Time again to Bear Down and step up: UA Cares is underway!

University Communications
September 2023

It is once again time for faculty and staff members to show how generous they can be. UA Cares [1], the University's annual workplace giving campaign, begins Oct. 2 and runs through Nov. 3. During the campaign, employees are encouraged to "Bear Down and step up" by donating 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.

"UA Cares is an important initiative that embodies our core value of compassion. I am proud to see the way that University of Arizona faculty, staff and students give back to the community both financially and through volunteer service," said President Robert C. Robbins, who served as honorary chair of the campaign from 2017-2020. "This giving campaign makes an incredible difference, and I look forward to seeing what we will accomplish together this year."

This year's campaign has two honorary co-chairs – one staff member and one faculty member – instead of just one, as in previous years. The co-chairs are Hope Noriega, enrollment counselor with Arizona International, and Brian Mayer, professor in the School of Sociology.

"As a UA Cares honorary co-chair, I am essentially the 'face' of UA Cares and one of the advocates for our community," Noriega said. "I am always looking for opportunities to help make the lives of the less privileged in our town a little easier. It is very important to me that my time be used for uplifting activities that assist our neighbors."

Mayer said the opportunity aligns with the work he does at the University.

"Community is central to everything I do at the University, from working with communities to build community disaster resilience to collaborating with my undergraduate students to better understand the causes and consequences of intergenerational poverty," Mayer said. "I am honored to be selected as a co-chair and to work with the campus community to highlight our commitments to social responsibility in 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 UA Access Employee [2] homepage. Those looking to donate their time can find dozens of volunteer opportunities [3] available through the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona's Days of Caring site.

Last year's campaign, with Joellen Russell, Distinguished Professor of geosciences, serving as honorary chair, raised a total of $268,727.58 in monetary donations [4], which was an increase of more than 30% over the previous year. University employees also logged 3,135 volunteer hours on 113 service projects through the United Way Days of Caring. Since it began in 2004, UA Cares has raised more than $6.8 million to address campus and community needs.

Another change this year is that the campaign will spotlight five local giving opportunities [5]. They include two organizations which address homelessness in the community: the El Rio Foundation [6], which supports El Rio Health programs, including a homeless outreach team that goes into shelters and washes to provide care to those experiencing homelessness, and the Primavera Foundation [7], which provides resources to help individuals and families escape poverty, including training, employment and housing support.

The campaign will also spotlight the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona [8], the University of Arizona Campus Pantry [9], which distributes food staples to students and employees at no cost, and the Employee Emergency Fund [10], which provides financial aid to employees facing temporary hardship as a result of unexpected emergency expenses.

"Our focus this year is on expanding giving and volunteer opportunities and getting more people involved," said Nick Hilton, assistant director in the Office of Government and Community Relations and coordinator of UA Cares. "The big events that we're promoting for this year are the service projects where people can come out, learn about a nonprofit and its needs, volunteer their time and enroll in a payroll deduction if they choose."

While there are more than 160 volunteer opportunities available through the Days of Giving, UA Cares ambassadors are promoting seven projects that are specifically for University employees. They include:

- **Garden Work at John B. Wright Elementary School** [12] | Oct. 20, 9-11:30 a.m. | 411 E. Linden St.
- **Garden Work at Tucson High Magnet School** [14] | Oct. 20, 9-11:30 a.m. | 400 N. Second Ave.
- **Shelter Face-Lift at PAWSitively CATS** [15] | Oct. 21, 7-11 a.m. | 1145 N. Woodland Ave.
- **Campus Beautification at Mansfield Middle Magnet School** [16] | Oct. 21, 9 a.m.-noon | 1300 E. Sixth St.
- Multiple projects at Pima Animal Care Center | 4000 N. Silverbell Road
Get involved

If you're looking for creative ways to donate, check out these events, which are open to anyone on campus.

- The College of Science Staff Advisory Council will hold a **food drive** from Oct. 16-20. Bins will be located in all College of Science buildings throughout campus, including Gould-Simpson, the Chemistry building, Life Sciences South and the Mathematics building. All donations will go to the **University of Arizona Campus Pantry** [9], which says the most-needed items include baking supplies, pasta and pasta sauces, peanut butter and jelly, and canned goods.
- The Office of the Provost will host its annual **Pumpkin Crafting Contest**, which raises funds for the Campus Pantry. This year's theme is Dr. Seuss. Entry into the event is $15. Voting takes place on Oct. 31 in Room 705 of the Administration building from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Everyone gets five free vote tickets. Additional tickets can be purchased at $2 for five votes. The office is hoping to raise $1,500 this year. Participants can also donate to vote for next year's theme. Anyone who needs more information can contact **Jonathan Lazar** [24], administrative associate with the Office of the Provost.

Get inspired

Looking for UA Cares activities that will unite your team or office? Find inspiration in some of the events that a few units are holding for their own employees.

- Housing and Residential Life and the Disability Resource Center will hold a **UA Cares Raffle and Fall Picnic** on Oct. 31 at Highland Commons. Employees from those units will receive a catered lunch from the Student Unions and can buy raffle tickets through monetary or canned good donations. Food donations go to the Campus Pantry, while monetary donations will support **Adaptive Athletics** [25] and the **Dorm Stipend Fund** [26], which is a new fund to help low-income and first-generation students live on campus.
- The James E. Rogers College of Law has created a "UA Cares Card" to encourage its employees to take part in UA Cares activities. Employees get their card stamped for volunteering at a United Way Days of Caring service project or donating items to nonprofits such as the Diaper Bank of Southern Arizona and Make Way for Books. Volunteering in a service project earns five tickets for a prize raffle, while in-kind donations are worth two tickets.

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