

msu **human resources** **Source**


April 2009

www.hr.msu.edu

Annual CT Award Nominations Due by May 15

Is there an outstanding CT in your unit who deserves special recognition for his or her skills, abilities and dedication to excellence? Nominate that special person for the 2009 Clerical Technical Recognition Award. The winner will be announced in the Source newsletter, will receive a \$1,000 monetary award and a reception will be held in his or her honor. Criteria for the award include:


- Respect of their peers and continuous diligence in attending to their daily responsibilities;
- Concern for students, faculty, staff and colleagues in their respective units, particularly (but not limited to) those assisting overseas U.S. students and faculty, international students, international faculty, etc.;
- Extraordinary and significant contributions to the community or public service;
- Innovative thinking in facilitating unit tasks and responsibilities.

The nomination form, criteria and instructions are available online now on the MSU HR Web site at www.hr.msu.edu in the HR News section. 

Check Out the Healthy State Web Site – Again! www.hr.msu.edu/healthystate

Thousands of you visited the new Healthy State Web site after MSU Human Resources recently sent all benefits-eligible faculty and staff an e-mail describing the new site. Healthy State is intended to help the University community stay informed about health care and health care cost issues at Michigan State University. We continue to add new content every week, including:

- Information to help you understand the health care cost challenge we face;
- A poll question with a weekly prize drawing (while donated prizes last!);
- Information on various efforts underway to address rising health care costs;
- Links to health and wellness resources available at Michigan State University;
- Tips that every member of the MSU community can use to help reduce health care costs, and more.

Please visit www.hr.msu.edu/healthystate once per week to keep informed about health care cost issues at Michigan State University. 

Advancing Knowledge. Transforming Lives.

Benefits Open Enrollment:

April 20 – May 11

Online open enrollment for the 2009-10 plan year will begin on Monday, April 20 and end on Monday, May 11, 2009. Open enrollment materials will be posted online and mailed to benefits-eligible individuals by Human Resources in mid-April.

We are pleased to invite you to attend a benefits fair to learn more about health benefits options and meet representatives from the Benefits office and the health plans. The fair dates and locations include:

April 28, 2009
MSU Union
Gold Rooms A/B
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

April 29, 2009
International Center
Spartan Rooms B/C
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

April 30, 2009
Nisbet Building
First Floor
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MSU HR

News You Can Use . . .

Introducing a New Format for the Source Newsletter

We are in the process of making some changes to the format of Source that we believe will allow us to better serve our readers' needs.

We've heard from some of you that our past practice of sending you 12- to 16-page newsletters packed with long articles a few times per year isn't as effective as it used to be in getting you the information you need, when you need it. Starting with this edition, we'll be striving to make the Source newsletter:

- **Shorter** – we're cutting back to 4-page editions with shorter articles so Source will be a quicker read.
- **More frequent** – we'll be testing an every-other-month production schedule for Source to try to reach you with information in a more timely fashion.
- **Easier to scan** – greater use of descriptive subheadings and bullets to help you find what information may be useful to you more quickly.
- **More focused on key facts** – articles will provide key facts rather than a lot of detail, but will also let you know how to access additional information if you want or need it.
- **Better integrated with the Web** – an online edition will feature live links to referenced material and/or links to contact e-mail addresses

to ask questions or request more information.

- **Environmentally responsible** – even though we'll be publishing more frequently, we expect to use significantly less paper due to the smaller edition sizes. In addition, we'll be printing on partially recycled paper and exploring ways to shift more print readers to electronic versions of the Source in the future.

In the coming months, you can also expect a new design to go with our new approach to content. We hope you'll find that our changing approach better meets your needs.

New FMLA Forms Online

Effective January 16, 2009, significant changes in federal law took effect regarding the Family Medical Leave Act.

New processes and forms now apply. You can find the new forms and a detailed summary of the law changes on the HR Web site "Quick Links" section at www.hr.msu.edu.

If you regularly process FMLA requests in your unit, please make sure you are familiar with the new forms and processes. Questions can be directed to the Benefits office at benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu, 517-353-4434 or 1-800-353-4434.

To learn more about FMLA requirements, register for the May 19 HRD course, Navigating the FMLA, ADA and Worker's Compensation. The registration cost is \$30. You can

register on the HR Web site at <http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/ProDev/Staff/>.

Academic Human Resources Process Enhancements

As part of ongoing efforts to automate, enhance and improve Academic Human Resources processes, changes were recently made to the Academic Hiring Report form that automatically pre-fill the Table A Affirmative Action Availability Data and Placement Goals.

This means one less step for hiring units in processing academic hires.

In addition, the Affirmative Action Placement Goals for Faculty and Academic Staff (Table A) data is now available to units at any time on the HR Web site at <http://facadplacementgoals.hr.msu.edu>.

This online version replaces the paper copy that used to be sent to deans and separately reporting directors via mail.

403(b) Plan Changes Now in Effect

The IRS issued new requirements for employers with 403(b) retirement plans that were effective January 1, 2009.

The new requirements state in part that employers, like Michigan State University, are now required to take a more active role in the administration of the retirement plans offered to their employees.

What does this mean for employees and retirees of Michigan State University? The following is a brief summary of the changes in the new requirements:


- All distributions and withdrawals from 403(b) retirement plans, including loans, must be reviewed and approved by the employer. In

response to this new requirement, the eligibility criteria and number of loans allowed has changed and hardship distributions are no longer available. For more detailed information, please review the “New 403(b) Loan Provisions” link on the MSU Human Resources Web site at www.hr.msu.edu under the QuickLinks title.

