



Facilities Management
Services Division

Newsletter

July 2023



Message from the Vice President

Congratulations, Welcome, and Thank you!
Winners of our Employees of the Quarter award.

(Continue on Page 5)

Welcome to Georgia State University

Our New Hires!

We are excited to have you join our team and look forward to your contributions to the success of our university!

Employees of the Quarter Awards!

The Employee of the Quarter award recognizes our staff who consistently provide excellent customer service. They produce higher quality work. Serve with a positive attitude and go the extra mile to help everyone. They are our stars. ★ ★ ★ ★

(Continue on Page 2)

Movers & Shakers!

Administrative Services
Building Services
Design & Construction
Facilities Information Systems
Facilities Planning
Maintenance & Operations
Renovations



JULY 2023

Employees of the Quarter!



Seabron Dock

Carpenter Foreperson, Renovations

Christian Smith

Utility Worker II, Building Services



**WINNERS OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
EMPLOYEES OF THE QUARTER AWARD**

IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering those who made their
transition.

Gerald Dean

Our Friend 1960 - 2023

Gerald Dean, of Oxford, Georgia, passed away Saturday, June 10, 2023, at the age of 62. Mr. Dean proudly served his country in the Army National Guard for 25 years before retiring.



**WE HONOR THE LEGACY OF ALL
THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO PASSED.
WE CONTINUE TO BE INSPIRED.**



Thinking About Retirement?

RUSS SEAGREN

RETIRED 7/1/2022

TEDENE DANIEL

RETIRED 8/1/2022

MAUVETT KING

RETIRED 10/1/2022

OLIVIA AMANQUAH

RETIRED 1/1/2023

XUAN NGU

7/1/2023

WELL, SOME OF OUR
COLLEAGUES HAVE DONE MORE
THAN JUST THINK ABOUT IT, THEY
HAVE LEFT THE WORK LIFE BEHIND
AND ARE ON A NEW PATH.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
FACILITIES 2023 RETIREES WHO
HAVE A COMBINED YEARS OF
SERVICE TOTAL OF**

ALMOST 125 YEARS!

**BEST WISHES TO OUR MOST
RECENT RETIREES!**

RICHARD GERALD DEAN

RETIRED 12/31/2022

OSMAN ALI

RETIRED 12/31/2022

JOHN JOHNSON

RETIRED 1/31/2023

STEVEN WHITFIELD

RETIRED 3/31/2023

JEREMY PIRTLE

RETIRED 4/30/2023

ANNIE EDMONDSON

RETIRED 4/30/2023



GSU Convocation Center – 2023 CMAA South Atlanta Chapter Project Award

Welcome Back Students, Faculty, And Staff

To the staff at Facilities Management, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your commitment and dedication to our university. Your hard work and dedication have helped to make Georgia State University the best it can be.

I am particularly proud of the work that you do every day in keeping our university safe, clean, comfortable, and appealing. Your efforts help to raise our profile and attract top students and faculty from around the world and contribute to our students' success.

I would also like to congratulate Seabron and Christian on being named Employees of the Quarter. Your hard work and dedication are an inspiration to us all. Thank you again for your commitment to Georgia State University. I am proud to work with such a dedicated and talented team.



Ramesh Vakamudi

KUDOS AND CREDITS!

Thank you!

It was so nice to have the opportunity to spend some time at the cookout and casually relax and engage with each other. In my short nine months at GSU, the facilities team has demonstrated incredible competence and dedication. Some examples of the incredible accomplishments include the renovation and reopening of Hurt Park, which now serves as a beautiful showcase at the center of our Atlanta campus. We opened and activated the new convocation center and just graduated almost 5,000 proud panthers in the building this month and we had our own beautiful space for their friends and families to celebrate them. And let's not forget about the extensive water damage that we sustained during the winter break and how this team worked day and night to stop the flooding, pivot our operations, and then immediately start on the remediation and recovery. Every day since I arrived, I have witnessed the incredible work and contributions of this team. I would be remiss not to recognize Ramesh, Kim, David, Paul, Christine, and Abdul for their leadership, and I also want each and every member of the team to know that I see your sacrifice and your dedication, and to know how much I appreciate you and what you do to bring and keep the GSU community together.

