

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT RONALD L. VAUGHN

Performance and Progress

A year ago, we feared for our lives, questioned the pandemic's impact on UT's existence and worried about employee jobs, as well as family livelihoods. While it's not over, together we have brought UT safely through much of the crisis. And despite the many challenges, the University has had another good year of performance and progress.

UT President Ronald Vaughn, and his wife Renée, in the Charlene and Mardy Gordon Performance Gallery in the Ferman Center for the Arts.



PHOTOGRAPH: BOB THOMPSON

NEW SPARTANS

During the past year, we maintained stable enrollments in the fall, when most universities could not do so. Despite dramatic uncertainties, personal challenges and financial trauma to many families, UT's enrollment for the past year remained about the same. And enrollment for this coming fall is surging to another record, our 24th record enrollment year since 1995.

Circumstances leading to this fall have been unprecedented for the institution and for families. Many of the college-bound students for this fall were learning remotely and unable to access high school counselors, couldn't attend college fairs or open houses, and were unable to travel, tour campuses or sit for required standardized college admissions tests. These events caused UT applications and deposits to lag behind prior years. However, a record late surge of enrollment and housing applications by families this year has contributed to the largest entering class in UT's history. The entering class of freshmen will be the largest and the brightest class of students in The University of Tampa's history.

Enrollments for the upcoming academic year are likely to escalate even more, due to UT's ongoing improvement efforts with continuing student retention. At present, continuing student improvement of first to second year retention rates for Fall 2021 are about two percentage points higher. This is an extraordinary effort given the difficulties of staying with and supporting our students during the pandemic.



Students get briefed on one of the laser cutters in the Fab Lab, a digital fabrication lab inside R.K. Bailey Art Studios.

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

For Fall 2021, we worked hard to protect and support current faculty and staff, as the pandemic was making that difficult. While we froze components of our operating budget, we did not lay off or furlough any employees, nor did we reduce pay or benefits, but rather provided a modest mid-year pay increase.

As UT's enrollment is ramping up for Fall 2021, we have been busy recruiting extra staff members to help support the larger number of students and 20 additional faculty to support the increased number of courses and sections being offered. For this academic year, the University will in total have about 6,000 different classes. Despite the record total enrollment of about 10,400 students, we're expecting the median class size to remain at about 22.

Accreditations or certifications achieved by an institution and its

academic programs also attest to UT's quality. At present, the University has 18 such accreditations and certifications.

UT's portfolio of academic programs is also regularly benchmarked against programs at other universities and reviewed for possible improvements. We also try to maintain relevance to community needs by regularly considering possible new programs that might be desired. The following are new programs offered for Fall 2020 and Fall 2021:

- B.S. in Actuarial Science
- B.A. in Communication and Speech Studies
- B.S. in Computer Science
- M.S. in Business Analytics
- M.A. in Professional Communication
- M.S. in Information and Technology Management
- M.A. in Social and Emerging Media

- M.Ed. in Educational Leadership (distance learning option)
- Minor in Professional Education

During this past year, faculty worked on a new Honors Program curriculum that's ready for Fall 2021 and also secured approval for a new general education curriculum, which is now undergoing implementation planning.

Finally, UT submitted its fifth-year report to UT's accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and received very positive feedback from report reviewers. Throughout the pandemic, much positive feedback was provided about our dedicated staff and faculty who worked extra hard to support students. Faculty also completed extra classroom training to enhance instructional quality as part of using online or hybrid learning technology.



ATHLETICS

Intercollegiate athletics had seemingly insurmountable pandemic requirements, yet by all accounts the year was one of success. More than 20,000 COVID-19 tests were administered in this department alone. Academically, student-athletes achieved success with a department-wide grade point average of 3.215, with women's rowing and men's soccer having the highest team grade point averages.

Several athletes achieved All-American status in beach volleyball, women's golf and women's swimming. Kiira Riihijarvi was named the National Player of the Year in women's golf.

All-Sunshine State Conference Selections came from baseball, men's basketball, women's basketball, men's cross country, women's cross country, rowing, men's golf, women's golf, men's lacrosse, women's lacrosse and softball.

