Seuss-inspired pumpkins take center stage as UA Cares is extended

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From Horton and his Whos to Willy Waterloo (and some green and blue fish, too), the world of Dr. Seuss was on display at the UA Cares Pumpkin Crafting Contest hosted by the Office of the Provost. The annual contest raises funds for the Campus Pantry.

What began as friendly competition among floors of the Administration Building has grown over the years to include submissions from across campus, said Jonathan Lazar, administrative associate with the Office of the Provost. This year's contest featured entries from UAPD, the Office of the Registrar, the College of Engineering and the School of Information.

See some of the Seuss-inspired pumpkins in a photo gallery on the University News website.

The competition has become a signature part of UA Cares, the University's annual workplace giving campaign. This year's campaign, which began Oct. 2, has been extended to run through Nov. 10.

Entry to the event cost $15, and pumpkins were displayed in the Administration Building throughout Halloween. The public received five free votes per person, and additional votes were available for purchase. This year's fundraising goal was $1,500.

"This is a fun way to give back to the campus," Lazar said. "We are able to give back to our students and show that we're not just nameless administrators and that we do support them. We're putting our money where our mouth is, and that's really important."

UA Cares is a series of University-wide initiatives that work to benefit and serve the University community. UA Cares includes a workplace giving campaign yearly food drive, employee fund, blood drives and more. During the workplace giving campaign, employees can donate to any department, college, program or initiative through the University of Arizona Foundation or to local nonprofit organizations through the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona. Employees can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring payroll deduction through a UA Cares tile that will appear on the UAccess Employee homepage.

"We're excited to extend our workplace giving campaign so that more University employees have the chance to Bear Down and Step Up for nonprofits in the community," said Nick Hilton, assistant director in the Office of Government and Community Relations and coordinator of UA Cares. "We've already collected enough pledges to support more than 100 charitable recipients such as the Primavera Foundation, where employees have already pledged enough support to provide more than 300 nights of emergency housing to people in need."

The Campus Pantry, located on the bottom floor of the Student Union Memorial Center, is provided by the Associated Students of the University of Arizona. The pantry aims to reduce food insecurity on campus by providing free food to the Wildcat community.

Lazar said the theme for next year's contest – as voted by the public – will be Saturday morning cartoons, Broadway musicals or Nintendo.

The Office of the Provost will announce the winner of this year's pumpkin crafting contest, next year's theme and the fundraising total in the coming weeks.