



**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT NEW ORLEANS**  
**CHANCELLOR'S**  
**REPORT**  
**MARCH 2024**

# INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

## ► CAREER SERVICES ◀

### CENTER FOR FINANCIAL ADVANCEMENT (CFA) REGIONAL CONFERENCE



The SUNO Center For Financial Advancement (CFA) Scholars recently attended the CFA Regional Conference at Talladega College. This program focuses on financial literacy, career pathways, and leadership development. Students receive internship opportunities, guidance on home ownership, and tips on creating generational wealth.

Ms. Vonda Taplin, Director of Career Services, and Ms. Cheryl Legohn-Tubbs, Director of Veterans Affairs and Community Service Learning, accompanied the students to this conference. The program's team deserves praise for their efforts in shaping the future of its students!

### HBCU LEGACY BOWL



Our SUNO Knights proudly represented at The Allstate HBCU Legacy Bowl Career Fair! Our scholars had a chance to connect with some of the top companies in the country, including the IRS, NFL, and Allstate Insurance Company. We were so excited for our students to showcase their talents and enhance their professional skills!

# ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

## SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT NEW ORLEANS WELCOMED **THE FUTURE CLASS OF 2028** HIGHLIGHTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL DAY!



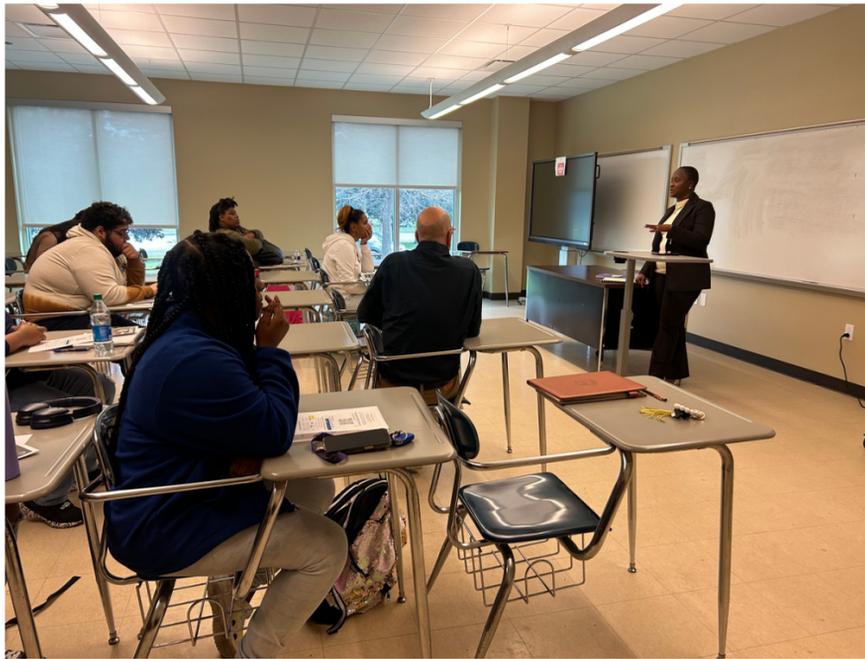
Southern University at New Orleans recently hosted High School Day, where we welcomed members of the future Class of 2028 to learn about our academic programs, campus life, and various clubs and organizations.

We were excited to showcase the numerous opportunities awaiting our future SUNO Knights! We look forward to seeing our future Knights on campus and helping them achieve their academic and personal goals.

## COLLEGE SUCCESS SKILLS VISITS SUNO!



# CAREER SERVICES IN THE CLASSROOM



Ms. Vonda Taplin, the Director of Career Services, recently visited classes to increase student engagement with the Big Interview & Handshake platform. With her in-depth knowledge and expertise, she provided valuable insights into how these tools can help students maximize their career potential and connect with potential employers. It was an excellent opportunity for students to learn about these cutting-edge resources and take their first step toward a successful career!

## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

# COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL SCIENCES

Dr. Illya Tietzel attended the 1st Quarter Louisiana Space Consortium (LaSPACE) virtual meeting on 1/26/2024 as a campus representation of SUNO.

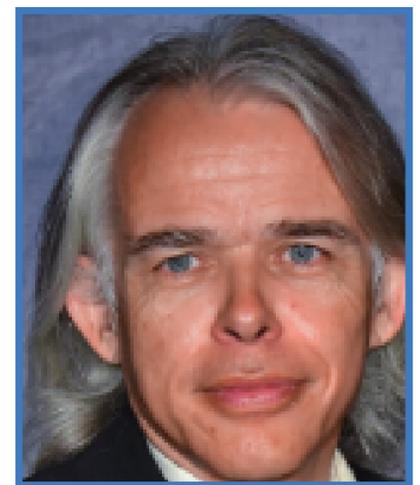
The Audubon Nature Institute (“Audubon”), under the leadership of Dr. Steven M. Whitfield and partner organizations, including SUNO with Dr. Illya Tietzel, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation entitled “RaMP: Conservation Science for Biodiversity Protection and Species Survival.”

Dr. Tietzel will serve as one of the multi-institutional mentors to train cohorts of 10 post-baccalaureates of underrepresented minorities each year for three years. Dr. Nicola Anthony from UNO and faculty from other universities such as Dillard University, Xavier University of Louisiana, Loyola University, and Tulane University are some of the proposed partner institutions.

Dr. Illya Tietzel also attended a professional development webinar about Brainfuse, an online tutoring service for students that is now available for SUNO faculty and students. He explored the Nursing School Exam functions in the Skill Surfer menu of Brainfuse to enhance the content for courses he teaches his nursing students.



**Dr. S. Whitfield**



**Dr. I. Tietzel**

# STRONG SUNO STEM PRESENCE AT 2024 GULF STATES MATH ALLIANCE CONFERENCE



On February 23-25, 2024 eight SUNO STEM students – Anastasia Newton, Britany Sylvester, Myles Bradford, Abdelmounaim Fillali, Lila Poole, Tre' Wise, Inez Burfict, Shivers Nellon, and two faculty members – Dr. Rachid Belmasrour and Dr. Joe Omojola attended the 2024 Gulf States Math Alliance Conference, held at Stephen F Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

They learned a lot at this conference. An example shared by a professor that spoke was an emphasis should be put on remaining calm, making good grades, thinking about the future, and, most importantly, finding a mentor. Additionally, the speakers were extremely positive and displayed a feeling of confidence that no matter a person's background or skin color, opportunities are endless, and the only thing stopping you is yourself.

Dr. Richardson, Dr. Omojola's mentee, was the main speaker. Dr. Richardson, the head of EPSCoR in the Office of Integrative Activities (OIA) at the National Science Foundation, stressed the importance of finding a community and people with the same trajectory as you to help you accomplish your goals. She also spoke about not being afraid to take risks and that stepping out of your comfort zone is rewarding. Dr. Sifuentes spoke about graduate assistantships, fellowships, and REU/internships. He explained the steps to get your PhD. He stated that obtaining a Ph.D. is a full-time job that cannot be completed part-time. He also explained that we should be encouraged if we are not accepted into a Ph.D. program for the first time. Other speakers spoke about overcoming the imposter syndrome and not expecting your job to be about something other than what you learned in your classes because the material covered in class is a scratching of the surface. Finally, Dr. Lawson of Southern University, Baton Rouge, spoke about seeing yourself as a mentor and paying it forward. Five posters were presented at the conference. One of SUNO scholars, Trey Wise, spoke about two explicit formulas for identifying Covid 19 parameters. The organization of the event was superbly impressive. After leaving the conference, Students felt like they should immediately start to apply for REUs and internships and become mentors.