There were several major awards from the Sunshine State Conference:

- Baseball - Jordan Leasure (Pitcher of the Year), Joe Urso (Coach of the Year)
- Men's Basketball - Max Jones (Freshman of the Year)
- Women's Basketball - Tom Jessee (Coach of the Year), Melijah Sullivan (Player of the Year)
- Women's Cross Country - Jarrett Slaven (Coach of the Year)
- Women's Golf - Kiira Riihijarvi (Player of the Year)
- Men's Lacrosse - Rory Whipple (Coach of the Year)
- Softball - Lauren Fantone (Freshman of the Year)

RANKINGS AND RECOGNITION

Once again, UT has received numerous recognitions even during a pandemic, when many of the entities providing rankings temporarily suspended such activities. Here is partial list of ones we received:

- UT was recognized in PLEXUSS, which is used by over 7 million students globally. UT's national ranking in PLEXUSS is shown for several categories:
 - No. 7 nationally in Best Colleges for Veterans
 - No. 8 nationally in Best Undergraduate Teaching
 - No. 32 nationally in Best Value (psychology is also listed as a Florida Best Value program in another ranking)
- *U.S. News & World Report* 2021 ranking listed UT as the No. 13 ranked university in the South region (up from No. 17 in the 2020 rankings and No. 20 in the 2019 rankings)
- NICHE rankings of UT are shown for several areas
 - No. 1 Best College Campuses in Florida, and No. 26 nationally
 - No. 2 Best College Location in Florida, and No. 51 nationally
 - No. 2 Best College Dorms in Florida, and No. 50 nationally
 - No. 22 Best College for Sports Management, nationally
 - No. 53 Best College for Criminal Justice, nationally

- Princeton Review ranked the Sykes College of Business among its Best Business Schools for the 15th year in a row.
 - UT is also ranked No. 17 in the nation for Best Undergraduate Program for Entrepreneurs and No. 20 as Best Graduate Programs for Entrepreneurs
- Study.com named UT's Sykes College of Business as the No. 2 Best International Business School in the World and No. 4 in business finance.
 - *Bloomberg Businessweek* listed the Sykes College of Business in its Best Graduate Business Schools of 2020.
 - *CEO Magazine* ranked UT in Tier One for the Best Global MBA Programs and Tier One for the Global Executive MBA Programs.
 - The QS World University Rankings for Business Schools ranked the M.S. Marketing program at No. 51 globally with 21 countries participating and UT's M.S. Finance program was ranked No. 101 globally with 32 countries participating.
 - For the sixth consecutive year, UT was named to the 2021 Phi Theta Kappa Transfer Honor Roll as one of the top 60 universities in the nation.
 - The *UT Journal* alumni magazine won three regional awards and two international awards from CASE, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.



Throughout the year UT offered high-quality co-curricular experiences in the context of a safe and healthy campus community.

STUDENT LIFE

This was a year like no other, yet student life was reimagined in a variety of ways and addressed a number of student needs that were driven locally and from our world at large. The focus was on delivering UT's high-quality co-curricular experiences in the context of a safe and healthy campus community. Staff worked collaboratively with many other areas and with faculty colleagues to fully engage students, whether through virtual means or in-person experiences that were compliant with pandemic precautions.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic was central to student life work and affected all areas of campus. The Spartan Shield Health Safety Plan was imbued into the life of the campus, including the following:

Medical Services has been meeting the demand for COVID-19 testing and evaluation head on since the beginning of the pandemic. Medical Services opened a modular unit that allowed the health center to increase access to quality care for patients with viral illnesses, including COVID-19. The health center was one of the few clinics in Hillsborough County offering a rapid COVID-19

test that provides results within 15 minutes. More than 2,600 COVID-19 tests have been conducted. Medical Services has been vaccinating UT students/faculty/staff against COVID-19.

The University partnered with Rapid-Trace contact tracing services to provide on-going support, resources and contact tracing for the entire UT community, successfully managing COVID-19 transmission.

The Wellness Center coordinated the placement of eight temperature kiosks for the campus community to provide a reminder and opportunity for faculty, staff and students to take their temperature daily as a part of the Spartan Shield recommendation of daily symptom checking.

The Wellness Center staff members and Live Well UT's leadership team assisted the Office of Public Information and Publications with the development, creation and implementation of COVID-19 educational materials. Live Well UT adapted to each challenge that was presented with the ever-changing landscape of recommendations and safety protocols provided by the CDC and altered their materials to reflect changes.

Live Well UT and its peer-led wellness initiatives continued with programming throughout the pandemic providing small in person events abiding by the Spartan Shield protocols as well as virtual events, recognizing the importance of mental health and alcohol and other drug programming during an isolating pandemic. Additionally, to decrease social isolation, Live Well UT created a monthly calendar of virtual events for students that was also shared with those in quarantine or isolation.

