

The background of the entire page is an aerial photograph. The top half shows the Dallas skyline with various skyscrapers under a blue sky with light clouds. The bottom half shows the Southern Methodist University (SMU) campus, featuring a large green lawn with a grid of paths and a prominent building with a large, green, copper-clad dome.

SMU® **Staff Association**

Staff Celebration and Convocation Program
October 26, 2021

**Streaming online from the
George W. Bush Institute Auditorium
at 10:30 a.m.**

**Honoring staff excellence, new inductees
of the 25+ Years of Service Club and staff award recipients.**

Prelude and Processional

Welcome

Brandon S. Chance
Staff Association, President

Invocation

Lisa Garvin
Chaplain and Minister to the University

Introduction of Speakers

Brandon S. Chance
Staff Association, President

State of SMU Address

R. Gerald Turner
President of the University

Recognition of Staff

R. Gerald Turner
President of the University
Brandon S. Chance, Michele Hill,
Lana D. Phillips, Samantha Tellone
Staff Association Executive Board Members

Twenty-Five Year Club Inductees

Ian Aberle
Marilyn Renee Bowen
Eric English, Sr.
Larry Helpert
Terry M. Johnston
Terri Lewers
Sean Miller

Ruben Munoz
James Pan
Shawn Remek
Katherine Schacht
Thomas (Tommy) Tucker
Merlin Wilkerson

Presentation of President's Awards

President Turner, Brandon S. Chance,
Samantha Tellone

Presentation of
Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins Awards

Christopher M. Ham
Staff Association, VP of Staff Development

Closing Remarks

Brandon S. Chance
Staff Association, President

University Hymn—"Varsity"

All sing together

Staff with Twenty-Six or More Years of Service

FORTY-THREE YEARS

Richard Abrahamson, Meadows School of the Arts
Rojelio Torres, Facilities, Planning and Management

FORTY-ONE YEARS

Sheila Crain, Dedman College
Andy Frye, Enrollment Services
Joe Papari, Enrollment Services
Winston Tubb, Dedman School of Law

THIRTY-NINE YEARS

Lisa Barnes, DEA-Marketing and Communications
Tito Munoz, Facilities, Planning and Management

THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS

Lydia Dale, Student Life
Jane Lenz Elder, Perkins School of Theology
Paul W. Golden, Jr., Dedman College
Lisa Montes, Dedman School of Law
Dee Powell, Cox School of Business
Sherry L. Reinwald, Enrollment Services

THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS

Davd M. Davis, II, SWGSB
Tara M. Emerson, Meadows School of the Arts

THIRTY-SIX YEARS

Mary Ann Casazza, Campus Services
Faron Collins, Facilities, Planning and Management
Chuck Donaldson, Meadows School of the Arts
Ellen Frost, Perkins School of Theology
Jennifer (JJ) Jones, Student Life
Arlene Manthey, DEA-Annual Giving and Alumni Relations
Sheri Starkey, Department of Human Resources
Diana Vineyard, Dedman College
Dale A. Winkler, Dedman College

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

Steve Collins, Athletics
Michael Washington, Campus Services

THIRTY-FOUR YEARS

Sherry Aikman, Dedman College
Laura Amberson, Dedman School of Law
Bobbie Heine, Dedman School of Law
Rebecca (Becky) Hood, Simmons School of Education
Carolyn Jeter, Office of the Provost

THIRTY-THREE YEARS

Jaynell Harrell Dalby, Office of Budgets and Finance
Deanna Johnson, Meadows School of the Arts
Debbie Seiter, Office of Information Technology
Alison Tweedy, Campus Services

THIRTY-TWO YEARS

Elizabeth Aguirre, Cox School of Business
David Anderson, Dedman College
Judith Benes, Dedman College
Jim Dees, Lyle School of Engineering
Gregory Ivy, Dedman School of Law
Cathey Soutter, Health Center
Jon Speck, Perkins School of Theology
Sharon Tabbert, Dedman School of Law
Mary Varela, Dedman College

THIRTY-ONE YEARS

Robert Buckner, DEA-Strategic Affairs
Jorge Cruz, Office of Information Technology
Christopher Eatmon, SMU Libraries
Kent Gadell, Facilities, Planning and Management
Sandra Heads-Thorpe, Dedman School of Law
Stephen Leary, Meadows School of the Arts
Carol Morris, Enrollment Services
Victoria Olvera, DEA-Marketing and Communications
Jacqueline Wilborn, Enrollment Services

THIRTY YEARS

Joe Arnold, Office of Information Technology
Margaret Dew, Office of Information Technology
Andrea Maupin, Office of Information Technology
Elizabeth Jeanne Milazzo, Cox School of Business
Paula Strasser, Cox School of Business

