

THE SEED SOWER

OU Facilities Management Quarterly Newsletter



Message from the AVP

It's remarkable how quickly the Fall 2025 semester has flown by. It feels like we just welcomed students back to campus, filled with anticipation for another exciting season of Sooner Football. Hosting a College Football Playoff game on our campus this year has been a thrilling opportunity for our community! As we close out the semester, I want to sincerely thank you for the dedication, skill, and care you demonstrate on our campuses every single day.

I also appreciate everyone who participated in the Engage OU survey earlier this semester. Your feedback provided valuable insights into our department. Every team member should have had the chance to review their team's individual results and discuss them with their supervisor.

This brings me to an important topic: our annual evaluations. Early next year, supervisors will conduct these reviews. These conversations are designed to support your growth by clarifying expectations, recognizing your achievements, and identifying the resources or support you might need to excel. To help you prepare, consider the following steps:

- *Reflect:* Note your significant accomplishments, challenges faced, and lessons learned throughout the year.
- *Align:* Revisit your goals and our safety and quality standards. Identify any tools, training, or process improvements you need.
- *Plan:* Think about your professional development—consider certifications, cross-training, or taking on stretch assignments.

Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment to excellence. Your efforts truly embody what it means to serve the OU community—every shift, every building, every day. Boomer Sooner!

Matthew C. Rom
Associate Vice President for Facilities Management

UPCOMING DATES

FINALS WEEK

December 15-19

WINTER BREAK

December 24 - January 4

SELF REVIEWS DUE

January 6th

OU LIVE WELL INFO SESSION

January 14, 8:00 AM, 705 Training Rm

OUFM ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 15, 10:00 AM

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

January 19

SPRING BREAK

March 16 - March 20

Have an idea for the next quarterly newsletter? Email Facilities@ou.edu with your idea!

FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jason Gann



Jason Gann has been a standout member of Facilities Management for the past five years, known for his reliability, leadership, and commitment to FM's core values. Whether taking on extra responsibilities or supporting his team through complex projects, Jason consistently leads with integrity and a dedication to excellence. His innovative approach has improved workflows across the department, and his team praises his ability to inspire others while maintaining high standards

Thank you for your hard work, Jason!

NEW HIRES

FACILITY SERVICES

Amya Jefferson | Oct. 19
Wyatt Dupree | Oct. 20
Acce Street | Oct. 23
Jessica Stevens | Nov. 4
Brandon Lacey | Nov. 10
Samonta Ross-Anderson | Nov. 15
Amara Blount | Nov. 30
Jesse Ramon Jr. | Dec. 1
Dyson Laster | Dec. 1
Bradley Webb | Dec. 1
Cassandra Salsman | Dec. 1
Brittaney Wilson | Dec. 1

LANDSCAPING/GROUNDS

Kevin Davis | Oct. 6
Jesus Celaya | Nov. 3

MAINTENANCE

Anthony Thomas | Nov. 3

WELCOME



MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

1 YEAR

Derrick Parker | Oct. 6
Shawn Worley | Oct. 21
Kadence Deaton | Nov. 17
Billy Atkinson | Dec. 2
Numas Aguilera | Dec. 2

5 YEARS

Anita Valdez | Oct. 26
Brandon Tiger | Oct. 26
Patricia Fite | Oct. 26

10 YEARS

Brendan Wheatley | Oct. 15
Emmeline Benally | Nov. 9
Scott Fischer | Nov. 16

15 YEARS

Robert Peshel | Dec. 14



QUARTER 4 AWARD WINNERS

Q4

LEAD/SUPERVISOR RANDY KINSEY



RANDY IS AN INTERIM SUPERVISOR IN THE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS SHOP. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 18 YEARS.

“

Randy always comes to work ready for the day and with a great attitude. He has done a great job taking over as interim supervisor, plus he always brings extra food for us to share!

”

Q4

CUSTODIAL DAINA WILLIAMS



DAINA IS A CUSTODIAN FOR CUSTODIAL SERVICES. DAINA HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 22 YEARS.

