



THE NEWS RECORD BEHIND-THE-SCENES AT UC SPRING 2023

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome back for the spring semester, Bearcats!

Through the years you spend at the University of Cincinnati, you're bound to learn a thing or two about the history of the school or small quirks on campus and the surrounding area. Sure, we all know that one of the best study spots on campus is the rooftop patio of French Hall West, but do you know the evolution of our beloved Bearcat logo or just how effective UC's carbon neutrality goal is?

In this guide, we've provided you the answers to all the burning questions you didn't know you had, and then some. Familiarize yourself with the names behind UC's groundskeeping and how students on campus are working to maintain sexual wellness for the rest of their peers. Get to know all the operations taking place behind-the-scenes at UC as you flip through the pages of our spring 2023 Behind-the-Scenes Guide, and make sure to keep up with us throughout the rest of the spring semester!

Emma Balcom, Editor-in-Chief

About the Guide

Stories in the spring 2023 Behind-the-Scenes Guide were produced by staff at The News Record, the independent student news organization at the University of Cincinnati.

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Leaf it to the grounds department

STEPHANIE SCARBROUGH | MULTIMEDIA DIRECTOR

The morning air is crisp with the chill of autumn, still cloaked by darkness as dawn creeps in and the day begins to stir and awaken. Equipped with a hand-powered spreader and thick gardening gloves, University of Cincinnati (UC) employee Bill Offutt disperses a pre-emergent herbicide on landscape beds at UC's Uptown East/Medical campus, working alongside his co-worker, Jay. While the turf guys are busy killing weeds before they have the chance to surface, five other UC employees are cutting back bushes at Bellevue Gardens apartments, the residential community adjacent to the medical campus. Meanwhile, others trim and tidy the zigzag of shrubs to Woodside Garage. The litter crew scours through Main Street on side-by-side utility vehicles stopping along the way to empty garbage cans and pick up remnants from the weekend left scattered on the ground.

Hours later, once the sun has passed its zenith at 3 p.m., Offutt will have treated at least a third of the plants and shrubs that decorate the medical campus and his day's work of landscaping and beautification will be complete. He'll drive home to Lawrenceburg, Indiana, and make it there just in time to lead girls' varsity soccer practice at Lawrenceburg High School, where he is the head coach. "Then I'll be right back here at 6:30 tomorrow morning to do it all again," he chuckles.

Offutt is one of 19 laborers who make up the grounds maintenance department at UC, the team that oversees all landscaping, trash collection and snow removal across both Uptown campuses, the 1819 Innovation Hub and the Victory Parkway campus in East Walnut Hills.

From mowing, planting, pruning and mulching to cleaning up millions of pieces of that pesky confetti after football victories, the grounds maintenance crew keeps university spaces looking picturesque as the seasons change – pretty enough to lure in prospective students and keep current ones coming back to campus gems like Hammock Village at Sigma Sigma Commons and the Mews Garden hideout behind Subway. The department's success is part of the reason why [UC has been listed](#) among the world's most beautiful college

campuses, right up there with prestigious institutions like Princeton and Yale.

For Adam Gagnon, a level three supervisor within UC's grounds department, first impressions are everything; he says that attention to detail is what sets UC's landscape in a category of its own. Gagnon, who has been with the grounds department for 23 years, started out as a laborer before multiple promotions landed him his current managerial position. "We are committed to making our campus look good," Gagnon said. "If we had that 'who cares?' approach, it would look like that – 'who cares?'" An unkempt bush or low-hanging branches make all the difference in appearance, Gagnon said, and just like buying a new house, if the outside is unappealing no one is stepping foot past the front door.

But aside from the lushness of the turf that carpets Bearcat Commons and the blushing hues of cherry blossoms near the Lindner College of Business, the work of the grounds department goes beyond just aesthetics. As UC's enrollment steadily climbs, maintaining harmony between the native environment and the dense urban setting of UC's campuses has been the intent of several recent projects and initiatives, said John Martini, the university's senior landscape architect.

Martini, who has worked for the Office of Planning + Design + Construction (P+D+C) for the past five years, collaborates closely with the grounds maintenance to incorporate sustainable solutions into the biophilic design that shapes the institution's identity as a place where nature and technological advancement coincide.

A few of the ways the department in which P+D+C and the grounds department have worked together to encourage the conservation of the ecosystem include increasing the tree canopy to promote carbon sequestration, planting more perennials to help multiply bee populations and diversifying the current agricultural monoculture. Safety, Martini said, is a priority too. Last winter, 6,000 blue zinger sedge plants were installed along Corry Boulevard to minimize soil erosion in the area, which is a common trip hazard for sidewalk pedestrians.

