**HFNT #15: See You At The Finish Line**

**Episode Transcript**

[INTRO MUSIC]

Scott: Happy Friday, North Texas. I'm Scott.

Alicia: And I'm Alicia.

Scott: Today is Friday, December 20th, and we're closing out 2024 with a strong episode, y'all.

Alicia: You know it, Scottie. First, we'll have a clip from our YouTube series, “UNT Works,” with Metrocrest Services CEO and UNT alum Tracy Eubanks. Then we'll kick off a brand-new `Student Orgs Spotlight’ series with an interview featuring members of the Mean Green Racing student organization. And, with commencement taking place this past weekend, we'll have an interview with one of our Fall 2024 Great Grads, an international student who just earned his Ph.D. in material science and engineering.

Scott: Well, before we get to all that, Alicia, we've got a lot of catching up to do.

Alicia: Let's do it, dude.

Scott: Alicia It is the most wonderful time of the year. We just made it through commencement. We're heading into the winter break, and we've got a Mean Green Bowl game to look forward to on January 3rd.

Alicia: That's right, baby. UNT will be taking on Texas State in the Servpro First Responder bowl at 3 p.m. Friday, January 3rd. And it will be taking place right in our own back yard, at Ford Stadium in Dallas.

Scott: Yeah, I don't love the idea of going to a game at SMU Stadium, but it would be pretty cool to see it get taken over by a flood of Mean Green fans. So, be sure to visit meangreensports.com to get your tickets.

Alicia: Wouldn't it be awesome to kick off 2025 with a bowl win?

Scott: That would be pretty sweet. This will be our 40th game against Texas State in program history, and we won 29 of those, so hopefully we'll get to add another one to the win column and make it an even 30.

Alicia: But before we make it to the bowl game, we've still got the rest of the holiday season to look forward to, aka the season of giving.

Scott: That's right. And, in the spirit of giving, we wanted to share this clip from “UNT Works,” a video series that goes on the job with UNT alumni to share what they're doing now and how UNT helped them get there. They’ve featured Dallas Mavericks broadcaster Mark Followill, WFAA news anchor Cynthia Izaguirre and, in this clip, Metrocrest Services CEO Tracy Eubanks.

Alicia: Metrocrest Services specializes in helping families and seniors who are going through a crisis situation by offering a wide range of services like financial assistance, a food pantry and employment coaching, just to name a few. Frequent podcast contributor Anthony Simone headed down to Carrollton with the video team to learn more about the organization and its Mean Green CEO.

[Transition Music]

Anthony: I'm here in Carrollton, Texas, and today we're going to be meeting UNT alum and CEO of Metrocrest Services, Tracy Eubanks. Let's go.

Anthony: Hey. Anthony. Pleasure to meet you.

Tracy: Pleasure to meet you, Anthony Tracy Eubanks, Metrocrest Services. So glad you're here.

Anthony: Thank you for having me here. This place looks amazing.

Tracy: Thank you very much. We’re in our volunteer center where our volunteers do amazing work every day. They pack food boxes. They're the ones that really make this place home.

Anthony: Tell me, what is the mission of Metrocrest Services?

Tracy: So, Metrocrest Services have been serving this community for over 53 years. And our job is to help families that are in a crisis become independent again. So, help with things like food and housing assistance to make sure people stay stable. But, the idea is how do we move people to self-sufficiency? We do that with programs like Workforce, sending people back to school, certifications, working on budgets and spending plans, doing things that help families not need us anymore, which is really what we want.

Anthony: Can you tell me a bit about your journey and how you got here?

Tracy: Yeah, absolutely, and UNT played a big part of that for me. I grew up in a very entrepreneurial family, so I knew I wanted to be in the business world, have my own business at some point, possibly. My dad went to UNT and graduated in 1960, so I kind of knew that was the place for me.

Anthony: How was your experience with the UNT College of Business?

Tracy: It was a great experience. I always admit I wasn’t a great student. But the way they taught management marketing especially, really appealed to me. We had to do case studies, which really worked well for me. I was learning as I went.

Anthony: How did UNT help launch your career into what it is now?

