

2022 Best Practices Proposal Form



Completed proposals are to be submitted to
Julie Parrish, Chair, SACUBO Best Practices Committee, info@sacubo.org
The deadline is November 10, 2021.

Best Practices Submission:

Title: **A&M-San Antonio CARES!**

Primary* Contact Information:

The primary contact must be a SACUBO member institution of higher education.

Institution: Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Address1: One University Way

Address2:

City: San Antonio

State/Prov: TX

Zip Code: 78224

Salutation: Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms.

First Name: Kathy Middle Name/Initial: Last Name: Funk-Baxter

Suffix (Jr, III, etc.)

Professional Title: Vice President of Business Affairs

Email: kbaxter@tamusa.edu

Phone: 210-784-2000

Fax:

*Additional team contacts may be listed at the bottom of this form.

2022 Best Practices Proposal Form

Institution Information:

Institution: Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Research Comprehensive/Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

Year Founded: 2009

Geographical Location: San Antonio, Texas

Number of Students: 6800

Website: www.tamusa.edu

Statement of the Problem:

Provide a brief statement identifying the challenge your institution encountered that benefited from your best practice.

When the institution closed at the onset of the pandemic, A&M-San Antonio was committed to a holistic approach to supporting employees. Technology needs were quickly addressed to ensure employees had the tools needed to work from home and human resources knew that physical, emotional and mental health needs must be addressed.

In addition, in February 2021 during the snowstorm, the university not only provided support to its students, but to employees as well.

The unprecedented challenges presented by the pandemic, of battling a snowstorm without utilities, and safely reopening the campus to students and employees was the impetus for developing the Collaborative Approach to Reconnecting Everyone Safely, or CARES, programming.

Identify the Solution (250-words maximum):

Describe how you identified and developed your best practice solution including those involved with the process, impact on the organization, finances and resources.

Serving employees was a priority throughout the pandemic. The university president, cabinet, CIO, chief HR officer, and staff worked throughout to develop and implement digital programming that addressed issues related to technological, emotional, physical, financial and mental health. Critical to the efforts were HR, IT and the communications department.

In some cases, priorities were quickly reestablished and funding was identified to purchase resources as needed to support faculty and staff.

This leadership group had a deliberate emphasis on mental health and promoted the COVID-19 Digital toolkit created by the EAP group ComPsych which addressed topics such as the CDC Eviction Moratorium, remaining productive while working remotely, navigating life at home, financial resiliency, and work life solutions, which offered free short-term counseling for employees and their family members.

The university added a weekly newsletter, the Wellness e-Blast, which included pertinent information and resources. Other resources included monthly on-line nutrition and wellness

2022 Best Practices Proposal Form

health kits offering information on healthy habits for caregivers, self-care during a crisis, how to stay active while working from home, and the positive impact of mindful eating.

As faculty and staff transitioned back to campus, a Collaborative Approach to Reconnecting Everyone Safely (CARES) shifted its offerings, but not its purpose. In September 2021, in collaboration with the A&M-San Antonio Women at Work initiative, a speaker presented on “Top 5 Recommendations to Reengage the University” and in November 2021 the former City of San Antonio Health Director will speak on stress management and work life balance.

Implementation Timeline:

Provide a bulleted list of the steps and implementation timeline of your best practice solution.

1. March 2020 – revisited website to enhance the Jaguar/Work Life Solutions (EAP) page and highlighted employee services and resources.
2. April 2020 – created a COVID-19 digital toolkit and initiated a weekly employee newsletter focused on wellness and wellness resources
3. May 2020 – increased digital program offerings under the Wellness Program
4. June 2020 – added a Nutrition and Health tab to the Wellness website
5. July 2020 – launched the new and more robust wellness website
6. August 2021 – the official CARES program is created
7. August 2021-CARES collaborates with other campus initiatives to offer robust programming and provide resources
8. Spring and Fall 2021-planning for a Memorial Garden honoring those who have passed away and offering a space for reflection and healing
- 9.
- 10.

Benefits & Retrospect:

Provide a brief statement of the benefits achieved by implementing the best practice solution.

The goal was for faculty and staff to know they had resources available to assist with challenges that arose from the pandemic and that as they returned to campus, the support continued and that their health and safety, physical and otherwise, are a priority.

Additional Team Contact Information:

Additional Contact #2:

Institution:

2022 Best Practices Proposal Form

Address1:

Address2:

City:

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Zip Code:

Institution:

Research Comprehensive/ Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

Salutation: Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms.

First Name: Martha

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Last Name: Gonzalez

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Additional Contact #3:

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2022 Best Practices Proposal Form

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Research Comprehensive/ Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

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Research Comprehensive/ Doctoral Small Institutions Community College

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2022 Best Practices Proposal Form

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Form: Updated August 2021