L. Jared Abramson



*Executive Vice President
and Chief Operating Officer
Georgia State University*

David Falvo is a pleasure to work with as he is exact and thorough in his planning, execution, and follow-up on projects.

David R. Brown, *Facilities Coordinator, College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office.*



Customer satisfaction is the heart of our facilities' exceptional service.

Facilities and all they do is integral and important to all of us who work and learn at GSU. We appreciate all that they do and can understand the pressure put on them daily. Anything that we can do to make them feel appreciated is well worth it.

Avani Raval,

Andrew Young School of Policy Studies



We appreciate Facilities immensely and are happy to provide some way to say thank you.

Angela D Turk and Ivan Vassall,

College of Education & Human Development

Our Facilities' commitment to exceptional customer service is unmatched.

Montrell,

We work together! Have a great day and Happy Friday!!

P.S. Thanks again for helping with the Project Activity Reports in May/June. We appreciated the support.

Good morning, Deborah!

Thank you for your willingness and commitment to train and support the growth of others. It's clear that you really enjoy what you do. Our division is fortunate indeed to have you as part of the team. Thank you. Thank you!

Hi Team,

Although I am still working on FY23 close, I wanted to thank you for all you do, your contributions to making our unit and division a success, and your amazing work attitude! I am so grateful to you, that you are on my team. I've said it before, I'm saying it again. I truly mean it.

You have such a can-do attitude and are willing to do what it takes to get the job done. You volunteer to take on more. You make yourself available to me. I so appreciate you.

Thank you for helping to make our FY23 successful. Looking forward to a successful FY24, as well!

Monica Phillips

Manager, Accounting Services • Facilities Management Admin



"BBQ Bliss:

Celebrating Our Gracious Sponsors"

Jared Abramson, Executive Vice President, and Chief Operating Officer
Gift Cards

Ramesh Vakamudi, Vice President of Facilities Management Services
Gift Cards

Shereaka De'Souza, Center Parc Credit Union
Beverage Tumblers

Leigh Barton, Athletics
GSU Beach Towel, GSU Magnets, GSU Vehicle Banner, Hot sauce

Avani Raval, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
GSU Pens, GSU lanyards, sunglasses, GSU squeeze balls, GSU notepads, boxed pens

Immanuel Chandler, College of the Arts
GSU Pens (a variety of nice pens), GSU glass paperweights

James Taylor and Torrez M. Wilson, College of Arts and Sciences
GSU Portfolio, note pads, pen set, outdoor game bag.

Angela D Turk and Ivan Vassall, College of Education & Human Development
Tumbler, GSU ID holder, GSU lanyards

Mignon Jackson and **Anjie Lymon**, College of Law
Pre-packaged GSU Gift bags (metal tumbler, socks, planner, pens, highlighter, GSU t-shirt)

Sabrina Armour, Instructional Innovation and Technology (IIT) Gift bags

Jodie M. Harper, Robinson College of Business
GSU Spiral writing tablets, GSU pens

Kristina Medina, University Events, PR & Marketing Communications
GSU Stadium bag

Bob Nichols, University Housing
GSU Socks, GSU bucket hats, GSU Squeeze balls, GSU cyber security cell phone protectors

Bob Nichols University Housing
GSU Socks, GSU bucket hats, GSU Squeeze balls, GSU cyber security cell phone protectors

Teri Lewis Organizational Development and Consulting Services.

The Facilities Crew

As we create yet another edition (though this is my 1st) of our beloved work newsletter, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the journey we've embarked on together as a team. In today's fast-paced and "Do You" society, it is often the strength of our connections that sets us apart. It is that connection, my friends, that makes the work team feel like family.

We are all a part of the largest school in the University System of Georgia. Each of our contributions is helping the overall mission of "transforming the lives of students." It is necessary for the success and superior standards that have come to be expected from Georgia State University.

