



# Human Resources Newsletter

September 2019



## In This Month's Issue:

- Save the Date for Professional Development Day!
- External Employment Form Reminders
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Update for FY20
- SSO Two-factor Authentication
- An Interview with Dr. Edward Romero, Chief Human Resources Officer

### Introducing the New HR Newsletter!

Greetings! You are reading the inaugural edition of the A&M-Commerce Human Resources newsletter. As part of our new communications initiative, we are implementing a monthly newsletter to keep you informed about announcements and upcoming events. We hope that you find this publication helpful.

Thank you for reading!

### Express Scripts Offering Program for Pets

Express Scripts now offers Inside RX Pets, a prescription savings program to provide pet parents with discounts on brand and generic human medications prescribed for pets at 40,000 participating retail pharmacies. Go to [Insiderx.com/pets](http://Insiderx.com/pets) for more information.

## Register Now for Professional Development Day



Professional Development Day, organized by Staff Council and HR's Training & Development office, is scheduled for Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Events include a keynote speech by Greg Hawks of Hawks Agency, an address from President Mark Rudin, and several breakout sessions.

The breakout sessions are diverse and cover topics such as civility, strategic planning, interpersonal work relationships, and health/wellness. To see a

list of sessions, please visit the Training and Development website: [tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/trainingDevelopment/default.aspx](http://tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/trainingDevelopment/default.aspx) and click on "2019 Training and Development Calendar" to register.

## Submitting an External Employment Form?

For employees completing an external employment form, this is a friendly reminder to make sure that you have obtained all necessary signatures before submitting your document to Human Resources.

The form, located at:

[assets.system.tamus.edu/files/policy/pdf/ExternalEmploymentForm.pdf](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/policy/pdf/ExternalEmploymentForm.pdf) requires several signatures. Employees should submit the form to their department for approval by both their department head as well as their dean (or supervisor, if staff). This form is then sent to the provost and president for approval before being housed in Human Resources.

The form can be dropped off at the Human Resources office in McDowell Business Administration 171 or emailed to [Brenda.Walker@tamuc.edu](mailto:Brenda.Walker@tamuc.edu). Thank you for your assistance!

## New Employee Assistance Program

A&M-Commerce has a new EAP program available to employees and retirees as of September 1, 2019. This new program, Work/Life Solutions by Guidance Resources, will offer a variety of services including:

- trained clinicians who offer confidential emotional support for issues including anxiety, stress, grief, relationship conflicts, and more
- referrals and resources for services such as child care, elder care, pet care, and home-repair contractors
- attorneys to assist with legal issues including divorce, adoption, family law, wills, and trusts
- financial experts to assist with retirement planning, taxes, budgeting, bankruptcy, relocation, mortgages, and more

To contact Work/Life Solutions by Guidance Resources, please use the following:

Phone: 866.301.9623

TTY: 800.697.0353

Online: [GuidanceResources.com](http://GuidanceResources.com)

App: GuidanceNow

Web ID: TAMUS





## Employee Benefits: Who's Who?

The A&M System utilizes several vendors for employee and retiree benefits. Please see below for a list of providers for FY20.



### Virtual Medical Consultation



### Dental Insurance



### Long-term Disability

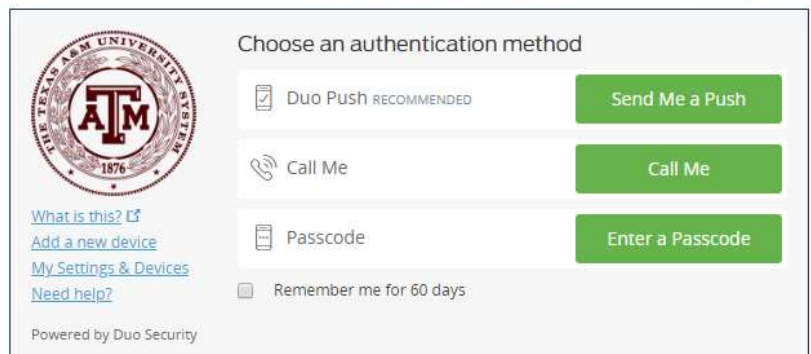


## What is Duo on Single-Sign On (SSO)?

It is not uncommon for our department to receive inquiries about using two-factor authentication to log on to Single Sign-On (SSO). Two-factor authentication is a security technique that requires both your SSO password (something you *know*) and a second, tangible identification factor (something you *have*, such as your phone). It is meant to be more secure than logging in using only a password.

SSO's two-factor login process is implemented in partnership with Duo Security. When you attempt to log in to SSO, Duo will prompt you to authenticate with your chosen method. Methods can include a phone call to your office or mobile phone, a passcode sent via text message, or a push notification sent via the Duo app on your mobile device.

Current business rules require you to use Two Factor Authentication to help secure your account.



## Virtual Healthcare Visits with MDLive

Virtual Visits is a feature provided by MDLive through your Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) health plan. It is available to covered employees and retirees in the A&M Care Plans. You can schedule visits with doctors and therapists via telephone, online video, or mobile app. This alternative to in-person appointments provides health care for simple, non-emergency medical and behavioral health conditions 24/7/365.