The second year of the University's online orientation program launched in August 2020, and since the program began in 2019, 5,515 students have completed the program and orientation modules that cover major features of campus life. The program has been viewed 377,179 times! Coupled with the Week of Welcome, new students were able to learn about campus life and engage in person with peer leaders and representatives of departments. One activity was a virtual book club, and the novel selected was "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot.

Given social distancing considerations, a decision was made to conduct the December 2020 and May 2021 commencement ceremonies on a virtual platform. To offset the disappointment that this decision engendered, efforts were redoubled to create events and activities that celebrated the accomplishments of graduates. Over an eight-day period graduates were able to engage in riverboat tours, professional photos with the academic deans, professional photos livestreamed for family and friends, minaret climbs and a graduate resource expo.

Spartan Living, UT's learning-centered, residential curriculum continues to support academic success and Spartan Ready competencies. Spartan Living's Global Engagement competency was redeveloped with new learning goals for the new Equity and Inclusion competency and embedded Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs in its offerings.

Spartan Ready concepts pervade student life, and 20 virtual Spartan Ready skillshops were conducted including such topics as resiliency, healthy relationships, identity protection, retirement planning, personal bias, creating positive social change and professionalism on LinkedIn.

Fraternity and Sorority Life recruitment was reworked in the fall to be compliant with social distancing requirements, and a fully structured, virtual recruitment process was held by the College Panhellenic Association. The Interfraternity Council hosted virtual recruitment as well, and both initiatives were highly successful and contributed to the robust system. The Unified Greek Council, made up of historically Black fraternities and sororities and multicultural fraternities and sororities, had a positive recruitment season as well, welcoming new members into its eight-member organizations.

Service learning and volunteerism did not suffer during this time of change. Bonner Leaders served with their community partners in on-site, hybrid and remote ways. The PEACE Volunteer Center staff provided safe, in-person service experiences each weekend and partnered with nonprofit

agencies focused on animals, education, environmental conservation, food insecurity and older adults.

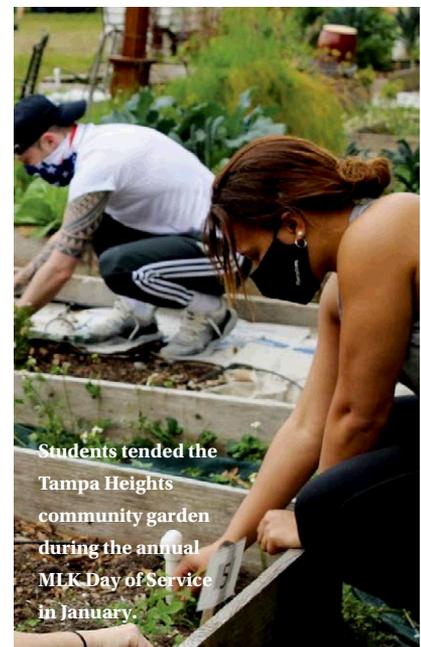
Among all the Sustained Dialogue campuses, UT had the most faculty, staff and students attend the 10-week trainings hosted by the Sustained Dialogue Institute.

Career Services programming and individual services touched over 9,100 students and alumni both in person and virtually. 238 career-related events were hosted across campus and virtually via Zoom. 15,078 student applications were submitted for job and internship opportunities. The total number of events hosted grew by 123% to 992, largely due to elevated virtual programs. The mock interview (artificial intelligence) platform, Quinncia, engaged 1,503 student users including 2,390 resume uploads and over 1,700 scheduled mock interviews. Over 38,000 positions were posted, and internships available to UT students grew by 14% to 8,630.

The Benson Alex Riseman Fitness and Recreation Center had 107,067 visits this academic year, an average of 4,441 visits per week. 276 in-person group fitness classes and 73 Zoom group fitness classes were offered. The center collaborated with the First-Year

Experience program, offering custom group fitness classes and Plant Park yoga events.

During Spring 2021, club sports returned to play, with 15 of 21 club sport programs holding practices after completing COVID-19 mitigation proposals. Of note, men's club golf held the No. 2 ranking nationally, while boasting five individual players ranked in the top 100 nationally.



Students tended the Tampa Heights community garden during the annual MLK Day of Service in January.