"To improve the landscape is to the

improve the greater community," Martini explained, "and it really does take a village around here to make everything work."

While the grounds maintenance department is closer to the size of a basketball team than a whole village, its laborers work year-round to upkeep the 240-plus acres that serve as the connective backdrop for the student experience at UC. And they do so in rain, shine, sleet or snow.

Snow, in fact, is perhaps one of the most familiar conditions that grounds laborers work in. Grounds laborers are classified as essential employees, so when inclement weather hits, they might be expected to start plowing and de-icing as early as 4:30 a.m., said Beth Rains, UC's director of grounds, moving and transportation. When snow blankets the university, flexibility and preparation became central to the grounds crew's success in keeping walkways and ramps clear and accessible. Sometimes, overnight accommodations for laborers are made when especially heavy snowfall is forecasted to accumulate. "But we get it done," Rains said.

Facing the elements is something that just comes with the nature of the job, Rains said, which is simply being outdoors. It was just an appreciation for being outdoors that drew Offutt and others like him to landscaping work. It's also a part of what keeps them in the field. "I don't get rich fertilizing lawn, but it's enjoyable," Offutt said, "for me at least."

As the scarlet and gold leaves have made their way back to the dirt and laid out the welcome mat for the winter season, the grounds maintenance department at UC will continue prepping the earth for the freezing temperatures to come, awaiting the reward of bloom in the spring.

The Arts & Sciences Hall features landscaping maintained by UC's grounds department.

Stephanie Scarbrough | Multimedia Director

The evolution of our beloved Bearcat

BRIANNA CONNOCK | LIFE AND ARTS EDITOR

When thinking of the University of Cincinnati (UC), what comes to mind? Perhaps the red and black colors, the Down the Drive cheer or thoughts of our very own campus. Above all else, the beloved Bearcat mascot and iconic C-paw logo are no doubt some of the first things thought of when you hear the word “UC.”

Where exactly did the Bearcat come from? All characters have their origin stories, and the Bearcat had an interesting evolution before it became the modern mascot that we all know today.

The UC Bearcat comes in three forms: the cartoon image of the Bearcat, the C-Paw and — of course — the Bearcat mascot costume seen at sporting events and around campus.

The first time we see a primitive Bearcat logo is in 1922. According to UC Magazine, a photo of a ferocious looking bear in front of a “C” for Cincinnati is the first depiction of our mascot. However, this is simply a bear, with little cat-like elements in sight.

UC’s Archives and Rare Books Library traces the Bearcat through the decades with images. The bear mascot remains relatively the same until a book cover for the Student Union Bookstore emerges in 1944. This bear has long whiskers and is arching its back with a puffed-up tail — body language that any cat-owner would recognize. Cats rear on their hind legs and arch their backs in this manner to appear bigger in confrontation.

Six years later, we see the first edition of the Bearcat mascot costume. With a teddy bear-like face, this mascot is kid-friendly and still more reminiscent of a bear than a cat.

Throughout the 1960s and ’70s is when the Bearcat officially develops its cat-like features. Photos from Homecoming parades and sporting events during this era show floats and costumes with the black mascot that is an indication of what’s to come: the modern Bearcat.

In the 1980s, the Cincinnati Zoo’s binturong — also known as a bearcat — makes appearances at football games and other school events, which is something we still see today with Lucille the Bearcat’s popularity among the UC community. Also during this time, we begin to see the C-Paw rather than the classic “C” seen back in 1914. The cat-like characteristics added to the “C” were meant to “represent the competitive nature

of the sports teams,” according to UC Magazine.

By 2006, the Bearcat mascot is more or less what it is today. Admissions flyers and magazines portray the modern cartoon Bearcat, however we still see a fluffy, gray version here and there as a more “vintage” style.

The question remains: why a bear in the first place on that old 1922 logo? The origin story traces back over a century to a football player, a cheerleader and a student-cartoonist for the campus paper.

The Bearcat’s creation all started with a simple play on words. Back in 1914, the UC football team captain was Leonard “Teddy” Baehr. According to an earlier article in The News Record back in 2014, UC cheerleader and editor of the campus newspaper Norman Lyon began a chant at the UC vs. football rival University of Kentucky (UK) game, cheering on Baehr as a “Baehr-cat.” This was a nod to the dominance of Baehr as a player and to UK’s mascot — the Wildcat.

