

STUDENT AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

The Division of Student Affairs Quarterly Newsletter



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SAY HELLO TO WINGMATE: YOUR NEW CAMPUS COMPANION

The Office of First-Generation Student Success is excited to introduce a new way for students to stay informed, connected, and supported throughout the year. Meet Wingmate, a friendly AI chatbot created specifically for first-generation students at Tennessee Tech. Whether you are just starting out or continuing your college journey, Wingmate is here to make things a little easier.

With Wingmate, getting help is as simple as sending a text. Have a question about your class schedule? Need to know where to find a campus resource? Want to stay in the loop about upcoming events? Wingmate can provide quick answers and helpful guidance whenever you need it. It also checks in with you throughout the year to see how things are going, offering encouragement and support along the way.



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One of the best things about Wingmate is how easy it is to use. There is no app to download or complicated sign-up process, just a phone number to text. It is like having a knowledgeable friend in your pocket who is always ready to help. From academic support to campus life tips, Wingmate is designed to give you the right information at the right time.

To get started, save Wingmate's number: 1(877) 536-7985. You will receive your first message during the first week of classes, and all you have to do is reply.

And don't forget about all the resources the Office of First-Generation Student Success and the Office of Financial Aid have to offer. Staff are available to assist with the college-going process, financial aid, and overall student success.



MEET YOUR WINGMATE:
Your friendly AI SMS chatbot specifically for First-Generation Students

Save your Wingmate's number now and look for a message the first week of classes to get the conversation started!
Your Wingmate's phone number: +1 (877) 536-7985

- Your Wingmate will reach out and share more information about the program
- Text your Wingmate questions about Tennessee Tech
- Your Wingmate will check-in with you throughout the year
- Based on how you respond, your Wingmate will connect you with helpful resources

WELCOME TO DR. LAMAR BRYANT

Student Affairs is pleased to welcome Dr. Lamar Bryant as the new Associate Vice President for Student Leadership and Engagement at Tennessee Tech University, beginning July 16. Dr. Bryant brings more than 16 years of experience in student affairs, along with a deep commitment to student success and leadership development.

He holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of North Texas, an MBA from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a Master's in Student Personnel Services from Northwestern State University. His background includes advising diverse Greek councils, leading regional leadership summits, and building programs focused on service, civility, and student engagement.

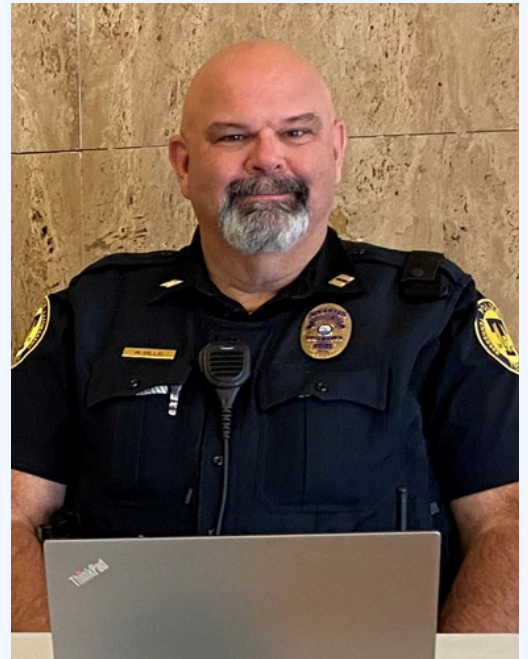
Dr. Bryant's strategic and collaborative approach will support Tech's mission and the Tech Tomorrow Strategic Plan. We're excited to welcome him to the Tennessee Tech community and look forward to the impact he'll make.



OFFICERS COMPLETE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAINING

Three officers from the University Police Department recently completed specialized training focused on domestic violence investigations. The program is designed to improve how law enforcement handles and prosecutes domestic violence cases. Participants studied a wide range of topics such as legal procedures, victim interviewing techniques, assessing risk levels, and responding to complex situations like strangulation and dual arrests.