OPERATIONS

Campus operations were incredibly challenged this year due to the pandemic. If you think about continuing with in-person learning and physically distancing students in classrooms, laboratories and other spaces, you can quickly imagine the complexity. This was escalated with the installation of plexiglass barriers, daily sanitization, expanded Health and Wellness facilities and the creation of COVID-19 education materials and signage.

Pandemic-related activities actually caused a ripple effect in Mail Services, as we were flooded with packages for students.

The Spring 2021 Give Day fundraising effort was a great success. Thanks to the leadership of Trustees and alumni, we ended the year with all-time-record giving.

Information Technology and Security (ITS) continued to improve on customer service, increased user

convenience and many other enhancements, e.g., technology upgrades to enable improved hybrid learning, including in classrooms and microphones.

We also enhanced internet access speeds, improved Wi-Fi coverage in residential buildings and common areas, upgraded audio/visual equipment in classrooms and added more remote printing stations across campus.

INTERNATIONAL AND DIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

In a year when the pandemic crippled travel and all international study programs across the nation, UT still continued with various international activities:

We organized, sponsored or co-sponsored 66 globally focused events on campus.

We continued to publish our *World View* magazine that focused on student and faculty spotlights on their international learning.

A new student organization, University of Tampa Global Ambassadors, was started to engage the campus community in dynamic activities in Spring 2021 that develop intercultural competencies and global citizenship. Fifteen events were held, e.g., A Night Around the World and International Friendship Day.

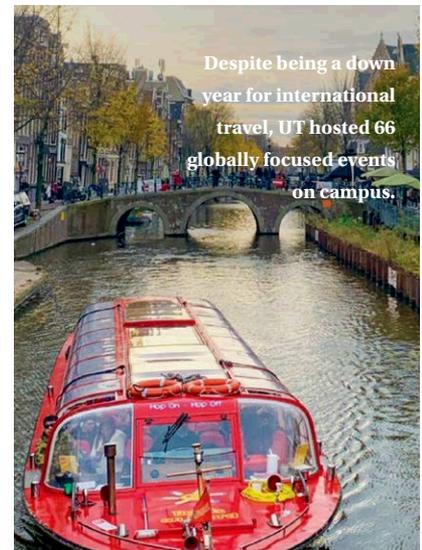
Once again, UT participated in the Global Scholar Series, which brings scholars from around the world (e.g., this year from South Korea) to UT, as well as serving for the 10th year as a sponsor to host exchange visitor

students on our campus (e.g., this year one from India).

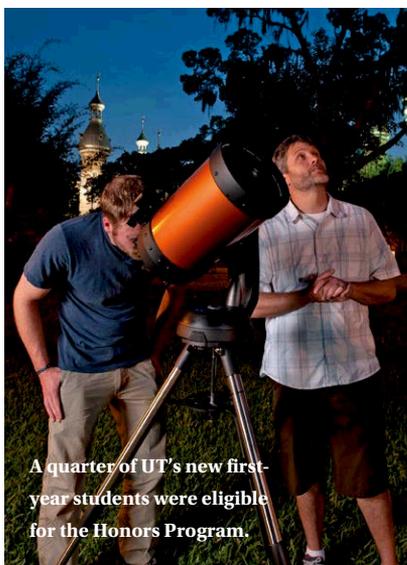
Throughout the pandemic year, UT's International Programs Office maintained about 25 partnership and affiliate relationships, which are part of the rich set of connections that UT has as part of providing more than 1,000 program choices in over 70 countries worldwide. So, even in the down year for such travel, there is much to do to help international students to maintain and prepare for restoration of our full international activities.

This year marked the formation of the Values to Action: UT's Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), a collegial effort led by Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Following a results-driven timeline, the Core Task Force and six subcommittees together held more than 40 meetings of record, facilitated seven student, faculty and staff listening sessions and implemented a campus-wide climate survey, in addition to countless hours focused on data gathering and in-depth analy-

sis. The culmination of this work is reflected in a comprehensive report highlighting key messages, notable achievements and actionable recommendations to help build on UT's solid foundation of diversity, equity and inclusion. A newly developed DEI website was also created to house important DEI information.



Despite being a down year for international travel, UT hosted 66 globally focused events on campus.



A quarter of UT's new first-year students were eligible for the Honors Program.

HONORS UPDATE

The UT Honors Program continued to attract excellent students to the University who were challenged with a stimulating environment of experiences and programs, while being mindful of social distancing and other health safety measures.

