# FAGILIES INREVIEW



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Building Futures, Maintaining Excellence! The mission and vision that encompasses the mindset within the Facilities/Construction Management (F/CM) department has been embraced and is used as the measure of how our services are delivered. The F/CM Team is committed to providing a campus that fulfills the needs of students, faculty and staff as we strive to provide a place for not only students to grow and learn, but also for our own team members.

Presenting our annual excellence awards was a wonderful time to celebrate two very deserving winners, Lawrence Dang and John Taylor. We also have extreme pride in being awarded the 2021

TAPPA Stars Across Texas Excellence award for the department.

We know that by the end of your visit through the pages of this annual review magazine, you will come away with a better idea of the many ways F/CM is making it real.

GO COOGS!

## FACILITIES OFFERS PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

Building future projects for the University, department, and staff.

Facilities/Construction Management continues to build futures and maintain excellence by providing career enhancement opportunities for employees.

The Project Management Professional (PMP) certification is an industry-recognized credential for project managers and one of the most sought-after certifications. Administered by the Project Management Institute (PMI), it demonstrates the experience, education, skill, and competency required to lead and direct projects.

A four-week onsite training for F/CM employees in Project Manager roles was facilitated by Eddie Merla from Duende Project Management Services. The coursework required to earn a PMP certification is very time demanding and rigorous. Offering

F/CM recognizes the determination needed to maintain the certification and encourages all team members to continue their efforts.

this opportunity met the required 35 hours of training time for employees to be eligible to take the PMP exam and obtain a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification. Fifteen dedicated employees attended the program.

Once completing the course work, a very detailed application must be submitted and approved by the PMI Institute with information on the projects that were led by the individual. At least 36 months of project experience is required for the application depending on the level of formal education reached.

After the application is approved, the exam registration can be completed. The PMP timed exam is 4 hours long, with 200 questions. Due to the pandemic restrictions, the exam was offered online through the PMI Institute.

The department would like to recognize three employees for their commitment and commend them for successfully fulfilling all the program requirements. Hussain Alkinani, Jennifer Rea, and Nick Tamayo are now joining Jennifer Brasher, and Kerry Prejean, as becoming certified Project

Management Professionals within the F/CM team



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE REVOLUTIONIZES CUSTOMER SERVICE

Facilities/Construction Management uses emerging technologies to deliver operational excellence

Facilities/Construction Management is currently in the process of implementing new software to reinvent how Project Management services are provided, tracked and improved for UH construction projects. PMWeb was chosen to help run projects more efficiently and is a tool that supports the full life cycle process of a project from the initial approvals, design, construction and the closeout process and provides numerous opportunities for data analytics.

The expectation is that PMWeb will be used by various teams that collaborate on the success of projects including F/CM departments such as Planning, Project Management, and Facilities Business Operation and Compliance. In addition, the software will be available for use by Contractors, Clients and Project Partners and is a resource available for all UH System Universities to access. PMWeb also provides a historical database that can be referenced for details on past projects to provide historical pricing to help future project pricing efforts.

With a powerful software comes many pieces that must align and integrate with other software platforms. A dedicated team from across Facilities/Construction Management has been leading this effort and will continue over the next 12 months to refine and complete the implementation.

PMWeb will revolutionize the way construction services at UH are provided and represents the innovative and captive technology improvements being implemented within the Facilities/Construction Management Department.



#### FACILITIES PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE USING NEW TECHNOLOGY TO FIGHT COVID-19

The Facilities/Construction Management Preventive Maintenance team implemented a newly developed nano-coating technology, called Capture Coating, developed at the University of Houston. This coating will improve the ability of air filters to trap the Corona virus that causes the COVID-19 illness and was developed at UH's Technology Bridge by Curran Biotech and tested at the New York Family Court Building, by DCAS-Energy Management Division.

