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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

TOPPEL CAREER  
CENTER

2018-2019

A YEAR IN REVIEW



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2018-2019

### A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What does it mean to be adaptable? According to the Cambridge Dictionary, to be adaptable is "to be able or willing to change in order to suit different conditions."

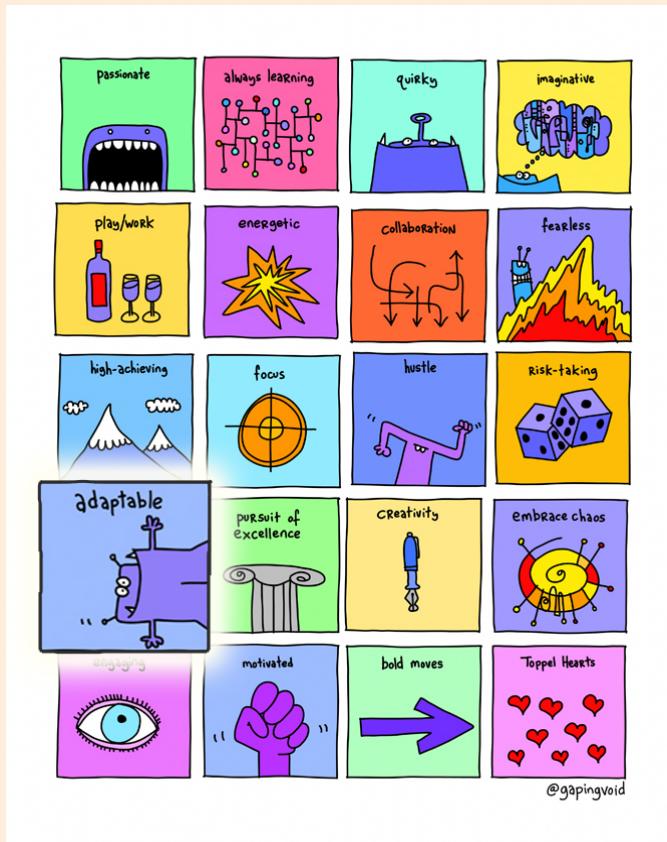
In the early summer of 2018, I presented my staff with an idea – let's have students run career advising. With no hesitation, they embarked on researching the idea, creating a new advising model, testing it, hiring and training students, and implementing this bold new era of peer-to-peer learning.

In an effort to get students to engage with our staff more and to learn about all the spectacular features in Handshake, we thought why not set up shop in various places around campus, wear thought-provoking t-shirts, have laptops and tablets available for Handshake logins and mini-tutorials, all while giving away free tacos? And that's how Toppel Taco Tuesday was born this year.

It's one thing to talk about diversity and inclusion. It's a whole other thing to actually do something about it. This year we created a new role at Toppel: Coordinator of career readiness and inclusion initiatives. As one of the most diverse departments on campus and one that has always recognized the importance of inclusion, this new role is allowing us to be more intentional with our outreach, collaborations, and most importantly, in our work with under-represented students and communities.

So, what do these things have in common? They each required lots of adaptability. Our team was able to change, but more importantly, they were willing to do so to meet the ever-evolving needs of our students and our campus. The results? Student engagement, not just in numbers, but in depth and meaning. It's what I believe all career centers should be striving for.

  
Christian Garcia



Toppel Values Wall

# #BOSSSEDUP

Our theme this year was #BosserUp. Getting bossed up means elevating yourself and your future career by taking confident action toward professional development. Throughout the year, we asked students about the ways they were getting bossed up and highlighted their answers each week in our e-newsletter, the Toppel Insider. Here are some of those answers:



## ◀ Melanie

*Sophomore  
Media Writing & Production*

Melanie interned with the Recording Academy/GRAMMYS and used Toppel to land an internship with Apple Music. "Toppel was the first place I went when I knew I wanted to do content creation for Apple Music. I workshoped my resume, and when I found out I had gotten an interview, I went in for interview advice."



## ◀ D'Andre

*Senior  
Journalism & Political Science*

D'Andre interned in the office of Congressman Hank Johnson, Jr., assisting with speech writing and conducting research on bills. It confirmed to him that he wants to go to law school. "Toppel has helped me become a stronger candidate in the job search, and Handshake has introduced me to multiple opportunities."



## ◀ David

*Senior  
Mathematics & Computer Science*

David interned with the Growth Team at Coursera, Inc., an online education startup in California. "I was treated as a full-time team member, and by the end of week 1, I was already contributing code that was live on Coursera's platform. Overall, I felt that I contributed something meaningful to the company and grew a lot as an engineer."

## Breana ▶

*Senior  
Broadcast Journalism & Political Science*

Breana interned with the NBA in their Content Department. "Toppel has helped me become career ready. I have been on two of Toppel's "Career Crawls," one in London and one in D.C. Both of these experiences exposed me to industries and careers that I had never thought of."



## Mia ▶

*Junior  
Industrial Engineering*

Mia participated in UShadow for 3 semesters, shadowing an immigration attorney, an engineer at FPL, and a business analyst. "The opportunity to shadow is one that I highly value and am extremely grateful for. I have gotten closer and closer to the career I can see myself in. UShadow has helped me gain connections in my future professional field, and that is priceless. I have learned so much more about myself and my true interests."



## Haley ▶

*Senior  
Marine Biology*

Haley's work in three diverse RSMAS laboratories has helped her become career ready. "Being around the PhD students helped me prepare for the next step, which is pursuing my own PhD in Environmental Science and Engineering at UNC-CH."



# 2,862

Students Attended  
Career Programs & Events  
(Expos, Fairs, Workshops)



# 304

Students Participated in  
Experiential Learning  
(TIP, UShadow, PDA)

# 1,148

Resumes Reviewed



# 799

Campus & Practice  
Interviews

# 48,011

Handshake Log-ins



# 28,418

Applications Submitted  
on Handshake

# 2,228

Advising Sessions

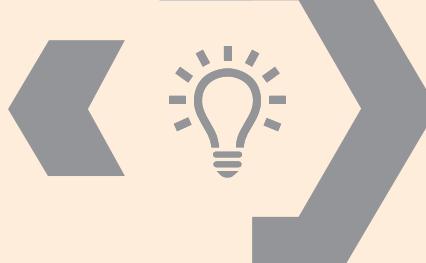


# 800+

Career Assessments  
Completed

# 469

Professional  
Headshots Taken



# 200

Professional  
Clothing Rentals

\* These data include enrolled undergraduate students only, except for career assessments completed and professional headshots taken.

\*\* Handshake is our online career management platform where students can find and apply to jobs/internships, among other things.

# NEW INITIATIVES

## PEER-TO-PEER CAREER ADVISING MODEL

This year, Toppel implemented a new career advising model to significantly reduce students' wait time for one-on-one advising appointments from up to four weeks to no wait time at all. The new model gets students the advice they need on the spot, no appointment necessary. Students can now come to Toppel for advising any time throughout the day during business hours and stay as long as they need. Drop-in advising has been available at Toppel for quite some time, so what makes this new model truly new? Now, drop-ins are more than just resume critiques and quick questions. Students can use them for extended conversations about how to navigate their career options and identify their professional brand. This is achieved in tandem with their advisor in a supportive, co-exploratory learning environment.

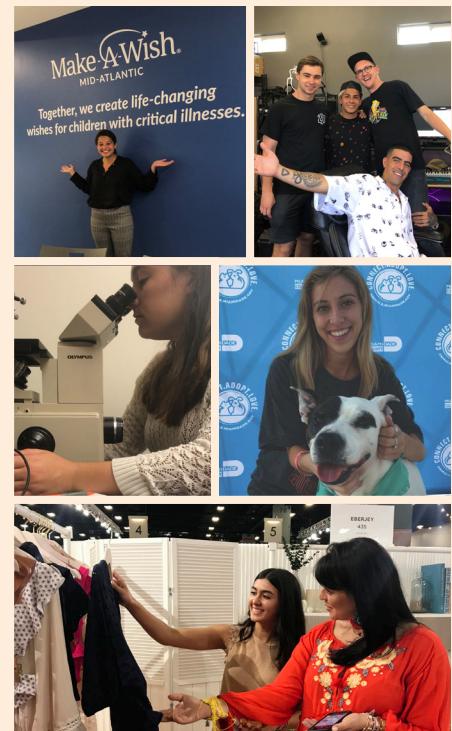
What does this look like exactly? The new advising model enhances our peer advisors' role in the office, providing them with an opportunity to further their own professional development as well as that of their peers. The core of this model, and the future of career services, is peer-to-peer learning. The drop-in area has become a

dynamic environment with a team of highly trained peer advisors. At any given time, approximately 3-5 advisors are working with a number of students to cover a variety of career-related topics in 1:1 sessions or small groups. Our peer advisors are UM students we train extensively before the school year begins and continuously throughout the year, including the use of immersive simulations. The specific skills we train them on are based on NACE (National Association of Careers and Employers) professional competencies for career advisors. A full-time staff member is always on site in the drop-in area to assist as needed and provide peer advisors with frequent feedback.

Our research shows that 94% of students who utilized drop-in advising felt that the session was very or extremely helpful. Students really embraced this new approach to advising, and Toppel is spearheading significant change in the world of career services.

## TOPPEL INTERNSHIP FUND

The Toppel Internship Fund was offered for the first time this year to support UM students with unpaid internships. Through the generosity of the Division of Enrollment Management, competitive awards of up to \$3000 were granted. We were able to support 20 students engaging in internships across the country! Winners represented 6 Schools/Colleges and encompassed over 12 different majors.



# TOPPEL TACO TUESDAY

In the fall of 2018, we created a new initiative called Toppel Taco Tuesday (T3) that brings Toppel staff out of their offices to meet students in spaces around campus where they are their most authentic selves. The goal of the event is to help students become more familiar with Toppel, especially with Handshake, our online career management platform. T3 is all about breaking down any intimidating barriers students may feel are keeping them from logging into Handshake and using it to its fullest potential.

With that in mind, the event is done in a casual, pop-up style at locations that students pass by on their way to class or other activities. Our staff wear bright yellow t-shirts with fun sayings on them that make us approachable and identifiable. Free tacos are given to students while they chat with staff about Handshake as well as other Toppel services. Laptops and iPads are set-up on high-top tables creating a conversational atmosphere where students can login to Handshake on the spot. Staff are there to guide students while they login and explore different Handshake features.

Students pop in and out throughout the entire 3-hour event. What we've seen is that the tacos are of course a big draw because – free food! – but also that students' awareness of Handshake increases in just a short amount of time. They're learning that all UM students

have Handshake accounts as soon as they set foot on campus and that activating them is as simple as logging in with their UM Single Sign-On. From there, they can apply for jobs and internships posted by thousands of employers across the country (including all Fortune 500 companies), connect with recruiters, write company reviews about their work experiences, message their peers at UM and other institutions about their work experiences, register for career events, and so much more!

At T3, we especially encourage students to complete their Handshake profiles, increasing their chances of getting noticed by recruiters and landing their dream job or internship! Once students are able to see how quick and simple it is to do anything on Handshake, you see a look of relief upon their faces. The interactions we have at each event are special to us because we frequently hear students say "oh wow I didn't know I could do that on Handshake" or even tell us "I'm going to come to Toppel tomorrow." It truly fulfills the purpose of the event. In the first year of T3, we've reached over 400 people, from freshmen all the way to alumni, and have seen a jump in the percentage of students using Handshake. T3 will definitely be continuing next year with plenty more to taco 'bout.



# EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

**71,990**

Jobs/Internships Posted  
on Handshake

**158**

Networking/Recruiting  
Events Held



**9,255**

Organizations Posted  
Jobs/Internships on Handshake

**182**

Organizations Attended  
Career Expos

## WHO ENGAGED WITH OUR STUDENTS THIS YEAR?



**AND MANY  
MORE!**

# THE 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TOPPEL AWARDS

The 4th Annual Toppel Awards ceremony took place on February 25, 2019. The Toppel Awards recognize outstanding students, faculty, staff, employers and recruiters for their commitment to career education and personal career development. The selection committee (made up of one UM faculty member, one UM staff member, three UM students, three Toppel staff members and an employer representative) reviewed nominations based on specific criteria developed for each of the 11 awards. Nominators, nominees, award finalists, and campus partners were all invited to the ceremony. Our Hurricane Platinum Partner, Gapingvoid, sponsored the event.

As in past years, the Toppel Awards were a great opportunity for guests to connect with

one another. Each guest received an acrylic paperweight, designed by Gapingvoid, and branded in UM green and orange to thank them for being Career Champions, and for embodying Toppel's mission and values. The planning committee took great care in picking art pieces for each award plaque that visually represented the significance of each award, also from Gapingvoid. Our goal was to highlight the impact they each made. The emcees were Toppel's very own Christian Garcia, Associate Dean and Executive Director and Ali Rodriguez, Executive Director of Employer Engagement. Special remarks were made by Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education, Dr. William Green. Also present to represent the Toppel Family were Patricia and Michael Toppel, who engaged with the winners and presented the awards.

*"I really enjoyed the Toppel Awards this year. I thought it was the perfect blend of recognizing students and professionals for their contributions. The energies surrounding the event represented what the U is all about. I look forward to attending in the future"*

-Dean Ryan Holmes, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

*"The annual Toppel Awards Ceremony is always a highlight of the academic year. I am impressed by the collaborative efforts of Toppel, employers, faculty, and staff to help our students connect to opportunities, and it is amazing to see the wonderful work our students are doing with those opportunities. This event is, in essence, a celebration of effective partnerships and a testament to the talent at UM."*

-Christopher Doell, Director of Programs, Office of Academic Enhancement

Thank you to everyone who helped make this a great event for a fourth consecutive year. We hope you all consider recognizing and nominating in the fall for our 5th Annual Toppel Awards Ceremony. Congratulations again to all our winners and nominees! We appreciate your dedication to career development and want you to know that Toppel and UM would not be the same without you!

## 2019 Award winners

### STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Graduate Student Recipient: Haluk Damgacioglu  
Undergraduate Student Recipient: Tyler Busby

### STUDENT GROUP OF THE YEAR

Ophthalmology Interest Club

### ALUM OF THE YEAR

Peter Chaibongsai

### DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

Jacklyn Collins, Lecturer, Miami Business School, Accounting

### DISTINGUISHED ADMINISTRATOR

Whitley Johnson, Senior Academic Advisor for Diversity and Inclusion

### RECRUITER OF THE YEAR

Captain Valerie Krygier, United States Marine Corp

### EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Corporate Recipient: Florida Power & Light Company  
Government/Non-Profit Recipient: Miami-Dade County

### PATRICIA TOPPEL AWARD

Administrator Recipient: Sean Kilpatrick, Assistant Dean for Student Services, School of Nursing & Health Studies  
Employer Recipient: Bill Fisse, Managing Director, Citi



# TOPPEL DAY OF SERVICE

The 2019 Toppel Day of Service was planned in collaboration with the National Pan-Hellenic Council, Alpha Kappa Psi, and the Butler Center for Service & Leadership. The Overtown Youth Center (OYC) graciously hosted us again as students, employers, and UM staff came together to serve in Miami's historic inner city. Children at the OYC participated in a variety of activities, including decorating t-shirts, playing basketball and corn hole, making slime, and tossing water balloons. UM students also taught the kids how to step and use their creativity to construct garments out of newspaper. The grand finale was the step show and fashion show, which resulted in a standing ovation! Here's what some of the participants had to say about the event:



“This year's Toppel Day of Service was an incredible experience! It allowed me to connect with Miami youth while also reflecting on my personal growth from my college years. The Overtown Youth Center does amazing work, and I hope the kids we spent time with at the Center achieve their wildest dreams.”

Courtney Hamilton  
UM Senior, Marketing



“Participating in Toppel Day of Service was very rewarding! We were able to give back to our community by interacting with the youth at OYC, as well as, making connections with the students at UM. I definitely look forward to participating in Toppel Day of Service again!”

Marleen Hernandez  
Enterprise



“Toppel Day of Service was enriching in many ways. I enjoyed being able to connect with the students at the Overtown Youth Center and have fun with them! I learned that it's always important to be grateful for what you have and give back to the community. I truly appreciated seeing employers from various companies come out and give their valuable time to be with the kids from the OYC. Corporate social responsibility is very important, and it's great to see these organizations serve the greater Miami community.”

Michelle Marino  
UM Junior, Public Relations



“I had a fantastic time at the Toppel Day of Service. I felt the varied array of activities challenged the youth in different ways (e.g. creation of magnetic slime, clothing design with newspaper, dance, basketball, etc.). Based on what I observed, the interaction with the kids and the volunteers was mutually beneficial and refreshing.”

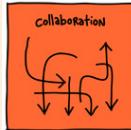
Kenneth Taylor  
Citrix

# LEADING THE WAY

Each year, we lead the way in the field of career services by learning new things and engaging in events outside of the U.

## EVENTS WE ATTENDED

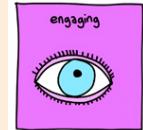
This year, 12 staff members attended over 15 different conferences and networking events across the globe, including:



- NACE Conference + Expo in New Orleans
- Career Services Institute West Conference on Inclusion and Equity: Key Strategies for Career Services Professionals in Los Angeles & Seattle
- Cooperative Education & Internship Association (CEIA) Conference in Chicago
- Glassdoor Recruit Conference in Chicago
- SoAce Conference in Atlanta
- Higher Ed Summit Conference in San Diego
- HIGHER Summit for Women Leaders in Higher Education in Miami
- Career Collective's Think Tank at Univ. of Delaware
- Career Collective's Mastermind in Colorado

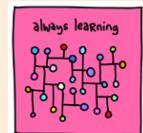
## AUDIENCES WE ENGAGED

- Christian served as a facilitator at the Handshake Director's Meeting at Rutgers University.
- Ismaris presented at the Social Justice Summit at FIU on "Understanding Us: Using an Intersectional Lens to be an Inclusive Leader and Organization."
- Devin served on the College Counselor Conference Panel at UM.



## THINGS WE LEARNED

- Doug attended the COACH Leader training.
- Ismaris completed IBIS Ally Training.
- Miguel completed his Master's in Management Studies at the U.
- Alison completed her Master's in Higher Education Administration at the U.



## STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS

We're 3½ years into our 10-year, Toppel 2025 Strategic Plan and have completed 72% of the objectives in the plan so far.



This year, among other objectives completed, we added **non-local shadowing** as an option for students in our UShadow program so that they have the opportunity to meet with people across the country in a wider variety of industries. We also joined forces with Skill Survey and NACE to better **assess the career readiness** of our student interns using a new measure that's being developed. Discussions and trainings are in the works to bring this measurement to other UM departments as well. We continued to grow our staff in ways that are aligned with our strategic plan, adding two new **coordinator positions**, one for Internships and for Career Readiness & Inclusion Initiatives.

Another accomplishment this year was the rebranding of On-Campus Recruiting to **Talent Engagement**. This rebranding shows employers that our recruitment philosophy is all about building the relationship between employers and students. That relationship is built through a variety of recruitment activities, both active and educational, on-campus and off, and we've redesigned and expanded our menu of talent engagement opportunities to support this. For example, culture videos showcasing the work environment are a huge trend. We even created our own **Toppel Culture Video** to show our partners how to engage with students in the modern age.

# NEW TOPPEL STAFF AND PROMOTIONS

## JENNIFER FARIA

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, BUSINESS INDUSTRY



Prior to joining the Toppel team, Jennifer was an international business consultant and professor in Lisbon, Portugal. She has over 10 years of corporate business experience, having worked for some of the largest media and entertainment companies in the world, including USA Today, Warner Bros. and Sony Pictures. At Toppel, Jennifer advises undergraduate students in the Miami Business School on their career development and reaches out to employers to create internship and full-time job opportunities for these students. She relates to students through her past academic and professional experience and enjoys helping students navigate their current

and future career paths. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia and an MBA from the University of Southern California.

**Some words from Jennifer about her role:**

"I can truly empathize with these students and their career journeys, and it is extremely rewarding when they come back and share some of their success stories. When students leave my office, I want to make sure that they have the right tools to reach those career goals now and in the future."

## ISMARIS OCASIO

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMS

Ismaris joined the staff last summer after completing her M.Ed. in Social Justice Education at UMass, where she specialized in intergroup dialogue training as well as in workshop and class facilitation. She moved to Miami from Boston, Massachusetts to be our Assistant Director for Graduate Programs on our Career Education Team. Ismaris is also one of our Diversity and Inclusion Committee co-chairs, infusing her passion for diversity and inclusion with career services. She enjoys connecting with students to help them gain a deeper appreciation for all aspects of their identity that they can then use to achieve

holistic success in their career-related goals.

**Some words from Ismaris about her role:**

"I love the connections I make through my role; they allow me to learn more about the world around me. I'm always learning something new about a variety of different industries and collaborating with different on-campus partners. Toppel provides a growth-orientated environment that makes me even more passionate about the work I do."



# ALISON SANCHEZ

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, BUSINESS INDUSTRY

Alison joined the staff at the end of Fall 2018 after working as a graduate student in UM's Office of Student Activities & Student Organizations. Just recently, she graduated with a Master's in Higher Education Administration from the U. Prior to UM, Alison earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Florida in 2014 and completed her Teach for America commitment as an Americorp Member educating at-risk populations in the Miami-Dade County Public School System for two years. Alison has always enjoyed mentoring students and serving as a resource, helping them to realize their fullest academic and

professional potential. Alison predominantly advises Miami Business students and collaborates with reputable employers to grow their recruiting efforts at the U. Alison is fueled by UM students' strong work ethic and pursuit of excellence.

**Some words from Alison about her role:**

"The way I measure 'success' in my job is knowing that students are leaving my office more informed and better prepared than when they first entered. You see that light bulb turn on, and by taking ownership of their career path, they feel confident and thrive!"



# KELSHAY TOOMER

COORDINATOR, INTERNSHIPS



Kelshay joined the staff last fall after completing her Master's in Higher Education Administration at Florida International University, where she found a passion for enhancing students' professional development and for helping students prepare for life after college. Born and raised in the "305," Kelshay was thrilled to start her professional journey right in her own backyard at the Toppel Career Center. Surprisingly, working in a career center is full circle for Kelshay because she was intimidated as an undergrad when it came to her career and professional development. Now, she is a confident advocate for internships and experiential learning, encouraging students to take advantage of all opportunities that help them become career ready. Kelshay also meets with many employers to educate them on how to host an intern, ensuring that the internship is a learning experience for the students.

Some words from Kelshay about her role:

"I love how I'm able to see the direct impact I have on students as I help them search for various internships or make them aware of opportunities that are out there for them. I enjoy showing students that job/internship searching does not have to be an intimidating task."

# AURORA GARCIA

SR. ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



Aurora joined the Toppel team in the fall of 2018 after working in the University of Miami Office of the Provost for two years. Aurora is originally from New York, and this is her second stint in Miami, as she earned her Bachelor's degree from Florida International University. Aurora is the Senior Administrative Assistant to Christian Garcia and overall Wonder Woman of the Operations & Strategic Initiatives Team. If you need something done, Aurora is your go-to person! She brings positivity and thoughtfulness to everything she does.

**Some words from Aurora about her role:**

"I love the passion and creativity that each member of Toppel brings to their respective positions. Each member of the team is committed to the Toppel values and more holistically to the university's DIRECCT values and Service Standards. Every day I come to work ready to "Explore . . . Prepare . . . and Connect!"

# JOSE GONZALEZ

OFFICE MANAGER

Jose joined Toppel as part of the Operations & Strategic Initiatives Team in 2018 after working for the U in other departments for over 10 years and completing his Bachelor's degree here as well. As a first-generation student and future enlisted reservist in the U.S. Navy, he is always looking for his next big challenge and advancing himself educationally and professionally. Jose is currently enrolled in the Master's of Leadership Management program at the Miami Business School. At Toppel, Jose utilizes fiscal responsibility and resourcefulness as he manages the budget, finances, and operations

and ensures that everything runs smoothly every day.

**Some words from Jose about his role:**

"I love Toppel's hustle; there's always something new to challenge me and make me grow every day at work. Although I do not advise students, I know that indirectly through budgeting and the allocation of funds to different Toppel programs, I'm contributing to our department's overall success."



*\*Special shout-out to Ali Rodriguez, who was promoted to Executive Director, and Dr. Alexa Lord, who was promoted to Director of Assessment and Communication.*

# A YEAR IN PREVIEW

## 2019-2020

We are beyond excited to introduce Cane2Cane –an online platform allowing UM students and alumni to more seamlessly interact with one another for career coaching and mentoring. The Cane2Cane mission is to connect current UM students with alumni for opportunities to explore career paths, prepare for the workplace, and establish new connections in their network.

Our alumni are doing amazing things and are often looking for ways to give back to the U. Alumni can join the Cane2Cane

community as mentors and decide the exact degree and areas they'd like to help with, such as sharing industry trends, discussing work/life balance, helping with resume or interview prep, and more!

Alumni are already joining, and current students will be able to join in Fall 2019 simply by logging in with their SSO. We hope that students will take advantage of this incredible new tool and leverage the power of our alumni community!

A banner with a black background and gold diagonal stripes on the sides. On the left, a cartoon bird with a long beak and a white shirt is carrying a briefcase. To the right of the bird, the text '# GOAL DIGGIN' is written in a large, bold, gold, sans-serif font.

Our theme for the upcoming academic year is #GoalDiggin. We'll use this theme to encourage all students to unearth their career goals, make self-discoveries, and become career ready.

# TOPPEL CAREER CENTER



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