Benefits Open Enrollment Ends Oct. 31

MSU Benefits Open Enrollment for the 2014 benefits plan year will be held through Thursday, October 31, 2013.

Benefits-eligible faculty and staff who need to complete the spousal/OEI affidavit, or want to re-evaluate their benefits selections, switch health plans or dental plans, enroll or re-enroll in a Flexible Spending Account, enroll in certain voluntary benefits, or add or remove dependents, must complete Open Enrollment by October 31.

Any changes made will go into effect on January 1, 2014. Please note that retirement plans and some voluntary benefits continue to be offered year-round without an open enrollment period.

Faculty and staff who need to complete the spousal/OEI affidavit and do not want to make other changes can find affidavit-only instructions at http://www.hr.msu.edu/openenrollment/Tutorial_Spouse-OEIAffidavit.pdf.

Full information about Benefits Open Enrollment is available at www.hr.msu.edu/openenrollment.

Staff Award Nominations Due Oct. 28

Nominations for the Jack Breslin Distinguished Staff Awards are due by 5 p.m. on Monday, October 28, 2013. This is a $2,500 award presented annually to six university support staff members. The award is named in honor of the late Jack Breslin, a student leader, honored athlete, former University Vice President, and steadfast advocate of MSU.

Criteria for selection of recipients include overall excellence in job performance, supportive attitude, contributions to the unit or university that lead to improved efficiency or effectiveness, and valuable service to MSU. Nomination forms and detailed criteria can be found at http://www.hr.msu.edu/recognition/supportstaff/DistStaff.htm.
MSU HR is pleased to be a sponsor of two workshops especially for women interested in enhancing their financial knowledge. These free workshops will be held Nov. 12 and 13 at the MSU Union. The workshops are hosted by TIAA-CREF and additionally sponsored by the Family Resource Center, Women’s Resource Center and Women’s Advisory Committee for Support Staff.

Postcards from the Future: A Woman’s Guide to Financially Ever After is focused on women who are 15 years or less away from retirement to educate them on the importance of taking immediate action on their financial planning. The first session is Nov. 12 from noon to 1:30 p.m. with snacks provided. You may register at https://publictools.tiaa-cref.org/public/tools/events?eventId=1-1JCTTT6. The second session is from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. with snacks provided, and you may register at https://publictools.tiaa-cref.org/public/tools/events?eventId=1-1JCTTT6.

She’s Got It: A Woman’s Guide to Savings and Investing educates women on the basics of saving and investing. Facilitators focus on simplifying savings and investment topics, so that women feel empowered (versus intimidated) to take action. The session will be held Nov. 13 from noon to 1:30 p.m. with lunch provided. Register at https://publictools.tiaa-cref.org/public/tools/events?eventId=1-1JCXZGY.

Questions? Call the HR Benefits Retirement office at 517-353-4434 ext. 0.  

Tax Treatment of Health Benefits for Same-Sex Spouses

Recently the U.S. Department of the Treasury and IRS released guidance clarifying that same-sex couples who are legally married in jurisdictions or countries that recognize their marriages will be treated as married for all federal tax purposes, regardless of whether same-sex couples reside in a state or jurisdiction that recognizes same-sex marriage.

Effective Sept. 16, 2013 employers will no longer impute federal taxable income for health benefits for same-sex spouses where a valid marriage exists. Human Resources is asking all employees who enroll an OEI and are legally married to provide a copy of their marriage license to HR Benefits no later than Oct. 31. Documentation received by that deadline will permit us to evaluate health insurance premiums for your spouse for pre-tax purposes.

Please be aware if you are contributing to a Flexible Spending Account for health care or dependent care, a same-sex spouse and their dependents may be eligible recipients of tax-free reimbursements. Eligibility under the MSU Other Eligible Individual (OEI) program remains unchanged. In order to be eligible for health coverage at MSU, the criteria must be met and can be viewed at http://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/oei.htm.

You may also want to review and/or adjust your Federal tax filing status which can be found by accessing your ESS tab in EBS. Please contact MSU HR Benefits at 517-353-4434 or benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu for questions regarding health insurance premiums. You may wish to contact your tax advisor for questions regarding tax filings.

MSU Fire Security and Safety Report and Drug and Alcohol Policy

Each year, MSU Human Resources is charged with distributing the MSU Alcohol and Drug Policy to all MSU faculty and staff. You can view the policy as part of the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report on pages 46-56 at http://police.msu.edu/resources/asfsreport2013.pdf.

In addition, please consider visiting http://thinkingaboutdrinking.msu.edu/ for an additional resource with a great deal of helpful information about alcohol use.
New Behavioral Threat Assessment Team

We have all heard about violent acts carried out at schools, public events, places of work and public locations in the media. Such tragedies are devastating events that can end and forever change lives. Taking steps to identify and address developing problems, and to prepare for an unlikely but worst-case scenario, is critical to providing a safe environment for our students, staff, faculty and visitors.