“

Daina has brought energy, honesty, and a fearless approach to her work that has made a lasting impact. Her compassion and commitment extend beyond the walls of OU-into the Norman community and beyond.

”

Q4

LANDSCAPE TUCKER CRAIG



TUCKER IS A LANDSCAPER FOR LANDSCAPE SERVICES. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 7 MONTHS.

“

Tucker has been an invaluable member of the team, playing a pivotal role in the success of this quarter's most visible and impactful initiative: the mum plantings. His attention to detail, work ethic, and commitment to excellence were instrumental in the planning, preparation, and execution of this seasonal project.

”

Q4

MAINTENANCE NOEL MATA



NOEL IS A SENIOR HVAC MECHANIC FOR MAINTENANCE SERVICES. HE HAS WORKED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA FOR 2 YEARS.

“

Noel is an incredible resource to FM. He is thorough with his work, always digging deeper than surface level to find underlying causes. He does a great job at communicating internally and with customers.

”

FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

UTILITIES MID-AMERICA TECHNOLOGY CENTER INTERNS



Jason Johnson (left) and Isaiah Sanders (right) completed their internship with Utilities. They liked learning about pumps and chillers the most, and they are excited to take their knowledge and apply it at Mid-America Technology Center.

PROMOTIONS

Congrats to the following team members on recent promotions!

Greg Beller
Landscape Supervisor

Michael Bergen
Mechanical Foreman

Jeremy Smith
Lead Locksmith

Malissa Harbison
Senior Custodian

Justin Ocegueda
Lead Custodian

Christina Jones
Landscape & Grounds Specialist

Ben Henniges-DuChene
Landscape & Grounds Specialist



KUDOS KORNER

Landscape- South Campus

"I just wanted to let you know how big of a help the landscape team was this semester. We finished our final lab last week and it was a huge help to have that field down there on south campus mowed for us. It made the whole thing go much more seamlessly and improved the student experience (and mine!) by a lot. I really do appreciate you all working that into your schedule."

FM Teams involved in Homecoming

"We are so grateful for all that FM has done for CAC Homecoming this year. This year was the best one yet and none of it could have been possible without your help. How lucky are we to have such great supporters of a student-led Homecoming. Thank you for putting the "Home" in Oklahoma!"

FEATURED TEAM MEMBERS

Congratulations, Retirees! 🎉

- Dan Alinger, Senior Shipping & Receiving Technician, 12 years of service



“Dan Alinger started in Facilities Management in November 2013. He has worn many hats and played many roles but throughout everything, his first priority was serving his customers and the University to the best of his abilities. Dan helped maintain the Tool Crib for many years, the last of which he managed on his own before the transition to Material Management. Over the last 4 years, the department increased from 1 to 8 team members, significantly expanded in square footage, and completely shifted operations. Dan was a huge help during the transition and has continued to be a big part of Material Management's accomplishments. His skills and knowledge have been an integral part of the department's growth and success. His resourcefulness and problem-solving capabilities have made him an invaluable member of the team, and he will be dearly missed. The FM family is thrilled for Dan and his next chapter.”

- Geena Brownell

- Kiff Day, Senior Landscape & Grounds Specialist, 11 years of service

“Kiff is a valuable employee and is going to be greatly missed.”- Ronny Senn,
Supervisor

“I enjoyed coming to work, getting to do this job, and working with my coworkers.”- Kiff



Pictured Above: Logan Kuhn



Pictured Above: Kyle Armon

Safety Champions

Logan Kuhn and Kyle Armon from Material Management completed the FM Safety Recognition Program this month. Congratulations, Logan and Kyle!

FEATURED ARTICLES

LiveWell OU Event

All FM Team Members are Invited to **Learn About LiveWell, The Employee Wellness Program.** Livewell is FREE to join, and includes Wellness Activities, Challenges, Building Healthy Habits, and more!

When: **Wednesday, January 14th**

Time: **8:00 am - 9:00 am**

Where: **705 E Lindsey-Training Room**

What is LiveWell OU?