The “Baehr-cat” was memorialized with a cartoon drawing on the front of the campus newspaper by cartoonist Paddy Reece. He drew an image of the “Baehr-cat” chasing down UK’s wildcat for the campus newspaper.

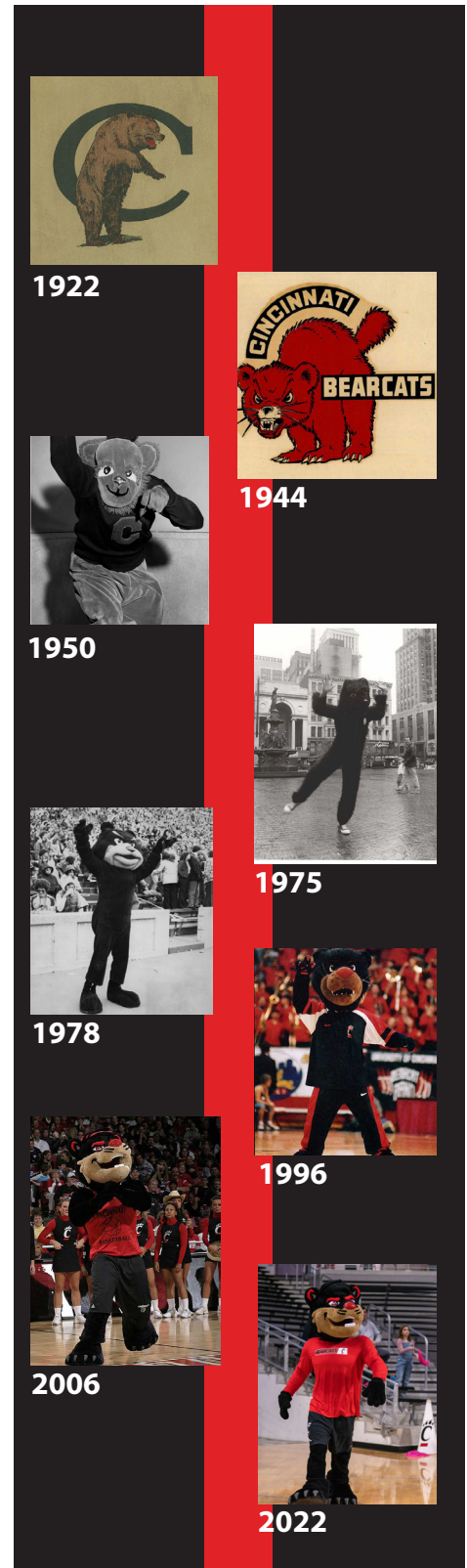
Lyon’s cheer was the first time the word “Baehr-cat” was heard on UC’s campus, but it wouldn’t be the last. The term did die off for a few years after Baehr’s graduation, but it was revived a few years later in 1919 at a UC vs. University of Tennessee football game. The UC football team was referred to as the Bearcats by the Cincinnati Enquirer, marking the first time the media used the name.

In the years that followed, there were questions as to what the Bearcat should be. It obviously had both bear and cat in the name, and it should be an intimidating and respected mascot, so early designers chose to lean towards the bear side of things in the early depictions.

The Bearcat has an evolution story that has taken a century to make it what it is today. However, evolution never ends. This calls into question — what will our Bearcat change to be over the next 100 years?

All photos part of the bearcat evolution timeline

Photos provided by the UC Archives and Rare Books Library and TNR File Art.



From pre-game prep to player care, sports medicine student managers make UC sports run smoothly

LONDON BARTLETT | SPORTS EDITOR

Prior to each University of Cincinnati (UC) football game, a team of UC Athletics staff – consisting of both full-time hires and students looking for experience in sports medicine – works hours on end to make the college football gameday experience flow smoothly. Hannah Schroeder, a third-year student, has spent the last two years and football seasons working alongside Bearcats football as a sports medicine student manager.

Schroeder, a McComb, Ohio native, studies as an undergrad in the Health Science - Pre-Athletic Training program, and has graduate school on the horizon. Schroeder was a part of the football team's program for two seasons, and spent every camp, practice and game progressing her skills in athletic training in a professional environment.

On gameday, being a sports medicine student manager required that Schroeder and her team be at the facilities six hours before kickoff. Whether it be the medical tents, coolers or equipment trunks, the student trainers prepare it all, committing hours towards gameday prep.

