By: Sarah Mirjavadi, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The holiday season is around the corner! It is the time of joy and happiness! During this Winter break, there are opportunities to share this joy and happiness.

Delivering and Serving Hope (DASH) is a wonderful first step to sharing joy. DASH focuses on hunger and homelessness. The program allows students to engage in learning activities along with mind opening discussions. Students also pack simple meals for the homeless and get the experience of personally delivering meals to those who need it. The goal of the program is to inspire students to continue serving the homeless and the hungry on their own. It is open to all UNLV students as well as faculty and staff. For more information, visit http://www.unlv.edu/service/dash. There are only 40 spots available each DASH. They do accept walk-in students if space is available.

Another volunteer activity students can participate in is the GNJ Community Pantry. This event is hosted by Jessica’s Children Foundation. Students help distribute food baskets to families in need every Saturday including holidays. It begins at 3:30AM and ends at 11:30AM. This service project can feed more than 1500 families in Las Vegas. To sign up or receive more information, contact Hollie Taylor at taylorh@unlv.nevada.edu.

Continued on pg. 2
UNLV Volunteers Continued

To continue the cheer, there is an Alternative Break Trip! It is a great opportunity to explore social justice issues as well as serving communities. Trips can be a weekend or an entire week. The cost also varies depending on the trip. Anyone interested should attend an info session on February 3rd and February 18th from 6-7 PM on the 2nd floor of the Student Union.

How will you spend this holiday season?

Sources


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Cap off your semester with CAPS

By: Robert Vargas, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

College is an opportunity for growth, both mental and physical. Of course, as a college student, there can definitely be times of stress while balancing multiple classes and activities. Fortunately, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Student Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is available as an amazing campus resource. As a UNLV student, your Health Fee pays for these services so they are available to you at any time throughout the semester. Whether you may be experiencing homesickness, going through a rough patch in a relationship, or simply want to discuss some challenges, there are counselors available at CAPS ready to listen. In addition, CAPS offers group counseling over topics such as overcoming test anxiety and stress management that can offer great help with students just like you. Information is kept confidential and you as a student can benefit from talking about challenges with professional staff that can help you along your college journey.

Now, how does one take advantage of such great services? CAPS is located in the Student Recreation & Wellness Center and is open from Monday-Thursday from 8am-6pm as well as Fridays from 9am-5pm. An initial appointment can be scheduled by calling 702-895-3627. In addition, walk-ins without an appointment are accepted during regular business hours. Remember that CAPS does not charge for your counseling, so take advantage of such a great resource. As a college student, you may become overwhelmed with the stresses that come with adulthood. CAPS at UNLV is a great service offered that allows students to speak to someone over personal issues and stresses, as well as gain additional insight onto how you can make the most of the college experience.

What is Coaching? Interview with Heather Hatch

By: Yana Ryjova, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Heather Hatch is both the Coaching Coordinator and an Academic Advisor at the UNLV Academic Success Center. From a short interview with Heather, it was apparent that she had tremendous passion for what she did. Being a first-generation college student herself, Heather’s eyes lit up when she spoke about helping students transition into higher education. From her position as an Academic Success Coach as a graduate student, to her position as Coaching Coordinator now, she knows all the ins and outs of the coaching program. Sitting down with her, not only did I get all of my coaching questions answered, but I also was able to get the inside scoop on study tips for finals coming up.

Q: Most people don’t know an extensive amount about coaching. What can Academic Success Coaches help students with?
A: Coaches can help students with a variety of things including time management, study skills, test-taking strategies, note-taking, and an overall transition into college. They can help students with this transition by guiding them to useful resources right here on campus. Coaches establish relationships with students, and can be someone students go to when they need help adjusting to the college-level classes and workload.

Q: What makes Academic Success Coaching different from academic advising?
A: While academic advisors help with things like degree planning, course recommendations, and transfer credits, coaches are more involved with providing other skills and resources for students to be successful within their respective college path.

Q: What kind of students would benefit from Academic Success Coaching?
A: Everyone can benefit from coaching, but particularly freshman. Due to admissions criteria, some students are actually required to meet with an academic success coach, but anyone can make an appointment. Anyone can benefit, even when a student is not facing any major struggles or problems. Everyone has room for improvement and coaches can be that outlet for students to really discuss what is challenging them in their academic lives. Coaching enables students to get feedback from someone who was in the same Undergraduate shoes, which allows them to give relevant advice to their students.