In the workplace, we spend a significant amount of time collaborating, problem-solving, making the doughnuts, and supporting one another. What truly makes our team stand out is the bonds we've formed that go beyond the confines of our campuses. Just like in a family, we celebrate victories together and offer a helping hand during challenging times of life. We share more than just the work we do; we share laughter, camaraderie, and unwavering support.

A family-like work team, in most cases, creates an environment where trust flourishes. It is this trust that empowers us to take risks, explore new ideas, and push the boundaries of our potential. It also makes it easier to feel secure in a place that is ideally designed to create better people through the vehicle of education.

Our entire work team is a beautiful melting pot of diverse talents, experiences, and perspectives. Our work family has members from various backgrounds and our differences are our greatest strength. We can combine our unique skills and experiences to tackle even the most complex challenges.

In a work, family, each member is invested in the growth and well-being of the other. Our team encourages personal development, both professionally and personally. We inspire one another to learn new skills, pursue passions, and achieve individual goals. While encouraging each other to be better versions of ourselves it



contributes to the collective success of our entire department.

As we reflect on the bonds we have created over the years and our accomplishments, let us cherish our work team as a family. We must continue to foster a supportive environment, where every member feels valued and appreciated. In doing so, we ensure that coming to work feels less like a chore but more like an honor.

Here's to the unwavering power of teamwork and family. Here's to being a part of a winning team! Here's to many more years of conquering new horizons together because ultimately, All roads lead to GSU!

Georgia State Reopens Hurt Park After Two-Year Renovation



Hurt Park won the following award.

ATLANTA — Georgia State unveiled the new look of Hurt Park, a City of Atlanta property in the heart of the university's Atlanta Campus.

Georgia State President M. Brian Blake, First Lady Bridget Blake, and Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens (M.P.A. '13) hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Aug. 23 at the park.

- ★ Hurt Park received an Award of Excellence from The City of Atlanta's Urban Design Commission at the UDC's 45th Annual Awards Gala that was held on June 23, 2023.



The Convocation Center

The Convocation Center won the following awards.

- ★ 2023 CMAA South Atlantic Chapter Project Achievement Award – Specialty Contractor, Public Industry, **New Construction – Gainesville Mechanical**
- ★ 2023 CMAA South Atlantic Chapter Project Achievement Award – Higher Education, Public Industry, **Program Management, Under \$75 Million – Gleeds**





Introduction of Kelly Wilson

My name is Kelly Renford Wilson, and after 14 years of working with Georgia State University on capital projects on behalf of the Board of Regents Office of Real Estate and Facilities, I am delighted to have joined the Panther family as the Director of Facilities Planning! I have over 25 years of experience in programming, planning, and project management of educational facilities in the public and private sectors. I have worked with the GSU Design & Construction team on projects such as the Law School, the Research Science Center, and the Convocation Center, among others.

I am slowly gaining control of the responsibilities left by Russ Seagren's retirement and I appreciate the support I have received from the Facilities Management team. I look forward to working with all of you to achieve President Blake's strategic goal of "creating inviting, sustainable, and accessible physical and social spaces where people feel safe and want to learn, study, work, live, play, and connect."