Tracy: Well, first, I just had a great education in the business department and then, through the Career Center, I got my first internship. And then, I got my first job through the UNT Career Center, working for a Home Depot-type hardware chain as a supervisor. And this is a guy that knew nothing about hardware and probably didn't own a hammer. But UNT got me that great connection, and that really launched my business career.

Anthony: Where did you go from there?

Tracy: So, I had a number of jobs early in my career, and throughout that time I had the opportunity to interact with nonprofits, to be on boards. So, I learned about giving back a bit, which was really meaningful to me. Anthony, welcome to my office here at Metrocrest, we're all in these amazing cubicles. We absolutely love it.

Anthony: Awesome. Tell me what a normal day for Tracy Eubanks looks like.

Tracy: I start pretty early. I'm an early riser. I usually get here about 5:30 in the morning before most others get here. Get a lot of work done, get caught up on email, plan my day.

Anthony: How long are your days usually?

Tracy: So, this gets me in trouble with my wife because they're much too long, usually 12-to-14-hour days, which is a long day. But, in this environment, with this mission, with the work that we do, the amazing people that we have on staff here, I just hardly want to leave. I mean, there's so much more I could be doing. We could do more, we could do better. And that's kind of our philosophy here. So, Anthony, you want to get to work?

Tracy: Let's do it. All right, let's go. Thank you so much for volunteering with us today. And my friend, Anthony, who's a UNT student, is with us to help.

Antony: So clearly, Tracy, this type of work involves a lot of passion. What motivates you to do this?

Tracy: That I was in a lobby one day and a woman walked up to me and I still new was very green. And she said, `Thank you so much. I have food now, I have rent now, I have a job now.’ And she thanked me for it. I wanted to say, `Well, I haven't done a whole lot, but my employees have done all this.’ And she said, `Well, you may not remember me, but we went to high school together up here at Newman Smith.’ And it really stuck with me that, it really resonated that, you know, hard times can happen to anybody, even people that you know. And so that really kind of spurred my passion. And I've been 11 years now, so I guess it worked.

Anthony: Tracy, that's an awesome story. I just want to tell you personally, thank you for having me out here now.

Tracy: We're so glad that you're here, Anthony. Hope you come again. We'll put you to work.

Anthony: Absolutely. Thanks for joining me for `UNT Works.’ Don't forget to like, subscribe. Go Mean Green.

[TRANSITION MUSIC]

Scott: Loved hearing about Tracy's UNT journey and how passionate he is about his work.

Alicia: Yeah. Working 12-to-14-hour days, you’ve got to really love what you're doing to pull that off. Be sure to check out the show notes if you’d like to watch the video or the rest of our `UNT Works’ series.

Scott: All right, now we want to shift gears. Our very own Amanda Lyons interviewed members of the Mean Green Racing student organization for our new `Student Orgs Spotlight’ series.

[TRANSITION MUSIC]

Amanda: OK, so we are here with two members of Mean Green Racing. Can you guys go ahead and introduce yourselves?

Aidan: Yes. My name is Aidan Larkin. I am the president of Mean Green Racing.

Miguel: And my name is Miguel Ordaz. I am the chief engineer for Mean Green Racing.

Amanda: So, Mean Green Racing is UNT's Formula SAE team. Can you guys explain what Formula SAE is?

Miguel: SAE stands for a Society of Automotive Engineers. Our organization is part of the collegiate chapter of SAE and our overall org is FSAE, Formula SAE.

Aidan: Formula SAE organization is a student-led team that is focused on building better engineers and business professionals of the future. We use skills and knowledge we learn from our classes and predecessors -- our alumni and people on the team before -- to build an open-wheel racecar similar to an F1 car, but a lot smaller.

Amanda: OK, so you bring this out to a competition every year, right?

Aidan: Yes.

Amanda: So, what happens at these competitions?

Miguel: The competition, we show up to it. We get judged on the cost of our car. The business decisions we took to build a race car, as well as the engineering decisions that we took to build that race car. And, once everything is said and done, we get to actually race the car. There's several events that we go into. There is a drag race that we are a part of. There is a figure eight as well as a standard SCCA autocross event and an endurance race that we take part of.

Amanda: OK, so there's multiple races, but you're not just judged on the race, it's also the costs and the build of the car.

Aidan: Yes, so engineering and costs itself.

Amanda: OK, that’s pretty cool.