F/CM installed this new technology in all buildings that have less than MERV-13 rated filters in time for the Fall 2021 academic semester. One of the unique traits of this technology is that treated filters have minimal effect on the HVAC operating systems, requiring no mechanical system upgrades or air flow adjustments as was noted in the DCAS report, "The M&V process evaluated the energy impact of this new technology developed to stop the COVID-19 virus without incurring an increase in AHU fan energy consumption."

#### UH FACILITIES HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Building future projects for the University, department, and staff.

The Atlantic hurricane season is officially from June 1 and through November 30. Each year, Facilities/ sponse Plan is updated annually and lessons learned lessons learned that can be rolled up into the revised plan, or to make necessary changes to the departmen-

F/CM has a checklist that is maintained that breaks down the activities and preparations needed as early as the 72-hour mark. The hurricane season is included in the overall UH Emergency Management Plan with oversight by the UH Office of Emergency Management.

performed. F/CM Ride-Out team members receive specific FEMA training and ride-out team training as

CLASSROOM REFRESH PROGRAM UPDATE

All F/CM employees are considered key and esreporting instructions.

cessful, accounting for the unexpected unique

challenges that occur. David Oliver tropical events typically last less than 24 hours before the conditions pass. We had not anticipated the amount of flooding we experienced both around campus and the region making response efforts difficult due to closed roadways and interstates. We have

improved on our planning for future events taking these experiences into account."

Nearly 160 general purpose classrooms scheduled by the Registrar's Office will be renovated over the next eight to ten years as part of a Classroom Refresh Program. Now in its

The Facilities/Construction Management Department (F/CM) in partnership with the Office of the University Registrar, and UH Information Technology collaborate to provide improved, modern learning environments for both students and faculty. The program's focus is to create a standard instructional platform by upgrading instructional technology, replacing furniture, and refreshing finishes consistent with UH's mission to transform lives and communities through education, research, service and innovation.

### WELCOME ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF CAMPUS SERVICES

Campus Services is considered the "first impressions" team within Facilities/Construction Management. The largest group within the department is under the supervision of Director Liliana Simmonds. This team has two Assistant Directors who are leading the way when it comes to building futures and maintaining excellence for the University.

Assistant Director Ana De Los Reyes began at UH in February 2020 as the pandemic was beginning. Due to the pandemic, De Los Reyes was immediately tasked with strategic placement and deployment of sanitizing stations campus-wide and maintained constant stats on the needs of maintaining safety during this challenging situation. She has endured an interesting work environment and was excited to see more students on campus as we geared up for the beginning of the fall semester. Within Campus Services, De Los Reyes is responsible for the overall leadership of Custodial Services, Solid Waste, and Moves & Events.

Prior to joining UH, De Los Reyes has eleven years of experience in roles with increasing responsibility within facilities departments at several organizations. One of her roles included the management of facilities operations for a top-ranked hospital in the Houston Medical Center. Her experience is enhanced by her

Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and her Masters of Business Administration from UH C. T. Bauer College of Business.

Assistant Director Katie Alvarenga has been with UH for over eight years. During the pandemic, Alvarenga was key in many of the needs that became readily apparent as a new normal developed. She is now leading the monitoring of current and ongoing facilities contracts and tasks related to Contracted Custodial, Landscaping and Irrigation, in-house Grounds, Pest Control, Uniform Rental Program activities as well as the Radio program. In addition, she collaborates with Facilities Business Operations within F/CM with regards to Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for our business partners.

Before joining UH, Alvarenga worked for the Physical Plant Department in Hofstra University in Long Island, New York where she received her Bachelor of Business Administration from the Frank G. Zarb School of Business. In 2012, she moved back to her hometown and began her UH career as an Administrative Coordinator in Minor In-House Construction (MIC). She accepted a new role in 2018 as a Program Manager 2 in Campus Services and she has now progressed to an Assistant Director role as of June 2021.