TWENTY-NINE YEARS

Pamela Bell, Office of Budgets and Finance
Yvette Castilla, Office of Budgets and Finance
Nazario Del Rio, Facilities, Planning and Management
Tammy Dyer, Office of Budgets and Finance
Susan Strobel Hogan, Resident Life and Student Housing
Lorinda Lamb, Office of Budgets and Finance
Alan Pushin, Office of Information Technology
Jerrell Stracener, AT&T Center for Visualization
Carolyn Yates, Dedman School of Law

TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS

Kathy E. Brooks, Office of Budgets and Finance
Christopher Hayward, Dedman College
Hillsman Jackson, DEA-Public Affairs
Dianne B. Jopling, Office of the Treasurer
Melissa Keene, Meadows School of the Arts
Scot Montague, Dedman College
Chris Smith, Office of Information Technology
Sandra Tefft, Facilities, Planning and Management
Rhonda Wilborn, Educational Programs

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS

Janet Allmon, SMU Libraries
Jose M. Moreno, Facilities, Planning and Management
Ian J. Richards, Dedman College
Marilyn Swanson, Simmons School of Education
Ronald L. Wallace, Facilities, Planning and Management

TWENTY-SIX YEARS

Monica G. Cordero, Enrollment Services
Abby Kinney, Office of Budgets and Finance
Julia Maynard, Office of the Provost
Elizabeth Minton, Lyle School of Engineering
Marc Peterson, Enrollment Services
Maria Richards, Dedman College
Kathleen Scott, DEA-Marketing and Communications
Lisa Seifert, Athletics
Mannie Tanner, Police Department

Twenty-Five Year Staff Inductees

Ian Aberle

Ian Aberle is a Senior IT Communications Specialist and Trainer in the Office of Information Technology. He began his career at SMU in 1996 as an Information Technology Intern and has worked his way through OIT serving as an Instructional Technology Specialist, STAR Program Coordinator, Manager of Multimedia & Web Development/Manager of SMU STAR Program, and a Help Desk Consultant & Student Manager before being promoted to his current position in 2015. Before SMU, Ian was waiting tables and working as a trainer for Brinker International. He grew up in southern California before moving to Texas. Ian is married to Dr. Courtney Aberle and has two daughters, Cai and Kalin. He has won several photography awards and has had his photographic work published. Ian enjoys road trips with the family, exploring new places, and watching horror movies in the dark.



Marilyn Renee Bowen

Renee Bowen is the Gift Planning Coordinator in Development and External Affairs. Over her years at SMU, she has served in many different roles, all within DEA. She says that working in DEA allows you to “see both sides of the University...the infrastructure...and the non-tangible needs.” Before coming to SMU, she worked at Baylor Medical Center Foundation, Baker & Zaby Law Offices, Dallas, and the Abilene Probation Department. Born and raised in Dallas, Renee is married to Gray and has two daughters, Mandy and Kristina, as well as five grandchildren. She likes to travel to visit her children and grandchildren, but she also has several other locations on her bucket list. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, catching up on movies, joining book studies, and gardening. She also volunteers and is active in her church where she plays in the handbell choir.



Eric English, Sr.

Eric English, Sr. is Director of Maintenance and Grounds in the Office of Facilities, Planning and Management. He began his SMU career in 1996 as a painter. He has been promoted to several positions, including Facilities Building Inspector, Environmental Services Supervisor, and Environmental Services Manager. When SMU outsourced Facilities to Aramark, he was their Operational Excellence and Sustainability Manager. In 2017, he was asked to return to SMU in his current position. Before joining SMU, he worked for the internal construction team at Tulsa Regional Medical Center where he learned various trades. Growing up in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Eric attended Cascia Hall Preparatory School for Boys. He has three children, Eric, Jr., Leslie, and Isaiah who range in age from 10–15 years old. Eric is a big football fan and loves the SMU Mustangs, Oklahoma Sooners, and Dallas Cowboys.



Larry Helpert

Larry Helpert is a Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing (MEP) Engineer in the Office of Facilities, Planning and Management. He began his career at SMU in 1974. In 1986, after twelve years, he was laid off only to return to SMU in 1996. He graduated from SMU in 1973 with a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering and worked in M&O for a local company before joining SMU in 1974. In 2013, he received the Energy Engineer of the Year Award for Region IV of the Association of Energy Engineers. He has been a Registered Professional Engineer since 1980. He grew up in Dallas and attended Bishop Lynch High School.