"My favorite part is the gameday atmosphere. We spend all this time setting things up and preparing for everything to go smoothly," Schroeder said. "I like the aspect of sometimes getting to put skills to the test. Even if it's something as small as a cut, I might have to go care for that."

While at surface level, its evident just how strenuous and busy gamedays can be, the hours that Schroeder and other student managers put into their position on a daily basis are proof that the behind-the-scenes operations don't slow down.

"[Doing this] has basically been like job shadowing every day. I think all the skills I'm learning, I will use in the future," Schroeder said. "It's the perfect mix between learning and getting to apply what I'm learning hands-on. I'm in the training room, I'm setting up the field, I'm watching our actual trainers while we're at practice and games so I'm seeing multiple aspects of sports medicine, something I really value."

Schroeder, along the seven or eight other sports medicine student managers for the football team, all start the season assigned to a specific positions group. During the 2022 football season, Schroeder was assigned to the team's offensive line, spending most of



Third-year student Hannah Schroeder works on the sidelines as a sports medicine student manager for the UC football team.

Provided | Hannah Schroeder

her time around the players to ensure they stayed hydrated and had all the equipment they needed, such as tape or bandages, to have an efficient and successful practice.

Topping the list of favorite memories for Schroeder during her two-year tenure in the role is the 2021 Cotton Bowl, the height of Cincinnati's historic season. Not only was Schroeder a part of one of the biggest events in college football at the time, but she also played a vital role in the flow and care of the team on

the sidelines of the No. 4 Cincinnati Bearcats College Football Playoff semifinal game.

Schroeder hopes to continue as a trainer in college athletics beyond graduation, but before then is joining the UC women's soccer program in the same role this spring. The grind never stops for a sports medicine student manager, and there's no doubt that Schroeder's experiences at UC have prepared her for the goals in her career.

At the end of the day, it's our health': How UC promotes sexual wellness on campus

JOE FRYE | FEATURES EDITOR



GlobeMed UC and the UC Wellness Center team up on Main Street to recognize World AIDS Day.

TNR File Art

When many people conjure images of the American university experience, themes that come to mind may include plenty of homework, plenty of alcohol and, yes, plenty of sex. Indeed, studies show that a majority of college students take part in some sort of sexual activity while in college. Although studies struggle to provide an exact number, New York Magazine's *The Cut* found [that over half of college students are sexually active](#).

Of course, with sex comes risk. According to a 2016 statistic from the National College Health Association (NCHA), only 53% of University of Cincinnati (UC) students reported using a condom or other barrier method for vaginal sex. However, despite this comparatively low statistic, Planned Parenthood says that condoms are an important part of safe sex. They are the most effective way to prevent not only pregnancy but also the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

At UC, the most visible resource that the

university puts forth in an attempt to encourage safe sex on campus is the Student Wellness Center. Located in the Steger Student Center, the center takes it upon itself to promote information regarding safe sex and to provide sexual wellness products and resources such as condoms, HIV testing, pregnancy tests and more.

"Our goal is to provide them [students] with accurate information so they can make the best decision for themselves about how to engage in sexual behaviors in a lower-risk way," said Brandy Reeves, director of the Wellness Center. "We also want to remove barriers to access to sexual health products and care."

To "remove barriers," Reeves said that the center works to create a discrete environment where students can come in and grab the products offered. Students simply check into the Wellness Center and are free to grab whatever they need out of the bins that line the walls.

Moreover, the center's "Gotcha Covered" program enlists volunteers throughout campus

to undergo a one-hour training to be able to distribute condoms to students. According to the university's website, there are 500 "Gotcha Covered" volunteers. These volunteers include staff and faculty of all kinds, including professors, RAs and more. After training, the volunteers help provide a more discrete way to use the benefits of the Wellness Center.

Reeves says that the "Gotcha Covered" program predates her arrival at UC, but that she believes it is successful both for those who are distributing condoms and information and the students who are picking up the condoms. "The Gotcha Covered volunteers report that they enjoy playing a role in providing sexual health services to UC students and being able to answer people's questions and provide resources," Reeves said. "The students who take condoms like having options for where, when, and how to get condoms and other sexual health products."

In addition to the condoms and other external barriers that the center provides, Reeves



The Student Wellness Center is housed in the Steger Student Life Center.

TNR File Art

also touts the university’s HIV testing as one of the ways that UC students can practice sexual wellness.

Offering multiple HIV testing events per month through partnerships with outside organizations, the Student Wellness Center encourages students to come in and get tested and receive their results in 20 minutes. Reeves says that these events have proven successful, with students taking advantage of each of the events.