Aidan: There's actually about 100 different teams all across the U.S. -- teams like UTA, UCLA, Western Washington. Also, MIT has one, too.

Amanda: OK.

Aidan: And, sometimes, there’s also international ones. We've had a couple of them. In ’23, when we went last time, there was a team from Poland that flew over here and competed.

Amanda: And they flew the car, too?

Aidan: Yes. They didn’t fly the car. They ended up shipping it on a boat, so they put had to put it on the boat, like, three months before the competition itself.

Amanda: And just hope it got there?

Aidan: Yeah.

Amanda: Does the location change every year?

Miguel: It hasn't in the past four years. It's still currently in Michigan International Speedway. But, before that, it took place in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Amanda: OK, cool. So sometimes y'all get to go new places. But lately, you’ve been going to the same one.

Aidan: It’s just been Michigan.

Amanda: Michigan. Got you. OK. So do you have to be an engineering student to join Mean Green Racing?

Aidan: No, we're open to all majors. We actually just started up our business team. It's relatively new. We started it up in the spring. We also have different majors, like kinesiology majors, which, like I said, open to all majors. It’s just the majority of the time, a lot of our members are engineering students just because we're located on the engineering campus and it's very easy for us to just ask our classmates, saying, `Hey, come join our team.’

Amanda: They're just right there.

Aidan: Exactly.

Amanda: So what kind of happens at these meet up, regardless of what major you're in?

Miguel: The business teams, like Aidan said, they take care of funding, recruitment, things that are better suited for business majors compared to us engineers. On the engineering side of the team, we go through designs, changes in the designs as well as manufacturing practices or ways that we are able to make the part for the car.

Amanda: So, you said funding. So, what do you mean? Like, is this outside-source funding?

Aidan: Yes, it is outside-source funding. UNT does give us some amount of money, but the car itself costs a lot of money. That way, the university cannot give us enough money to outright build a car. It is up to us to talk to companies, alumni, supporters or individuals that want to either give funding, support, resources or also services. There's also, some companies also offer manufacturing of some of our parts.

Amanda: I can see where the business majors would come in handy here. OK, so what stage is the car in right now?

Miguel: Currently, our 2025 car is in the manufacturing stage. So this past last spring and summer, we have been designing, doing engineering work, iterations one, two, three, five, 10 iterations on certain parts. But now we're past that for most of the subsystems and now are actually making said parts. So, hopefully by the start of spring semester is when we should have a put-together car that we can start troubleshooting, upgrading and testing.

Amanda: OK, very cool. Well, you answered my question about how much work is left, so we will skip over that one. And then when is the big race?

Aidan: It's going to be mid-June. So it starts in June 17th and then goes from that day all the way until, I think, June 21st or whenever that Saturday is. So, it starts on a Tuesday and it goes all the way until Saturday.

Amanda: OK. So this is almost year-round, because if the competition’s in June.

Aidan: It is. They do it every single year. But there are some teams that do take a leap year. Like, we were going to go to a 2024 competition, but we decided to take a year off to better develop our car and that's why we're a two-year team and we started to go to competition ‘25 instead of ‘24.

Amanda: OK. What are some of those changes that y’all made?

Miguel: It's actually very exciting changes. The biggest one is that we are no longer sticking to an internal-combustion engine. We're actually going to a battery-powered vehicle. So the car is now electric. It will be making around 30 more horsepower and weighing around 80 more pounds. But it is a lot more efficient and actually pretty fast compared to other the IC cars -- the internal-combustion cars. Besides that, we're also going to be the first year that we put aerodynamics on the car. So front wing, rear wing as well as an under tray. And that will just help us be faster and overall perform better at competition. There's also some suspension changes that are taking place. We were reducing our wheel size from a 13-inch wheel package down to a 10-inch, which will allow us to better perform in the drag race as well as in the figure eight.

Amanda: OK, so this is a brand new, souped-up EV that y’all have got going on?

Aidan: Yes. And, because of this, with all the changes, we're not going to be using our, the parts from our previous car, in ‘23. So, now we have a car is going to be fully built, so that way we can go to SCCA events, if we want to take the car out to drive, or UTA autocross and other events like that.

Amanda: OK. Well, that explains why y’all also took a gap year, because that's so much work that y’all did.