In July, the MSU Police Department sponsored a three-day “Mental Health and Threat Symposium” to educate a cross-functional group of university leaders about the risks of violence in the university setting. Through a case-study approach led by nationally-recognized leaders in the fields of mental health and public safety, attendees developed an awareness of the need for an ongoing multifunctional approach to assess potential threats on campus and protect our Spartan family and guests.

The university has formed a Behavioral Threat Assessment Team (BTAT) to facilitate a multidisciplinary, coordinated response to reports of students, employees or other individuals who have engaged in behavior indicating a possible threat of harm to self or other members of the campus community. This team is an expansion of the former Student Risk and Review Committee. Goals of the BTAT include:

- Support a safe, productive working and learning environment
- Educate the campus community to identify and report potential threats
- Provide early, prompt and effective intervention

The BTAT meets regularly and as needed to review potential threats to the safety of all who visit, work or live in any of the university’s campus or off-campus locations.

For information about the BTAT and/or to submit an issue to the team case manager using the online referral form, please visit http://btat.msu.edu/. Referrals also can be made by phone (517-355-2222) or email (kennedym@police.msu.edu). As always, matters requiring immediate attention due to a perceived imminent risk or an act in progress must be reported by dialing 911.

The Spartan Experience Begins

Driven by President Simon’s Bolder by Design initiative, the Spartan Experience is a high-energy training program designed to embrace and advance a high-performance, service-minded culture at Michigan State University.

The best, highest-performing organizations in the world have achieved results and set themselves apart from their competition by maintaining a clear focus on creating excellent experiences. The Spartan Experience program will help MSU staff through a day-long program to understand and develop the habits and vital service behaviors that will ensure outstanding Spartan experiences for MSU’s many customers and stakeholders – internal and external.

Literally thousands of Spartan experiences occur every day between the public and MSU staff and systems. They include the countless exchanges between teammates, partners, vendors, students, faculty and support staff. They are seen and unseen. They are face-to-face, over the phone, and via e-mail. They are the impressions left by any interaction with anyone or anything MSU.

Due to the critical role supervisors play, there will also be “Leading The Spartan Experience” workshops. This training program is intended to kick-off The Spartan Experience by providing an overview of the program, explaining the “why” and the critical nature of the supervisors role. Tools and resources will be provided for successful implementation.

Leading The Spartan Experience is scheduled on October 22, 28 and November 14 and is available for enrollment in EBS. Additional sessions will be scheduled as necessary. The Spartan Experience workshops will begin November 1 and are available for enrollment in EBS. Questions? Contact Sharri Margraves at margrave@msu.edu.

FMLA Process Update

Effective October 1, 2013, FMLA Form #2 (for employee’s own serious health condition) will no longer be available on the HR website. Individuals desiring this form must contact one of the FMLA specialists in the HR Benefits office. The FMLA specialist will verify eligibility, attach a job description to ensure compliance with the Act and make sure the individual receives the form in a timely manner. The FMLA specialists are Beth Tominski, 517-884-0188, handling last names A-L; and Sheila Chorey, 517-884-3652, handling last names M-Z. Individuals desiring a meeting with either FMLA specialist must call for an appointment.
The 2013 MSU Community Charitable Campaign is Underway!

On September 18 the MSU Community Charitable Campaign held its annual Kickoff. Campaign volunteers were greeted with encouraging remarks by President Simon, Dr. Marylee Davis and Andre Hutson, former MSU Basketball standout and local businessperson. In addition, Gabriel Biber provided the audience with a video tour of Haven House, the only homeless shelter in mid-Michigan that serves families of any kind – including mother/son, father/daughter and dual-parent families with children!

This year's campaign will continue to offer the university community the option of making pledges electronically. Like last year, faculty and staff will receive their solicitation via email with instructions about how to use the user-friendly form that mimics the paper form, but with drop-down menus and automatic acknowledgement of the pledge. MSU employees can find this form on their ESS tab, under the University Information link. However, in order to make sure everyone is able to make their pledge in a manner that suits their individual needs, the pledge form can also be printed off and sent in via campus or U.S. mail, just as in past years.

MSU as an institution is involved in teaching, research and service throughout the world. The MSU Community Charitable Campaign provides us all with an opportunity to make a difference right here in our mid-Michigan backyard. The campaign leadership is asking Team MSU to once again reach out to the local community by making a pledge. Taken individually, each gift will help someone in need. But as part of the greater university giving effort, you have an opportunity to help make mid-Michigan a better place to live!

Learn more at [http://www.msuccc.msu.edu/](http://www.msuccc.msu.edu/).