Although the Wellness Center may be the most visible resource for students seeking sexual wellness products, it is not the only organization on campus promoting safe sex. Other groups that are not directly affiliated with the university also take part in passing out safe sex products, among other sexual wellness initiatives. One such group is GlobeMed UC, an organization that promotes all types of health and healthcare access throughout the world. Although the club’s belief that healthcare is a human right leads its members to work in all areas of health in all corners of the globe, the club does focus on sexual health at the university.

Much like the Wellness Center, GlobeMed UC passes out items like condoms and also promotes knowledge and awareness around safe sex. Different from the Wellness Center though is the location in which they pass out

condoms and literature. The club often picks a public and visible location, such as Tangleman University Center (TUC) or the Lindner College of Business, to table and spread its message.

“In our organization and our committee meetings, we talk a lot about how we approach stigma,” said Simhya Karthikeyan, a third-year medical sciences student who serves as external Global Health University coordinator for GlobeMed UC. “At the end of the day, it’s always best to lead by example, having these conversations and then inspiring others to have those conversations with people that they’re comfortable with. It’s just a domino effect.”

Past initiatives by GlobeMed UC and its members include a recent tabling event in TUC celebrating World AIDS Day on Dec. 1 to pass out candy canes and condoms, and speaking with those interested in the club. Although technically independent from the university, GlobeMed UC partners with UC resources like the Wellness Center and the LGBTQ+ Center, allowing the club to put students in contact with campus resources and therefore continue to promote sexual wellness.

“There’s been an increase in students being more aware that the university has these resources. Especially with the new opening of the Student Wellness Center right in the middle of

Main Street, plus the LGBTQ+ Center and how they overlap in their programming,” Karthikeyan said. “Students feel more comfortable reaching out.”

According to Karthikeyan, the biggest barrier to promoting sexual wellness is the stigma. Although she commended the opening of the Wellness Center and the resources provided there, she hopes to see more work done to create more equitable and open access to sexual-wellness resources and she hopes that GlobeMed UC can play a role in that. “I think the university could definitely do a better job of bringing more people into the conversation and seeing what students want to see on campus as well.”

Despite being a rather uncomfortable subject to broach, Karthikeyan does believe that changes can be made on a global, local and campus level, helping to promote safe sex everywhere. Stressing the importance of sexual health in a complete and robust healthcare system, she said, “There needs to be more opportunities and resources for students to be able to have these conversations.” She continued, “Whether or not we’re sexually active or not, whether or not you’re in public health or not, at the end of the day. It’s our health. That is something that’s going to be with us no matter what.”

Providing support to professors, TAs help keep courses running smoothly

HAYLEY GARR | FEATURES REPORTER

Professors at a large university like the University of Cincinnati (UC) say they strive for greatness in all that they do. Yet, sometimes it is hard to teach large classes, grade materials and keep up with individual classes all at the same time. In order to assist these professors and keep their classes running smoothly, UC offers a teaching-assistant program open to students. The program, in addition to providing support to professors, grants these students credit hours toward their degree.

Teaching assistants, or TAs, are students that apply to assist professors during courses they have previously completed and passed themselves. Some professors have TAs grade assignments and quizzes, take class attendance and even host office hours to assist students currently taking the course. TAs are also required to periodically meet one-on-one with their professor to make sure everything is running smoothly.

“My favorite part about being a TA this semester would be how close of a relationship I had with the professor,” said Maya Collins, a third-year psychology student who was a TA for a course titled “graduate school in the social sciences” this past fall semester. “If I could recommend one thing to those going into college or already in college, it would be to find a way to build a relationship with a professor. Working with Cathy Stough [who taught the course], I am now comfortable going to her with questions about graduate school, applications for research positions and she even wrote me a letter of recommendation for graduate school.”

Although being a TA comes with advantages for the TAs themselves, it also comes with a large amount of responsibility. Some unexpected duties of a TA include being available to the students in the course, answering questions and providing support, often at any time outside of class. Other tasks, though small, can prove especially difficult, like deciphering handwritings.

Typically, TAs are offered credit hours for their work while assisting professors. However, some students debate whether the job is worth more than just another typical required class. Some students believe there should be some kind of payment outside of credit hours.

“There should definitely be financial compensation of some kind with TAing,” says Josiah Herring, a fifth-year engineering student who was a TA last fall for a statics and basic strength of materials course. “Whether that be an hourly wage, scholarship or reduced tuition.”

