

UNT SYSTEM™

HR HIGHLIGHTS

S E R V I N G . E M P O W E R I N G . T R A N S F O R M I N G .

UNT System HR Highlights is the Official Newsletter of UNT System.



FACULTY & STAFF

Spotlight

NAKIA DOUGLAS

Executive Director
TRIO & Pre-Collegiate Programs
University of North Texas at Dallas

Nakia Douglas has devoted his career to mentoring and shaping our young future leaders in his hometown of Dallas. At UNT Dallas since 2017, Nakia designs and implements non-traditional educational experiences for first-generation and historically disenfranchised students. Click the button below to learn more about Nakia Douglas and his impact at UNT Dallas.

[READ MORE](#)

If you'd like to nominate a faculty or staff member to spotlight, please email communications@untsystem.edu.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

2023 IRS Limits for Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans

The IRS has published the new tax year limits for 2023. If you participate in the [Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans](#) (403b TSA and/or the 457 TexaSaver) and need help determining what you'd like to change your contribution to, your [Benefits Advisors](#) will be glad to assist you.

Note, your January 1st paycheck is the first paycheck of the new tax year.

New 2023 tax year limits:

403b

\$22,500. – Under 50 years of age
\$7,500. – Catch-up if 50 or over

The combined limit for 403b and ORP participants: \$66,000

If you are in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) you can't contribute more than this amount combined between ORP and 403b TSA

457

\$22,500. – Under 50 years of age
\$7,500. – Catch-up if 50 or over

The salary limit for the tax year 2023 is \$330,000. This means that compensation above this amount will not have retirement plan contributions deducted.

Our Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans page also includes links to where you can log in to your existing 403b and 457 accounts to make changes.

Timeline for making changes to your January 1 paycheck:

Log in to your [403b](#) and change your contribution amount after November 21st but before Dec 15th.

Log in to your [457](#) portal and change your contribution amount after November 5th but before November 30th.

Please remember to select a monthly, not an annual amount, for your contribution amount.

These plans are a great way to build retirement income – they're easy to participate in, flexible, and have low minimums to participate (to participate in the 403b, the minimum is \$1 a month or 1%; the 457 is \$25/month). You can change the amounts, change your investments, and start and stop as needed. You'll also enjoy free financial education resources and can request professional financial advisement as a participant!

HSC and RAM fundraiser to provide new pajamas to children's hospitals



Please donate and help bring comfort and hope

In preparation for our upcoming [RAM clinic](#) on December 3-4, 2022, HSC is partnering with an organization called [Pajama Rama!](#)

Pajama Rama collects and donates/distributes pajamas to individuals in hospitals, transitional housing and shelters, and to those in need. Pajama Rama has agreed to come to RAM and distribute pajamas to our patients!

To ensure that the organization has the quantity needed, we will be collecting new pajama sets as well as [accepting monetary donations](#) to purchase new pajamas.

If you or your office are interested in having a drop box in your area or are interested in volunteering at RAM, please reach out to Katy Heesch at Katy.Heesch@unthsc.edu. Flyers for Pajama Rama and RAM are available upon request.

About Ram

[Remote Area Medical](#) (RAM) is a major nonprofit provider of free pop-up clinics. Their mission is to prevent pain and alleviate suffering by providing free, quality healthcare to those in need; RAM delivers free dental, vision and medical services to underserved and uninsured individuals.

HR RESOURCES



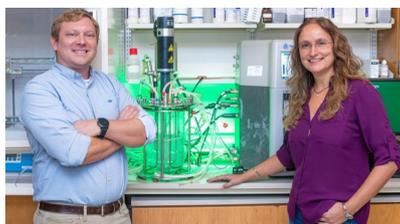
Check out these UNT System employee perks

Free wellness resources are part of your employee health insurance benefits

- [Tips to maximize your TexFlex FSA account](#) – Find helpful resources such as the how-to guides
- [Blue Access for Members](#) – Six ways to help you make the most of your medical benefits.
- [Choosing a primary care provider \(PCP\)](#) – Your PCP can help you save money

UNT System Human Resources has numerous programs and tools available at no cost to assist you with health or well-being issues, work-life balance, financial issues and more. Explore your [UNT System benefits](#), and follow this space for tips, programs and promotions.

CONGRATULATIONS



UNT researcher engineers bacteria to convert greenhouse gases into sustainable products

[UNT Department of Biological Sciences](#)' Dr. Calvin Henard is starting a three-year project to develop a methanotroph that can mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by eating carbon dioxide and methane. A researcher at the [BioDiscovery Institute](#), Dr. Henard's work and teaching are focused on microbiology. By feeding gases to these bacteria rather than releasing them into the atmosphere, engineers can help reduce the greenhouse effect – a more sustainable way to make chemicals, plastics, and fuels that would otherwise come from petroleum. Another aspect of the project has Dr. Ana Paula Alonso, a professor of plant biochemistry at UNT, trace how carbon moves throughout the organism.