- All retirement plans must have a written plan document that details the eligibility requirements, benefits and the plan provisions. MSU has created a 403(b) plan document that governs the plan, which is available online in the MSU Human Resources Web site at www.hr.msu.edu. Click the “Benefits” link in the left menu, the “Retirement” link in the center menu, and then the “403(b) Plan Document” link near the top of the page.

Please contact the Benefits Retirement office at 517-353-4434 or 800-353-4434 ext. 3, or e-mail benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu for more information.

Angel System Upgrade Planned

On Thursday and Friday, May 14 and 15, 2009, the ANGEL course management system at Michigan State University will be upgraded to a new version. The new version of ANGEL will feature improved grading rubrics and a more accessible layout and appearance. For dates, times, and locations to preview the new version before the upgrade or for more information, visit <http://help.angel.msu.edu/upgrade> or call 517-355-2345 or 1-800-500-1554. 

Comments about Source?
Contact us at: 517-884-0111
or hrmail@msu.edu

Top Ten “Spartan” Exercise Tips

More than 280 MSU faculty, staff and retirees participated in the first Healthy State weekly poll. We asked for your tips on how you manage to work exercise in to your busy lives. Out of hundreds of tips we received, the following “Top Ten” represent those themes most frequently submitted:

- 1. Schedule It Like You Mean It!** Put exercise “meetings” on your calendar and treat them as you would any other important appointment.
- 2. Target TV Time!** Give up one program per day and exercise instead or plant exercise equipment in front of the TV and exercise during your favorite program. Do push-ups, crunches, weight lifting or running in place during the commercials (instead of that run to the fridge!)
- 3. Lose the Car Keys!** Lots of Spartans say they rack up exercise time by making an effort to walk or bike instead of drive whenever possible.
- 4. Work toward a specific goal!** Sign up for a marathon in six months or take a virtual walk to a distant location and chart your daily progress on a map.
- 5. Buddy up!** Get an exercise partner or make up an exercise group of coworkers or family members. We heard about one group of MSU office mates that walks over 60 miles a month during breaks and lunch time!
- 6. Be Creative!** Sneak exercise into your daily routine by finding ways to add more motion or activity to daily tasks you already do. Pace while reading memos. Stand up while on the phone. Do seated leg lifts while keyboarding. Just add a little extra movement to everything you do.
- 7. Join the Stair Climbers!** Choose the stairs over the elevators and spend 20 minutes over lunch walking from the basement to the top floor of your building and back down several times.
- 8. Pay Up and Plan Ahead!** Though you can certainly find ways to exercise without a gym membership, some Spartans reported finding it very motivating to either join a gym or register and pay for exercise classes.
- 9. Take Baby Steps!** Successful exercisers at MSU told us the hardest part is often getting started. Their advice? You don’t have to start big – just start. Do something. Do anything. But do it every day and start NOW.
- 10. Get a Dog** (or two or three!) It’s a reality of the dog-owning lifestyle . . . the furry little critters need to go outside and walk around several times a day to do their business.

Staying active can improve your health and lower MSU’s health care costs. However you choose to work exercise into your schedule, getting more exercise is great for you and MSU.

Upcoming HRD Education Opportunities

To register or get more information on any of these upcoming Human Resource Development courses, look at the Odyssey catalog on the Human Resources Web site at www.hr.msu.edu. The current Odyssey catalog is available under the “Quick Links” section of the HR Web site.

- *Building Strong Communication Connections at Work*, Tuesday, April 21, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. **Presenter:** Rosemary Ward, TrainingDirect. **Investment:** \$90.
- *Effective Phone Communication Skills for Today's Workplace*, Wednesday, April 22, 8:30 a.m. to Noon. **Presenter:** Rosemary Ward, TrainingDirect. **Investment:** \$90.
- *Developing Resilience for Professional Success*, Thursday, April 23, 9 a.m. to Noon. **Presenter:** Debra Nelson Dunbar, Indiana University. **Investment:** \$100.
- *Communication Confidence Factor*, Tuesday, April 28, 8:30 a.m. to Noon. **Presenter:** Lois Wolfe-Morgan, Wolfe Associates. **Investment:** \$110.
- *Best Practices for Writing Policies, Procedures and Manuals*, Thursday, April 30, 8:30 a.m. to Noon. **Presenter:** Jacqueline McCarroll, McCarroll Associates. **Investment:** \$100.
- *Survival Tactics to Master E-Communication*, Thursday, April 30, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. **Presenter:** Jacqueline McCarroll, McCarroll Associates. **Investment:** \$80.
- *Navigating the FMLA, ADA, and Worker's Compensation*, Tuesday, May 19, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Presenter:** Alicia Bailey and Rosemary Huguélet, Human Resources, and John Pedraza, MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. **Investment:** \$30.

Upcoming Retirement Education Opportunities

To register or get more information on any of these upcoming retirement education sessions, call 517-353-4434 extension 0 or send an e-mail to benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu. All sessions are free of charge and are held in 125 Nisbet Building unless otherwise noted. Advance registration is requested.

- *MSU Benefits/Retirement Orientation*, Wednesday, April 15 at 12:30 p.m. **Presenter:** Human Resources staff.
- *Basic Investment Concepts*, Thursday, April 16 at 5:15 p.m. **Presenter:** StraightLine.
- *5 Habits of Highly Successful Investors*, Tuesday, April 21 at 5:15 p.m. **Presenter:** TIAA-CREF.
- *Intermediate Investment Concepts*, Thursday, May 14 at 5:15 p.m. **Presenter:** StraightLine.

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UNIVERSITY

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