Welcome to the AGGIE PURCHASING BUZZ. We thank you for the wonderful feedback received on our first edition of the BUZZ. We plan to implement some of your suggestions in upcoming editions.

In this month’s edition, you will get an update on the application of the new purchasing system, AGGIE-MART. The Implementation Team has been busy promoting the system, and has solicited the talented students in the School of Technology and Graphic Communications to design a logo for the site.

Almost every week there is a news headline about a public official or state employee in trouble for accepting a gift or favor from a vendor. “Protect Yourself! Do Not Become a Headline” reminds us to be leery of vendors who offer gifts and favors to obtain business from the University. Few things in life are ever free!

Last year, the Purchasing Department worked with Auxiliary Services to conduct a comprehensive bid for the Campus Dining Program. In this edition, we provide an overview of the process and the benefits to our campus. Because we are all busy and

often do not have time to attend training sessions, we are introducing our “How To” series. This series will provide instructions on processing items such as requisitions in Banner (although not for long), how to complete an Internal Authorization for a Contractor, and many other procedures with which we often need help. This month we will remind you “How To” create item text in Banner so that the commodity codes are captured and the test is copied correctly onto the purchase order.

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It is not often that the Purchasing Department has an opportunity to interact with our students, so when asked by the School of Business and Economics to speak to Purchasing and Supply Chain Management students, we could not pass up such a great opportunity. “Purchasing 101” is an overview of insight given to the students during the session.

The Purchasing Department would not be able to run without the amazing purchasing agents and support staff. As promised, we will be highlighting a few members of the team in each edition of the BUZZ. Collectively, Team 1: Cherrie Chrisp and Wendelin Douglas have been apart of the Purchasing family 18 years and we are excited for you to get acquainted with these valuable assets to our department.

In closing, we want to remind you that Year-end Close Out is just around the corner. Do not wait until the last minute to clean up your budget. Check for open unused requisitions that need to be deleted, follow up on orders/services that have not been delivered or performed, and contact the Purchasing Department to cancel purchase orders that are not going to be used this fiscal year.

We hope you like this edition, and look forward to more helpful feedback!

Ted A. Little
Director of Purchasing

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Thompson Hospitality, Inc, and Perkins Management Company Services, Inc.

Bids were evaluated in four phases: written response, oral presentation and food preparation, site visit, and price and compensation. Each member of the Campus Dining Services Evaluation Team was required to participate in each of the phases along with the assistance of other students, faculty, and staff to provide feedback. After an extensive evaluation of the three bidders, the bid was awarded to Sodexo Management, Inc. (“Sodexo”) in partnership with FDY, Inc., (one of the nation’s largest 100% nationally certified minority-owned companies) to provide the services to the University.

Angela Peterson, Director of Auxiliary Services said of the selection process, “The Purchasing Department provided a comprehensive plan which thoroughly evaluated the completeness of successfully awarding the food service contract. The process was very transparent and efficient for everyone. Thank You!”

You will see a change in the overall dining experience at the University. In addition to the opening of Simply To Go! which opened January 19th and has been a huge success with our students, Café A La Cart will open April 19th in McNair Hall and a Starbucks® will open on April 26th in the Boss Webster’s Food Court. This is only the beginning of the changes that will be implemented to enhance campus dining for our students, faculty and staff. Check out one of the new locations for a great breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Protect Yourself! Do Not Become A Headline

Ethical practices are major in the realm of purchasing goods and services. Although the Purchasing Department serves as the primary intermediary between the campus community and vendors, every University employee that is involved in any part of the purchasing process should be mindful to conduct themselves in the highest ethical standard no matter what the dollar value.

It is not uncommon for University employees to be offered gifts such as t-shirts, lunches, or even complimentary trips. But the size of the gift does not matter, all gifts have the same intention from vendors—give you something for free in hopes of doing business with A&T, whether new or continued.

Protect Yourself! Do Not Be A Headline.

It is against University and State policies (Executive Order #24, N.C. General Statue 133-32) for employees to accept gifts, fees, payment of expense, or any other item of

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monetary value, where the acceptance may result or be perceived to result in the following:

1. An undertaking to give preferential treatment to any person or company
2. A loss of complete independence or impartiality; or
3. An University decision made outside official channels

It is imperative that we all conduct business with potential and current suppliers in an atmosphere of good faith, devoid of intentional misrepresentation and grant all competitive suppliers equal consideration.

Protect yourself and say no thanks!

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How To: Banner “Item Text” Descriptions

For some, this may seem redundant, for others a reminder, or it may be the first time you have heard this information. But bear with us as we explain the process again because you may not be entering line item description correctly and causes problems on the back end of order processing, such as incomplete information being provided to the vendor to fulfill an order.

When creating a requisition, it is important not to delete, add, or type over the commodity code that has been established. The descriptions for a line item should be typed in “Item Text.”

The following steps are simple to add line item descriptions to your purchase requisition:

1-After a commodity code is selected for the item being purchased go to the tool bar and select “Options.”
2-Once in Options select, “Item Text” (FOAPOXT).
3-Once in “Item Text”, Hit Control Page Down, and type the description of the item. Then hit F10 to save the information.
4-Hit the Black X and return to the commodity screen to complete your requisition.

AGGIE-MART Implementation Moving Forward

Approximately sixty people attended presentations on March 16th and 17th, to hear about the new purchasing system AGGIE-MART. The presentations provided an overview of e-Procurement, the benefits it will provide to the University and the effect it will have on anyone that is a part of the procure-to-pay process on campus. The current procure-to-pay process is manual and tedious often resulting in rush orders and late payments to our suppliers. According to Ted A. Little, Director of Purchasing, “We are marketing the new System to our end users to inform them not only about it, but also to let them know that the System will change the culture here at A&T. We are looking at the entire procure-to-pay process to identify improvements for the entire University. Although this will require thinking outside the box for many of us, it will provide significant benefits in the long run.”

Feedback from the sessions has been extremely positive. One of the attendees stated “I am excited about AGGIE-MART, it should make our jobs a lot easier.”

In addition to the presentations, thirty-two individuals across the campus have been identified and contacted to serve as the Pilot Group. This group will test the System to assist the Implementation Team in ensuring a smooth transition from Banner to AGGIE-MART.

Purchasing Specialist: Meet Team 1

The role of the Purchasing Department is to administer the procurement function for the University by ensuring that all policies and procedures are properly administered.

The Department is staffed by a Director, an Assistant Director, five purchasing specialist, and three support staff. We are fortunate to have a great group of people who work in the Purchasing Department.

We are proud to introduce two of our wonderful staff members; Cherrie Chrisp and Wendelin Douglas.

Cherrie Chrisp, a North Carolina A&T State University Alumnus, has been employed with the University for over eight years. Cherrie says she likes working in Purchasing because of the challenge it presents in trying

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to find the best price for the end user. She is the proud mother of two girls. Her hobbies include sewing and attending her children’s basketball games.

Wendelin Douglas, a graduate of Bennett College, has been employed with A&T for 10 years. She enjoys the interaction with suppliers and the challenge of acquiring the products and services that meet the needs of her clients. Her hobbies include bowling and scrapbooking.

Cherrie and Wendelin make up Team 1 in our department and are responsible for the following:

School of Education
College of Arts and Sciences
Division of Research and Economic Development
Division of Academic Affairs
College of Engineering
Athletics

If you are in one of the departments above, contact either Cherrie or Wendelin for assistance with your procurement needs.

Purchasing 101

On Wednesday, April 7, 2010, Ted A. Little, the Director of Purchasing spoke to Dr. Shona Morgan’s graduate students in the School of Business and Economics Purchasing and Supply Chain Management program about careers in the field of purchasing.

The highlights of the discussion centered around professional certification, keeping up with the current trends in purchasing such as e-Procurement, the various areas where purchasing professionals are needed such as healthcare, manufacturing, public and private industries, and the impact the role of a Purchasing Department can play in the financial bottom line of a company or higher education.

Mr. Little stated, “The students were extremely interested in the key skills needed to set them apart when they begin looking for work. And the key skill shared with them is that they must keep up with the latest technology and be able to think strategically instead of tactically.”

“Concerning the industry he stated, “The purchasing profession has evolved over the last twenty years, however the public sector (governmental, higher education) are just catching up to what the private sector has been doing for years, especially in terms of technology.””

This was a great opportunity for the Purchasing Department, and we hope that we have more opportunities to share our profession with the students.

Important Announcements:

The Purchasing Department is pleased to welcome Richard Clegg to the department. Richard has been in the purchasing profession for over ten years and brings a wealth of knowledge to the University. Richard will be working with us temporarily through the implementation of the e-Procurement System.