

KNOXVILLE ADMINISTRATION & STUDENT LIFE ERC

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION & IPS ERC

Meeting Minutes

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021 | 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.

Via ZOOM

PRESENT

Mark Alexander, Brenda Bartram, Jen Benton, Danielle Bohn (Guest Speaker), Shannon Bruce, Jessica Cantu, Matt Cramer (Guest Speaker), Crissy Douglas, Darrell Easley, Nancy Gibson, Angie Holtzclaw, Ryan Kemnetz, Ami McCarter, Julie Roe, Jeremy Smith, Bethany Tozzi, Leslie Valentine, Pam Vatter

ABSENT

Linda Arms, Yousef Baskin, Andrea Brayton, Dedra Cotner, Mary Lucal, Mark Paganelli, Iesha Shaw

1. WELCOME

Julie Roe, Sr. Employee Relations Consultant, welcomed the group to the February meeting.

1. UPDATES
	1. Division of Student Life Update – Mark Alexander, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Life

Mark Alexander greeted the group, and led by sharing news that Student Life is finishing up the [shell space located on the third floor of the Student Union](https://news.utk.edu/2021/03/24/student-union-celebrates-third-floor-opening-for-student-resources/). He said Smokey’s Closet has relocated and opened about a week ago. Once furniture for the space arrives next week they hope to move the Pride Center and Student Life administrative offices into their new offices the following week. He said there is also an interfaith meditation space, although they do not plan to open that until fall semester. They are currently working on policies and procedures for the interfaith center. The move will allow the Dean of Students office to expand into the space currently occupied by the Student Union administration.

Mr. Alexander next shared that Massey Hall continues to be used as an isolation hall. He announced that John Keith has joined Student Life as the new Director of Sorority & Fraternity Life. Dr. Tanisha Jenkins, Director of [Multicultural Student Life](https://multicultural.utk.edu/), has moved on to Ohio State University to become their Vice Provost of Belonging and Inclusion. Mr. Alexander shared his well-wishes for Dr. Jenkins new work at Ohio State and announced that they are now searching for a new Director of Multicultural Student Life.

* 1. System Update – Mark Paganelli, Treasurer

Ms. Roe announced that Mr. Paganelli would not be able to join the meeting but he asked her to share that the Martin Methodist acquisition is the primary item of focus for the System at the moment.

* 1. Human Resources Update – Darrell Easley, Director of Learning & Organizational Development & Employee Relations

Dr. Darrell Easley greeted the group and introduced himself to the representatives. He shared an update that the new Online Performance Review (OPR) system is in place and talked about how the OPR system works. He discussed the new diversity and inclusion question for 2021 and noted that a recent webinar focused on how to identify and incorporate DEI goals for this year.

Dr. Easley next discussed Governor Lee’s recent State of the State address, and shared his optimism for the support for campuses across the state. He said that news of a 4% raise pool is promising. Dr. Joan Bienvenue was recently hired as the new Executive Director for the Oak Ridge Institute. Dr. Bienvenue joins UT from the University of Virginia.

Dr. Easley then discussed vaccination events on the UTK campus, noting that the clinics follow current state guidelines. Knoxville-area employees who are interested in signing up for a vaccination appointment at the Student Health Center are encouraged to visit <https://www.utk.edu/coronavirus/vaccine/> to view upcoming clinics.

1. GUEST SPEAKER
	1. Here4TN Employee Assistance Program & Services – Matt Cramer

Matt Cramer, Senior Client Service Manager for Optum, greeted the group and began his presentation by reviewing resources that Here4TN provides to University employees. He first shared contact information (855-Here4TN/855-437-3486) and their website ([here4tn.com](https://www.here4tn.com/)). He also highlighted a new live chat feature for employees who are too busy to call. The chat feature is available on the Here4TN website from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

Mr. Cramer led by noting that employees who have behavioral health coverage via their medical insurance coverage through the University should have also received a behavioral health ID card from Optum. He said the cards can be used like any other medical identification card when visiting providers. Employees who have lost their card or did not receive one may call 855-Here4TN to request one or log into the Here4TN website and download a PDF copy.