Aidan: Yes, there was a lot of work.

Amanda: So, when maybe there's not as much work to do, like, maybe after the race is over, what kind of activities do y’all just do throughout the year that may not be tied to that?

Aidan: So, we also do recruitments. So, Mean Green Fling, we do tabling events. We also do tabling events at Discovery Park. We also do events for our sponsors. So, we're sponsored by Lucky Lou's. We actually just had an event with them Friday, actually. We had a pint-night an event with them. It went really well. We also do other events, like tours. So, some companies will invite us out and we can just go look at their facilities. For example, we're actually going to be going to a Packer tour, and so Packer is going to be showing us their electric vehicles and showing us how they make their semi-trucks.

Amanda: Yeah, inspiration for your own cars.

Miguel: As part of SAE as well, we get a free entrances into some conferences. So, this past semester, there was a conference here in Dallas for SOLIDWORKS and SAE members got free entrance to it, so we got to take part into that one. We're also invited to the upcoming one in Houston that we can go to, if we're available to. They also host other conferences that are specifically marketed towards engineers and the engineering of a race car. Our brakes lead, a month ago, went to a specific conference that was dedicated on the design of the brake system for the car.

Amanda: Oh, wow. So, you have leads for like specific parts of the car, too, within the group?

Miguel: Yes. So, the car, it takes a lot to build. So, we separate them out by leads. So, there'll be a suspension lead, aerodynamics lead. And each one of those oversees their subsystem and part of the car and works along with the other leads to make sure that everything comes together. And then, those leads themselves will have people under them that can help them model stuff, measure and manufacturing and things like that.

Amanda: So, if you had to give, like, an estimate, like, how many people are working on this car, do you think, throughout the year?

Aidan: So, this includes leads and also members that are joining. But we have around 40 to 45 people that work on the car itself.

Amanda: That's a good crew. So, how can people support you guys?

Aidan: By getting our name out there and joining our team if they want to. We are open all majors. You do not have to be an engineering major. You can come help by either, if you want to get involved with the engineering side or you want to get involved with the business side. We do have different tasks and projects for everyone to work on. And also, just talking about us and getting our name out there. We're not well known on the main campus because we're isolated at Discovery Park. So, coming out to our events, talking to us and just getting to know us is probably the best way that everyone can support us.

Amanda: So, if people who are interested in helping you guys out, like, sponsoring you specifically, how could they find you guys?

Aidan: We do have a website. It's MeanGreenRacing.com and there is a contact form for them to fill out. That contact form goes directly to our email that everyone on the team can see. So then, that way we can respond back and, you know, start that conversation. We also do have an Instagram, MeanGreenRacing, which is where we post sponsor posts. So, if we get a new sponsor who, say, gave us funding, gave us support through either parts or manufacturing, we do sponsor post them. We also do posts for the events we do, and also our work-day posts. Our work-day posts is, our immediate team will go around and take pictures and kind of talk to all the leads and see what they're working on that day. And then, we post on our social media. So, you kind of get to see what exactly each of the team is doing.

Amanda: OK, very cool. And then, so for students, I'm assuming they can go to Instagram, but maybe there's someone who's interested in joining Mean Green Racing. How do they find you guys?

Miguel: Yeah, so our Instagram has our Discord, which is our main communication method, and they're welcome to join. They can always reach out to us through OrgSync and the email will reach directly to the officers. And everyone is welcome to join. Whether they help out with wrenching on the car, if they're not too familiar with engineering practices yet. Or, help by designing stuff in front of a computer and clicking a mouse and typing on a keyboard, they're welcome to do that, as well as going to events with us and speaking about the car. Like Aiden said, getting our name out there is the best way that we get funding, and more funding equals a better car.

Amanda: Makes sense. All right. Well, thank you, guys, and good luck with the race.

[TRANSITION MUSIC]

Alicia: Man, I love a good student org story. Really takes me back to my UNT Running Club days.

Scott: Yeah. Big thanks to Amanda for bringing us that interview. Check the show notes to learn more about Mean Green Racing and other student organizations. And, if you'd like us to feature your student org on the pod, use the contact info in the show notes and get in touch. Alicia, maybe you can get us an in with the running club as a proud alum.