However, some TAs say they believe the

credit hours provide compensation that they are content with. As such, Collins said, “For someone struggling financially, I think that this would be a good way for someone to make a little extra money when they don’t have the time to have a job during school. For me, credits worked perfectly, but I can also see why someone would want money instead and believe that it should also be an option.”

Overall, life as a TA is an extra opportunity for students to grow their resumes and gain extra credit hours. However, the work during and outside of the course is up for debate whether they are worth the credit hours, or worth more than that to hardworking students.

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UC's Latino Faculty Association aids the growth of Latino community on campus

LUKE BISESI | LIFE AND ARTS REPORTER

Life at the University of Cincinnati (UC) may seem like it hasn't changed in the last few years, with campus life buzzing as students and professors work their way through the semester. But thanks to a 2017 grant from UC's Office of Equity & Inclusion, campus life and culture have changed in a crucial manner, especially for UC's Latino community.

In 2016, Hispanics or Latinos accounted for a mere 3.2% of students and 1.8% of professors at UC. This period sparked a desire for improvement, according to Dr. Michael Odio, one of the founding members of UC's Latino Faculty Association (LFA) – especially when it came to bringing the Latino community together on UC's campus of [over 47,000 students](#).

"The growing population of Latinos in the United States is on a big-time trajectory," Odio said. "If you want your university to reflect your community, then you need to make it a place where Latinos are represented and feel welcomed."

The LFA at UC was founded in spring 2017, after receiving a \$5,000 grant from UC's Office of Equity & Inclusion.

"[At the beginning] the idea was to bring some awareness to the contributions of Latino faculty [at UC]," said Dr. Flávia Bastos, another founding member of LFA. "[In order to connect with students], It's essential for them to know where the Latino faculty are on campus."

According to statistics gathered in the [grant proposal](#), Hispanics have been the fastest-growing population in Ohio, increasing over 89% since 2000 – which is why it's become increasingly important to provide resources for current and future Latino students at UC, according to Bastos.

"[Latino faculty members] are so focused on students," Bastos said. "We always try to support and be present at the events that student [organizations] are hosting."

LFA mainly collaborates with UC Latinx en Acción, a student-led group that fulfills a similar mission to UC's Latino Faculty, according to Diana Gutierrez, the group's public relations chairwoman.

"The amount of support that we've gotten from other organizations has increased our opportunity to engage with UC Latinx students," Gutierrez said. "In comparison to how [Latino representation] looked when I was a freshman [in 2019], it's increased tremendously."

Within the last five years, Latinx en Acción has nearly tripled in size, increasing from 50 members in 2017 to 129 in 2022. This growth is partly due to the constant support and advice provided by campus resources like UC's Latino faculty, according to Odio.



The Latino Faculty Association often collaborates with the student-led group UC Latinx en Acción. Instagram | @latinxenaccion

"It's been our continued mission to bring the faculty together so that we could be more of a resource, as a whole, for other people," Odio said. "Our membership doesn't include students or staff, but it impacts all of them."

According to Odio, LFA's impact on students started small – with a few faculty members connecting to assist with UC LEAF, a campus-wide initiative that provided resources and funding for Latino students with aspiring STEM careers.

LFA soon began expanding its efforts, especially by supporting Latinx en Acción. In 2017, LFA funded a volunteer mission trip for Latinx en Acción members to travel to Puerto Rico after two hurricanes devastated the island within two weeks of each other.

"It's easy to just admit students and hire faculty [at a university] but to keep them around, you have to make them feel like this place is for them," Odio said.

LFA's organized existence at UC is beneficial for Latino students, said Bastos, especially those who may feel alone or isolated at a large university – like international students. Bastos has heard the stories of numerous Latino and minority students throughout her 21-year career at UC as a researcher and professor.

"There are a lot of things [like co-ops and finding internships] that international students are left to figure out on their own," Bastos said. "Actions that may seem simple to native

English speakers, like finding transportation and establishing residency, are difficult for international students to figure out, especially when their family can't be there in-person to provide support."

Navigating the common obstacles of a minority group is a task that the LFA hopes to lend a helping hand with, according to Bastos.

Throughout LFA's involvement with groups around campus, primarily Latinx en Acción, the prevalence of Latino-focused events continues to increase. During 2022's Hispanic Heritage Month – Sept. 15- Oct. 15 – Latinx en Acción hosted cooking classes, guest speakers, soccer competitions, a fruit sale to support the student organization and more.

