



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Rachel Wise
press@sg.ufl.edu

SG worked hard for students & accomplished concrete goals in summer, 2015

Student government got a running start this summer while working to achieve their campaign promises. In the three summer months, SG tackled accessibility, transportation, study space, social inclusivity and student resources and came out with positive changes for the entire student body.

“We wanted to get started in summer and utilize all the time we have to benefit students,” Joselin Padron-Rasines said, University of Florida student body president.

To provide students with more study time and space, SG officials have expanded student resources on campus. In August, the Marston Library renovations were finished and now offer more seats, electrical outlets and additional services. The facility is now open for a new 24/5 hour schedule, similar to Library West’s extended hours from 2012.

Over summer, SG hosted the first “Java with Jos” event hosted at the Reitz Union Starbucks where students could meet the student body president, have a coffee and discuss any pertinent issues facing students.

“Java with Jos is the perfect opportunity for students to casually connect with their student body president and see that she’s an everyday Gator just like them,”

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Gabriella Larios said, SBP chief of staff. “We want students to know that our SG officials can relate to them and understand their needs.”

As the school year progresses, these events will expand to the other executive officers and agencies.

In July, SG leadership approved and funded six new tables in Turlington Plaza for student use to provide equal opportunity for all clubs on campus to showcase their talents, ideas and involvement.

With the help of the P.R.I.D.E Student Union and Diversity Affairs Secretary Kalyani Hawaldar, Student Body President Joselin Padron-Rasines discussed the issue with university administration and led to the installation of all-gender, single-stall bathrooms in Cypress Hall, one of the new residence hall.

“We decided that our initiative to bring all-gender restrooms to UF was a priority because it is a significant step in building a more inclusive campus,” Hawaldar said. “All-gender restrooms validate the needs of students who may not identify with the gender to which that are societally assigned.”

Additionally, they are working towards signage changes from specific gender to all-gender at various locations all over campus throughout the fall semester.

Throughout the summer B semester, SG partnered with Uber to provide students with a 50% coupon for rides within a certain parameters of campus.

To continue finding safe rides for students, a student survey was conducted in July and August that allowed students can show their preferences and concerns

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regarding transportation to and from campus. Using these results, the executive and legislative branches will make the necessary changes to make traveling on campus safer.

In July, student body treasurer Nicholas Carre implemented a new system for publicizing how the UF Student Activity and Service Fees, the money paid for by students that SG is allotted for student programming through Docutraq requests, are spent on campus.

“We were able to create the Docutraq Transparency Report on the SG website, which gives students the opportunity to see how SG funded organizations spend A&S fees,” Nicholas Carre said, student body treasurer. “Our hope is that students use this information to take advantage of all the resources that Student Government has to offer.”

Over summer, Padron-Rasines and Executive Press Secretary Rachel Wise worked with SG Information Technology staff to completely overhaul the SG website.

“The SG website is one of the first resources for students go to learn about student government and in the past it was difficult to update and navigate. With this new site, we will be able to make it easier to navigate and as informative as possible,” Wise said. “We plan to unveil it soon with many new features to can help students get involved with their SG.”

Student government plans to continue this upwards trajectory of student-focused achievement as the year progresses.

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"We were elected by students to work for students so every change that has been made was in response to either new needs or wants reflected in our student body," Padron-Rasines said. "This has been our goal from the beginning and we will keep working for students throughout the year."

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