

# Human Resources

## News You Can Use

A publication for University of Wisconsin-La Crosse employees

### From the desk of the Executive Director

September 2009

Volume 1

Issue 1

Welcome to the first edition of HR's *News You Can Use!*

While we always welcome you to email, call or stop by the Human Resources office (144 Graff Main Hall), our goal with this newsletter is to provide the campus community with additional resources on HR-related topics and issues in one easily accessible package. We will continue to send emails and use the *Campus Connection*, with *News You Can Use!* providing more information on various topics. This monthly e-publication will be sent as a link via campus email with the newsletters archived on the HR website.

Regular features in *News You Can Use!* will include:

- resources for work-related issues
- information and tips for supervisors
- ways to help balance work, home and health
- answering employee questions of general interest
- timely information on topics of interest
- health and wellness tips
- upcoming human resources events and related timelines

We hope you find this monthly newsletter of value and we encourage any suggestions regarding this publication. If you would like to suggest a topic or see a particular question answered in this newsletter, please e-mail your suggestions to our editor, Susan Hauber at [hauber.susa@uwlax.edu](mailto:hauber.susa@uwlax.edu).

Jennifer B. Wilson

Executive Director for Human Resources

### What is Trust Fund News and why is it in my email?

*Trust Fund News* is a newsletter that is published quarterly from the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF). Remember, ETF manages the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) funds—your retirement account. The State of Wisconsin retirement fund remains one of the largest and most robust retirement funds in the nation and is an important and valuable benefit of working for UW-La Crosse!

*Trust Fund News* has been distributed in hard copy in the past, but is now going green! The September 2009 issue will be distributed, as a mass email to all state employees. Late in the week of **September 7<sup>th</sup>** you will receive an email that contains the link to this newsletter. This email will be sent from UW HR Administration and that is what will be displayed in the 'from' portion of the e-mail.

You can access the newsletter at: <http://etf.wi.gov/publications/newsletterstfn.htm>.



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# Office of Human Resources News

## PeopleAdmin Updates

The UW-L electronic recruiting and application system went live in the middle of May. Since that time we:

- have filled 4 unclassified positions through the electronic process,
- currently have 14 positions posted,
- have trained over 60 users on the use of PeopleAdmin.

If you are thinking of starting an unclassified search, your first step is to contact Carmen Wilson in AAO at 785-8043 to schedule a meeting to discuss resources and tips to assist you. Your next step will be to contact Tracey Simpson in HR at 785-8629 for PeopleAdmin training and user access.

Please send questions about unclassified recruitment and/or PeopleAdmin, comments or ideas for future topics to Tracey Simpson at X58629 or [simpson.trac@uwlax.edu](mailto:simpson.trac@uwlax.edu)

What likes all species of trees, does not have legs, is friendly and the only thing it has in common with the Emerald Ash Borer is that it's fast and its color is green?  
(Answer at end of newsletter)

## New Employee Checklist

- Verify Human Resources has new address
- Complete I-9 form within 3 working days
- Submit all insurance and benefits forms to Human Resources before deadline



## Furlough Fast Facts

Is Furlough Better Than a 3% Pay Cut? Yes it is, and here is why:

### TEMPORARY:

The Governor's Mandated Furlough Plan ends July 1, 2011 and cannot be extended without action of state legislators and the governor.

### PAY RATE UNCHANGED:

While the salary you receive will be less **due to the furlough deduction**, your actual rate of pay has not been reduced. When the furlough reduction ends, the salary you receive will be higher.

**In comparison**, to restore a 3% salary cut would require action by the UW System, the Board of Regents of the UW System, the governor, the state legislators and various legislative committees.

### RETIREMENT UNCHANGED:

Your reported salary and related contributions to your state retirement fund will be made as if there was no furlough deduction or as if the Governor's Mandated Furlough plan had not been implemented. That would not be possible if salaries had been cut.