One common thread links UC's Latino inclusion resources: the ability to maintain a strong bond with each other, according to Gutierrez.

Nearly seven years after LFA's founding, the quantity of Latino students at UC has increased to 4.6% of the student body, according to [UC's demographic report](#), adding nearly 1,000 students to UC's Latino community.

"[UC's Latino groups are] all one big community and safe space," Gutierrez said. "Knowing that [other people] have already been what you've been going through creates such a strong bond."

‘Both a joke and completely ineffectual’: UC’s 2075 carbon neutrality goal is well behind other universities

ZACHARY JARRELL | MANAGING EDITOR

When the University of Cincinnati (UC) announced an update to its Sustainability and Climate Action Plan in 2019, President Neville Pinto touted the school’s efforts combatting climate change – including a Gold STARS rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education – and said UC is “committed to enhancing resiliency in a future that is sustainable for all.”

“The integration of Next Lives Here and this Sustainability and Climate Action Plan lays the foundation for ensuring that the University of Cincinnati will be a global leader in sustainability – whether in academics, research or operations,” Pinto said.

However, in that Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the college states that it will strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2075 – a date far behind other universities and one that climate experts say is much too late.

“[UC’s carbon emissions goals are] obviously so late as to being both a joke and completely ineffectual,” said David Stradling, the director of Environmental Studies at UC. “If there is still a carbon economy in 2075, we’re all in trouble. There won’t be a market for carbon energy in 2075, there can’t be.”

By comparison, one college, American University in Washington, D.C., achieved carbon neutrality in 2018. The University of California in 2013 committed to emitting net zero greenhouse gases from its buildings and vehicle fleet by 2025. The Ohio State University (OSU) has committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.

Furthermore, the United Nations (UN) says that carbon emissions must reach net zero by 2050 to keep global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, as called for in the Paris Agreement – a legally binding international treaty on climate change. While UC is not a world power, it shows the goal of 2075 is far behind what scientists say is needed to lessen the effects of climate change.

“After some initial improvement, related to moving away from the purchase of coal or the burning of coal, I think UC has actually stopped making progress on achieving carbon neutrality,” Stradling said.

In an email, John Seibert, associate vice president for Planning + Design + Construction at UC, said the goal in the report was “likely articulated in that way at the time in recognition of the fact that the science and circumstances regarding climate change are fast moving and remarkably dynamic. As such, new or changing opportunities for action may come to the forefront that, currently, cannot be predicted.”

He also said UC’s progress toward carbon neutrality has “already achieved notable steps.” Seibert continued: “The university’s total carbon emissions have been reduced and were less than half those of OSU at the time of the report. Moreover, per student emissions and emissions per gross square foot at UC have been similarly reduced and were almost half those of OSU at the time of the report.”

“These strong outcomes demonstrate UC’s commitment to action toward climate neutrality, and we will continue to invest in projects to reduce our carbon footprint,” Seibert said.

On a global scale, the UN shared an urgent message in late 2020, calling carbon neutrality by 2050 “the world’s most urgent mission.” Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres wrote that “the main climate indicators are worsening.” First and foremost, he said, “we need build a truly global coalition for carbon neutrality by 2050.”

“Every country, city, financial institution and company should adopt plans for net zero – and act now to get on the right path to that goal,” Guterres wrote.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), climate change is already impacting our health, environment and economy. It is leading to increasingly worse heat waves, worsening air and water quality, and more extreme weather events – like hurricanes and wildfires – among other things.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says, “climate change is already killing us.” In the statement, released on Nov. 7, the agency said it is estimated that at least 15,000 people died due to the heat in 2022. In addition, high-impact weather and climate events led to hundreds of fatalities and directly affected over half a million people in 2021, the WHO said.

“At the individual and community level, we all need to substantially reduce our carbon emissions through more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, and by embracing a full and rapid transition towards clean and renewable energy,” the statement reads. “We have the technology – we need to find ways for it to be accessible to all countries and implemented rapidly.”

Climate change can be seen locally, as well. Though Greater Cincinnati has not seen devastating wildfires like California or head-line-grabbing hurricanes like Florida, the city still sees the impacts of climate change.

According to the city’s Office of Environment & Sustainability, Cincinnati is heating up, expected to rise seven degrees and include two major heat waves per year. Currently, Ohio averages five “dangerously hot” days per year, compared to three in 1950. By 2050, Cincinnati can expect to see over 30 dangerously hot days per year. In addition to public health, the warmer temperatures could also lead rivers like the Great Miami to shrink by 35% and agricultural productivity to suffer.

