Record Number of Staff Attend Crossroads Professional Development Conference

University Relations ? Communications
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The Classified Staff Council organized its largest-ever Crossroads Conference this year, with more than 300 UA employees in attendance ? almost 100 more participants than last year.

About 320 employees attended the daylong conference at the JW Marriott Tucson Starr Pass Resort and Spa on Friday. Conference workshops focused on professional and personal development and covered various subjects, including CPR training, identity theft, how to get more involved in the UA community, the ins and outs of UAccess, and how to be mindful of self to manage stress.

The theme of this year's conference was community, and the event featured keynote speakers Greg Byrne, vice president and director of athletics, and Jon Dudas, senior associate to the president and secretary of the University.

Byrne's talk focused on how people can affect the community around them. He emphasized the idea that when you come into contact with someone, you either take from their bucket or you fill it up, no matter how big or small the interaction. He encouraged the audience to always leave people with a little more in their bucket than they had before.

The Crossroads Conference is the only UA event of its size specifically for UA employees, said Janet Gurton, senior business analyst for the Financial Services Office and conference chair.

Gurton, said that the Crossroads Conference, organized by the 15 members of the Classified Staff Council, addresses one of the council's primary goals ? to get employees to network and participate in the UA community.

"This is a great opportunity for networking," said Gurton, board historian for the Classified Staff Council,. "It's good if you have to call the admissions office and you actually know somebody there. You can say, 'Hey, I met you at the Crossroads Conference last year.' It helps with the communication."

Conference attendee Aurora Plascencia, administrative associate for the Department of Animal and Biomedical Sciences, said this year's conference was the best one out of the four she has attended.

Plascencia attended the session titled "Growing Resilience Through Mindfulness," which taught employees how beneficial it is to take care of their mental health during the workday.
"We learned that we need to take the time to relax and concentrate on us during the workday and de-stress so we can have more energy and be more productive," she said.

**Patty Marinez**, accountant for the Department of Animal and Biomedical Sciences, agreed that the conference is beneficial to all who attend.

"It’s good that this offers both personal growth and professional development," Marinez said.

The Classified Staff Council is open to all classified staff members who want to get involved in the staff community. To find out more about becoming a member, visit the council's [website](http://csc.arizona.edu/).