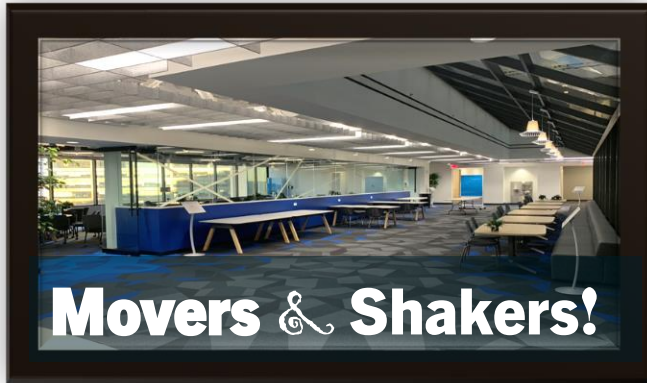


Introduction of Robert (Rob) Paltz

Hi, I'm Rob Paltz and I'm the new Operations Manager of Grounds. Prior to coming to GSU, I held positions as a Horticulturalist and Operations Manager at Georgia Tech and most recently a Director of Maintenance for several self-funded UGA properties around the state. As part of my current position, I manage an in-house landscape department as well as outside contractors. Altogether I've been with the USG for almost 17 years. So far, the GSU community has been great to work with and I hope there will be many opportunities to beautify the campus.



Design and Construction Services



The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies (AYSPS) recently moved from its leased space at 14 Marietta Street to floors 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9 of 55 Park Place. To accommodate AYSPS, the five floors at 55 Park Place, totaling over 98,000 square feet, were completely renovated. The renovations aimed to create collaborative research spaces for faculty, staff, researchers, and students to utilize while developing and working on grants, empirical research, and technical assistance projects.

The new home for AYSPS features expanded computer lab space for experimental economics and cybersecurity, a student services area for academic advisement, career development, alumni outreach, collaborative meeting and seminar rooms, and dedicated work areas for faculty, staff, and students.

The project was designed by Collins Cooper Carusi Architects, Inc. and built by Hogan Construction Group. **Brian Carroll, Sr., Construction Project Manager from Design & Construction Services**, oversaw the project management.

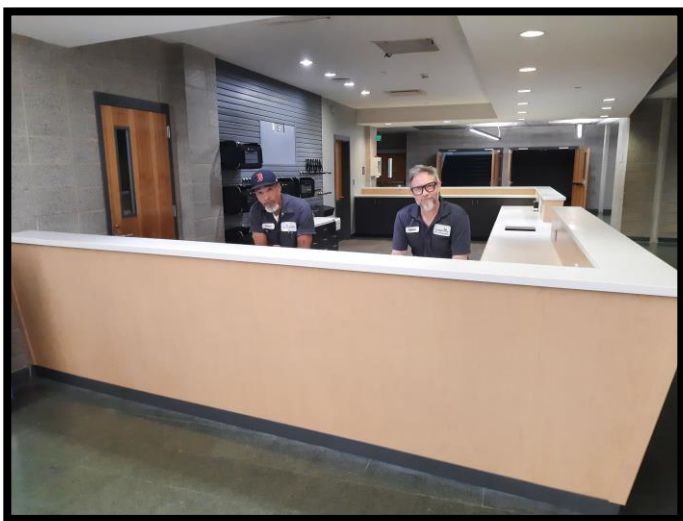
Facilities Planning



Since April, the Robinson College of Business has been working with the architectural firm NELSON to program and conceptually plan the relocation of programs from various buildings across the downtown campus to their new home in the 55 Park Place Building. This planning phase is the first step in what may become a phased construction project and migration plan that will take several years to implement.

Late May and early June involved working with the facilities team on the submission of \$7.6 million in Minor Repairs and Renovations Funding (MRRF) for various projects across the GSU Atlanta and Perimeter campuses. The MRRF submittal occurs annually and will go before the Board of Regents and the Legislature for approval in the 2024 session. GSU's Transportation Department recently received a grant from the Federal Transportation Department to transition to a fully electric fleet of buses. GSU will be the first university in the Southeast and one of the first in the nation to have a fully electric, zero-emissions fleet. The new bus depot will be located just east of the downtown connector on Old Wheat Street. Facilities Planning is coordinating to receive the Board of Regents project authorization and approval.

Renovations



Renovations employees Robert Brou and Francisco Monteiro recently installed a custom-built service desk on the lower level of the Student Recreation Center. This project, spanning over 60 linear feet, features custom cabinets, shelving, integrated electrical and data outlets, and countertops, making it one of Renovation's largest endeavors!