Mr. Cramer then discussed coverage for [substance use disorder (SUD),](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/substance-use-resources.html) which involves excessive and compulsive use of alcohol or drugs. He explained that for employees who are struggling with SUD the state has a benefit that allows access to a preferred substance use disorder facility. He said SUD treatment is clinically proven and has a lower cost for members. To seek treatment assistance, call 855-Here4TN.

Mr. Cramer next discussed the different programs and resources that fall under Here4TN including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), WorkLife Services, Take Charge at Work, and other digital resources. He stressed that employees have access to a dedicated minimum masters-level clinical team available through Here4TN, and can call 855-Here4TN for any EAP or other resource needs.

Mr. Cramer explained that employees have access to five EAP sessions per person, problem, and year at no cost to the employee. Prior authorization is required, and can be obtained by calling 855-Here4TN or submitting an authorization request via here4tn.com. Virtual visits for EAP as well as behavioral health visits can be scheduled through the website at Here4TN.com. [TalkSpace](https://www.here4tn.com/content/dam/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/documents/SOT_Optum_Talkspace_Flyer.pdf), a text and messaging app, is available for both EAP and behavioral health visits, and may be helpful for employees who perform shift work. [Sanvello](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/library/sanvello.html), a self-help app, helps users engage in activities to improve their mental health at any time via their smartphone. He explained it includes practical on-demand tools to help manage stress and anxiety such as deep breathing exercises and relaxation techniques. Employees can access premium membership at no cost by signing up via the Here4TN website. Mr. Ramsey asked to clarify if Here4TN is for those who need to see a psychiatrist. Mr. Cramer confirmed that Here4TN is an umbrella that includes behavioral health benefits for employees participating in a University medical plan. Mr. Ramsey asked if employees’ dependents are eligible for behavioral health benefits. Mr. Cramer confirmed the employees are benefits eligible then their dependents are eligible for the five free EAP visits per year. For behavioral health services beyond those five visits the employee would need to be enrolled in a University medical plan. Lisa Turner asked if there are specific providers that must be used or if employees can use any provider and pay a copay fee. Mr. Cramer responded that the providers need to be in-network, and to visit here4tn.com to use the search tool to find a provider. Ms. Turner asked about how billing works after the five free EAP visits per year. Mr. Cramer responded that if an employee exceeded the five EAP visits and needs to continue seeing a provider they would then begin using their behavioral health benefits and there would be copays involved.

Mr. Cramer next covered [legal and mediation benefit services](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/benefits/legalandfinancial/legal-consultation.html), which include free consultation services and a discount for ongoing representation. Employees interested in finding an attorney or mediator should call 855-Here4TN and an agent will assist them with setting up those services. Dr. Lucal asked if mediation services are a new benefit, and Cramer responded that they are not. They agreed it is a very useful and cost-effective resource for constituents. Mr. Cramer said self-help legal forms are also available through the website as well as access to consulting with a money coach and other financial resources. He said that Optum recently held a [financial webinar series](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/financial-webinars.html) on topics such as managing debt, controlling spending, and maintaining excellent credit. The series is available on their website to view at any time.

Mr. Cramer then discussed [WorkLife Services](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/benefits/wl.html), which is a service designed to assist employees by researching things to like caregiving assistance, community education programs, support services and more. He shared his personal experience with using the service to locate a contractor for a home project.

Mr. Cramer next talked about the [Take Charge at Work program](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/take-charge-at-work-program.html). The program is confidential and designed to help working adults manage symptoms of stress and depression. Those who qualify work with a licensed clinician and the State of Tennessee offers participants who complete the first engagement activity $150.00 through Active Health. For more information and to take the assessment online visit here4tn.com. Mr. Ramsey asked how the incentive is paid out, and Mr. Cramer replied that it is like other Active Health wellness rewards and is paid out via payroll.

