

# MyArlingtonISD

## HOLIDAY EDITION

Comments from You!

A Message From  
Dr. Cavazos

The Gift of Goodness

Tech Corner

Employees  
of the Month

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## REFLECTIONS

To wrap up 2020 for MyArlingtonISD we wanted to hear from you. It's been a crazy year so we asked some of our stakeholders a series of questions. Here's what they had to say.

### A YEAR FROM NOW WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK BACK AND REMEMBER ABOUT THIS TIME?

"I hope I remember how much we had to pull together to make things happen - that it took us all to be successful. I have a mindset this year that I am not just a librarian, but I am whatever I need to be when asked to fill a need."

**Karen Patterson, Webb Elementary librarian**

"I think I will look back and remember that I can do anything that I put my mind to. I will remember that I never gave up, I kept trying, I kept working, I made the best of the situation we were all in. 2020 did not defeat me. I defeated 2020."

**Janae Champion, Morton Elementary teacher**

"I hope I look back and remember two positives: my family may have been apart but we talked more than ever and all of the friends and coworkers who jumped in to provide emotional support for each other on the really tough days."

**Michelle Heath, Seguin High School advanced academics coordinator**



SEE REFLECTION, PAGE 2

## A MESSAGE FROM DR. CAVAZOS

If this edition of *MyArlingtonISD* looks a little different to you, that's because it is.

Instead of a feature story on a teacher or a department, we wanted to hear from you about what's happening in your lives as we close a memorable 2020. You didn't disappoint, either. We had tons of responses from our schools about what people are thankful for, their favorite gift and what they're going to remember about 2020 when they look back at this time next year.

It was wonderful reading the responses about being thankful for the people you're working with. That may have been my favorite part of the story. We've worked to build an outstanding culture in the Arlington ISD, and while this year has been a test it's also been a testament to how strong that culture is.

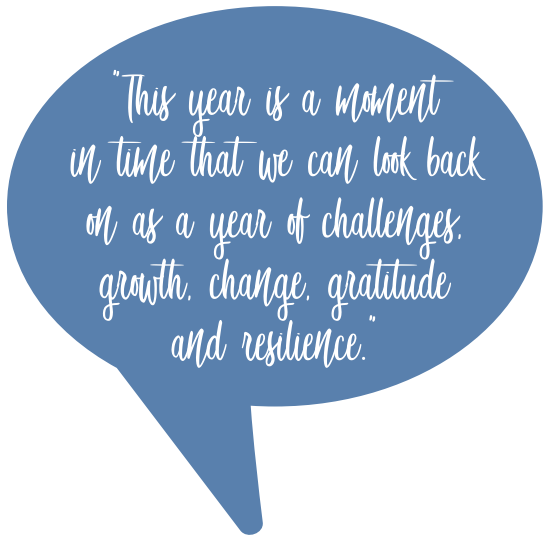
Even though it was a short month, we were still able to honor our December employees of the month. That's still one of my favorite things to do each month, even during a pandemic.

I'd like to finish this by giving my thanks to you for everything you've done to make 2020 as successful of a year as possible. It's been challenging for sure, but you've met that challenge head on every day. I hope you have a wonderful holiday break and stay safe.



"I am going to remember how much time I spent with my husband, son and daughter. I have learned while being quarantined how much my daughter enjoys drawing and painting! My son has taught me how much he loves soccer! He is always dribbling his soccer ball when he is inside. My husband has taught me the importance of communication." **Camille Austin-Henderson, Sherrod Elementary counselor**

"I think next year I am going to look back with pride for all the personal and professional growth, not just in me or even at my school, but as a profession, we have achieved. I don't think I will ever forget the year we had to "teach on our toes" and how much I learned from the open hearts and willingness to reinvent our entire profession I've witnessed in my colleagues." **Beth Simmonds, Seguin High School teacher**



"I think that in the coming years, I will look back on this holiday season as the year that I got to spend so much quality time with my son and my husband cozying up at home, making memories and partaking in simple, old-fashioned holiday traditions." **Emily McCray, Young Junior High teacher**

"I'm going to remember how resilient we are as a society and as human beings. This year is a moment in time that we can look back on as a year of challenges, growth, change, gratitude and resilience. We have had to evolve and adapt to our current situation, and we've done what it takes to have some 'normalcy'." **Leigh Ann Seward, Sherrod Elementary teacher**

"I am most likely going to remember much of the chaos from this year surrounding the election, race, relations and of course the pandemic." **Sarah Pollan, Young Junior High associate band director**

"That I made it through it all!" **Sydney Williams, Young Junior High teacher**

"I think we will all look back on this time and feel appreciative of all we learned and grew through. Growing is a good thing even if we don't know it as we are experiencing what it is taking to do so. We will be better for it next year!" **Heather Garcia, South Davis Elementary assistant principal**

"One thing I will look back on a year from now will be the joy I had from working from home. Even though I worked long hours, I had peace of mind about not getting infected." **Rose Darkwa, Seguin High School assistant principal**

"I will look back and remember how it made my teenage nephew and my relationship closer than it already was. It forced us to slow down and be grateful for things that we take for granted and we started new traditions that we will continue even when restrictions have been lifted." **Cristy Sanders, Hale Elementary teacher**

"This has been a rough year for everyone. As a teacher, I think that when I look back at this time, I will remember how no matter what was going on, we stood up to it and made sure that our students were being educated and were given all we had to offer." **Amy Rainey, Rankin Elementary teacher**

"How much my class helped me grow as a teacher." **Haley Hutchins, Hale Elementary teacher**

"We will remember to live every day to its fullest. Cherish your loved ones. We have lost three important adults in our life in the last month and I'll remember to always stay a little longer, visit just because and soak up the God winks in the moments of each day." **Whitney Terrell, Duff Elementary STEM manager**

"I will remember that there were so many things that felt difficult throughout this experience. However, I will remember that there were many things that were great as well." **Jennifer Franklin, Duff Elementary teaching assistant**



## THE GIFT OF GOODNESS

We live in a unique time. Never before has the world been so small and accessible. People from distant lands can board a plane and within hours travel to the other side of the planet populated with individuals who share a different culture and value system. With the click of a few buttons, we can connect face-to-face with those living in various time zones and engage in conversations that challenge our thinking and expectations. Information is doubling at a pace that far exceeds our ability to consume it. New ideas saturate our living rooms and bookshelves as they are published and put on the air at a once inconceivable rate. If you had asked a person even 25 years ago what today would be like, I would venture to say it would have been a stretch of the imagination at best. And while these advances may generate some unique challenges, I believe that our exposure to each other, our individuality and diverse thoughts is actually a gift.

What makes a gift so special? Is it the wrapping paper covering the package with colors and patterns that pique our curiosity and insight emotions of excitement and anticipation? Is it that the gift was unexpected and an expression of someone's care for us? There is probably an endless list of reasons why gifts feel significant to us. I would like to suggest that the reason that gifts are generally received with joy is that they represent goodness. That goodness is not wrapped up in paper or delivered with a bow. The goodness is actually felt and discovered in the unseen positive motivation that we sense from the gift giver themselves. And that goodness is available to us every day.

Goodness is all around us. It is found in the new people we meet and the new ideas they

share. Goodness is easily visible if it is sought with intent. Discovered goodness breaks down stereotypes and holds space for individuals to authentically show up and be seen. Adults and children alike have goodness, and when we intentionally look for it, we can see their humanity and become a source of encouragement. Alexs Pate in *The Innocent Classroom* writes, "People learn better from people who they believe care about them." What are some things we can do to effectively foster the relationship-building process in both students and each other? Pate has three suggestions:

1. Believe that good exists in each of the children [and adults] we work with;
2. Believe it is possible for us to discern the good in each of them; and
3. Believe that responding to their good will affect their engagement level and create an environment without the weight of negative narratives, stereotypes and iconography.

Each of you... your talents and ideas, your personalities and cultures, your backgrounds and skills... no matter from where in the world you come... all of those things that make you different constitute a gift you offer to the world. When embraced in others, those same things are a gift received by each of us individually that blesses our lives. As you round the final days of this year, may you intentionally find the good you carry and seek it out in those you meet.

*Dr. Steven Wurtz is the Arlington ISD  
Chief Academic Officer*



“A year from now I will look back and think ‘Wow, I really did make some great Seesaw activities that were kid friendly and inquiry based.’ I allowed myself to become a student. Clicked on anything just like my kids. Made many mistakes just like my kids. I kept clicking, learning and creating! I loved the mistakes, the work and the whole experience. I will also think of the ways my school admin supported me. The way my Crow family, even with newbies, stuck together through the ugly and uncertainty. How everyone was stressed, tired, sick and just crazy with everything going on but we never stopped or gave up. Someone said to me that ‘Teachers do not teach for the money’ and that is so true. We teach because we love our children, and we want to help them learning even through all this.” **Amalia Davis, Crow Elementary teacher**

“How crazy and unexpected it has been! Also, how we were all able to get through it and do hard things!” **Hannah Cambron, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“I will look back and remember that it was a tough time and not to take anything for granted, one day your here and the next one who knows. Enjoy life and your family. Live day by day and make the most of it.” **Evelyn Rivera, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“I will remember sadness for the people who were lost. I will remember the people who I have worked with for so many years. I will remember and miss all the children and their families whom I have taught over the 23 years I have been here. I will miss my friends but will remember the fun and much laughter we have shared. I still can’t speak Spanish well; but have found that I can make up words in Spanish, just like I can in English. Mostly, I will remember the love that I have gotten and given at Crouch.” **Susie McVay, Crouch Elementary teacher**

I think in a year I will look back and remember the way we have come together to take care of one another and to help each other.” **Cherise Collins, Key Elementary counselor**



## WHAT ARE YOU MOST THANKFUL FOR THIS YEAR?

“I am thankful for my health, family and my job here at AISD. While many people are without work, AISD has worked hard to make sure we are able to work as much as possible, either virtually or F2F.” **Karen Patterson, Webb Elementary librarian**

“My health and that of my family.” **Michelle Heath, Seguin High School advanced academics coordinator**

“I am most thankful this year for my family. I realize how precious our time is and the importance of making connections with them through FaceTime & Zoom!” **Camille Austin-Henderson, Sherrod Elementary counselor**

“That with everyone complaining about 2020 and how horrible it has been that I was hired by the best principal in the district on my birthday in 2020. So, there have been some great things that have happened in 2020.” **Cristy Sanders, Hale Elementary teacher**

“I am most thankful for my Seguin family, particularly our administration, for stepping up every day to cover for each other, lift each other up, and protect each other medically and emotionally during this exhausting school year.” **Beth Simmonds, Seguin High School teacher**

“I am most thankful for my new campus, Morton Elementary, accepting me into their family.” **Janae Champion, Morton Elementary teacher**

“This year I am most thankful for the life that was chosen for me. I am blessed to be a part of a school that means so much to me. Rankin will always and forever be my home. I have been in this building since I was 5-years old and there is nowhere else I would rather be.” **Amy Rainey, Rankin Elementary teacher**

“Where work is concerned, definitely my team! We work so well together and all truly enjoy our jobs. This has allowed us to build our spirits and support each other through these challenging times. I am a better teacher because of them. Personally, I am thankful for such an amazing family who I love more than anything.” **Sydney Williams, Young Junior High teacher**

“I am most thankful being in a position in my life where I can help others and have the chance to be a positive influence in the lives of the people in my life (especially students). I’m grateful for my family and my boyfriend and friends and without them I would not be where I’m at today.” **Veronika Brzezina, Amos Elementary music teacher**





The technology integration and innovation department (TI<sup>2</sup>) would like to congratulate district and campus staff on the successful completion of the first semester of the school year.

TI<sup>2</sup> invites campus staff to access a 'Gratitude Flipgrid' to hear each member of TI<sup>2</sup> describe the vital importance that teachers, librarians, campus techs, coaches, clerks, counselors, TAs, and campus administrators play in ensuring student success. Access the videos at <https://bit.ly/ti2gratitude>.



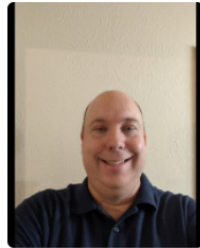
**Crystal Lee** ❤️  
Thank you Counselors!



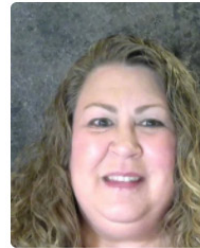
**Lori Heaton** ❤️  
Thank You to Our Elementary Librarians!



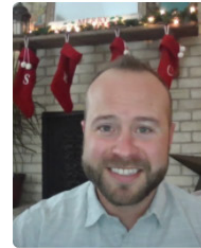
**Jessica Mays** ❤️  
We appreciate our secondary teachers!



**Kenny Pinkerton** ❤️  
Thank You to the Secondary Librarians!!!



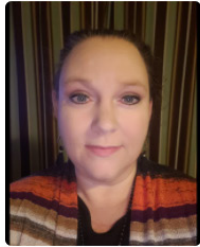
**Livanne Mirabelli** ❤️  
Thank you Instructional Coaches!



**Stephen Hayes** ❤️  
Thank you PreK-2nd Grade Teachers!



**Steve Simpson** ❤️  
Thank you Office Staff!



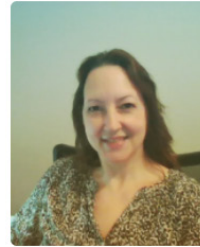
**Deann Thompson** ❤️  
Thank you, 3rd-6th Grade Teachers!



**Susan Anderson** ❤️  
Thank you Campus Administrators



**Jim Holland** ❤️  
Thank you Secondary Teachers!



**Lesley Cano** ❤️  
Thank you, TAs and Student Teachers!



**Julie Moore** ❤️  
Thank You to CTMs and BTCs!

No single person or role within Arlington ISD can ensure that students leave the district "future-ready," and the same is true for any single department. It takes a unified effort to ensure that AISD learners become future ready through intentional technology integration, purposeful technology usage, and effective use of relevant resources.

Thanks to everyone throughout the district who helps TI<sup>2</sup> advance its mission day to day, month to month, and semester to semester. Best wishes for a restful and relaxing winter break!

## DYNAMIC DIGITAL RESOURCES FROM LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES

Did you know that you have access to an entire digital library of Chilton auto repair vehicle and service manuals? There are manuals back to the early 1900s! Now it may not seem like a fun way to spend your holiday, but sometimes the holidays is the only time you have to get serious about car repair and maintenance. You can access these resources by clicking on the Chilton image below and using the credentials: **username: aisd** and **password: student**.



*Happy car repair and happy holidays from Library Media Services!*



**EMPLOYEES  
OF THE MONTH**



- 1. *Sadie Harvey*  
Short Elementary  
Elementary Teacher of the Month
- 2. *Michelle Clemmer*  
Gunn Junior High  
Junior High Teacher of the Month
- 3. *Sydney Bustamante*  
Lamar High School  
High School Teacher of the Month
- 4. *Sarah Heroman*  
Department Employee of the Month

**MONTHLY MENTIONABLES FOR JANUARY 2021**

Texas School Board Appreciation Month \*tasb.org  
National Mentoring Month

New Year's Day	Jan. 1	School Board Recognition at Board Meeting	Jan. 14
Teacher Prep Day	Jan. 4	World Religion Day	Jan. 17
Start of Fourth Six Weeks	Jan. 5	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Student/Staff Holiday)	Jan. 18
Elvis Presley Birthday	Jan. 8	Chocolate Cake Day	Jan. 27
School Resource Officers Day	Jan. 9		





## Thankful Continued

"I am most thankful for my friends and family. Their love and encouragement has really helped me handle all of the stresses that this challenging year has presented." **Emily McCray, Young Junior High teacher**

"It is really hard to narrow this down to one thing I am thankful for so I'm going to make a short list: Jesus. He loves me even though I let Him down. My husband. We got married April 25, 2020 during a pandemic. My family. I would not be who I am today without the love and support I have received over the years from my family. My teammate, Alex Cox. She is not only a first-year teacher, but a first-year teacher during a pandemic and she is one of the hardest working people I know. I am very thankful to have such a wonderful teammate!" **Suzi Luger, Sherrod Elementary teacher**

"Our health, our home, and the fact that I am still employed during a time when so many others have been furloughed or let go completely." **Sarah Pollan, Young Junior High associate band director**

"I am most thankful for the health and safety of my family and my school family this year. We have been blessed beyond measure to all be standing here when so many have been lost to the pandemic." **Heather Garcia, South Davis Elementary assistant principal**

"I am most thankful for life. With all the lives of friends and family we have lost through COVID, I'm so thankful to be alive now." **Rose Darkwa, Seguin High School assistant principal**

"I am thankful for my physical and mental health, my family, my job(s), and the reminder that time is precious - so using time wisely." **Leigh Ann Seward, Sherrod Elementary teacher**

"More time with my family and less rush, rush, rush." **Jeanmarie Bryant, South Davis Elementary teacher**

"My family and health." **Haley Hutchins, Hale Elementary teacher**

"I'm thankful for all the unexpected time with my kids and husband when the world lock up. We learned more about each other and was forced to slow down. We took walks, rode bikes, played games and laughed a lot." **Whitney Terrell, Duff Elementary STEM manager**

"I am most thankful for my family and friends sticking together and pushing through some of the hard or difficult situations that 2020 brought." **Jennifer Franklin, Duff Elementary teaching assistant**

"Health, and spending quality time with my immediate family and husband after living in Seattle for a year." **Rocio Vargas, Crouch Elementary teacher**

"So far, being healthy and not catching COVID-19." **Myda Owens, Crouch Elementary teacher**

"I am most thankful for my family and for our health and safety in such uncertain times." **Hannah Cambron, Crouch Elementary teacher**

"Being healthy and debt-free." **Brigitte Palm, Key Elementary clerk**



## WHAT'S THE BEST GIFT YOU'VE RECEIVED AND WHY?

"My best gifts ever are my grandkids! I have a dozen (6 girls and 6 boys). The youngest was born during this pandemic and she has been such a blessing!" **Karen Patterson, Webb Elementary librarian**

"My baby brother. He was born on December 23 and got to come home Christmas day. Best present ever." **Michelle Heath, Seguin High School advanced academics coordinator**

"The best gift I have received was a drawing from my daughter for my office." **Camille Austin-Henderson, Sherrod Elementary counselor**

"The best gift I've received is the realization and learning experiences that taught me that I'm in charge of my own life and therefore what I'll make of it, is what it'll be! The future is in my hands (and God's)." **Veronika Brzezina, Amos Elementary music teacher**

SEE GIFT, PAGE 8



“Laughter is the best gift I have received this year. I didn’t realize how much I depend on my students and my coworkers to lift me up on a daily basis until last spring. I cherish every moment I have with them and the fun we have learning together.”

**Beth Simmonds, Seguin High School teacher**

“The gift of some of my students attending class in person and working more closely with families.”

**Jeanmarie Bryant, South Davis Elementary teacher**

“The best gift that I have received is to be able to do what I love at a place that I call home. I have had some close calls, but it has always worked out in my benefit.”

**Amy Rainey, Rankin Elementary teacher**

“My favorite gifts always involve time spent together, like entertainment tickets or spontaneous trips. When my husband bought a firepit set for our backyard, we had no idea how frequently we would gather together with family and friends to solve the world’s problems! We’ve shared many celebrations and struggles around that fire, and it has become a cherished place at our home.”

**Dee Richardson, Key Elementary teacher**

“My best gift is that I get to see my 90-year-old father in person this Christmas. He is in a veteran’s home in Union Grove, Wisconsin. There have been several cases of COVID-19 in his nursing home, so we have not been allowed to see him and he has been confined to his room for the greater part of the last nine months. He celebrated his milestone 90th birthday all alone in his room. I get to take him to his doctor’s appointment and see him in person next week!”

**Carol Whitehead, Bailey Junior High teacher**



**“The best gift I’ve received is a baby girl she is now one-year-old.”**

**Dominique Ezell, Hale Elementary family engagement liaison**

“Definitely my children! My husband and I went through many years and treatments and were blessed with the two greatest kids a parent could have.”

**Sydney Williams, Young Junior High teacher**

“The best gift I’ve ever received was nothing that can be purchased. My strong family ties from my grandparents down. I am grateful that they always instilled good values in my sisters and me. Many people such as my early childhood teachers always encouraged me to be the best me! The reason this was such a great gift was that no matter what has come my way throughout life I knew that I could overcome and that I was worthy of great things.”

**Jennifer Franklin, Duff Elementary teaching assistant**

“The best gift that I have received is my adult children still appease me and never miss spending a holiday with me... even if we spent it virtually this year. They recognize how important it is to me and they make sure that they don’t disappoint me by not spending it with me.”

**Cristy Sanders, Hale Elementary teacher**

“The greatest gift I ever received was actually one I received just last year. My husband gave me a painting that had been painted by an orangutan by the name of Sumagu. It was such a cool thing that I would NEVER think to get for myself, but I loved it and I loved the thought that he put into getting me something that he knew I would really enjoy.”

**Emily McCray, Young Junior High teacher**

“The best gift I’ve ever received was a fully functional ocarina made to be a replica of the Ocarina of Time from the Legend of Zelda N64 video game. That video game was a major part of my childhood, so having the real instrument to be able to play on made my nerd heart so, so happy!”

**Sarah Pollan, Young Junior High associate band director**

“I am thankful for the gift of time to slow down and be closer to my family this year. We were forced to take time to stay home and cook more and learn more about those we love the most.”

**Heather Garcia, South Davis Elementary assistant principal**

“The best gift I received was money to go to college. My dad had recently been diagnosed with cancer and had travels to Houston for treatment. Being the oldest in the family at that time, I was left to take care of them and I only had a few hundred to pay for bills and food. My dad was the sole provider for the family so there was no money coming in to support the family. I was able to use the money to pay my tuition for the semester and buy food for my siblings.”

**Rose Darkwa, Seguin High School assistant principal**

SEE GIFT, PAGE 10





“My two dogs because they bring me joy.” **Haley Hutchins, Hale Elementary teacher**

“A wooden tortilla presser made by my grandfather. It’s the only keepsake I have of him and it means a lot since he is no longer with us.” **Rocio Vargas, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“The best gift I’ve ever received is not a physical gift. The best gift I’ve received is the gift of time. Any time someone takes to spend with me, or time I spend with those I love means more to me than possessions. Quality time is my love language, therefore, my greatest gift.” **Leigh Ann Stewart, Sherrod Elementary teacher**

“The best gift was my health. With so many getting sick including my husband and son, I somehow remained healthy and COVID negative. That is a gift with many friends having more serious situations right now.” **Whitney Terrell, Duff Elementary STEM manager**

“Frogs, because I love animals and need things to nurture during the quarantine.” **Myda Owens, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“I’ve always considered having a sister who I am very close to as the best gift I could ask for and a built-in best friend and support system. As far as actual gifts, my sister and brother-in-law hand carved and made a wooden keepsake box for my husband and I as a wedding gift. As a handmade, beautiful, and functional box, we will use and cherish it for years to come.” **Hannah Cambron, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“Recently, my left eye was swollen shut due to allergies and I have to say, I began thinking about all the times I had taken my sight for granted. It is my greatest gift and I’m fortunate to be able to afford prescription glasses.” **Haylee Greenlee, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“Husband surprising me for my 30th whisking me off from work in a limo and taking me straight to the airport to fly to California where I grew up to spend time with friends and family.” **Monique Tarver, Crouch Elementary assistant principal**

“The best gift that I have received this year is that I have an amazing group of students. They are work hard daily and tell me weekly how much they love school. I am especially appreciative of this after the hard year that I had last year.” **Angela Wilkerson, Crouch Elementary teacher**

“One of my students gave me tin of butter cookies and Lysol wipes for my birthday (because of COVID times). This student said the cookies were meant to go with my coffee that I drink every morning in class. It’s the best gift because the student thought of me and gave me something that compliments by daily routine. She noticed a small detail that was a grand gesture for me.” **Eslandy Galvez, Crouch Elementary teacher**





## REPORTING AN ACCIDENT

Contact supervisor. If an emergency response professional is needed call 911.

Contact the risk management office at 682-867-7649.

[Complete workers' comp packet.](#)

Completed packet should be sent to the risk management office in the administration building.

Tina Baze, Specialist  
Risk Management  
Arlington ISD  
1203 W. Pioneer Pkwy  
Arlington, TX 76013  
Office: 682-867-7649  
Fax: 682-867-4682

## MANAGING FATIGUE AT YOUR JOB

Even for someone who loves going to work every day, it may be inevitable that you will need a break. For the good of your own personal health and safety, it's important to recognize fatigue as a serious issue.

### WHAT IS FATIGUE?

Being fatigued is a more serious issue than simply being tired or sleepy. Fatigue stems from extended mental or physical exhaustion, and can be dangerous due to its adverse effects on things like reaction time, motor skills and alertness. People who are fatigued may also be more likely to suffer from heart disease and depression.

In addition to potentially having negative effects on your own health and productivity, trying to work while fatigued can result in serious safety issues for both you and your co-workers. According to the National Safety Council, approximately 13% of injuries suffered in the workplace can be attributed to fatigue, and 43% of Americans say that they may be too tired to be able to function safely at work.

### PREVENTING FATIGUE

There are a number of methods that you can use to try to help yourself fend off fatigue. Consider these tips:

- Sleep well—Establish a regular sleep schedule, make your bedroom as dark as possible and avoid using your cellphone while in bed.
- Eat right—Drink plenty of water throughout the day, limit your caffeine and alcohol intake, and avoid eating large meals close to your regular bedtime.
- Get some exercise—Find time to get in a workout during the day. Even modest exercise, like taking a walk, can help you to both sleep better and feel less stressed.

### MANAGING FATIGUE

Although it may be ideal to prevent yourself from becoming fatigued in the first place, it's important to be prepared in case it does become an issue. Remember these tips if you find yourself feeling fatigued at work:

- Grab a healthy snack—While foods that are high in fat or sugar can lead to an energy slump, there are many healthier options, such as fruits and nuts, that can provide a boost.
- Loosen up—Taking a minute or two for a short walk or to stretch out your muscles can increase your body's blood flow and your overall energy levels.

Fatigue is a serious issue that can lead to many other physical and mental health problems. If you are suffering from fatigue, inform your supervisor and talk to your doctor.

***We wish everyone a Happy New Year!***