You can select your doctor from a national virtual visit network or choose to meet with the first available physician. When appropriate, prescriptions can be sent to your pharmacy of choice. Behavioral health consultations are available by appointment and video only.

Virtual Visits are included in the A&M Care plans with a \$20 copay. All retirees, including those with Medicare or in the 65 PLUS plan, can use these services for the \$20 charge. These services are not covered by Medicare and will be paid by BCBS without needing to be submitted to Medicare. You will be asked to pay up front before you speak with the physician. To use MDLive, go to <https://mdlive.com/bcbstx> and activate your account. You can also download the MDLive app on your phone.

## HR Benefits Rep. Named Employee of the Month



Congratulations to Cindy Todhunter, Senior Employee Benefits Representative, for being recognized as the July Employee of the Month! Cindy was nominated for the award by Tammi Thompson, Associate Director of Human Resources, who wrote the following nomination letter:

*“Cindy Todhunter is the epitome of customer service. She loves the people she works with and it shows in her actions. Many times, she meets people who are dealing with death, sickness and forced retirement. Her positive attitude and advanced knowledge of the benefits that are available greatly assists our employees to deal with whatever problems they may be facing. I have seen her cry with*

*them as well as laugh and encourage anyone who crosses her path. She is a leader for the HR team and is an awesome team member. I would like to see her recognized for the work she does, going over and beyond in her job. She truly enjoys what she does for TAMUC and it shows in her interactions with our employees, dependents and retirees. She sets high expectations for customer service in our area.”*

Cindy was honored on August 21<sup>st</sup> with a luncheon followed by a dessert reception and the presentation of her award. We are so proud to have you in HR, Cindy! Keep up the good work!

## HR Recognizes Strategic Partners

This summer, Human Resources honored individuals who played an integral role in the progressive movement of HR since the implementation of Workday. Their dedication and expertise within their functional areas have assisted us in the establishment and efficiency of programs and procedures.

The following individuals were recognized as **HR Strategic Partners**:

- Erica Contreras (*Budget Manager for Academic & Student Affairs*); Budgeting & Financial Analysis Dept.
- Lisa Owens (*Budget Coordinator*); College of Education & Human Services
- Coy Martin (*Budget Coordinator*); College of Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts
- Seleta Edge (*Budget Coordinator*); College of Science and Engineering
- Belinda Benson (*Budget Coordinator*); College of Business
- Lacey Henderson (*Director of Career Development*); Career Development
- Bethany Ferrall (*Assistant Director*); Career Development
- Brian McGinley (*Asst. Director of Contract Administration*); Contract Administration
- David Boyd (*DMS Administrator*); Center for IT Excellence
- Dr. Titilola Adewale (*Director of the Office of International Programs*); Office of International Programs



Thank you to our strategic partners!





# HR Staff Spotlight



**HR Employee:** Edward Romero, PhD  
**Position:** Chief Human Resources Officer

**Tell us about your journey: how did you end up at A&M-Commerce in your current position?**

I have an eclectic background. My undergraduate is in Agricultural Economics/Agricultural Business with a minor in Finance. My Masters is in Agricultural and Extension Education and my Doctorate is in Agricultural Education with an emphasis in Leadership. I started in higher education right out of college, then left higher education and was in the financial services business for about six years before returning to higher education in 2000. While in academics as assistant dean, I started dabbling in HR matters and in 2008 I left the college where I was working and went to work with AgriLife HR. In 2011, I came to A&M Commerce to start the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity and in January 2017 I became the Chief Human Resources Officer.

**How would you describe your role in Human Resources?**

My role in HR is very broad in scope. I am responsible for overseeing organizational development, policies and programs covering employment, compensation, benefits, performance management, employee relations, employee recruitment and retention, training and development, employee wellness, and compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws, in addition to A&M System regulations and University policies, procedures and rules.

**What are some of the challenges of your role?**

Some of the more serious challenges in my role are the lack of resources to have adequate staffing. Also, housing all of our staff in one geographic location has been a challenge that we soon hope to correct with the completion of the Nursing and Health Science Building. Once that building is

complete we anticipate a series of moves by a number of offices that hopefully will help us finally be all in one central location, which will allow us to provide better service to those we serve.

**What are some of the positive aspects or highlights of your role?**

Probably the most obvious positive aspect of my role is the opportunity to help people in the workplace. Sometimes when people come to see us when they are upset and they leave smiling or happy it makes all we do, worth it.

**What are your future hopes and goals for your role?**

My primary future goal is for people on campus to view HR as a strategic partner and resource. HR is a vital component to any organization but I am not sure people totally appreciate all we can do for our employees, managers and administration. HR is complex and riddled with law, regulation, policy and practice and it is our job to make it easy to understand, keeping the University compliant while finding ways to help managers accomplish their employment goals and hiring objectives.

**How do you try to maintain work-life balance? How do you like to unwind?**

Unfortunately, I do not do a good job in managing a work-life balance. I tend to work long hours. I need to spend more time finding ways to enjoy life and doing the fun things I did before I transitioned into HR.

**Is there anything else you'd like for us to know about you?**

I am an introvert. I can be shy most times. I am a deep thinker so sometimes if you see me on campus with a scowl on my face, I am not mad, I am just preoccupied trying to solve one of the many problems that comes through our doors every day.