Terry M. Johnston

Terry Johnston is a Senior Client Systems Administrator in the Office of Information Technology. He has been performing various roles in OIT since he started with SMU. Before starting at SMU though, he taught computer science in the public school system. He received a Bachelor of Science in Education with a minor in Earth Science from Midwestern State University in 1980. He grew up in Iowa Park, Texas where he attended high school. He is married to Mary Jo Johnston. Terry enjoys photography, 3D computer graphic creation, producing electronic music, and astronomy.



Terri Lewers

Terri Lewers is a Production Associate for the Southwest Review, SMU's literary magazine. She has worked all 25 years at SMU managing the offices of the Southwest Review. Prior to starting with SMU, she worked for Taylor Publishing Company in Dallas for 10 years. She just celebrated her 40th wedding anniversary with husband, James Lewers, who she met on a New Year's Eve blind date in 1980. They have two children, four grandchildren, and two fur-grandbabies. She is a proud Texan growing up in Mesquite and attending North Mesquite High School. When not at work, Terri enjoys sewing, crocheting, and crafting.



Sean Miller

Sean Miller is a General Services Technician in the Office of Facilities, Planning and Management. Prior to joining SMU, he worked for a local company performing grounds work, recycling, and trash collection. He is now responsible for the sweeper-truck and power-washer in order to maintain the university's campus for everyone to enjoy. He graduated from R.L. Turner High School in Carrollton, Texas. His father, Ralph, is a former SMU employee. When he isn't maintaining the beauty of the SMU campus, Sean enjoys playing airsoft, airplanes, constructing models, and mountain-bike riding.



Ruben Munoz

Ruben Munoz is a General Services Technician in the Office of Facilities, Planning and Management. He began at SMU almost 25-years ago to the day -- October 10, 1996. Before he started at SMU, Ruben worked for a carwash. He grew up in Mesa de la Magdalena – located in the State of Zacatecas in Mexico. He is married to Felicitas Munoz and they have two children – Aracely and Ruben, Jr. They are also proud grandparents of Cali, Sofia, and Seldi. Ruben has been recognized as Employee of the Month in the Facilities group. He enjoys making home improvements and watching football.



James Pan

James Pan is the Academic Technology Services Director for the Dedman School of Law and the Perkins School of Theology. He began his career at SMU as an IT Specialist. Prior to his start at SMU, he was working in Hong Kong. He attended SMU where he received a Bachelor of Science in Economics and a Masters of Telecommunication. He immigrated to Highland Park in 1980 when his father came for business from Hong Kong. He grew up in Highland Park. He has received the School of Engineering's Outstanding Staff Award and the Faculty Senate Outstanding Staff Award. He is married to T. Nguyen and has had 7 family members graduate from SMU. James enjoys playing intramural billiards, cycling, reading Chinese novels, and cooking.



Shawn Remek

Shawn Remek is Manager of Events and Classroom Support in the Office of Information Technology. He began his career as the Night Building Manager in Hughes-Trigg. Over the next several years, he received several promotions including being named head of the Audio Visual department which was then responsible for supporting all of the AV needs in the student center. In 2015, his department migrated out of Student Affairs and under the auspices of OIT. Prior to starting at SMU, he worked for the Dallas Stars organization in Valley Ranch running their check-in/check-out desk. He grew up in Euless and attended Trinity High School. He attended TCU for two years and Tarrant County Community College for two years. In 2004, he received a Bachelor's in History from SMU, as well as his MBA in 2007. He is a recipient of the M Award. He is married to Theresa Remek and enjoys traveling and spending time with his dogs.



Katherine Schacht

Katherine Schacht is the Special Collections Catalog Librarian in the Technical Services Department for Fondren, Hamon, and DeGolyer Libraries. She began her career at SMU as a part-time catalog librarian at Fondren Library. This position later became a full-time position, focusing on cataloging print material for DeGolyer Library including monographs, maps, serials, and broadsides. Before joining SMU, she worked at Amigos Library Services and at the Richardson Public Library as a cataloger. She grew up in Torreon, Mexico and various cities in Texas. She attended Highland Park High School. She received a Bachelor's in Spanish with a minor in French from SMU and a Master of Science in Library Science from the University of North Texas. She enjoys reading, gardening, and sewing.



Thomas (Tommy) Tucker

Thomas (Tommy) Tucker is the Interim Director of the Mustang Band. He began his career with the Mustang Band as Assistant Director/Staff Arranger. He later became the band's Assistant Director. Before joining SMU, he worked temporarily in accounting. He grew up in Dallas – in the Casa View area near Mesquite and attended Dallas Bryan Adams High School. He went to Eastfield College before receiving a Bachelor's in Psychology and History from SMU in 1984. He is married to Pam Tucker and has two children (Kristen and Kathryn) and one grandson, Rory. He is a HOPE Honoree. Tommy enjoys reading, watching sports, and playing golf.