## FORENSIC SCIENCE

On February 17, 2024, Ms. Brooklynn Johnson, Interim Chair of the Forensic Science Program, participated in the inaugural Knight's Preview Day. This event, tailored for high school students, offered a unique chance to discover SUNO's campus and interact with various colleges. Ms. Johnson took the opportunity to interact with students, participating in meaningful conversations about forensic science and potential career options. Among them, an enthusiastic student traveled from Lake Charles to learn more about the forensic science curriculum and to indicate that she planned to enroll as a first-time freshman in the Fall 2024.



# DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES



Dr. Robert Azzarello has submitted a review essay on Naveeda Khan's *River Life and the Upspring of Nature* for publication in the *WSQ: Women's Study Quarterly* journal.

# HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS



**Jairus Ballard MHI, RHIA, CLT, CTR**  
*HIMS Program Director/Assistant Professor*



**John Barrilleaux MME, RHIA**  
*APAR Coordinator/Assistant Professor*



**Sharon McGee MS, RHIA**  
*Clinical Coordinator/Assistant Professor*

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Congratulations to the HIMS Program for achieving a commendable milestone with three (3) HIMS graduates from the Class of 2023 passing the Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) Exam. Their accomplishment reflects the department's commitment to excellence and dedication to producing highly qualified professionals.
- Mrs. Sharon McGee and Mr. John Barrilleaux participated in the CAHIIM virtual meeting on December 4, 2023. Meeting topic: Future Education Model Series. This was the first meeting to discuss changes to the upcoming HIM and HIIM curriculum standards.
- On December 4, 2023, an AHIMA representative conducted an AHIMA Microcredential Needs Assessment Interview with Mrs. Sharon McGee. The organization has recently adopted micro-credentials and is conducting interviews with select members on the benefits of the current micro-credentials and recommendations for adopting additional ones.
- On December 5, 2023, HIMS faculty members participated in a CAHIIM town hall meeting for students, whereby a new program was piloted to improve students' ability to take and pass the RHIA exam.
- Mr. John Barrilleaux and Mrs. Sharon McGee participated in the AHIMA All Practice Council virtual meeting on December 7, 2023. The meeting was to thank volunteer members for their contributions and discuss topics for the 2024 action plan.
- In January 2024, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) went live with the new Body of Knowledge section on the AHIMA.org website. The Body of Knowledge holds the publication made by AHIMA. Mr. John Barrilleaux co-authors the practice brief, *Developing Facility-Specific Coding Guidelines*, now published on this website.
- Mr. Jairus Ballard has agreed to serve on the Succession Committee of the Louisiana Health Information Association (LHIMA). This committee is tasked with interviewing potential candidates for the upcoming CEO (Chief Executive Officer) position within LHIMA. The inaugural meeting took place on January 23, 2024.
- Mr. Jairus Ballard has agreed to join the HIM Advisory Board for the University of Arizona's Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management Program. He participated in his initial meeting.

# MUSEUM STUDIES



**Dr. Haitham Eid**

**Director/Associate Professor**



**Professor Erika N. Witt**

**Director and Chief Curator**

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Congratulations to Dr. Haitham Eid on his America 250 Louisiana State Commission appointment! The Commission collaborates with the Federal America 250 Commission to plan and coordinate the celebration of the semi-quinquennial anniversary of the United States of America. Furthermore, Dr. Eid was chosen to join the advisory committee for the upcoming "New Masks Now" exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art.
- In addition to these achievements, Dr. Eid attended the January board meeting of the Louisiana Association of Museums (LAM), where he is Treasurer.
- Dr. Haitham Eid has been chosen to participate in the Local Arrangements Committee (LAT) for the NAFSA 2024 Conference. He attended the committee's kick-off meeting on January 24, 2024.
- On January 26, 2024, the MA Museum Studies Program and SUNOMA welcomed the State Department delegations from Egypt, Tunisia, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia to exchange expertise on "Preserving Cultural Heritage and Combating Trafficking of Conflict Antiquities." Dr. Carl Johnson, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Eurmon Hervey, former Interim VC for Academic Affairs, greeted the group. Dr. Haitham Eid, Director of the MA Museum Studies Program, and Assistant Professor Erika Witt, SUNOMA Director and Chief Curator, discussed ideas for collaboration with the group. Some group members expressed interest in applying for the MA Museum Studies Program.
- Dr. Eid attended the Louisiana Association of Museums (LAM) Board meeting on February 6, 2024. He serves as the board treasurer.
- Congratulations! Ms. Erika Witt has been selected to join the 2024 Southeastern Museum Conference Leadership Institute cohort. Additionally, she has been granted the opportunity to handle multiple African and African American book donations on behalf of Dr. Roslyn Walker and Dr. Peek.

# COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



## SUNO College of Business Students & Faculty Attend COMPA 2024 Conference

The College of Business & Public Administration is actively and financially supporting the 2024 Conference of Minority Public Administrators (COMPA), which is taking place on the SUNO campus. The theme of the Conference is “Reshaping Public Administration: A Search for Self-Determined, Participatory, and Sustainable Governments”. The conference started on Sunday, February 25, 2024, and will end on Wednesday, February 28, 2024. The current president of COMPA is SUNO’s Dr. George L. Amedee, the Emmett Bashful Endowed Chair and Professor of Political Science. Dr. Patricia Boyd Robertson, Associate Professor of Public Administration, and the SUNO Small Business Development & Management Institute supports the COMPA program in various capacities. COMPA was established in 1977 to provide a forum for leadership and professional development for minority students, public servants, administrators, and governmental officials. It is dedicated to nurturing the career aspirations of members by identifying employment opportunities, promoting their candidacy in the public sector, and recognizing outstanding public administrators for their contributions both in the public and private sectors.

Four SUNO Public Administration students (Dana Bailey, Jules Dumas, Kanetra Whyte, and Brian Alexander) participated in COMPA’s intercollegiate debate on Monday, February 26, 2024. Other student debate teams were from Jackson State University, Ohio State, Virginia Commonwealth University, Southern University Baton Rouge, Texas Southern University, and Prairieview A&M University. The debate topics were “Should We Adopt a Rule to Change the Judicial Terms from Unlimited to Limited?” and “Should the United States Government Attach Conditions on Subsequent Aids to Ukraine?” Dr. Patricia Robertson was responsible for ensuring audience involvement in the debate by distributing the votes and tallying the returns after the discussion. The SUNO debate team was voted the runner-up, and the SUBR team took the top honor.

# MILLIE M. CHARLES SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



Dean's Office & MSW Director Dean Rebecca Chaisson and Dr. Torin Sanders have been engaged in preparing for several program enhancements, including launching the MASTERS in Five(MIF) campaign as a way to recruit new and transfer students for the BSW program at SUNO. Dean Chaisson is currently meeting with two undergraduate programs in order to recruit students into the BSW program that can lead to the MSW in five years. The MIF campaign will be used with junior and community colleges to assist students in preparing to transfer into the BSW program. Dean Chaisson chaired the state-wide committee to facilitate agreement among BSW programs to establish common courses for seamless transfers from community colleges to BSW programs across the State of Louisiana. Dr. Sanders holding the new campaign shirt is pictured above. Dr. Sanders is preparing for the next step in working with Dr. Dixon Chibanda, founder and CEO of the Friendship Bench. He is working with the planning and implementation team funded by the Institute of Mental Hygiene(IMH) to start the first Friendship Bench in New Orleans this year as a community-based resource in mental health services. The program is recruiting individuals who are interested in becoming a participant in the Friendship Bench in New Orleans. The Millie M. Charles School of Social Work is the first HBCU in the U.S. to partner with Dr. Chibanda, an international expert in community mental health. Dr. Chibanda developed this evidence-based model of practice that has been implemented in the U.S. and across the globe. Dr. Chibanda will return to the School of Social Work in April for further planning in piloting this program in New Orleans.

