



Non-activity - Members with non-active status (affiliate members) will be required to renew their membership yearly until active status is attained.

How Often Am I Required To Participate?

SCCO Volunteers are asked to make a one-year commitment consisting of 10 hours for a year, which roughly translates to less than one hour per month.

We request that our clowns participate on a regular basis and respectfully suggest participation in a clown event at least once every other month to maintain proficiency in make-up application and clown skills (balloon sculpture, magic, puppetry, etc.).

Clown Volunteers are informed by e-mail monthly of upcoming events and any particulars including manpower requirements, location and directions. Volunteers can then e-mail a yes or no regarding availability for the events.

SCCO and the seasoned Caring Clowns both highly recommend exploring the various events to find your main interest and comfort zone. UTMB and the patients will appreciate your commitment whether large or small.

Purpose

To establish and maintain a pool of volunteers to serve as clowns for visiting patients at UTMB

Goal

To bring smiles to UTMB

UTMB Honor Pledge:

On my honor, as a member of the UTMB Community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors.

CLOWNstitution

Below are some excerpts from SCCO at UTMB. As this could be used as a guideline to Care Clown groups (both student and volunteer) The complete *Clownstitution* is on www.hospitalclown.com under Past Issues Vol. 12 No 3.

Article 3 – Statement of Purpose

Student Caring Clowns is a non-profit organization to organize student, as well as non-student caring clowns. We handle the finances, inventory, supplies and general organization of all UTMB-related clown affairs.

Article 4 – Membership

Section 1 – Membership shall be open to students of the University of Texas Medical Branch regardless of race, national origin, creed or political affiliation, sex (in accordance with title IX), sexual orientation, religion, age, handicap, or veteran's status.

Section 2 – Membership must be limited to students and/or faculty and staff of UTMB to be an active member.

Section 3 – For students: Active membership consists of 10 service hours and one meeting per year. If these requirements are not met, members will be categorized as affiliate members. If a member is not a UTMB student, they are considered an associate member.

Section 4 – Provisions for application, acceptance and termination

Application – Fill out Membership application form and volunteer services application form. Pay \$10/20 membership fee.

Acceptance – Anyone that passes the background check and has completed their application process.

Termination- Inactivity for one year will terminate membership.

Section 5 – Membership dues are \$10 for UTMB students and \$20 for all other members - annually.

Patient Visitation

As previously stated, our volunteer clowns' primary goal is to serve our patients. This goal is met by participating with various in-house Children's Hospital events (e.g., monthly birthday parties, patient visitations, and other special events like Mardi Gras and July 4th parades).

The birthday parties and parades are scheduled events that involve the clowns interacting with the patients in a party setting, assisting the party sponsors with entertainment by singing songs, playing games or telling jokes, and/or distributing gifts and food.

During Patient Visitations, the clown and patient interactions are often short, usually only lasting five to ten minutes. During that brief time, the clown may utilize a quick skit, pantomime, a hand puppet, some jokes, funny props, silly songs, sight gags or pocket magic to provide momentary relief for the patient and hopefully bring a smile to his/her face. All of these interactions must be undertaken with compassion and sensitivity to the patient's needs and feelings.

Caring Clowns must be able to read each situation to gauge the patient's needs—whether it is for a little cheer, some companionship or a listening ear.

Pay close attention to any signs posted on patient room doors.

- Be a good listener!
- Gear your visit toward the patient. Make the patient the center of attention, but always try to include the family and guests in the fun.
- Always knock before entering a room.
- Ask permission to enter – "Would you care for a visit from a Caring Clown?" or "Would you care for a visitor?"
- Avoid asking patients how they feel. Instead, find something complimentary to say, such as "My, what beautiful flowers!", "You have a beautiful smile!" or "Look at all of the wonderful cards you have received."

- After the niceties, begin your lead-in lines to begin your skit or gag.
- Do not assist the patient in getting out of bed or agree to get food or water for a patient. In these situations, graciously offer to get the nurse for the patient.
- Remember – Patient interactions should be brief to avoid tiring the patient or overstaying your welcome. Visitations should be kept to approximately five minutes or less. Some visitations may run over, but should never last more than 10 minutes.
- Upon completing your patient interaction, excuse yourself to leave by thanking the patient for allowing you to visit and/or remarking that you need to spread some cheer to other patients.
- Always wash your hands before entering another patient's room for visitation.
- If a prop is ever touched by a patient or dropped on the floor, that prop must be put away and removed from use. It should be washed and disinfected before introducing it back into your patient interactions.



Bringing Smiles to UTMB



Laura "PiP" Wainstein and Karen "PerryWinkle" Stagner

From Karen Stagner "Perry Winkle"

The original Caring Clown Troupe at UTMB was created in 2001 "to establish a pool of clowns for patient visitation" and to bring smiles to UTMB. Becky Saenz (former UTMB Volunteer Services Department Coordinator) began the group in effort to create a positive influence for the children in the children's hospital. Tim Raeke, aka "Izzy Nuts" and Neal Lauve "Buttons" were two of the original seven (7) Caring Clowns. Mary Sweeney "MeMe" and Trisha Wooten "Molly Wiggles" were in the second group of clowns recruited.

Laura Wainstein "PiP" and Debra Beland "Sunflower" joined the troupe in 2003. That was when we first began expanding efforts from the Children's Hospital to a lot of community based events.



2007 Clown Rounds with the Clown Cart with "Lollipop" 2008-9 President, "Safety Cecilia", and "QueTip" 2007-8 President

Over the next several years, requests for Caring Clowns at community health fairs and other health related events increased. So, in 2006, several of the students at the UTMB School of Medicine thought it would be a great idea to organize a Student Organization of Caring Clowns.

Laura Wainstein "PiP"[see photo to the left], a first year medical student, took on the initiative to create the student organization to continue the work of the original UTMB staff clowns. Her first recruit was another 1st year medical student, Judy Hereford "Sparkle" and together, they drafted the CLOWNstitution and set up the official student organization.

During the first year of the Student Caring Clown Organization at UTMB, they recruited and trained more than thirty (30) students from the School of Medicine (SOM), School of Nursing (SON), School of Health Professionals (SHP – formerly SAHS) and Masters Programs at UTMB.

Since the organization is primarily made up of medical and health study students, the roster and responsibilities are constantly changing. The Welcome Weekend "Quest" for incoming students at UTMB proved to be a wonderful recruitment venue for the troupe. At the first Quest, the troupe recruited another twenty (20) new Caring Clowns for the student organization.

During the year, the 2nd year students provide hands-on training to the new 1st year students during weekly Clown Rounds for the hospitalized children; at community events and at monthly skills lunch meetings. Officer elections are usually in April – the new officers are elected from the 1st year students (which will be 2nd year students when classes resume in the fall). Once 2nd year students get to their 3rd year of Medical school, they begin their rotations and have much less time for clowning around – except for special events.

2010 UTMB Caring Clown Family Portrait



2007 Officer Installation: Judy Hereford "Sparkle" 2006-7 VP; Sarah Stafford "Bubbles" 2007-8 VP; Lindsey Waldrep 2007/08 President; Laura Wainstein 2006-7 President and founder of the Student Organization.

Hurricane Ike destroys UTMB

The troupe had just recruited another 20 or 30 new incoming students at UTMB's Quest Welcome Weekend when Hurricane Ike struck the Texas Gulf Coast, September 13, 2008 – virtually destroying Galveston Island and the University of Texas Medical Branch and the Schools. Students were relocated throughout Texas for months while the Island and UTMB assessed the damage and made temporary repairs to get the schools back up and running.

It wasn't until January 2009 when the officers of the Student Caring Clown Organization at UTMB could begin to try to rejuvenate the troupe and assess how many members were remaining in school and on the Island. The troupe lost all of their inventory and supplies in the storm; and most of the recent recruits were either ... no longer on the Island or way too swamped playing catch-up with their school work because courses condensed the materials to make up for the time lost during the aftermath of the hurricane.

. But not for long

The recruitment response at the 2009 Summer UTMB Quest Welcome Weekend brought SMILES to everyone! The troupe survived the hurricane and is growing strong again – thanks to the dedication 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 troupe officers: Julie Barton 2008 "Lollipop", Carolyn Pearce 2009 "Rick Rack", Thuc Phan 2008 "Knick Knack", Karen Sargent 2008 "Country Bumpkin", Rita Saynalath 2008 "Paddy Wack", Lyle Workman 2008 "Beautiful Britches", Dorcas Fletcher 2009 "Snickers", Jing Jing Zhou 2009 "Princess Jingle" and Jennifer Fritz 2009. There are so many members of the troupe, who over the years, have contributed so much of their time and shared their CARING SMILES. I would LOVE to list each and every one of them.



2008 Galveston Country Health Fair, "Choco", "Pockets", "Knick-Knack", "Perry Winkle", and "Paddy Wack."



2009-2010 Officers: Carolyn Pearce "Rick Rack" President, Jennifer Fritz "Freckles" Secretary, Dorcas Fletcher "Snickers" Vice President, Jing Jing Zhou "Princess Jingles" Webmaster: Not Pictured: Lyle Workman "Beautiful Britches" Treasurer and Thuc Phan "Knick-Knack" Webmaster

Today (2010), the troupe has eighty-nine(89) student members and twenty-four (24) associate members who are either - UTMB staff; students who have graduated; or outside friends who enjoy clowning around with the troupe.

The 2010-2011 Caring Clown Officers are:

President: Rachel Lombardo, Co-Vice Presidents: Layla Ghergherehchi and Jorge Blanco: Treasurer, Mallory Prideaux. Secretary: Abel Flores, Co-Fundraisers: Jasmeet Kaur and Eli Newsome, Webmaster: Hugo Salazar

The troupe does not charge for their SMILING and Balloon-Crafting fun. They support themselves through fundraisers ... heart balloons for Valentine's Day, tip jar at events, special "clown" days at area restaurants ... and the annual "April Fools for Health" Smile Sponsorship Campaign on the UTMB campus and throughout the community.

"Clown Rounds" during lunch time, are coordinated each week, with UTMB Child Life Specialist, Kristin Gerhard to entertain the hospitalized children, their parents and the nursing staff. The troupe is planning to expand this fun loving service to the waiting areas for pediatric clinics and the monthly hospitalized children's birthday parties.

For information on The SCCO at UTMB, Please contact Kelly Cassity, UTMB Community Relations, klcassit@utmb.edu.



2006 Ronald McDonald House "Light Up The House" Back row: "Miss Pearl", Jan Brick of Ronald McDonald House, "Perry Winkle", "Sparkle" Front Row: "Happy" and "PiP"