Facilities/Construction Management appreciates the time and dedication these two team members have shown, especially over the last 18 months, as they were maintaining excellence. F/CM looks forward to how they are building the future.



Team members from F/C M are excited to create learning environments which have a direct impact on UH's academic community by providing safe, highly functional and attractive spaces which foster educational excellence. This program is the perfect opportunity for F/CM to continue building futures and maintaining excellence.

second year, the program has completed 19 general purpose classrooms with an additional 10 classrooms and three lecture halls selected for FY23.



### UH Facilities receives TAPPA Stars Across Texas Award

It's with pleasure that we announce that the University of Houston Facilities/Construction Management was awarded the TAPPA Stars Across Texas Award at the Texas Association of Physical Plant Administrators (TAPPA) 2021 Virtual Conference.

This recognition is designed to recognize those that demonstrate excellence in the field of educational facilities and is granted to one organization each year. Previous winners include University of North Texas and Baylor University.

As explained during the TAPPA Business Meeting on April 26 2021, seven categories are evaluated for excellence:

- 1. Leadership
- 2. Strategic and Operation Planning
  - 3. Customer Focus
    - 4. Information and Analysis
      - 5. Development and Management of Human Resources
        - 6. Process Management
          - 7. Performance Results

During the presentation, attention was specifically given regarding the purpose of F/CM, the values and the Making It Real workshops facilitated in 2020. F/CM is proud to receive this award and has worked hard to cultivate and live the purpose of Building Futures, Maintaining Excellence.

#### Congratulations and a job well done!



#### UHS FACILITIES FORUM 2021

UH System Facilities leaders gathered to collaborate, network and gain knowledge at the 2021 UHS Facilities Forum. This year's theme was to contemplate the concept of 'finding the new normal' under these very unusual global circumstances. The event was attended by members of staff at the University of Houston, University of Houston-Downtown, University of Houston-Victoria and University of Houston-Clear Lake.



The first presentation was a keynote address from Dr. Robert K. Glenn. The President of UH-Victoria shared an encouraging message that many participants regarded as inspiring and hopeful.

A series of other workshops transpired over the following 48 hours and formed a collaborative, learning environment. Facilitators highlighted the importance of establishing networks, shared research, and valuable information.

Senior Associate Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice President David Oliver said, "The time we spend together during the forum builds our knowledge base and helps to encourage the continuous development of new ways of thinking. Out of the four years we have had this event, this was the best one. It gets better each year."

UH Facilities/Construction Management thanks all of the participants who engaged during the forum. A very special thanks goes out to the hard work and dedication of the Facilities Forum planning committee who met for months in advance to discuss the logistics and who were prepared for multiple scenarios under the new normal mindset. F/CM looks

forward to conducting many more UHS Facilities Forums in the future.



#### TOUR OF THE LIGHTHOUSE OF HOUSTON

Work Quest coordinated a tour for City of Houston Mayor's Office Rep & UH F/CM Team

In 2021, a team from UH Facilities/Construction Management joined Director Gabe Cazares from the City of Houston Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities for a tour of The Lighthouse of Houston.

The tour was set-up by WorkQuest which is the non-profit corporation that links Texans with disabilities to meaningful employment opportunities. The Lighthouse of Houston was chosen as the organization that will support

the UH FIXIT Call Center with 24/7 phone coverage.

The visit began with a meet-and-greet for all of the parties involved. The Lighthouse of Houston President Jenna Dhayer explained the vast array of services provided for those with vision impairments at their facility. She also included a brief history of the non-profit organization.

City of Houston Director Gabe Cazares expressed his appreciation for the partnership between





University of Houston, WorkQuest, and The Lighthouse of Houston. He noted that this relationship reinforces the Mayor's initiatives of more employment opportunities for those with disabilities.