LiveWell OU is the University of Oklahoma's comprehensive employee well-being program, managed by HR, designed to support staff across eight dimensions of wellness: Physical, Financial, Spiritual, Emotional, Social, Intellectual, Occupational, and Environmental. Each of these areas contributes an important part of our overall well-being. Through challenges, resources, activities, and incentives via their online portal, aiming to foster a healthier, more engaged campus community. Participation is free and available year-round.

For specific questions, please contact the team at wellness@ou.edu



OU Engage 2025 Q12 Survey

83%

Thank you to everyone who completed the OU Engage 2025 Q12 Survey. Facilities Management had an impressive 83% participation rate!

Applications Opening: 2026 FM Committees

Please keep an eye out for upcoming email communication regarding applications to serve on an FM committee. The application period is now open and will close on Friday, January 16. Use the QR code below to access the application.

The available committees are Policy, Events/Recognition/Engagement, Safety, and Learning & Development. Please be sure to follow the instructions in the email to complete your application. This is a great opportunity to serve on a committee that aligns with your interests and contribute recommendations and ideas for 2026.

Thank you to everyone who served on a committee in 2025!

Scan to Apply by January 16!



FEATURED ARTICLES

Ellison Hall Lighting Project

The FM electric shop and sustainability team successfully completed a major lighting upgrade at Ellison Hall. This initiative replaced fluorescent T8 and can lamps with energy-efficient LED Type B lamps, reducing overall energy demand and extending lamp life significantly. The project is projected to save more than 400,000 kWh over its lifetime, translating to \$41,845 in energy savings and an additional \$6,028 in material cost avoidance.. Beyond the impressive impact on efficiency, the new lighting improves overall building comfort and reliability, delivering a brighter, more sustainable environment for everyone who uses Ellison Hall.

This project reinforces FM's ongoing commitment to energy efficiency and long-term value campus wide



Tree Services Learning Event



Facilities Management, in partnership with the Campus Tree Committee, recently held a Service Learning Event as part of the university's commitment to maintaining its Arbor Day Tree Campus designation. Students, faculty, and staff came together on the South Oval to learn proper tree pruning techniques that promote long-term health and ecological sustainability.

Proper pruning is essential for the health and longevity of trees. Participants gained firsthand experience by learning about dead or weak branches, how pruning reduces the risk of disease, storm damage, and improves structural integrity, encouraging healthy growth patterns. These practices ensure that our campus trees remain strong, safe, and vibrant—supporting biodiversity and creating a welcoming environment for everyone.

Through collaboration and stewardship, OU continues to cultivate a greener, healthier environment for generations to come. 🌳

FEATURED ARTICLES

Fall Festival Recap

Our FM celebrated the annual Fall Festival on October 10, offering both overnight and day-shift employees a chance to connect and enjoy seasonal food.

The event began with a Fall Festival Breakfast for the overnight crew at Couch Cafeteria, featuring a warm and hearty menu including a waffle bar, turkey legs, smoked sausage, corn dogs, and Frito chili pie. The breakfast provided a meaningful opportunity for night-shift staff to spend time together outside their normal work routines.

Later in the morning, day-shift employees gathered at Burr Park for the Fall Festival Lunch, which included a baked potato bar and other festival favorites. Voluntary games added an element of friendly competition, giving employees the chance to win prizes and engage with colleagues in a relaxed setting.

This year's Fall Festival offered a welcoming space for FM employees across shifts to connect, unwind, and celebrate their shared commitment to the OU community.



Pictured Below: team members of the Utility Services department



Pictured Above: team members of Custodial overnight teams

FEATURED ARTICLES



Important Update: AiM URL Change Effective January 1, 2026

Starting January 1, the AiM website will move to a new address:

OU.Assetworks.Hosting.

Please update your bookmarks and shortcuts

when you return from break.

This change comes as AssetWorks transitions to Amazon hosting services, delivering improved performance and faster speeds for all users.

Boomer On The Shelf

Season's greetings from Boomer on the Shelf! This year, our FM General Services team has taken on the festive task of placing "Boomer on the Shelf" on various rooftops across campus. Brian Clark has been in charge of leading the project, with support from team members each day. The team not only transports Boomer to the rooftops but also carries additional equipment. Keep an eye out—Boomer will continue making appearances around campus through December 24th!