Seabron Dock, Renovations Foreperson designed and led the construction of a three-window viewing room at the Clarkston Perimeter Campus, room CH3240. The project transformed two separate meeting rooms into an instructional laboratory, enabling room-to-room observation. Seabron skillfully designed and built a new wall featuring three equally sized framed glass windows. The result is a professional educational space.

Maintenance and Operations

GSU's maintenance team plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and quality of the university's facilities. They are involved in various projects, ranging from renovations to new constructions, to maintain the university's standards.

One significant project undertaken by the GSU maintenance staff is the replacement of traditional lighting with energy-efficient LED lighting at the **Downtown Campus Library North Building**. This initiative not only enhances safety and reduces energy consumption but also helps GSU save money on its budget, enabling further investments into the university's overall development.



Despite being short-staffed, the maintenance team diligently manages five zones, overseeing multiple buildings, parking decks, and lofts. They handle various responsibilities, from routine tasks to emergencies, contributing to the comfort and safety of the university community.

Their dedication is evident throughout the year, as they work tirelessly, even during late nights and weekends, to ensure the smooth functioning of all facilities.

The importance of the maintenance department cannot be overstated, as they are the backbone of Georgia State University. Without their efforts, the university would face challenges like hot summers without air conditioning, cold winters without heating, leaky springs, and polluted falls. Their contributions deserve appreciation and acknowledgment from all members of the university community.

In conclusion, the GSU maintenance team is an essential part of the university's extended family. Their hard work, dedication, and teamwork significantly contribute to the success and greatness of Georgia State University. Remembering to express gratitude and recognize their efforts can go a long way in motivating and appreciating their valuable contributions. Collaboration turns dreams into reality!

Building Services

Campus Services and Custodial Services:

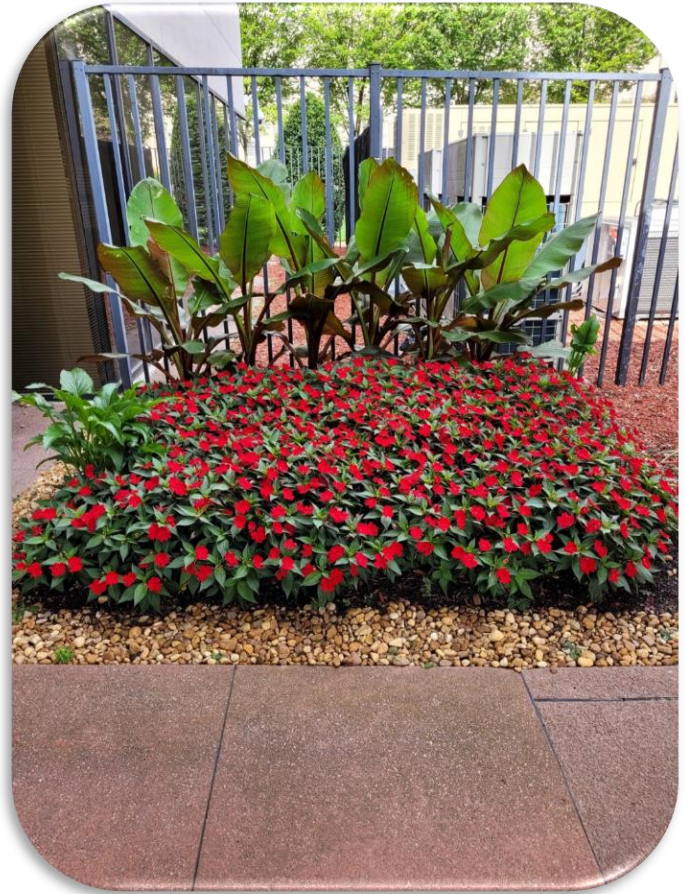


Centennial Hall

The past few months have been very busy and productive for all of Building Services. Robert Paltz joined our department as Operations Manager for Landscaping and Grounds. Robert came to us from the University of Georgia, where he oversaw all the 4-H non-profit, educational program camps in the state of Georgia. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and is already making an impact with various projects on the downtown campus. He's also working with contractors to enhance the beauty of our Perimeter College campuses. Grounds has many projects in the works, including plantings at the Peachtree Center entrance to G-deck, Centennial Hall, 25 Park Place, the PantherExpress stop at Langdale Hall, and multiple projects at all Perimeter College campuses.