Merlin Wilkerson

Merlin Wilkerson is the Academic Technology Services Director for the Lyle School of Engineering. He began his career at SMU as a Network Systems Specialist in Lyle. From there, he worked as the Director of Lyle's Networks & Systems and later as Director of Lyle's Tech Support. Before coming to SMU, he worked as a computer systems consultant. He grew up in Bentonville, Arkansas and attended Bentonville High School. He went on to complete coursework at the University of Arkansas. He is married to Cindy Wilkerson and has four children, Jake, Billy, Emily, and Mason. He is a recipient of the Faculty Senate Outstanding Staff Award. Tommy enjoys home remodeling and motorcycles.



President's Award Winner 2021 Gretchen C. Voight New Employee Excellence Bobby Lothringer

Bobby has been the University Registrar & Executive Director of Enrollment Services since 2020, though he has been in higher education for 26 years. Before joining SMU, he was the University Registrar at Texas Woman's University. He grew up in Texas and attended Victoria High School. Bobby earned a Bachelor of Arts in Telecommunications from Texas Tech University and his Masters of Education in Higher Education from the University of North Texas. Bobby received the Texas Association of Collegiate Registrar's & Admissions Officers President's Award. He served as President of TACRAO from 2019-2020. He is married to Rebecca and is very active in his church where he serves on the Board of Elders and the Mission Team.



President's Award Winner 2021

Continuing Excellence

Rebecca Tiemann

Rebecca has been the Executive Assistant to the Dean in the Lyle School of Engineering since 2017. Prior to that, she worked as a Coordinator in the Dean's Office supporting Duncan MacFarlane (Associate Dean for Engineering Entrepreneurship) and DeeDee Conway (Assistant Dean of Operations). Before coming to SMU, she worked in corporate event planning specializing in planning conferences and conventions. She grew up in Farmers Branch and attended R.L. Turner High School in Carrollton. She received a Bachelor's degree in History from SMU following high school. Rebecca enjoys exploring antique stores with friends or reading, preferably at the beach.



President's Award Winner 2021

Innovation

Chris Walerczyk

Chris is the Assistant Director of Processes and Operations in the Financial Aid Office. Since starting at SMU five years ago as an Information Systems Specialist, Chris has worked consistently for the Financial Aid Tech team. Before coming to SMU, he worked for a start-up company producing helmets aimed at athletic teams. He grew up in Amarillo and attended Tascosa High School. Following high school, Chris attended McMurry University in Abilene where he majored in Computer Information Systems. He is currently completing his MBA at SMU where he will graduate this December. When he isn't taking care of his fur-family (cats Birdie and Nuka, as well as a feral cat family), Chris enjoys being outdoors and traveling to new places where he can immerse himself in new experiences. When not traveling, he enjoys building and fixing things, or just working on his car.



President's Award Winner 2021

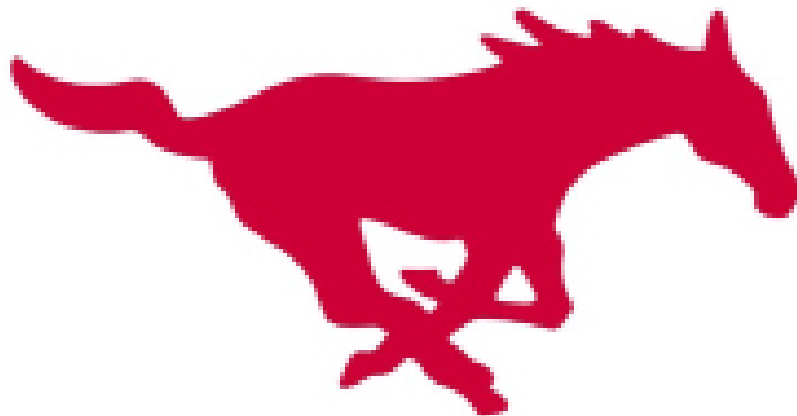
Outstanding Leadership

Ryan Cole

Ryan is the Director of Undergraduate Recruitment & Admission for the Meadows School of the Arts. He began his career at SMU as an Admissions Counselor in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions where he was the liaison to Meadows. Before joining SMU, he taught middle school choir in Plano ISD. Ryan grew up in Houston and attended the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. He received his Bachelor's in Music Education from SMU in 2013 and went on to receive a Masters of Education in Higher Education Policy and Leadership from SMU in 2017. He is the recipient of the Roy and Sue Johnson Award in Memory of Maurice Acers and the M Award. His wife, Rebecca Cole, is also a SMU alumn. Ryan enjoys spending time with friends and family and supporting his Meadows students.