Cincinnati is also seeing more precipitation, according to the city – with heavy rain events increasing by over 40% since the 1950s. This trend could cause the Ohio River to surge by 25% in the next 30 years. Major storms, the city said, can cause major damage. In 2017, Cincinnati spent over \$50 million on storm-related issues.

“I think when talking about climate change, it’s most important not to think about how different the world will be 10 or 15 years from now, but to think about what it is that we should be doing right now,” Stradling said. “Because we do know that the actions that we take at the moment are the only ones that we can control.”

Stradling said personal decisions can make a difference. “But I think maybe we put too much emphasis on that,” he said. “I do think that students at UC underestimate the impact that they can have on the institution itself, which is to say that I think that students at UC should be demanding that UC move toward carbon neutrality as quickly as possible.”

Read all about it:

The biggest headlines from winter break

ALLISON KIEHL | NEWS DIRECTOR

CUF neighborhood proposes one-way streets

The CUF neighborhood association (CUFNA) proposed to the City of Cincinnati converting eight streets near the University of Cincinnati (UC) to one-way traffic.

The neighborhood association is working with Cincinnati’s Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) to change the traffic flow on Flora Street, Victor Street, Stratford Avenue, Chickasaw Street, Rohs Street, Wheeler Street, Moerlein Avenue and Ohio Avenue. The streets are all located south of the university’s campus and are largely populated by UC students.

“The purpose of these changes is to improve safety for bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers in the area by only allowing one-way travel on these streets that are too narrow in many places for two vehicles to safely pass,” said Matthew Hulme, division manager for DOTE.

The department has issued a survey to gain community input about the potential changes. It is open to anyone “who may encounter those streets” as a first step in the project timeline, according to Hulme.

“We’re really just trying to get the information that we need to see if this is a direction that we want to pursue or not, and then go from there,” Hulme said. “I’m going to have the survey results by the end of the month.”

This project is currently unfunded and has not been approved by the city planning commission. At this time, no changes to traffic flow have been decided.

Calhoun Hall reopens to residents, Siddall under renovation

UC students are to move into the newly renovated Calhoun Hall beginning Jan. 7, leading the way for Siddall Hall to begin its renovation process.

Like Calhoun Hall’s renovation, which began in June 2021, Siddall’s renovation process will involve the demolition of the building’s outside, as well as a reconfiguration of the dorm rooms and the creation of new common spaces, according to a Board of Trustees (BOT) Capital Design and Projects report.

The project will also include upgrades to the building’s mechanics, electric, plumbing, fire suppression, fire alarms, technology and vertical transportation systems. New landscaping and retaining walls will be added as well.

The BOT has allocated \$85 million to this project, which is set to begin after all residents have fully moved out of the building. For the remainder of the school year, students who previously resided in Siddall Hall will live in Calhoun Hall.

The timeline for the Siddall Hall renovation



Scott Satterfield, the newly announced coach of the University of Cincinnati football program, speaks at a press conference in Fifth Third Arena.

Allison Kiehl | News Director

process will be nearly identical to Calhoun, with both buildings taking 19 months to complete. Siddall Hall, according to the report, is said to be closed until June 2024.

The University of Cincinnati welcomes two new head coaches

During UC’s last fall season in the AAC, the school hired a new women’s soccer head coach, Erica Demers, and a football head coach, Scott Satterfield.

Demers replaced the former head coach, Neil Safford, to lead UC’s soccer program on Dec. 7, 2022. She is only the sixth coach to ever lead the women’s soccer team and will transition the team to the Big 12 Conference this fall.

“I’m excited and honored to lead the University of Cincinnati women’s soccer program,” Demers said in a UC athletics press release. “Cincinnati has a phenomenal soccer community and one of the top athletic departments across the entire country. I’m looking forward to getting started in early January to start competing for championships and developing the next great student-athletes on and off the field.”

Demer joins the UC coaching staff from her previous position at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

On the football field, Scott Satterfield

replaced Luke Fickell as head coach of the football program on Dec. 5, 2022. He will be the 43rd head coach of that team.

“I am honored to be the next head coach at the University of Cincinnati and am looking forward to building on the winning tradition this program has had over the last 20 years,” Satterfield said. “My family and I have admired this university and athletic department from afar for many years. I’m excited to take Cincinnati into the Big 12 this fall and ready to compete for championships.”

Satterfield previously was the head football coach at the University of Louisville.

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