Mr. Cramer closed by highlighting [services available to supervisors and managers](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/leaders.html), including catalogs of available training available at no cost on topics such as COVID-19, diversity and inclusion, and supporting mental health concerns in the workplace. Departments interested in scheduling these training can call 855-Here4TN.

Ms. Roe noted that EAP services have been especially helpful as we have made our way through the pandemic. Jessica Cantu asked Mr. Cramer to help representatives understand what employees who call in to access EAP services can expect. Mr. Cramer said that callers will talk with agents who are at minimum masters-level clinicians who can listen and help the caller with their needs. If an employee calls in for EAP authorization agents can assist them in finding a provider accepting new patience and assist callers with appointment searches.

Bethany Tozzi asked who employees should contact to obtain a replacement Here4TN/Optum card. Mr. Cramer replied that the employee can call 855-Here4TN to request a new card be mailed to them.

More information about EAP can be found at: <https://hr.utk.edu/employee-assistance-program/>.

* 1. Be Well – Danielle Bohn

Danielle Bohn, Health and Wellness Coordinator, introduced herself to the group and discussed how [Be Well](https://bewell.utk.edu/), the UTK employee wellness program, provides preventative wellness education and outreach to employees and departments across campus. Ms. Bohn shared that Be Well works to benefit employees’ and the campus community’s wellbeing and helps employees prioritize their overall wellbeing beyond just the physical dimension.

Ms. Bohn then shared the vision of a campus that supports positive lifestyle choices, and talked about the [eight dimensions of wellness model that the program is based upon](https://bewell.utk.edu/dimensions-of-wellness/): emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social. She noted that they want to help people understand that different dimensions of wellness exist within their lives, that sometimes there will be fluctuations in how they are doing in those different area, and that the model is not necessarily designed for 100% achievement in all eight areas. She shared examples with the group of campus resources that support each dimension of wellness, including those related to COVID-19. Ms. Bohn said that they are currently seeing employees needing more assistance in the social, financial, and emotional aspects of wellness due to the pandemic. She shared that her focus for this year is to prioritize those areas as best as they can given the virtual and hybrid environments.

Ms. Bohn mentioned that [EverlyWell COVID-19 test kits](https://studenthealth.utk.edu/everlywell-covid-19-home-collection-kit-overview/) are available at no cost to staff. Asymptomatic employees may pick up a kit from the Student Health Center during regular business hours. The employee can either complete it on campus or at home, ship it via UPS, and EverlyWell will email them their results. Employees experiencing symptoms should contact their health provider instead.

Ms. Bohn noted that due to the pandemic Be Well transitioned their work online, and said it has been rewarding to see it grow in this new direction. She said participation numbers have skyrocketed and it has been a great increase in accessibility for those who are unable to attend in-person events on campus but can attend virtually. Be Well’s partnership with the Culinary Institute continues with virtual [healthy cooking series](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-cooking/) classes, and she noted they have found that allowing people to engage in the class in their kitchens and with family members has been great to watch. She works with the UT Culinary Institute to provide food kits to the first 30 people who sign up. Similarly, Be Well has also been hosting virtual [healthy gardening classes](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-gardening-classes/), with the first class of the semester kicking off this Saturday. She said that UT Gardens sets up kits for those classes, allowing employees to tune in to the virtual class and follow along at home.

Ms. Bohn said that they will be kicking off the [Grow With Be Well](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/employee-campus-garden/) employee gardening program in May. Be Well and the [Grow Lab](https://growlab.utk.edu/) campus garden partner to offer plots and produce plants to employees, who then tend to the gardening with their teams. She said it was a great way to safely connect with others as well as harvest and take produce home. Registration starts in March and the program will kick off this May. She also mentioned [employee fitness classes](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/employee-fitness-classes/), including an upcoming virtual Zumba class. She said the classes are held about once a month and employees can [try any RecSports Zoom fitness classes](https://recsports.utk.edu/virtual-group-fitness-classes/).