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Cyber Infrastructure Days Oct. 24-25

Michigan State University is hosting its second Cyberinfrastructure (CI) Days event Oct. 24-25, 2013. CI Days provides an opportunity for the MSU community to share information about cyberinfrastructure resources and their use in research. This free event will feature:

- Nationally-renowned research leaders from multiple disciplines presenting how advanced technologies have enabled their scholarly work
- MSU researchers discussing CI challenges and solutions
- Posters showcasing CI-enabled research at MSU
- Resource fair featuring CI resources available to MSU researchers

All events will be held on campus in the Biomedical and Physical Sciences building.

Participants are not required to be present for the full day of events. More information, including a detailed agenda, registration and poster session information, are available at [http://tech.msu.edu/CI-Days/index.html](http://tech.msu.edu/CI-Days/index.html).
What you may have missed this month on our blog...

2013 Campus Flu Clinics

Dropping temperatures and shorter days means flu season will soon be among us and preparation for the foreboding season is vital. The University Physician’s Office will be offering flu clinics at various campus locations in October and November. Flu vaccines administered at the flu clinics will be subsidized by Human Resources for MSU faculty, staff and retirees and will be offered at a cost of $10. The vaccine cost for non-MSU employees and students will be $30.

This flu season the University Physician’s Office is stocking the new quadrivalent flu vaccine, which includes two influenza A strains and two B strains to help protect against influenza disease, in both injectable and intranasal formulations. Until this year, seasonal influenza vaccines included two influenza A strains and only one B strain.

See this year’s flu clinic schedule here.

Get Medical Information Delivered to Your Inbox with the MSU Healthy Email Service

Decoding medical information can be challenging, but not anymore thanks to the Healthy Email Service (HEM) offered by the University Physician’s Office at MSU.

The Healthy Email Service provides up-to-date, evidence-based medical information about traditional medicine and alternative practices. The emails cover multiple topics, such as calcium supplementation, sleep medications, head injury in children and more. The emails are delivered bi-weekly throughout the academic year. Each email is written in an easy-to-understand format and can be used for discussions with your health care provider. Learn more at our blog post.

Step-by-Step Benefits Open Enrollment Instructions

Remember to complete your Benefits Open Enrollment during the month of October. Benefits-eligible employees will complete open enrollment using Employee Self-Service (ESS) in the Enterprise Business Systems (EBS). Here is the process for completing open enrollment:

- Visit ebs.msu.edu and select “EBS Login.”
- Log in using your MSU NetID and password.

View this blog post for full directions!
HRD Education Opportunities

To register or get more information on any of these upcoming Human Resource Development courses, look at the SpartansLearn.msu.edu catalog on the Human Resources website at www.hr.msu.edu or go to SpartansLearn.msu.edu. The current catalog is available under the “HR News” section of the HR website.

New! Impactful Introverted Leader
Tuesday, November 5, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Presenter: Susan Combs. $75.
The quiet leader—the introvert, plays a special role in teams and as a leader. Explore contemporary research to understand the keys to being an impactful, introverted leader.

New! Fraud Prevention And Business Ethics At MSU
Wednesday, November 6, 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Presenters: Tom Luccock and Jana Dean, MSU Internal Audit. Free.
This course will cover the importance of internal controls that help to prevent potential financial fraud in your unit. Audit policies that support effective stewardship of MSU resources by applying sound ethical business practices will be discussed.

Smart Phone and Tablet Productivity Tools
Wednesday, November 13, 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Presenter: Randy Dean. $105.
Turn your smart phones and tablets into productivity workhorses. You will learn how to integrate your devices with other software and communication tools. Please bring your instrument with you to class.

Leveraging the MSU Brand
Friday, November 22, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Presenters: MSU Communications and Brand Strategy staff. Free.
A university’s brand is its most valuable intangible asset. Learn how to tap into MSU’s branding initiative to positively affect recruiting and fundraising, and to communicate your unit’s distinctive attributes while reinforcing the university brand.

Benefits/Retirement Investment Education
To register or get more information, call 517-353-4434 ext. 0 or email benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu. Sessions are free and are held in 125 Nisbet Building. Registration is requested.

MSU Benefits/Retirement Orientation
Tuesday, November 26, at 12:30 p.m.
Presenters: Human Resources staff.
Recommended for anyone new to benefits or signing up for a retirement plan.

HR Department Directory

Academic Records
517-355-1526
records@hr.msu.edu

Benefits
517-353-4434
benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu

Employee Records
517-353-4330
records@hr.msu.edu

Employee Relations
517-353-5510
hr.er@hr.msu.edu

Human Resource Development
517-355-0183
hrdmail@hr.msu.edu

Staffing Services
517-353-3720
hrstaffingservices@hr.msu.edu

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