## Classified Excellence Appreciation Breakfast

The Thirteenth Annual Appreciation Breakfast for classified staff will be held on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup> in Valhalla, Cartwright Center-Gunning Addition. Breakfast will be served starting at 7:15 a.m. through 8:45 a.m.

Invitations and RSVP information will be sent via email. Additional information will also be available in the upcoming issues of Campus Connection.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Ring in Human Resources at 608-785-6499.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual UW-L Health and Financial Fair



It's that time again for the UW-L Health and Financial Fair. The event is being coordinated with the Department of Transportation (La Crosse). The fair will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2009 in Valhalla, Cartwright Center-Gunning Addition from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

There will be an estimated thirty to forty vendors on hand to answer questions regarding life insurance, health and dental insurance and retirement issues. Additional information will be announced in the upcoming weeks.

If you have any questions regarding the upcoming fair please contact the Human Resources office at 608-785-8013.

# Office of Human Resources News

## Worker's Compensation

Have you cut your hand, fallen in the hallway, or had problems while keyboarding?

These are a few of the examples of injuries that could and have occurred in our work place. If you have an injury, please visit the HR web page; click on current employee; accident/worker's compensation. Complete the three forms (a portion is completed by your supervisor), and submit to the Human Resources Office.

It is very important to report injuries as soon as possible; the Department of Workforce Development can levy fines on a department for failure to report the injury on a timely basis.



## Payroll and Benefit Questions

Do you have questions regarding your benefits?

If so, please make an appointment with one of the Human Resources payroll and benefit specialists, Cedric Steine or Mary Dixon, to get your questions answered. Questions may also be fielded on a first come first serve walk-in basis.

## Student Payroll

The Kronos timekeeping system will be updated on the weekend of September 26, 2009. This will eliminate the Java problem that has followed the previous version since UW-L started using Kronos in 2006. The new version will have minor changes, but will be similar in the feel of the current version.

Training materials will be emailed to all affected student supervisors. Hands-on training sessions has been set up and schedules will be emailed. For additional information contact Mark Flottmeier at [flottmei.mark@uwlax.edu](mailto:flottmei.mark@uwlax.edu).

# Leader's Corner

Effective Communication = Increased Employee Productivity

## Communicate goals clearly

Employees look to management for basic company goals. When those goals are not clear, disagreements will erupt as employees try to define goals themselves. By clearly laying out goals, everyone begins in the same place and understands where the business is going.

## Provide feedback

Don't make a group second-guess your opinion of its work. Be clear not only in your initial expectations and assignments, but also in your opinion of the work. Open and frequent communication, where employees are clear on where they stand, will help them feel more secure and willing to work together.

## Meet regularly

The best way to understand your employees and to let them know

they're not alone is to meet regularly with them. Whether it's a monthly lunch meeting or an organized meeting with specific agenda items, it's critical to keep the lines of communication open. This allows you to gauge not only their needs and productivity, but will also help you assess any team-building concerns that need to be addressed.

Excerpt from:

<http://www.allbusiness.com/human-resources/employee-development/team-building/11366-1.html>

## Discourage "backdoor" reports.

Inevitably, there will be at least one employee who will attempt to report to you after every meeting — giving a play-by-play slanted in his or her favor. Don't encourage this behavior, and resist the temptation to use this employee as a fly on the wall. Backdoor tactics can severely

undermine an otherwise positive office environment.

## Create an encouraging environment

An effective manager sets up a system where employees can express themselves, whether in public or private, and establishes ground rules for communication. Perhaps that means an open door policy or scheduled times for department-wide conferences. As long as you create an atmosphere of respect, employees and management will be encouraged to communicate. These management skills will go a long way in making the workplace a productive and positive one.

Excerpt from:

<http://www.life123.com/career-money/career-development/management-skills/effective-communication-skills-2.shtml>

# Health and Wellness

## Five Strategies to Achieving Life Balance



### 1. Simplify

Even the world's worst pack rat can appreciate the feeling of having a clean desk or house. A little bit of order will result in a new sense of calm. Knowing where to find a particular item whether at work or home will save time and give you peace of mind.