As the conversation around the conference table continued, all parties involved were pleased and excited to be a part of this ground-breaking opportunity for the University

The Lighthouse of Houston Director of Contract Management & Health Services Michael Geisler conducted a full tour of the facility including a peak into the location where the dispatchers receiving the UH FIXIT calls will be located. UH F/CM Executive Director Magda Alanis commented, "This will be a win-win situation for everyone."

UH F/CM is proud to be revolutionizing customer service with this new endeavor and continues to focus on building futures and maintaining excellence.

### F/CM RECOGNIZES EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR FY21

Virtual Kick-Off & Appreciation event includes the annual award presentation

Facilities/Construction Management was determined to recognize their employees who contributed to the success of the FY21 academic year. Although gathering 400+ employees in one space was considered, it was determined the best option this year would be to continue to use a virtual setting.

During the spring, fellow staff members were able to nominate colleagues who they felt exceeded in their work this year. Nominations forms were available for both Individual Employee Excellence Nominations and Cross-Team Project Excellence Nominations.

The top nominated employee finalists were individually emailed to let them know they had been considered for the award. The finalist's included: John Taylor, Hussain Alkinani, Lawrence Dang, Jennifer Brasher, Ed Mader, Jennifer McPhail, Wendy Byron, Anthony Davis, Woody Sutton, Willy Vazquez, and David Bergman.

During the F/CM 2021 Kick-Off & Appreciation event in September, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice President David Oliver announced the four award winners.

The Building Futures Employee award was given to Application Developer 3 Lawrence Dang for his work on adjusting the Work Order software, the backbone of the department's operational processing, and preparing for the future development of the department's upcoming changes.

The Maintaining Excellence Employee award was presented to Elevator Supervisor John Taylor for his dedication and commitment to helping the university, supporting his colleagues and always maintaining an excellent attitude.

The PMWeb Implementation Team was awarded the Building Futures Cross-Team award for their work on tenaciously devoting their time and efforts towards this initiative.

The General Maintenance Restroom Installation team were the winners of the Maintaining Excellence Team award in recognition for their work installing touchless faucets, touchless paper towel dispensers and foot pulls for the restroom doors all across campus.

Facilities/Construction Management continues to encourage all of its employees to build futures and maintain excellence throughout the year and looks forward to continuing this annual tradition.





#### THE NEWEST ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF F/CM

Facilities/Construction Management goes beyond buildings

Over the last four months, Facilities/Construction Management has recruited three team members who will be overseeing a range of responsibilities for the department.

Summer 2021, Jennifer Rea accepted the position of assistant director of facilities communications and engagement. The communications aspect covers the website development and maintenance, social media oversight, internal communications for the department of 400+ employees and information gathering for outside of the department. The engagement portion is defined as connecting within the department such as trainings and development opportunities but includes engaging with the campus community as well. Jennifer has been with the University of Houston for six years and is excited to continue to bring her enthusiasm to help connect and be the conduit of information.

David Geis joined the University of Houston in August and works as the assistant director of operations and utility services. He will be giving oversight to the teams that help maintain the utilities for the campus. He has over 20 years of experience in manufacturing, operations, engineering and maintenance and in the past has worked for Minute Maid, Maxwell House

Coffee and Cadeco Industries. He is originally from Indiana but has lived in Texas for 21 years.

David is proud to be able to now support UH and its mission even more closely since his son is a sophomore living on campus.

October marked the month when Dwight Bradley began as the assistant director of customer service. Before coming to the University of Houston, he worked several years with the City of Houston as an Assistant Project Manager responsible for overseeing facility projects, both large and small, including the completion of a \$17.5 million dollar quadrant building on the NE side of the city. He has been charged with helping to further develop and fully implement the "Revolutionizing Customer Service" initiative. F/CM has placed an emphasis on customer service and wants to make sure there is a synergistic relationship between the customer's needs and technicians. Dwight is ready for this new challenge in his life and is quickly learning how to say, "Go Coogs!"

Each of these three employees are ready to assist the campus community and help to build the future and maintain excellence.