Ms. Bohn then discussed the [Healthy Lifestyle program](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-lifestyle-program/). Healthy Lifestyles is a six-week lunch and learn program adapted from the CDC’s Diabetes Prevention Program, and offers incentives for participants. The next session kicks off on March 10, and participants can engage in physical activity during the Zoom sessions. The program covers basics around physical activity and nutrition and building a healthy lifestyle at work and at home. It also covers stress management and how to keep healthy lifestyle momentum going. Participants receive a $10 Publix gift card for attending the first session and a $20 Amazon gift card for completing the entire program.

Ms. Bohn then talked about the [Wellness Warriors award](https://bewell.utk.edu/wellness-warriors/). The award highlights a person on campus each month in the Be Well newsletter. She asked the group that if someone they know in their department or on campus is doing a great job of taking care of themselves in any of the eight dimensions of wellness to nominate them as a Wellness Warrior. [Wellness Champions](https://bewell.utk.edu/wellness-champion-program/) are employees who serve as a role model of wellness in their department and promote healthy department certification programs. It helps create change within the department and has an emphasis on wellness to ensure employees’ needs are being met in the workplace. She said that they help identify needs specific to their department, and they consult with Be Well to plan activities. She also said the employee wellness committee helps her brainstorm ways to connect with people on campus. Those interested in becoming involved as a Wellness Champion or participating in the wellness committee can email her at bewell@utk.edu.

Ms. Bohn closed by touching on a new sleep campaign for campus. She said survey data shows 43% of campus employees sleep less than seven hours per night, and the current recommendations for average adults is to get seven to nine hours of sleep per night. She noted sleep is highly connected to emotional well-being, and lack of sleep impacts cognitive functioning and may result in metabolic changes. She shared that research shows finding a routine and sticking with it helps the body go to sleep and wake faster because of a constituent schedule. She shared that slow transitions to increase sleep by fifteen to twenty-minute increments is helpful as is turning off electronic devices before bed, adjusting thermostats at night to around 65 degrees, limiting naps to 20 minutes, and making the room as dark as possible.

Visit [bewell.utk.edu](https://bewell.utk.edu/) to sign up for the Be Well monthly newsletter or follow Be Well on Facebook and Twitter to learn more about upcoming events and healthy living tips.

1. OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
	1. Non-Exempt Staff Sounding Board (2/24)

The Non-Exempt Staff Sounding Board invites all non-exempt staff to join them for a virtual coffee hour on February 24. The Board is sponsored by UT HR and was created to gather resources together to help inspire and encourage non-exempt staff in their goals.

More information: <https://calendar.utk.edu/event/non-exempt_sounding_board_virtual_coffee#.YCKmhGhKiHs>

* 1. L&OD: Upcoming Events

For more information or to register for any of these sessions, visit K@TE:

* March 2, 9, 23 & 30 from 3:30p-4:30p: Telecommuting with Children
* March 8 from 11:30a-12:30p: Lunch and Learn: A Presentation on Supercharging Your LinkedIn Presence with Michael Smith-Porter
* March 24 from 9a-11a and 2p-4p: Professional Development – Building Your Brand: Leading from Where You Are
	1. Big Orange Pantry

The Big Orange Pantry provides emergency food assistance for students, faculty, and staff attending or employed by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The Big Orange Pantry is located on the ground floor of Greve Hall. Students, faculty, and staff seeking food assistance will be able to choose for themselves what products they would like to receive.

More information: [tiny.utk.edu/BigOrangePantry](https://dos.utk.edu/big-orange-pantry/)

1. REMINDERS
	1. Please email Jessica Cantu (jlcantu@utk.edu) any constituent questions.