### 2. Be Organized

Set your alarm to go off 15 minutes earlier than you normally would during the work week. This small fraction of time can make a big difference when car keys are missing or road construction suddenly appears on your daily commute. A calmer start to the day can set the tone for the rest of the day.

### 3. Schedule time for yourself

Reserve a time slot in your daily schedule that is reserved just for you,

even if it is only 15 minutes. Consider this time as an investment in your well-being.

### 4. Exercise

Start out with a weekly goal(s) and increase your time and intensity each week. This will help to avoid burnout and makes reaching those big goals possible.

### 5. Eat a healthy diet

To avoid feeling overwhelmed and deprived, incorporate small changes into your diet. Drink at least eight glasses of water daily, increase your fruit and vegetable intake and slowly wean yourself of off caffeinated beverages. It takes time to break old habits, so be easy on yourself and begin with tangible goals.

References:

<http://www.achieve-goal-setting-success.com/success-secrets.html>

## Managing Stress

Do you need some ideas on how to cope with the everyday stresses between home and work? Listed below are some simple techniques that may help to alleviate a stressful situation.

- Relax and take a deep breathe.
- Organize. Have a place for everything and everything in its place. Losing things is stressful.
- Visualize success.
- Have a plan "B".
- Stand up and stretch or walk around your office for a few minutes.
- Break down projects into little tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed. When you are working on a project do not think about everything else you have to do.

Excerpt from:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/238857/50-Easy-Ways-to-Reduce-Stress>



## Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program, also known as EAP, is available to all employees (regardless of appointment percentage and including limited term and project employees) and their immediate family members, including domestic partners.

The EAP provides professional, confidential assistance to help individuals resolve concerns that affect their personal lives or work performance.

UW-L has contracted with Gundersen Lutheran Business Health Services to provide EAP services. Up to three sessions with a counselor are offered at no direct cost to employees or their family members. Confidentiality is the foundation of the EAP.

More information about EAP is available on UW-L's HR website at <http://www.uwlax.edu/hr> or Gundersen Lutheran's website at [www.gundluth.org/eap](http://www.gundluth.org/eap)

To schedule an appointment, please call EAP at 608-775-4780 or 800-327-9991.



# Brain Teasers

## Centennial Celebration Trivia



1. The University's name has changed several times throughout its history, what have been the various names?
2. Who was considered the first chancellor?
3. Before women's athletic teams on campus were called the "Eagles", what were they known as?
4. What building became the first campus residence hall?
5. Who was the first Dean of Women?

### Answer Key

PeopleAdmin Trivia

- The answer is Electronic Recruitment

Centennial Celebration Trivia-

1) La Crosse Normal School, La Crosse State Teachers College, Wisconsin State College, La Crosse Wisconsin State University-La Crosse, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse 2) Kenneth E. Lindner becomes the 6<sup>th</sup> president and then the 1<sup>st</sup> chancellor (because of the merger, the name of the position is converted to chancellor). 3) Women's teams, known as the "Roonies" since the inception of intercollegiate competition in the early 1970s, become the "Eagles" in 1990. 4) Wilder Hall becomes the first campus residence hall. 5) Josephine M. Jones was appointed as the first Dean of Women.

## Food For Thought...

- Every day more money is printed for Monopoly than the US Treasury.
- Coca-Cola was originally green.
- It is impossible to lick your elbow.
- The state with the highest percentage of people who walk to work: Alaska.
- The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$6,400.
- The average number of people airborne over the US at any given hour: 61,000.
- Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.
- The first novel ever written on a typewriter: Tom Sawyer.
- The San Francisco cable cars are the only mobile national monuments.

Reference:

[http://www.bukisa.com/articles/22627\\_explanations-of-fascinating-trivia-and-phrase-origins-from-the-good-old-days](http://www.bukisa.com/articles/22627_explanations-of-fascinating-trivia-and-phrase-origins-from-the-good-old-days)

*"Many of life's failures  
are people who did not  
realize how close they  
were to success when  
they gave up."  
Thomas Edison*