The Honors Program taught a total of 77 special honors courses designed to engage UT's best and brightest students in novel ways. Twenty-two Honors students received research grants and four students applied to Honors and/or presented scholarly works with three receiving awards (for Best Undergraduate Paper, Best Research Topic and Best Oral Presentation).

Honors Program leaders planned UT's inaugural Distinguished Speakers Series with Jane Goodall. The sold-out event was scheduled for April 2020, but had to be cancelled at the last minute due to COVID-19. Planning for the Fall 2021 program, which features Tony and Emmy award-winning actor Christopher Jackson, continued through the year. Jackson will offer a master class to Honors students in the theater department, as well as give a general presentation.

CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION

The University continued with physical campus transformations that eliminated more of the old, outdated buildings and improved the overall campus learning environment.

The new Science Research Laboratories on Kennedy Boulevard were completed in time for the Fall 2021 academic year. They provide shared research laboratory space for about 12 biology and chemistry faculty and their undergraduate students in the College of Natural and Health Sciences. The facility will allow for some modest growth of the faculty in the areas of synthetic and analytical chemistry, and in various fields of biology that use primarily molecular techniques.

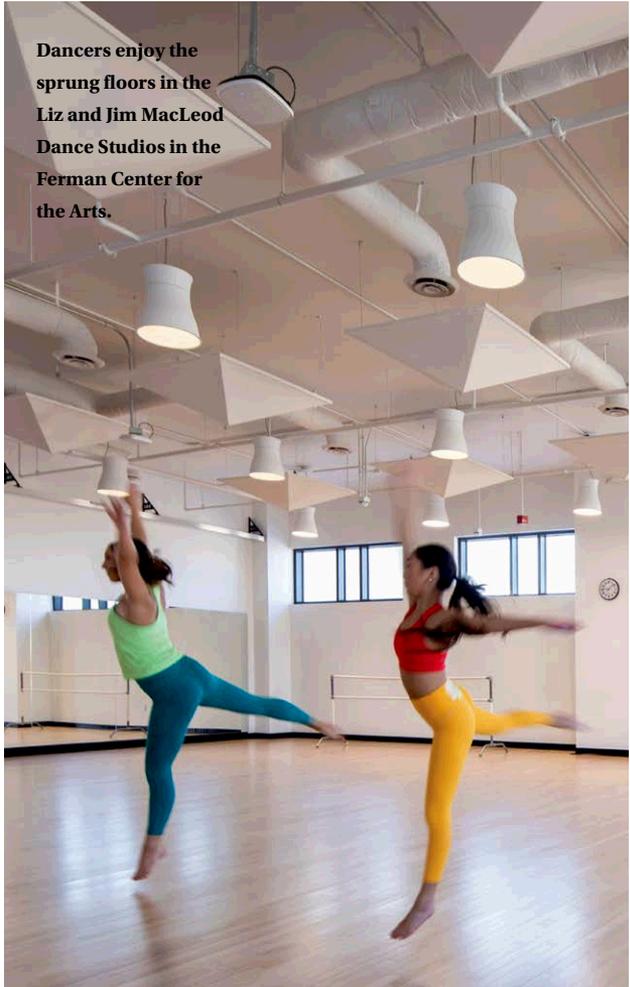
The Ferman Center for the Arts Building was completed for use in the Spring 2021 semester. The building is 90,000 square feet and is one of the best such facilities in the country. For the almost 50 UT majors, minors and certificate programs in arts, it's a game changer.

We broke ground during the spring on the Benson Alex Riseman Fitness and Recreation Center project. There is much more to come on this exciting project, which should be completed by February 2022.

The new Delaware Avenue Parking Garage, which has about 430 new parking spaces, secured bike storage and automatic recharge stations, is completed and ready for use beginning in the fall semester.

Last, a major new Technology Building academic and learning support project is now underway. This project is over 100,000 square feet and will provide a new home for the departments of communication, information technology management and computer science, as well as new homes for the Academic Success Center and for ITS (i.e., cybersecurity).

Dancers enjoy the sprung floors in the Liz and Jim MacLeod Dance Studios in the Ferman Center for the Arts.



The Vaughns, sitting in the Charlene A. Gordon Theater in the Ferman Center for the Arts, thank all UT friends and supporters for success during a challenging year.



IN APPRECIATION

All in all, UT had a resilient year in which our achievement and progress was not dimmed by the historic pandemic! I thank all Trustees, Chiselers, Fellows, Counselors, alumni, UT faculty/staff, students, parents and friends for your help and support.