Learn more: [UNT Research Science News](#)



HSC's Cameron Cushman nominated for D Magazine's Innovation Award

D CEO Magazine and Dallas Innovates announced finalists for the fourth annual [Innovation Awards](#), which honor the “disruptors and trailblazers driving a new vision for North Texas.” [Cameron Cushman](#), assistant vice president of innovation ecosystems at HSC, was nominated in the category of Innovation Advocate or Accelerator Leader of the Year. “I think Cameron is an excellent nominee for the award,” said Dr. Sylvia Trent-Adams, HSC's president. “He cares so much for Fort Worth and wants our local entrepreneurs to be recognized for their contributions to the community ... He brings a high level of energy and enthusiasm to every venture he leads at HSC.”

Learn more: [HSC Newsroom](#)



UNT Dallas receives \$1.5M grant to help more students attend

The funding aims to funnel more high school graduates into UNT Dallas while equipping their families with resources. The Greater Texas Foundation, which aims to increase post-secondary attainment in the state, awarded the university \$1.5 million. The grant allows the school to “remove barriers to higher education and create pathways to bachelor's degrees that lead to socioeconomic growth,” UNT Dallas President Bob Mong said in a statement.

Learn more: [Dallas Morning News](#)



UNT College of Music named to The Hollywood Reporter's list of Top 20 Music Schools in the World

We know that the College of Music is an excellent music school. It is also reassuring that the world outside Denton agrees.

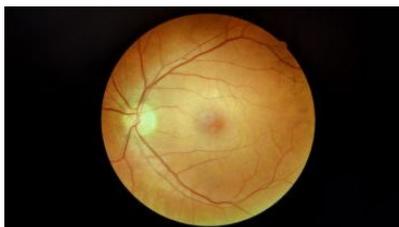
Learn more: [Hollywood Reporter](#)



UNT receives funds from the Department Of Energy to cut impact of used nuclear fuel disposal

UNT was awarded \$2,711,342 from the U.S. Department Of Energy and will develop a self-powered, wireless sensor for long-term, real-time monitoring of high-temperature molten salt density and level to enable accurate safeguarding and monitoring of electrochemical processing of used nuclear fuel.

Learn more: [PowerEngineering.com](https://www.powerengineering.com)



HSC Institute for Translational Research awarded grant to study retinal scanning to detect early-stage Alzheimer's

The [Institute for Translational Research](#) at UNT Health Science Center at Fort Worth is the recipient of a five-year, \$1.42 million grant from the National Institute on aging, (part of the National Institutes of Health - NIH), to study the use of retinal imaging for screening early changes associated with Alzheimer's disease. This is the second grant the institute received in the last six weeks from NIH for research related to Alzheimer's disease. This new project could help provide a low-cost, minimally invasive screening technique to detect Alzheimer's disease before symptoms appear.

Learn more: [HSC News Research](#)

WELL-BEING CALENDAR

For all current and upcoming well-being opportunities from UNT System. Visit our [website](#).

Drinking Responsibly

Organized by ComPsych EAP

[Tuesday, November 29, 2022. 11:00 AM - 2:30 PM \(CST\)](#)

Managing Holiday Stress

Organized by ComPsych EAP

[Tuesday, December 6, 2022. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM \(CST\)](#)

Look back on the Year and Get Ready for Next Year!

Organized by BlueCross BlueShield of Texas

[Tuesday, December 13, 2022. 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM \(CST\)](#)

Happiness: A Key to Life's Satisfaction

Organized by ComPsych EAP

[Tuesday, December 13, 2022. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM \(CST\)](#)

STRONGER TOGETHER



*The UNT System DEI
honors our connections*

"Achieving true peace requires the building of societies where all members feel they can flourish. It involves creating a world in which people are treated equally."

As November continues, the Office of [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\)](#) is highlighting **Native American Heritage Month**. Be sure to tag #IamDEI @untsystem on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and/or YouTube and encourage your teams' thoughtful participation, recognition, celebration, or activity throughout the month.

Watch a FREE online Native Cinema celebration for education and discussion November 18–25, 2022

The Smithsonian, along with the National Museum of the American Indian's Native Cinema Showcase, is offering an online festival for free. This is an annual celebration of the best in Indigenous film. The showcase provides a unique forum for engagement with filmmakers from Indigenous communities throughout the Western Hemisphere and Arctic.

Use this link to watch [Welcome to Native Cinema Showcase](#) and share with your team.

Please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Krystal Onyekwuluje (krystal.onyekwuluje@untsystem.edu or 214-752-8827) should you need help facilitating any DEI programs or activities. She is happy to help in any way (even host)!

From The UNT System Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)
Wanda S. Boyd, PHR, SHRM-CP; Assistant Vice Chancellor of DEI
Wanda.Boyd@untsystem.edu 214-571-2424

Krystal Onyekwuluje, Ed. D.; DEI Program Coordinator
Krystal.onyekwuluje@untsystem.edu 214-571-4928

DEI strongly believes in being a valued strategic partner accessible to everyone, regardless of race, gender identity/expression, age, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or diverse perspectives. Its goal is to create an environment that fosters engagement by serving people, empowering teams and transforming lives.

HOLIDAYS & OBSERVANCES

Learn about more November's cultural celebrations at [The Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\) Event Calendar](#)

CAMPUS NEWS

Click our member institutions' logos for the latest news





If you have an HR question or topic you'd like covered in the newsletter, please email HR@untssystem.edu.



Miss an issue of HR Highlights? [CLICK HERE](#) to catch up.