Q: How many coaches does the Academic Success Center currently have?
Currently, the ASC has 10, but in the past we have had anywhere from 8-15 coaches, each individually passionate about helping students succeed.

Q: What are the goals of the coaching department?
A: The number one goal of coaching is to help students successfully transition to college and support them with academic strategies. Another goal is to connect students to staff members on campus, a strategy proven to increase retention rate, which I guess is the ultimate goal for the department.
What is Coaching? Interview with Heather Hatch Continued

Q: With exams coming up, do you have any tips for students who are just starting their studying?

One thing that I suggest is making a calendar from now until the final, dividing the studying into smaller, more manageable pieces that include studying and review each day until the final. While the task of studying seems overwhelming, breaking it down makes it much easier to accomplish. Additionally, creating some sort of study aides is a good tip. Just re-reading notes will not help students understand or process, so using aides like PowerPoints or note-cards will help you understand the material that is being studied. Finally, I suggest re-creating the testing environment. Before you take the test, create a situation similar to a test in a similar setting. The most important thing, however, is overcoming test anxiety. To do this, when you feel the anxiety coming on, take some deep breaths to calm down. Lastly, a good night of sleep and a good breakfast will help you feel ready the morning of the exam. Good luck!

Source: (H. Hatch, Personal Communication, November 27, 2014).

Capstone Café

By: Nestor Chaidez, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Before I became a full-time student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), I enrolled myself in a professional cook training course. I spent the first two months reading from books and the last month was all hands-on: cooking and serving customers. The Chefs emphasized the importance of the books, and I understand why, however, physically cooking and seeing customers consume our dishes was very rewarding and assured my colleagues and me that our studying had paid off.

It was a delightful feeling to see that UNLV has a similar program for their culinary students. The Capstone Café is provided by the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. Culinary students have the opportunity to experience what it is like to feed and service customers. By doing so, the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration is not only providing their students with the knowledge, but also with an experience that will propel their success in their field of study.

The Capstone Café is hosted in the Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH) in the Boyd Dining Room on the second floor. They are open on certain days throughout the semester and serve students, staff, and the public. Lunch is served around noon and dinner Café hours are from 5 to 7 p.m. Lunch is $10 per person and dinner runs from $12 - $20 per person. All lunches and dinners feature an appetizer, main dish, and a dessert.

The days that the Capstone Café is in service are listed online at the UNLV website (http://www.unlv.edu/hotel/dine-with-us/capstone-cafe). Aside from the scheduled dates, there is contact information for the Chefs in case a customer would like to ask questions about the food being served. Through a small fee people can eat high quality dishes at UNLV, while also providing students with valuable experience.

Source: http://www.unlv.edu/hotel/dine-with-us/capstone-cafe
Spotlight on Dr. Joe Ervin

By: Garrett Wilson, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Dr. Joe Ervin serves as a Visiting Assistant Professor for UNLV’s Academic Success Center. He currently teaches COLA 100E, the first-year seminar for Exploring Majors. This past May he received his Ph.D. in Higher Education. I sat down with Dr. Ervin to gain some insight into his position at the ASC.

Where did you receive your education?
I received all my degrees here at UNLV - Bachelors in Philosophy, Masters in Special Education, and Ph.D. in Higher Education.

Who have been some of your academic and professional influences?
A: In the Educational Psychology and Higher Education Department, Dr. Victoria Rosser has been a big help throughout the doctoral program. Dr. Dave Beisecker, the chair of the Philosophy Department, was incredibly helpful in my undergraduate years.

How have you contributed to the undergraduate experience at UNLV?
I’ve taught first-year seminars for the College of Education. This is my first year teaching COLA 100E for Exploring Majors. I have also volunteered and worked part-time for the disability center.

Why is it important for students to take your course?
Coming from high school, college is a different environment. The course is a helpful transition and guide to help students find resources to assist them in choosing a major. It’s a healthy transitional course that points them in the right direction.

What do you enjoy most about being a professor at UNLV?
I enjoy seeing students succeed and take something valuable from my course, and when I feel like I’m making a positive impact on a student’s transition. So many topics are touched upon in the course to help the student gain value in their college experience.

What has been your greatest professional accomplishment thus far?
Just being given the opportunity to teach, knowing the students get something meaningful out of the class, and seeing their success.

What’s a fun fact students wouldn’t normally know about you?
In junior high, I wanted to be a competitive ping pong player. I thought it was the coolest thing after I watched Forrest Gump. I’ve tried to continue with it my entire life.

(J. Ervin, Personal Communication, November 25, 2014).