In addition, Dean Chaisson continues as co-chair of the Interorganizational Committee, a group of social work professionals across the state who bring concerns and issues in a collaborative manner to the body for discussion and action. There are numerous larger issues that organizations are facing, including licensing examinations and data that show racial disparities in pass rates, supervision of licensed social workers, revisions to continuing education, and the elevation of macro practice social work in the state of Louisiana. The current concerns are licensing examination pass rates, adding social justice content for continuing education, and eliminating discriminatory outcomes that disadvantage social workers experience based on current license categories. Other faculty members engaged in this organization include Drs. Jill Murray and Kevin Brown.

## SUNO SSW faculty named President of NOLACode

Dr. Kevin J. Brown, Associate Professor of Social Work, was named President of the Board of Directors for NOLACode. The nonprofit organization works with New Orleans public schools to provide computer literacy training and STEM education. NOLACode introduces children to computer programming, development, electronics, and more to make technology accessible, inspire confidence, and assure students are not left behind due to the Digital Divide. Dr. Brown has been engaged in many other activities focused on equity and access.

## SUNO SSW Faculty Receives City Council Proclamation

Dr. Damekia Morgan, Assistant Professor, recently received an award for her work with the Crescent City Mentoring Collaborative (CCMC) and its impact on Youth in New Orleans. Dr. Morgan is a community activist with an intensive and extensive history of advocacy for vulnerable youth in New Orleans and the State of Louisiana. She and her collaborators recently published a "Strategic Action Plan" for youth. The Mentoring Collaborative is a coalition of Black-led non-profit organizations with a shared mission to strengthen and retain effective mentors throughout the local community. The groups provide engaged leadership, mentorship, activities that meet different interest areas, and most importantly a caring relationship. Those groups include the Silverback Society, Son of A Saints, Reaching for the Stars, and 100 Black Men. Dr. Morgan is pictured right with Councilman Oliver Thomas shortly after receiving the proclamation from the City of New Orleans and its council members. Dr. Morgan has often engaged students in the BSW and MSW programs in community activities and she is a faculty leader for the Phi Alpha Honor Society.



# SCHOOL OF NURSING



## ***Developmental Milestones:***

### **January 26, 2024 – Student Nurse Assembly**

The purpose of the nursing assembly was to engage nursing students returning in the Spring 2024 semester to reset goals and objectives to achieve academic success. The meeting began with the “4 C’s” icebreaker where students and faculty had to describe their personality with a cartoon, cuisine, car and color. The students received information regarding the curriculum and how it was designed. The School of Nursing curriculum system mainly reflects the standards established by the American Association of Critical-Care Nursing (AACN), Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QESN), and the Louisiana State Board of Nursing of the nursing specialty. Threading the AACN Essentials and QESN Competencies throughout the curriculum intensifies the training objectives and emphasizes the training on student quality. Students were assured that the curriculum is evidence-based which cultivates objectives, philosophy of nursing education, values of teaching, resources and that they are receiving a quality education. Dr. Smith concluded with reviewing topics such as resilience, mental/physical wellness, self-care strategies, and reflections from practicing nurses on their “STUDENT SELF” characteristics.

### **February 5-7, 2024 – AACN Diversity Equity & Inclusion Conference**

Dean Kelly Smith attended the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion National Conference held in downtown New Orleans at the Marriot Hotel February 5 – 7th. AACN is a leading advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in nursing. The purpose of the conference is to promote and advance DEI initiatives in nursing education. Topics for leadership and faculty development included Inclusive Excellence, Belonging, and Sustainability in Nursing Education, Promising Practices in Holistic Admissions Review, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Faculty Toolkit. One of the main topics that resonated with Dr. Smith, featured here with the poster presenter, was Holistic Admission Review. As a new nursing program, Dean Smith is committed to this proven strategy to increase the diversity in student enrollment at SUNO, and ultimately the nursing workforce in Louisiana.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO  
NEXT MONTH'S UPDATES!**

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
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**6400 SUNO KNIGHTS DRIVE,  
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70126  
504-286-5000 | SUNO.EDU**



**WE ARE SUNO**