Captain Mark Hillis, Officer Hannah Beaty, and Officer Anthony Sherrell took part in the training. The curriculum also addressed coordinated community responses, courtroom testimony, sexual assault cases, and the issue of witness intimidation. Their participation reflects the department's ongoing efforts to strengthen support for victims and improve outcomes in domestic violence cases.



PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND CONNECTION AT THE TLPSCA SUMMER SUMMIT

The TLPSCA Summer Summit was held at Trevecca University on June 13 and 14. It featured a variety of professional development workshops on topics such as Evaluation and Risk Management in Supervision, Body Dysmorphic Disorder: Identifying an Often-Overlooked Concern, and Ethical Implications for Counselors and Counselor Supervisors Working in Multidisciplinary Settings.

The Summit provided a time of insight, renewal, and momentum for the year ahead. Participants had the opportunity to engage with current issues in the counseling field, connect with peers, and gain valuable tools to enhance their professional practice.



ALCOHOL EDUCATION GETS A JEOPARDY TWIST

On March 12, the Center for Counseling and Mental Health Wellness teamed up with Fraternity and Sorority Life chapter leaders for an engaging alcohol education presentation. The event was part of an ongoing effort to promote student well-being and responsible decision-making.

Dr. Mick from the Center led the session using a Jeopardy-style format, making the conversation around alcohol use both informative and interactive. Students had the chance to test their knowledge, learn practical tips, and discuss the impact of alcohol in a fun, approachable setting.



4TH ANNUAL STUDENT AFFAIRS RETREAT

The Office of Student Affairs hosted its 4th Annual Leadership Retreat on May 15–16, bringing together leaders from across the division for two days of reflection, team-building, and strategic planning. Held at the Saltbox Inn and the Marc L. Burnett Student Recreation and Fitness Center, the retreat focused on aligning leadership practices with the division's long-term goals and improving service delivery under the theme "Strategy and Practice: Setting the Stage for 'GREAT' Service Delivery."

The first day emphasized collaborative planning through sessions like a review of the Student Affairs Strategic Plan and breakout discussions. Facilitated by members of the Executive Team, these sessions encouraged leaders to translate planning into action. The day also featured team-building activities led by Assistant Director Kim Williams.

Day two shifted focus to practical tools and resources that support everyday work in Student Affairs. Sessions covered website and social media best practices, emergency preparedness, and the university's Persons of Concern framework. The retreat ended with a reflection session, allowing participants to share insights and identify next steps as the division prepares for the academic year ahead.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: DOMINIC FOSCO

Dominic Fosco is a first-semester master’s student in Civil Engineering at Tennessee Tech and a dedicated member of the Steel Bridge Team. Now in his fourth year at Tech, he has served as both Design Lead and Captain, helping the team earn top awards in Structural Efficiency, Aesthetics, and Stiffness at their most recent symposium. He credits the team's success to their consistent effort and the strong support from faculty and university leadership.

Dominic plans to pursue a career in structural engineering, either in his hometown of Chicago or in Tennessee, where he has grown to love the Cookeville community. His involvement with the Steel Bridge Team has given him valuable leadership experience, lasting friendships, and a strong sense of purpose. He believes in leading with kindness and reliability and is especially grateful for the guidance of Dr. Huff, the team’s advisor.



HEALTH SERVICES PARTNERS IN STATEWIDE HEALTH GRANT

Tennessee Tech is one of three universities participating in a new statewide initiative funded by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services through the Promoting the Integration of Primary and Behavioral Health Care grant. In partnership with UT Martin, Bethel University, Volunteer Behavioral Health, Carey Counseling, and McKenzie Medical Center, the program supports students facing both physical and mental health challenges.

The initiative uses a collaborative care model to connect students with peer support, therapy, and coordinated care services—bridging the gap between physical and behavioral health. At Tech, JJ Oakley Campus Health Services is proud to be the delivery partner, expanding access to these important resources and supporting student well-being across campus.





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