Alicia: I'll see what I can do. Up next, we wouldn't let the commencement season pass us by without featuring one of our Great Grads on the pod.

Scott: That's right. Every commencement, our division writes stories about dozens of graduating students who have accomplished great things in their time at UNT. Sharing those stories is one of our favorite projects we do here.

Alicia: Yes. And today, we're sharing the story of Anurag Gumaste, who came to UNT all the way from India. Our very own Allicia Washington White interviewed Anurag about his journey to earn his Ph.D. in material science and engineering.

[TRANSITION MUSIC]

Allicia WW: So, where are you from originally?

Anurag: So, I'm from India. There's a small town called Sangli in Maharashtra. S-A-N-G-L-I. So, so that is where I grew up, basically. So, coming from a small-town background back in India, it was always fulfilling for me as a high school student to work on some economically viable solutions. So, lik,e one of the examples was for my backyard garden. I designed a frugal water sprinkler system because my mom used to water all the plants every day. But then I designed it myself using plastic bottles and pipes, which cost me only $3. So, that was something, a kind of story, wherein I was always interested in engineering solutions. So, I found problems interesting and making solutions, trying to build solutions was something that was there in me. This was done all using waste pipes and bottles. So, that that was something which are interesting, and then I grew up watching these science- fiction movies like `Transformers’ and stuff, which turned on a belief in my that science and innovation can make the life on the planet very efficient and easier. So, blend of automation and human control can really help build a more sustainable world without compromise to any environmental concerns. So, that that was always there as part of when I grew up.

Allicia WW: OK, now tell me, please, are you the first person in your family to go on to college, or did you have other influences that made you want to study engineering?

Anurag: So, to study engineering. My dad is also an engineer, but I'm the first person to come outside India to do anything.

Allicia WW: Oh, my goodness.

Anurag: So, there was always an influence of people around doing engineering. There were quite a few in my family who did engineering, but then I was specifically interested in mechanical engineering because it had something to offer in terms of thinking and the real world things happen in mechanical engineering, where you could see and devise things, so that was the most interesting aspect.

Allicia WW: So, how did you hear about UNT and how did you journey to Denton, Texas? How did you find your way here to us to become part of the Mean Green family?

Anurag: So, I progressed ahead of my engineering career there, and got my bachelor's. After my bachelor's, I got a job in the campus placement and I moved to a city called Pune. And so, during my bachelor's, I had stayed at home. So, in Pune, which helped me gain some valuable industry experience, I could really see how solutions were engineered at an industry level. So, coming from an academic background, getting exposure to industry, that triggered an interest in me to pursue higher studies. In the industry exposure, I got to work on the software part. I worked on the shop floor production and got my hands dirty. So, and then I saw different materials being used, and that is how my interest in materials grew. And then, that was the switch from mechanical to materials that I did. And I decided to pursue my master’s. I scored the top five percentile in India for the competitive exam for master’s. And that secured me entrance into Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar, where I started my journey in material science and engineering. And, from then on, I think material science and engineering has been quite a revelation to me. Materials are everywhere, right? There are so many different materials used in every industry. So, that was something which was interesting. So, that is how my journey for materials started. And then, the influence, the research that I did during my master’s is what influenced me to come to UNT. So, the exposure that I got there in research was in friction study technology. So, this is a very specific niche area. And UNT’s Department of Material Science and Engineering and Research is very well known for this. The Material Science Department in UNT is top notch in terms of research. It's a Tier One research institution. And that is what, essentially, I felt that I want to come to UNT to do my research. And professor Rajiv Mishra, was my dissertation advisor. He's one of the top in the field and, hence, I decided to come to UNT.

Allicia WW: My goodness.

Anurag: So, there were other institutions. But that was the sort of thing that I wanted to do, and hence UNT.

Allicia WW: I love your story, because it's, like, materials has. I like how you said materials are everywhere. And then, the way that you, you know, helped your mom at home with plastic bottles. Does she still have that or has it has it evolved?

Anurag: I think it has evolved now. This was 2007 or 2006, so it’s been a while.

Allicia WW: It has been a while, yes. And you were just in high school. That is so awesome. So, when you got to UNT, when you came here. So, tell me about that experience when you decided to formally come to the United States to pursue your education at UNT, tell me about that time in your life.

