



STAFF SENATE

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

The Staff Senate is a dedicated group of professionals advocating and representing staff in all divisions at Sam Houston State University. Members are elected for two-year terms and volunteer their time on many different projects, initiatives, and events on campus. As a collective voice, Staff Senate provides staff with opportunities to succeed through networking and development. To accomplish these objectives, the Staff Senate:

- **Acts as a liaison between staff and the administration of SHSU regarding interests and concerns of staff.**

*In 2020-2021, the Staff Senate created and implemented a **dependent scholarship** for employees who have spouses or dependents who want to attend SHSU. Furthermore, support the updates to the leave and telecommuting policy. The updates to these policies **allow both spouses** who work at SHSU to get 12 weeks of FMLA leave and request to telecommute if employees need additional FMLA time. Council members represent staff on presidential committees such as Sustainability and Wellness.*

- **Provides opportunities on campus and within the community for staff to reflect SHSU's motto of service.**

*In 2020-2021 the Staff Senate with Faculty Senate sponsored the People and Pets Food Drive, donating close to **700 lbs** of food to the SHSU Food Pantry and the Rita B. Huff Animal Shelter. **More donations** for the SHSU Food Pantry were received at the annual Spooktacular Breakfast in October 2020 and Summer Grab & Go in May 2021 sponsored by Staff Senate.*

- **Provides staff with learning and development opportunities.**

*The Staff Development Committee planned several "Hot Topics in Higher Education" in 2020-2021. Seminars were held on such topics as **QPR Suicide Prevention and Cybersecurity**. Our Professional Development Conference, held annually on the Tuesday of Spring Break had over **100** staff members participate throughout the day. Multiple sessions were held for staff to gain experience and professional development.*

- **Recognizes and promotes contributions and accomplishments of staff at SHSU.**

The monthly Spotlight on Staff Recognition Award is given to staff members nominated for their exemplary work, collegiality, and service to the university. Recipients are chosen by the Staff Senate News & Networking Committee from nominations submitted by staff across campus through the online nomination form located on our website. The recipient receives an award certificate, a gift with a handwritten note, and 8 hours of administrative leave.

Recent Recipients

September 2021 – Jessica Gorbett in Finance & Operations Business Solutions

August 2021 – Seth Orea in Property

July 2021 – Julie Schwab in the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

- **Provides networking opportunities to enhance cooperation and camaraderie among staff members.**

*The Staff Senate held numerous events in 2020-2021 to introduce the council members to the SHSU staff community, including the annual **Spooktacular Breakfast and Summer Grab & Go**. Also, for the first time, the Staff Senate, in conjunction with the Office of the President, hosted the **Staff Appreciation BBQ Lunch** in August 2021. This was a fantastic opportunity to finally see each other in person and kick off the Fall semester in true Bearkat style with approximately **300** staff attending.*

If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for Staff Senate, please email them to staffsenate@shsu.edu. An anonymous submission form is also available on our website.

Follow us for information on upcoming events and initiatives:

