

THE VOICE

A newsletter for THE University of Southern Mississippi association of office Professionals

Letter from Our President Mary Maner



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Over the past several years, we have been pushed to realize our true potential as individuals and professionals. Organizations around the world are experiencing unprecedented changes and challenges. Organizational leadership is being tasked with developing transformational professional development pathways to address our present situation.

From delivering high quality workshops and professional development experiences to cross campus collaboration and community outreach, USM AOP is meeting the challenge by helping office professionals enhance their skills and unlock their potential by delivering high quality workshops and professional development experiences to take USM office professionals To The Top.

I have been a member of AOP since 2018. During this time, I have witnessed the growth of the USM AOP organization and can attest to the impact it has had on my own personal and professional growth.

As Interim President, I need your help to raise awareness of the many benefits of being a member of AOP and the information and resources available for professional development. If you have been active as a member, many thanks, if you need some motivation, click the link and see what you have been missing. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication for 2021, let's keep the momentum for 2022.

AOP – To The Top!!!
Peace and Blessing,
Mary Maner
AOP Interim President





Professional Development – A Gift to Yourself!

JOYCE POWELL, VICE PRESIDENT

The Fall semester has come to a close. Less and less people are on campus now that it is winter break. Time to sit back and relax, right? Definitely! It also may be a good time for you to reflect on the past year and look forward to what 2022 may bring.

Once you have attended your holiday parties, taken care of your household to-do list (wishful thinking – I know), and hopefully had some time to rest, consider taking time to review your professional development goals for the year. If you are like me, it can be hard to find downtime to plan once the Spring semester gets rolling. Here are some tips for planning your professional development:

1. Prioritize your goals

What do you want to achieve this year in your professional life?

-Are you working on a PSP certificate?

-Are you working on a degree?

-Are you aiming for a promotion or a different job?

-Maybe you simply want to be better at your current position or more knowledgeable on a particular topic.

Time is always limited, so it is important to prioritize your goals. You can't do everything all the time. Try to determine your most important goal and what activities will have the most impact on that goal.

2. Reverse engineer your goals

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of reverse engineering is "to disassemble and examine or analyze in detail (a product or device) to discover the concepts involved in manufacture usually in order to produce something similar." If we think of this concept in terms of achieving a goal that we set, we need to think about the small steps and actions that will lead to our ultimate goal. Set your "big" goal for the year (or even a longer-term goal), and then lay out all of the "small" things that you can do to accomplish your overall goal.

For example, if you want a promotion or a different job, think about things that might help you achieve that. Does this job require a certain degree or specialized knowledge in a particular area? If it requires a degree, then maybe consider going back to school (and taking advantage of six free hours per semester). Maybe you don't need a whole new degree, but instead, it could just be a couple of classes, a certification, or applied knowledge in a field. Another example, if you are working on a PSP certificate, then go ahead and start the application document to see what you need to get there. Then, you can start strategically working on the areas you need and avoid wasting time in the areas that you don't need.

3. Put it on the calendar

If it is not on your calendar, it is not a priority and it is not going to get done. For me, if I don't make myself a deadline or set aside the time for something, I will keep saying "I'll get to that after I finish XYZ." Use your Outlook calendar (or planner if you're old school), to schedule your professional development, even if it is 30 minutes here or there. Make an appointment on your calendar that has your "small" goal for that time. Some progress is better than no or delayed progress. It will build up over time.

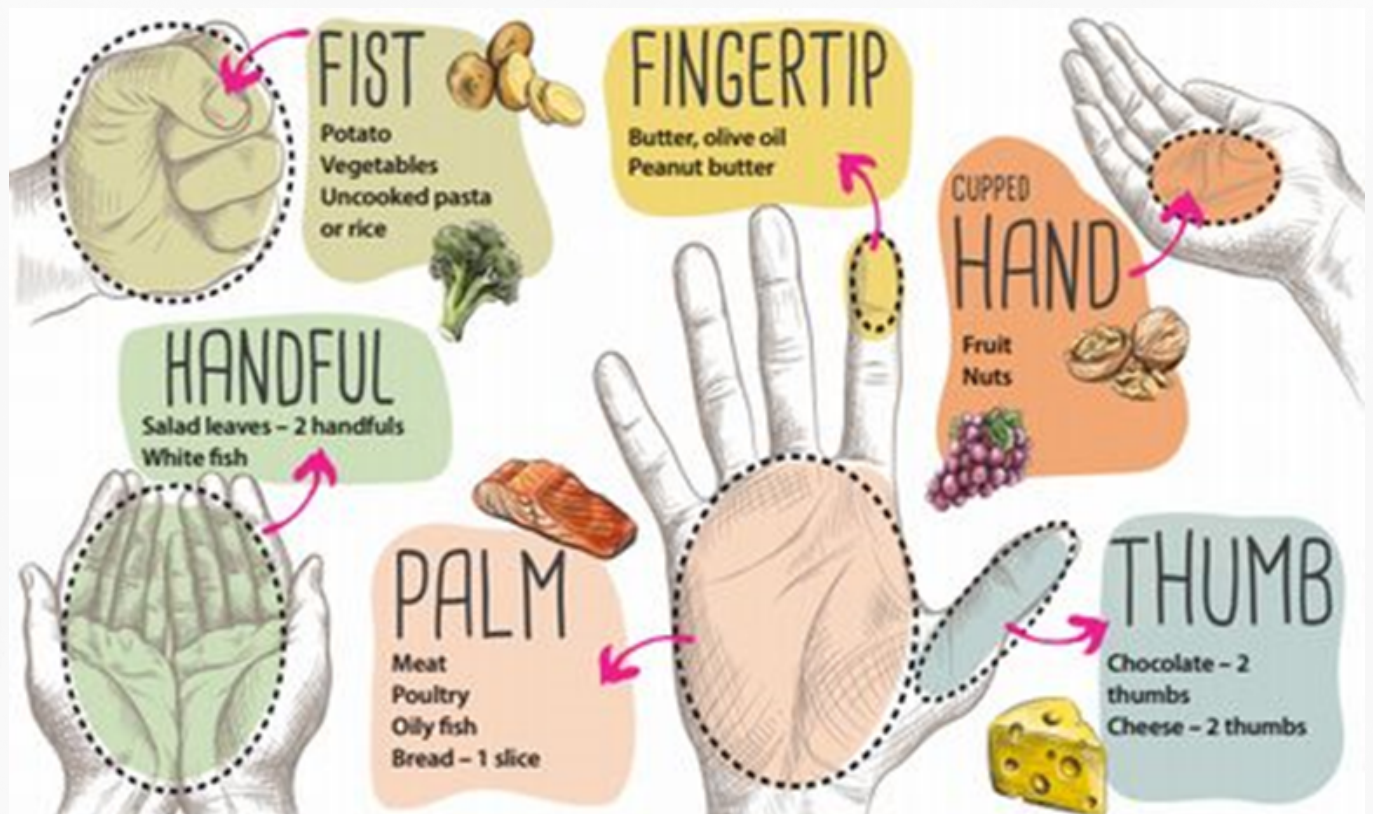
4. Ask for help

Don't feel like you have to figure things out on your own. Find someone else who has achieved the goal that you are aiming for. Ask someone more experienced than you for advice. If you are lucky enough to have an encouraging and empowering boss like me, tell them what you are trying to accomplish, and they will likely offer their support and advice. When you ask for help, you can avoid wasted effort and probably find things out that you didn't know or think about in the first place.

Have a fun and restful holiday break! Then, I hope you return inspired to continue the pursuit of your goals. Finally, I want to leave you with this quote by Aristotle:

"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives – choice, not chance, determines your destiny."

Portion Sizes and Eating Fruits and Vegetables



WRITTEN BY: VALERIE CRAIG

Eating the right foods is important. Knowing how much food to eat is another key factor in our dietary behavior. We should eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Yes, every day! A serving of fruit or cooked vegetable is a half-cup. When we eat out or eat at the home of others, we certainly don't carry a measuring cup with us.

The graphic above shows us how to use something most of us have with us all the time - our hand. A cupped hand gives us an idea for a serving of fruit and a closed fist gives a visual of a serving of cooked vegetables. A salad serving is about two handfuls. Berries are a good fruit choice because they are lower in sugar per serving. Look for blackberries, strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries.

Try to eat different colors of non-starchy vegetables to get a variety of vitamins and minerals. Examples of non-starchy vegetables are asparagus, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, cucumber, eggplant, green beans, mushrooms, okra, peppers, salad greens and all dark leafy greens, squash, and tomatoes. Non-starchy vegetables are low in calories, are a good source of fiber, have high water content, and are high in antioxidants. Non-starchy vegetables make you feel full and are a great way to get good nutrition while maintaining a healthy weight.

Twelve Holiday Health Tips

WRITTEN BY: LISA WRIGHT



1. Wash your hands often.

2. Get your vaccines.

3. Try to stay on a routine and get enough sleep.

4. Manage stress.

- a. Prioritize.
- b. Stick to a budget.
- c. Be realistic and accept imperfection.
- d. Spend time with loved ones.
- e. Do nothing. Sit back and relax once in a while.
- f. Make some time for yourself too.
- g. Say no.
- h. Take some deep breaths.
- i. Reach out. Seek professional help if you need it.

5. Eat healthy.

- a. Make some healthy swaps—substitute healthier ingredients, air fry or bake.
- b. Practice moderation and balance by setting limits for yourself.
- c. Use small plates.
- d. Have a pre-party snack. Don't show up hungry.
- e. Slow down during meals.
- f. Wait 10 minutes before having seconds.

6. Drink plenty of water.

7. Drink safely.

- a. Alternate alcoholic beverages with non-alcoholic beverages.
- b. Do not drink on an empty stomach.
- c. Have a plan to get home safely.

8. Stay active.

- a. Schedule it.
- b. Try something new.
- c. Remember, every little bit helps.

9. Create healthy holiday traditions.

10. Decorate safely—be extra careful when dealing with roofs and ladders.

11. Skip the shame if you get off track. Learn and move forward.

12. Remember what really matters.

- a. Volunteer
- b. Set aside differences.
- c. Be kind.

Member Spotlight-

Joyce Powell



In early December, we had a chance to have a sit down with Vice President of Membership, Joyce Powell and learn just a little bit more about her. Thank you Joyce for your service to AOP and for taking the time to be interviewed right before the holidays.

How long have you been at USM?

I have been at USM for four years (October 2017).

What would you say as the most important personal goal you have for the next five years?

I am currently working on my Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration. I plan to graduate in Summer 2023 so that is one of my top personal goals in the next five years.

What motivated you to join AOP?

I am passionate about professional development and helping others reach their personal and professional goals. Helping others with their personal and professional goals is one of the main reasons I wanted to work in higher education. When I began at USM, I felt like there were not as many professional development opportunities for staff as there were for faculty. Then, I found out about AOP and decided to join for my own growth. By joining AOP, I found a group of community-oriented people who have a drive to lift others up, whether it is through professional development or community service projects.

What inspires you?

I am constantly inspired by the stories of those around me. I relish any time I have the opportunity to hear about what someone has accomplished, despite difficulties or obstacles they may have faced – often these inspiring stories come directly from our students or my coworkers. I also love to listen to podcasts!

If you could travel anywhere, where would that be?

If I could jump on a plane tomorrow, I would go to Greece. I love Mediterranean food and the beautiful blue water and hilltop city you always see in pictures. I would also love to explore all of the historic sites.

Name one fact about you that would surprise us?

My first-time to ever officially gamble in a casino was in Monte Carlo.

UPDATES

Awards for Educational Office Professional of the Year and Educational Administrator of the Year:

Each year, we accept nominations for these awards to be sent in for review by the Affiliations committee no later than May 1st. The nominee must be current member of USM AOP and been employed at USM for a minimum of 3 years. The awards are presented to the recipient at our Annual Membership Recognition Luncheon. Winners of the award are also sent to MAEOP for nomination at the state level.

If you would like more information about the guidelines or to nominate someone for one of these awards, please contact Cindy Walker, Affiliations Chair, at 601.266.4844 or cynthia.walker@usm.edu

Community Service

Caring Christmas Tidings for Our Veterans

We sent out almost 1,000 Christmas cards to veterans in Florida, Arizona, and, of course, our very own Mississippi vets. Thanks to USM AOP Vice President Joyce Powell for helping mail off so many cards and to The Wesley Foundation for helping make this effort successful, along with all our volunteers who wrote so many heartfelt cards. We are lucky to have forged such a great partnership with The Wesley Foundation.

If you would like to know more about this overall effort which is being spearheaded by 6-year-old Eden Pink, see the link below:

<https://www.wtvr.com/heroes-among-us/child-mails-cards-to-lonely-veterans-i-want-them-to-know-someone-cares>

Worldwide Wesley Wishes and Home baked for the Christmas Holidays

AOP also supported The Worldwide Wesley Wishes initiative, which provided Christmas gifts to our international students. Additionally, AOP ran our annual Home baked for the Holidays which delivers Christmas baked goods to our international students with the assistance of our partners at The Wesley Foundation.

Other Giving Opportunities

Should you feel the need to give to any initiatives since ours are coming to a close, I ask you to consider donating to the outdoor Wesley Pantry Plus. It is outside the Wesley Foundation on our Hattiesburg campus (3200 Montague Blvd, Hattiesburg) and is proving to be a valuable resource for our students during these times. Our international students cannot work off-campus; therefore, they risk experiencing food insecurity during the break. Just a few supplies from each of us can go a long way.

The Year in Community Service

Blessings in a Backpack

Fall Wellness Fest

Hub City Humane Barktoberfest

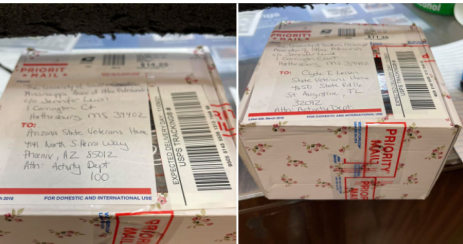
Wesley Pantry Plus

Published by Jen Lewis · September 2, 2021
AOP member Karen Shaw had the pleasure of giving out the last backpack in our Blessings in a Backpack campaign.



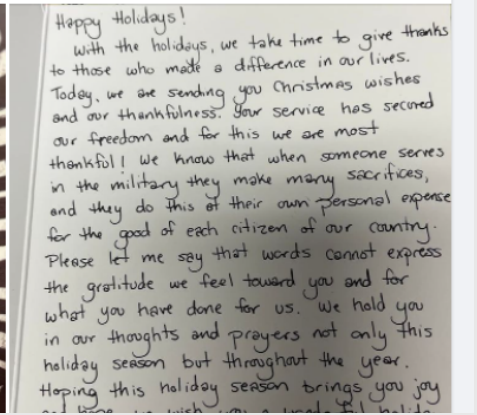
Caring Cards for Veterans

November 6, 2021
Cards that we collaborated on with [USM Association of Office Professionals](#) are on their way to the vets in nursing homes in Florida and Arizona. #HappyVeteransDay



USM Association of Office Professionals is at Hattiesburg Post Office.
November 6, 2021 · Hattiesburg ·
Veterans Day cards for vets at nursing homes are on their way. 185 handwritten cards. Thanks to those who helped write these messages of appreciation.

#supportveterans #thereasonfortheseason #SALspirit #collaboration



Wesley Worldwide Wishes

Widam USM Wesley USM Association of Office Professionals and Sigma Alpha Lambda University of Southern Mississippi partnering for Wesley Worldwide Wishes and Home Baked for the Holidays



Home Baked for the Holidays



2021-2022 USM AOP Board



Valerie Craig
Immediate Past
President
valerie.craig@usm.edu



May Maner
Acting President and
President-Elect
mary.maner@usm.edu



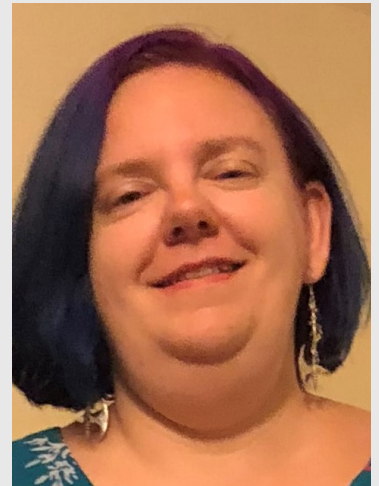
Joyce Powell
Vice President
Membership Chairman
joyce.powell@usm.edu



Jennifer Lewis
Secretary and
Community Service Chair
Historian/Publicity Chairman
jennifer.lewis@usm.edu



Cindy Walker
Treasurer
Budget Chairman and
Affiliations Chairman
Cynthia.Walker@usm.edu



Cory Williams
PSP Chairman
cory.smith@usm.edu

Get Involved

Join a committee

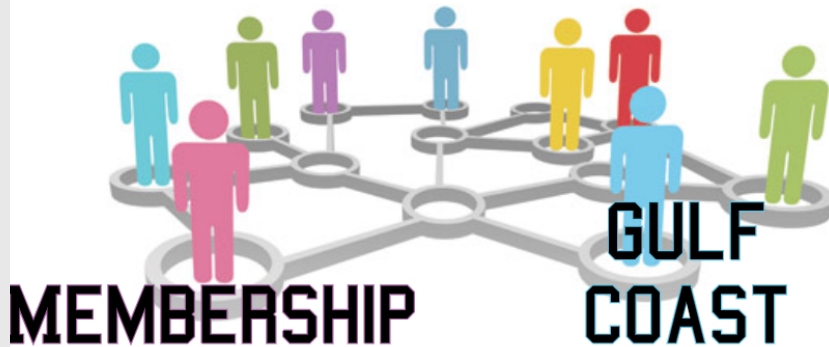
WAYS AND MEANS

Plan Fundraisers



BUDGET

Plan Annual Budget
&
Approve Expenses



MEMBERSHIP

Recruit & Track
Members

Actively Promote
& Ensure Gulf Coast
Member Participation



PUBLICITY

Promote AOP through
Online & Print
Communications

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Plan Community Service
Projects



HOSPITALITY

Send Cards for Condolences
& Congratulating Members,
Provide Door Prizes

PSP ADVISORY

Advise Members
about the
Professional
Standards Program

INSERVICE

Plan Educational
& Professional
Development Events

AFFILIATIONS

Keep up with
Affiliated
Organizations,
Organize Annual

Email: aop-info@usm.edu for more information



July-August

- 7/30-Jessica Francis
- 7/30-Kayla Mashburn
- 7/31-Delores McNair
- 8/2- Terry Whittington
- 8/15- Rayonne Grant
- Michelle Konscak
- 8/21-Jeannene Garbee
- 8/22- Alan Thompson
- 8/31-Heather Houston

September

- September 9th- Saidul Hassan
- September 8th- Tymika Rushing
- September 9th, Raven Moore
- September 11- Melanie Bryan
- September 14th- Sandy Laubersheimer
- September 20th- Cathy Ventura

October & November

- October 14th- Susan Christensen
- October 15th- Melissa Carpenter
- October 20th- Ruth Brooks
- October 22nd- Lisa Huff
- October 27th- Cory Williams
- November 1st- Shannon Ladner
- November 3rd- Pamela Bullard
- November 15th- Kelly Johnson
- November 18th- Katie Kitchens
- November 21st- Petra Lamb
- November 26th- Erin Sessions

December

- December 10th- Valerie Craig & Betty Shaw
- December 12th- Kayla Johnson
- December 17th-Christopher Marcell & Cassidy Jacquet
- December 19th- Elizabeth Killinger
- December 21st-Jennifer Lewis & Marci Calcote
- December 24th- Brenda Tart
- December 29th- Becky Malley