Anurag: So, I came in January 2021, which was a little bit of a precarious time because it was COVID. The vaccines were still not out. So, our travel and all was very, it was still kind of kind of taboo, if I might call it. People are still scared to travel. So, COVID was definitely one of the challenges. It was a time when a few of the offers made in Ph.D. were called back, so that I was, I was really nervous about travel and I'm a vegetarian. So, that was one of the concerns that if I would come to U.S., how would it be? And then, being the first guy at home to travel out of India, I was certainly nervous about it. I didn't know anyone here. Then, I tried to get on the internet, found lab people, and then I contacted the professor once he gave me an advert, and then he linked me to a student and then that's how I got in touch with someone at UNT.

Allicia WW: Yes. So then, this student, was this student like a classmate or like a mentor?

Anurag: He's, he's my, he's my lab mate. He's an alumni of UNT. So, his name is Suprid. He is one year senior to me in Ph.D. Yeah. So, he graduated last year. Suprid has been a great friend -- also a guide there to me many times. So, initially that kind of thing is what you need. And then, back in India, the times were even more difficult because during COVID getting a visa slot, traveling in India for a visa, was still skeptical. So, all those aspects of were there and I was in touch with Suprid back in India as well. So I got an admittance 2020 August, but I couldn't come because my I didn't get a slot for visa. And then I had to defer by six months and then I arrived in January 2021.

Allicia WW: OK, and then finally, my goodness. With COVID and knowing that you had to defer your studies for six months, were you still encouraged? Did you get discouraged a little bit?

Anurag: No, I think I was always looking forward to coming here. So, having pursued a master's, going for something higher was always the aim. And, UNT being again the top notch of research institutions, the idea was that I want to get in here and do some good stuff while I'm here.

Allicia WW: Love it.

Anurag: And it has always been like home to me. The people around, my lab mates, friends that I've made here. And, especially, I would like to mention the UNT dining halls You know, having a vegan dining hall and so many vegetarian options made my life eaiser during the start of my journey here.

Allicia WW: I love that. Oh, my goodness. And you know what? A lot of students that come here internationally, they're afraid because it's so much food. And, you know, `I'm a vegan. I have dietary needs.’ So, did you eat a lot at the Mean Greens Cafe?

Anurag: I did eat a lot at the Mean Greens Café and especially Eagle Landing, where you have a separate vegan counter. So, those two were my favorites. I enjoyed visiting these places and I miss going out.

Allicia WW: I love this. Here you are. So, you're kind of almost at the end of your academic journey. And, let's say, there are, we still have, you know, freshmen that come to us. Do you have any advice for whether new UNT students or students who are coming from India like yourself, do you have any advice for them coming to UNT and they want to study material science and engineering. What advice can you share?

Anurag: So, material science and engineering department is one of the top notch, so I don't think anyone should think twice before coming in here. If research is their interest, UNT do material science and engineering is the place to be. It offers a wide range of exposure in terms of research. Very, very nice professors and academic standings. The research is very good and there are lots of seminars that happen. The exposure that we get at UNT because of international professors and students who are visiting and the support that we get to visit conferences from the department I think is huge and from UNT. College of Engineering. So, these are all the aspects that really give a good exposure to and support students. So, from a more life perspective, I think adversities define character and, hence, it isn't just about achieving the top of something, but progress rather lies in the continuous pursuit of further challenges and growth. It's about looking for new horizons to conquer ahead. So, I have a small quote which has developed over these years, which can be probably be included at the end. So, `Success is not when you reach the apex, it is when you reach there and discover greater heights to be scaled.’

Allicia WW: So, this is the last question that I have, last series of questions. So, what are you most proud of as a UNT student? Like, what is your proudest accomplishment? You certainly have several to choose from, but you yourself, what are you most proud of during your time at UNT?

Anurag: I'll have to think about that.

Allicia WW: Yes, take your time.

Anurag: It has, it has been about, the four years have been definitely very transformative for me in terms of research learnings and how I look towards life. The achievements that I have accomplished in research are something that I'm really proud of, and that they wouldn’t have been possible without the support, mentorship and guidance of faculty and my peers in the lab. And, I did have a bit of health issues in between my Ph.D., but then I decided to take that seriously. And then, I participated and I started running and picked that as a hobby. And I ran two runs in the Irving marathon. So, I ran two 10Ks in the Irving marathon and they are doing marathon December 16th last year and March 30th of this year, I think.