SMU®



Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins Award



The Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins Award was established to recognize and reward employees who represent the qualities and spirit of Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins, her love of SMU, her commitment to the community, and her high standards for work and life. Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins was a member of the university staff for 37 years, from 1924 to 1961, during which time she held various roles, including assistant to President C.C. Selecman and President Umphrey Lee. Her retirement in 1961 was announced in a lead editorial in the Dallas Morning News entitled "Loretta's Leaving."

Mrs. Hawkins was a single parent who was devoted to both SMU and her family, working tirelessly through the depression (and a 66% pay cut for staff employees) to better the university, while also taking on part-time and evening work to support her family. She had an excellent reputation in the community and high standards of accomplishment in work, family, and the art of living. This award was endowed by Mr. Dallas E. Hawkins II, to honor his mother and her life as well as to benefit the university to which she was so dedicated.

Loretta O'Reilly Hawkins Award Winner 2021

Mirjan Laçi

Assistant Director of Student Account Services

Mirjan began at SMU as a Student Account Advisor in 2006. In just three years, she was made a Senior Student Account Advisor. Before SMU, Mirjan was a Child Nutrition Manager for Richardson ISD as well as a teacher in her home country of Albania. Growing up in Albania, Mirjan attended the University of Albania, met her husband, Gezim, and started her family with children Igli and Bora. Her idol, Mother Theresa said, "Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love" which exemplifies her outlook on life. This is most evident in her love of mentoring the younger generation. Mirjan loves to travel and experience new cultures with her family. Both of her children graduated from SMU and her daughter currently works for the Tower Center.



2021-2022

SMU Staff Association Executive Board

Brandon S. Chance
Samantha Tellon
Raina A. Watts

Michele Hill
Christopher M. Ham
Lana D. Phillips
Tiffany Powell
Allison Slomowitz
Lashanda Phillips

President
President-Elect
Past-President
Staff Advocacy Council Chair
Vice President of Programming
Vice President of Staff Development
Vice President of Service and Activities
Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Director of Administration
Treasurer

SMU Staff Association Members at Large

Michelle Ried
Diana Vineyard

Bridwell Library
Dedman College

SMU Staff Advocacy Council

Mariah Chappell
Gail Darden
Anna Martinez
Michelle Baehl
Scot Montague
Winston Tubb
Claudia Castillo
Diane Rives
Christy Ahsanullah
Ryan Cole
Rachel Holmes
Karie Conklin
Ed Collins
Jill Moore
Kaleb Loomis

Athletics
Business & Finance
Cox School of Business
Development and External Affairs
Dedman College
Dedman School of Law
DES, Taos, LEC, Int'l Programs
Legal Affairs
Lyle School of Engineering
Meadows School of the Arts
Perkins School of Theology
President's Office
Provost's Office
Simmons School of Education
Student Affairs

SMU Staff Association

2021-2022 Events and Activities

Please join us for these upcoming events, presented just for you!

Details will be communicated closer to each event,
so watch for SMUSA announcements or check out the
Calendar of Events on our website for updates. www.smu.edu/smusu

October 29, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Book Club via Zoom
The Last Thing He Told Me
By: Laura Dave

November 4, 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Virtual Lunch & Learn
TBD

November TBD

Meet & Greet
SMU Staff Networking

November 19, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Holiday Book Club Meeting
Book: TBD

We will have more events throughout the year.
Some will be online and some may be in person.

Invitations to events are sent through your SMU email account.
To manage your list subscription, please visit <https://mylists.smu.edu>.

Join us on social media for information and updates!
We can be found on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).
Tag us in your photos, #smustafflove!



Event coordinated by Brandon Chance, President, SMU Staff Association
Program/all media created & managed by Tiffany Powell, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, SMU Staff Association

University Hymn

“Oh we see the Varsity, Varsity, Varsity
as she towers o’er the hill over there.
And our hearts are filled with joy, SMU, SMU,
Alma Mater, we’ll be true forever!”

Special Thanks

Zach Peterson
Announcer

Chris Regis
Vice President for Business and Finance
SMU Staff Association Advisor

Get Involved

We would love to hear your ideas!
To volunteer to help with the planning or hosting
of one of our events, just send an email to smusa@smu.edu
or reach out to your [Staff Advocacy Council](#) Member in your area.

SMU **Staff Association**