Holiday Lights Display

Utilities Services has successfully completed the infrastructure work required to bring OU's holiday lights to life on November 19th. This marked a major collaborative effort to create a festive atmosphere for the campus community. The project preparation included installing new electrical infrastructure from the Bizzell Library subpanel to the Gingerbread projector housing through the underground tunnel system, ensuring a reliable power source with minimal surface disruption. Additional work involved running a new circuit from the George Lynn Cross external subpanel north through the South Oval to power both the signature tree and the centerpiece Holiday Tree—features that served as focal points of this year's display.

Utilities Services maintained a clean, safe, and accessible environment, helping ensure that this year's holiday displays are shining brightly while preserving the beauty and spirit of the season at OU.



Pictured Above: OU Holiday Lights event at the South Oval, on Nov. 19.

COMMITTEE UPDATES



Events, Engagement & Recognition

Chair: Patrick Downs

The Events, Engagement, and Recognition committee had an incredible year! Our Fall Festival saw record participation thanks to interactive games and competitions—feedback was overwhelmingly positive! We fine-tuned menus and prizes based on input, and proudly added OU Athletics tickets to giveaways. Huge thanks to OU Athletics for supporting Facilities Management. Here's to building even more excitement in the year ahead!



Safety

I would like to thank those team members that served on the Safety Committee in 2025.

- Kyle Brunsmann, Chair
- Kenneth Credille
- Kyle Armon
- Jesse Dees
- Dakota Hill
- Bessie James
- Alex Loftus
- Tristan King

We will be sending out new interest forms by the end this week. If you are interested in serving, we would love to hear your perspectives. Please consider serving.



Learning & Development

Chair: Korey Wheeler

After a short hiatus, the Learning and Development Committee is ready to come back strong in 2026! The department has many new learning and development initiatives in the works for next year (hint: the Advisory Council minutes and OKRs give a sneak peek). Be on the lookout for your chance to get involved on this committee. We also have an early 2026 event planned with LiveWell OU that includes great resources, along with free swag and money! Save the date for January 14 to learn more.



Policy

I would like to thank those team members that served on the Policy Committee in 2025.

- Chair: Stuart Simpson, Landscape
- Jeremy Smith, Maintenance
- Grant Eason, Administration
- Jason Gann, Custodial

We will be sending out new interest forms by the end this week. If you are interested in serving, we would love to hear your perspectives. Please consider serving.

HR UPDATES



SAFETY UPDATES

Happy Holidays! Another year is almost behind us. Reflecting on the year in safety feels like we have made good progress. Many of our team members completed:

- Stop-the-Bleed Training
- CPR Training
- Extinguisher Training

Our Safety Recognition Program was completed by five team members:

- Marta Morgan
- Logan Byers
- Stephanie Cunningham
- Logan Kuhn
- Kyle Armon

Congratulate them next time you see them!

In 2026, we will have some new safety-related programs and training to look forward to: rigging safety, department inspections, and various equipment training, to name a few. I hope you have a great holiday! See you in 2026!

-Jeff Mlekush



HR UPDATES



The department is busy developing several exciting initiatives for 2026. While those plans are underway, I want to take a moment to remind team members of the many learning and development opportunities already available through the university. These include a variety of career development offerings such as employee workshops and programs, which are regularly shared on the events calendars posted near the clock in/out kiosks.

The university also offers a new leader development program, which is an 18-month comprehensive experience that provides approximately 40 hours of leadership development. In addition, employees have free access to LinkedIn Learning, which offers on-demand video courses covering topics ranging from leadership and professional skills to software and technical training, as well as opportunities to earn certifications entirely online. To learn more visit: <https://hr.ou.edu/Employees/Career-Development> or learninganddevelopment@ouhsc.edu

LIKE & FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

 @OUFACILITIES

 @OUFACILITIES

 @OUFACILITIES

Did you know?

The Sooner Schooner was introduced in the fall of 1964 and became the official mascot of the Oklahoma Sooners in 1980