Paul R. Kany

Director, Building Services
Facilities Management Division



Grounds and Landscaping Services:

Custodial Services has seen a boon in applicants and new hires over the past few months, and our vacancies are at the lowest number in years. Our staff is working hard to get all the campuses ready for what is certain to be a very busy fall semester. In addition to daily cleaning duties, we have multiple deep cleaning and floor care projects occurring daily on each campus. Grounds and Custodial Services staff are doing their best to present a beautiful and clean campus to students, faculty, staff, and visitors to all of Georgia State's campuses.

Robert Paltz

**Operations Manager, Building Services -
Admin & Support**

Administrative and Customer Services

Happy New Fiscal Year to All!

July 1, 2023, marked the start of a new fiscal year. Various units and departments are now assessing their annual spending allocations, getting contracts established, planning activities for the first quarter of the year, etc. The Administrative and Customer Service Department is here to provide support with those activities, as well as with IT and computer assistance, responding to customer service inquiries, managing every aspect of employment and payroll, etc.

While it is exciting to start anew, to get a fresh start, we should also reflect on our successes and accomplishments, examine challenges and plan for ways we can improve. Taking time to pause and review what has already been done can often inspire us to try new things, establish new goals or fine-tune existing processes and skills.

As we reflect on what we accomplished this past fiscal year, the Administrative and Customer Service Department would like to share some of what we achieved this past year (July 1, 2022, thru June 30, 2023):

1. Hired and/or onboarded 61 new employees in the past six months. Note: Most of the units/departments successfully hired at least one new employee!

2. Reviewed/managed approximately 242 requests for room reservations.
3. Initiated or processed more than 1200 requisitions, including those for Utility Contracts, PO Contracts, and Payment Forms, and we created receipts or initiated 3013 payments for the Perimeter campus.
4. Initiated or processed more than 1800 lines of billing journals for FMRs.
5. Initiated or processed more than 2300 requisitions, including those for Agency Contracts, Lease Agreements, PO Contracts, and Payment Forms; created receipts or initiated 4196 payments for the downtown campus.

While we are proud of our successes, we can also honestly acknowledge our challenges. Even so, we look forward to having a productive and rewarding fiscal year 2024, providing much-needed support to our Facilities Team and the University as a whole.



Facilities Information Services

Derrick Chisolm, a dynamic Manager of Facilities Information Systems, leads a team of skilled and talented professionals, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, streamlined operations, and enhanced efficiency within FIS. Committed to delivering exceptional customer service, we provide a wide range of services, including **enterprise computing, mobile device management, CAD/CAFM services, and space inventory reporting**, dedicated to the Facilities Management Services Division personnel.

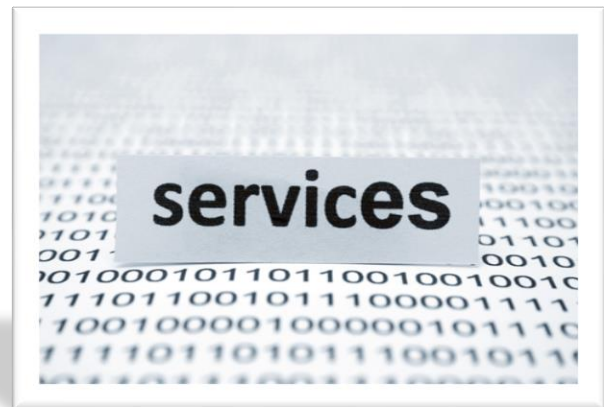
We take great pride in recognizing and appreciating the outstanding contributions of our entire team members. A special kudos goes to Deborah Dunbar for her consistent excellence in proficiently securing, protecting, troubleshooting, and monitoring nearly 400 cell phones. Along with offering personalized Microsoft training and crafting this incredible newsletter!