Jennifer Rea



**David Geis** 



**Dwight Bradley** 



#### NEW FACILITIES TEAM FOR LABS AND RESEARCH

As a part of the University of Houston's recently unveiled strategic plan, UH's research enterprise is expected to continue to grow at an accelerated rate for the foreseeable future. To support this key strategic goal, a new Labs and Research Facilities team was formed in winter of 2021. This new laser-focused team will provide top level service to our science and research buildings across campus.



Having a dedicated and skill specific team leads to a higher capacity to proactively address issues within the laboratories.

This strategy reduces unscheduled maintenance needs in critical lab areas. These knowledgeable team members will also ensure a faster response time when a problem does arises.

The success of this team will be measured by key performance indicators (KPIs) set forth to review different metrics such as average time of completion of work orders, customer satisfaction levels, and percentage of work orders completed on time.

Director Mario Carrera was appointed to lead this team which consists of 18 technicians with an array of experience. Multiple trades are represented including General Maintenance technicians, HVAC technicians, and BMS/Lab technicians.

Along with the Labs and Research Facilities team, Carrera will manage the Preventive Maintenance team. Prior to becoming director, Carrera was assistant director of general maintenance for UH Facilities/
Construction Management for four years so he is very familiar with the buildings. He is well experienced with this type of leadership role due to his 30 years in educational maintenance and operations.

Facilities/Construction Management is looking forward to the way this new team adds an additional support for helping to build futures and maintain excellence.

#### REVOLUTIONIZING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Facilities/Construction Management is changing the game.

Building Futures, Maintaining Excellence was the summation of F/CM's recent mission and vision initiative. Revolutionizing customer service with a new emphasis on engaging with customers is one way these four words are not just a statement on a wall but are being made real in the hall.

As always, the first step in our customer engagement process is for customers to submit their service requests through the Four Ways to FIXIT. This can be a phone call, email, text, or using Access UH<FIXIT icon.

These requests will then be processed by the 24/7 FIXIT Customer Call Center serviced by WorkQuest. This non-profit corporation links Texans with disabilities to meaningful employment opportunities. Using this provided service aligns with the UH Strategic Plan with regards to the Social Responsibility through the Texas Workforce Commission program that supports community rehabilitation.

requests by arriving at the customer's door, in-person within 24 business hours of an issue being submitted by dedicated Customer Liaisons that can be easily identified by their recognizable UH Carts. AVC/AVP



David Oliver comments, "This is an ambitious goal, but with determination and commitment, it can be accomplished."

The FIXIT Frontline individuals who will arrive @ the door in 24 will triage the situation and communicate to the Facilities shops, teams, and crews what has been observed, reviewed, and discussed with the customer. This will help direct the work orders to the right shop along with an increased understanding of the urgency of the issue reported. The expectations on when and how the work will be completed will also be more accurately communicated.

After the FIXIT Frontline team member assesses the situation, our well-trained and knowledgeable team members will then work hard to complete the request using the resources available.

#### PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PROJECT

Facilities/Construction Management is proud to help support safety initiatives on campus. A recent campus assessment of pedestrian safety was conducted and the results initiate the Pedestrian Safety Project being managed by Assistant Project Manager Akila Raman in Campus Construction Services (CCS).

The primary purpose of this project is to improve pedestrian safety campus-wide. One of the recommendations given in the report to was to identify, fix and replace traffic signage throughout the campus. This not only helps to comply with codes and standards but ultimately increases the overall pedestrian safety. Installing signage that is structurally more secure along with being more visibly legible will help both pedestrians and drivers in vehicles. In addition, this project will standardize a 15 mile per hour speed limit throughout the campus in an effort to improve safety for pedestrians.

The first phase is currently in design and the anticipated start date is prior to the Spring 2022 semester. F/CM will work closely with the engineer and contractor to develop a traffic control

# UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

FACILITIES/CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT