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Good morning!

The Spring semester is ramping up! Here are a few upcoming events that should be on your radar:

PTK Awareness Week: This week, **February 26-March 1**, we celebrate Phi Theta Kappa with PTK Awareness Week. Please promote and support PTK by **wearing your PTK shirt** one (or more!) days this week. If you don't have a PTK t-shirt, email honors@otc.edu – they still have a few left and will get more later in the semester. There are so many benefits for our students who are involved with PTK (scholarships, leadership development, travel opportunities, and friendships to name a few), so help spread the word.

Community Resource Fair: OTC will host a Community Resource Fair on **March 6 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** in the Jared Atrium on the Springfield campus. Over **20 service organizations** from the area will be here to assist students with everything from mental healthcare to housing and everything in between. Many of our students struggle to get help with basic needs, so please help promote this event to your students.

Ozarks Food Harvest Mobile Food Pantry: And speaking of unmet basic needs, the OFH Mobile Food Pantry will be back on the Springfield campus this semester. Your help is useful in two ways:

1. **Getting the word out:** Emails and text invitations will be sent to a select number of students identified as needing food resources to avoid overwhelming the capacity of the Mobile Food Pantry. That being said, if you know of a student who is interested in receiving food items and has not gotten an invitation, please refer them for food resources [through the OTC Cares reporting system](#). As a reminder, **please do not send students directly to the mobile food pantry pick-up line**. To ensure enough food items are available, participants must be referred in advance through the OTC Cares reporting form or by responding to the invitation sent to their OTC email account.
2. **Volunteering:** Volunteers are needed to provide this valuable service to our students, and it only takes an hour or two per shift. Here's the link to sign up:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D45ABA92BA0FBC61-47164035-sp24>

I enjoyed last week's College Development Day, particularly the morning Showcase. As I listened to each presenter, I was struck by how passionately they spoke about their academic programs – the strengths, the challenges, but especially the changes they've made to improve

the student experience. As I told the audience at the conclusion of the event, this is why OTC is the best: We aren't ever satisfied with the status quo. We have a passion for improvement and doing it better.

In *The Prophet* (1923), Kahlil Gibran, the Lebanese-American author and poet, wrote about passion, but he also wrote about reason: "Rest in reason and move in passion." He asserted that reason and passion are two sides of the same coin and that we should honor both, just as we would "two loved guests" in our homes because honoring one above the other would cause us to lose "the love and faith of both."

I've always liked Gibran's quote, and last Tuesday – first at Showcase, then later at Innovation Celebration – reminded me of it; moving in passion was definitely on full display. One factor that makes OTC such an inspiring place to work is that we are constantly in motion, ever-changing. Seeking better, striving, shifting...all to improve how we serve. And all that passion is great, but what is reason's role here? As Gibran wrote, "Among the hills, when you sit in the cool shade of white poplars, sharing the peace and serenity of distant fields and meadows – then let your heart say in silence, 'God rests in reason.'"

Despite the reference to God, this isn't about religion. No matter your religious beliefs, or lack thereof, the wisdom is the same. If you're like me, resting in reason – or resting in *anything* - is probably not something you're great at. Our minds are constantly going, going, going. But it's in the resting that the good ideas come. A colleague was telling me last week that his best ideas come when he's chopping wood or rowing at the gym. For me, it's when I'm walking my dog. For those of us who are passionate about our jobs and serving students, the rest periods away from that work are often when the best reasons can emerge.

This is a long, roundabout way of saying this: OTC is a great place to work, but the culture of continuous improvement, while exhilarating, can also be exhausting. You're doing a great job, but it's wise for all of us to take Gibran's advice: Stop. Listen. Rest. Then move.

Enjoy your week!

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