Furthermore, we extend heartfelt congratulations to Harvey Johnson and Debbie Loflin for their well-deserved promotions this past year. Harvey has taken on the role of Assistant Manager of Facilities Information Systems, where he now oversees the talented CAD/CAFM team.

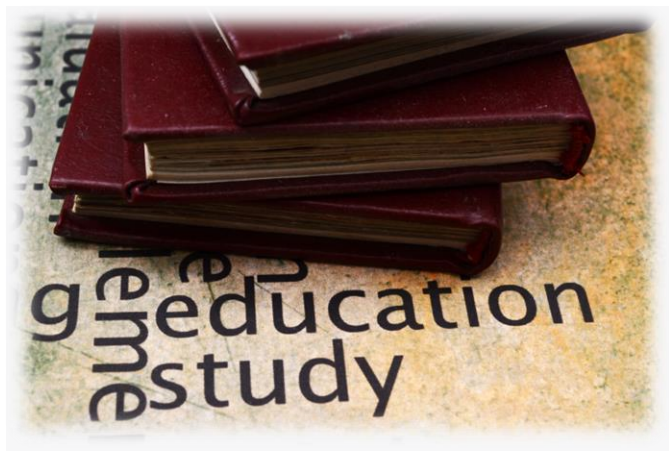


Debbie Loflin has been elevated to the position of PC Systems Specialist Lead, and continues to excel in her role overseeing Facilities' endpoint computing, while consistently driving cost-efficiency by annually saving the department



hundreds of dollars through strategic acquisition of desktop computers.

As a testament to our GSU growth and expansion in the last year, we are thrilled to welcome two new valuable team members, Tyrie Head, and Damaris Brown. Tyrie joined us in 2022, Tyrie, an exceptional Network System Administrator, provides indispensable support for our servers and network infrastructure, ensuring seamless operations and optimal performance. Damaris, a recent graduate of Liberty University with an impressive background in serving the Design and Renovations team, has joined our CAD team. Alongside Farrah Vaughan and Zuri Haley-Robbins, two highly skilled staff she will be an instrumental third CAD Specialist, contributing to the creation of fire evacuation plans and documenting Georgia State University's vast real estate, which spans nearly 15 million square feet.



Elevate Your Skills with Computer Training

Deborah Dunbar

Microsoft Certified Instructor



Unlock the full potential of Microsoft's powerful suite with our specialized training courses!

Learn to harness the capabilities of Microsoft Excel, from essential formulas to mastering pivot tables and creating insightful dashboards. Gain expertise in Microsoft Word, Access, and craft captivating PowerPoint slide decks that leave a lasting impression. Our courses cater to all skill levels, accommodating both absolute beginners and advanced employees seeking to sharpen their skills. Additionally, we offer Archibus training tailored to Facilities staff and Building Facilitators, ensuring they have the knowledge they need to excel in their roles. Don't miss out on this indispensable opportunity to enhance your Microsoft proficiency and take your productivity to new heights! Enroll today and unlock a world of possibilities.

Editor: **Christine Zelt**

Creative Design: Facilities Information Systems: **Deborah Dunbar**

Committee: Administrative: **Monica Phillips & Ursula Allen** ★ Design & Construction: **Denise Ekpoudom** ★ Fire Safety: **Jennifer McWhorter** ★ Maintenance & Operations: **Jessica Henderson** ★ Building Services: **Lucille Smith & Kevin Chappell**

SAFETY TIPS

(FIRE AND SAFETY)

Let's Get Prepared For Emergency Evacuations!



In the event of an emergency evacuation, it is crucial to be prepared.

Familiarize yourself with your building's evacuation plan and ensure you know the designated meeting site outside.

When the fire alarm system is activated, never use the elevator; always proceed down the stairs to exit the building.

Once outside, contact Georgia State Police at 404-413-3333 to report the evacuation and ensure everyone's safety.

**"Smoke Detectors
Save Lives"**