Allicia WW: My goodness.

Anurag: So, picking running as a hobby has been one of the defining moments for me. And then, the third thing was, I started cooking. So, you need something to pick up during your Ph.D. to get away from the mindset. So, I have really enjoyed cooking different cuisines during the last three years. And so, these, these are the three things that I pick up from, the research, running and cooking.

Allicia WW: Research, running and cooking. I love it.

[TRANSITION MUSIC]

Scott: So cool to hear how the vegan options at Mean Greens Cafe gave Anurag some comfort as he adjusted to life in the U.S.

Alicia: That's right. We love out UNT dining options. Shout out to Mean Greens and shout out to Allicia for bringing us that interview. Check the show notes for a link to her story about Anurag or to read more about our Fall 2024 Great Grads. It's Q&A time. Scotty. What's our Q today?

Scott: Well, since it's our last show of the year, our question today is what are your goals or resolutions for 2025?

Alicia: Well, for 2025, my goals are to meditate more, read more and cook more. 2024 was a very fast-paced and stressful year for my family and I, and I really just want to be more intentional with how I spend my time. I also want to learn how to drive. My goal is to learn how to drive, not because I want to – hot take -- but because I probably should at the ripe age of 24. Yes, listeners, I still don't know how to drive, but that should change in the near future, hopefully. I'll keep y’all updated. Career-wise, I'd like to be more involved than I already am with the podcast and really refine my production and editing skills. How about you, Scotty?

Scott: Well, on the professional side, I'm excited to get the podcast the one-year mark in April, assuming we don't get canceled. But, I want to look back at Year One and figure out what worked and what we can do better to keep growing this thing and see what kind of new things we can try in 2025. Personally, I'm not too big into resolutions. I always try to cut back on soda and always fail, because Dr Pepper. But I'm sure I'll try that again for a couple of days. Our student assistant, Anthony, went out to campus to see what some of our students hope to accomplish in 2025.

Anthony: OK, what are your main goals for 2025?

Student 1: So, currently the main goal is for me to get a job in 2025 by May. I'm going to graduate, so I need to get a job, internship full time, whatever it is. I need to get that. That's my resolution right now. And then, I need to hit the gym every day. That's the only thing I was, like, thinking to do. That's it.

Student 2: I hope to be in a new apartment by the end of the year.

Anthony: End of 2025?

Student 2: Yes. End of 2025. Yes. That's my resolution to have a new place. Yes.

Student 3: Right now, I'm preparing for my Anglican exam. It's like a traditional I want to become a registered nurse here. So, my new year’s resolution is that I have to, like, work hard and, like, achieve my goal as pretty as soon. Yeah. And, yeah, like I'm lethargic person. Like, gym is not my hobby. So now, I'm preparing to like, build my body, like going gym every day. Yeah, that's my resolution.

Student 4: I want an adult job with my degree because I just graduated. So, I hope to get a job.

Anthony: Congratulations. What did graduate with?

Student 4: Public health.

Alicia: All right. Well, now that you've heard from us and some students, we want to hear all about your New Year's resolutions. So, email us at podcast@UNT. edu or call us at 940-565-4341.

Scott: And, don't forget to tell a friend about the show, share it on social media or leave us a rating and review wherever you listen. Until next time, we hope you have a happy Friday North Texas.

Alicia: And, Go Mean Green.

[OUTRO MUSIC]

Scott: “Happy Friday, North Texas” is a production of the University of North Texas. Today’s show was produced by Scott Brown with editing by Scott Brown and Amanda Lyons, and original reporting by Amanda Lyons, Allicia Washington White and Anthony Simone. For more information, visit UNT.edu/podcast.

Scott: You said, `We have a new brand new.’

Alicia: I know I did. Dang it. I don’t freakin’ know.

Scott: You know the clap is never on the actual podcast, right?

Alicia: I know, but it should be. It should be. That was loud. OK, I’m done. Man, I love a good student org story. Really .,,

Scott: Back it up. And if you’d like us to feature your student org on the podcast … Use the contact info ….

Alicia: That should be in the bloops video