A Message from the Director

In the last issue of the HR Reporter, we communicated about the importance of the 2010 Performance Evaluations for UTHSC employees. As you are aware, the established deadline to have the Performance Evaluations submitted into the Human Resources Office was March 31, 2011. As of today, we have presently secured and documented 81.8% Performance Evaluations. Over the next couple of weeks the Human Resources office will be communicating directly to the colleges/departments/divisions that have not yet turned in the Performance Evaluations to our office.

A goal of 100% participation has been set by the University and endorsed by the Chancellor’s Office and it is imperative that we obtain this. We ask the department heads/supervisors continue to forward this information to Human Resources as soon as possible. Again, thank you for the time and consideration in completing this important task for the university.

Educational Assistance changes begin

2011 Summer semester!

In the Jan-March issue of the HR Reporter a change occurring with the Educational Assistance benefit was announced. Letters were also forwarded to employees who were currently using the benefit. Beginning with the summer semester and going forward, the fee waiver will no longer cover course program fees or fees associated with RODP and online courses. The fee waiver will continue to cover maintenance fees.

RODP and online program fees are additional costs set by each institution and vary from school to school. Each employee attending an eligible institution and use the PC-191 or UT Fee Waiver will be responsible for program and any additional class fees beyond maintenance charges.

UTHSC is excited to continue to offer this great benefit to employees and help reduce costs of higher education for eligible employees, retirees, their spouse and dependent(s). If you have any questions, please contact the Benefits office at 448-5601.
Partnership PPO members keeping their Promise

APS representatives visited our campus during the months of February, March, and April to provide free health screenings for UTHSC Partnership PPO members. APS screened an estimated 800 UTHSC employees during their visits. Of the 800 employees those who registered ahead of time were seen within 10-15 minutes. Walk-ins were typically seen within 30 minutes of arrival.

During the screening, employees were weighed, gave a blood sample (needle prick), had their waist measured and blood pressure taken. After the process was complete, the medical representatives reviewed the results of the screening with the employee. The screening will fulfill a portion of the Partnership Promise commitment as required by the ParTNers for Health Wellness Program.

If you missed the screenings on campus, a visit to your personal physician is still an option. Physicals dated July 2010 or after, can be used to satisfy your 2011 screening requirement. When using results from a previous physical or during an upcoming appointment with your personal physician, provide the Physician Screening Form to your doctor for completion. Once your physician has provided the required information, the form can be forwarded directly to ParTNers for Health. Both the address and fax number are listed on the form.

While there has been much talk about the screenings, a health questionnaire is also required to complete your commitment. There are two options to complete the questionnaire. You may use the Partners for health website or by phone at 1-888-741-3390.

Employees describe their experience....

“I was a walk-in at the first APS visit in February. I went one morning on my way into the office and was done in a very reasonable amount of time. Although there was question whether I could get my results that day, the UTHSC Insurance staff and APS staff quickly resolved the issue and I was able to get my results prior to leaving. Overall, I had a positive experience.”

C. Akram

“I attended the Health Screening on April 13, 2011 in the SAC. The entire process took about 30 minutes. Each of the medical personnel was professional, informative and answered questions that I had. Height/weight were taken, blood pressure and blood was drawn for specific tests. There, of course, were no fees associated with this screening. I had contemplated going to my primary care physician and have the results sent to Tennessee Partners but that would have required more time away from the office and a co-payment. I hope that the other UTHSC employees who attended the screening had the same professional experience that I had.”

J. Hall

“The staff was friendly and the process was fairly easy. Providing the onsite health screening has now alleviated waiting until the final hour in getting this done”.

M. Blake
The Long Term Disability (LTD) kick-off meeting was held on Tuesday, March 29, 2011 in the Student Alumni (SAC) dining hall. Prudential Insurance Company of America along with Office of Benefits and Retirement (Knoxville, TN) hosted the info session and offered employees an opportunity to meet one on one with enrollment specialists to discuss their LTD options. Heath Hildreth, our Prudential in-state representative, gave a brief overview of Prudential and the new LTD benefits. Afterwards, employees were divided into small groups with one of the Prudential specialists. This allowed a more personal interaction with the employees and Prudential.

Thank you gifts from Prudential were offered and the Office of Communications and Marketing donated 6 UTHSC Centennial Books, *The Legacy The Future: A Centennial Portrait of The University of Tennessee Health Science Center*.

During the special open enrollment period, March 28 – May 2, 2011, employees will be allowed to increase or decrease plan levels and enroll. Health questions are not required for new enrollees who wish to enroll in a basic level or for current enrollees who choose to select one higher percentage level up from their current plan. To find out more about the LTD plans, please visit the Human Resources website [http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/Insurance/longterm.htm](http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/Insurance/longterm.htm) or contact Human Resources at 448-5577 or 448-4876.

**Attention Managers and Supervisors!**

**Mark your calendars!** A Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) training session will be held on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in the HR training room at 910 Madison, Suite 725. In *PDQ Basics*, Compensation Manager, Damon Davis will review the basics of writing an accurate PDQ and guidelines for determining when revisions are needed. You may enroll through the HR [training portal](http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/).
On Friday April 1, 2011 the HR Benefits Office hosted a Sick Leave Bank Kick-Off event in the lobby of the Plaza Building. The event was designed to encourage employees to enroll in the Sick Leave Bank during the Annual Open Enrollment period. Employees were able to pick up and turn in enrollment forms; ask questions; and get general information about the sick leave bank.

Some frequently asked questions covered with employees who stopped by were:

**Q:** Why should I join the Sick Leave Bank, what’s the benefit for me?

**A:** The Sick Leave Bank is a way to protect your income; it provides paid leave to bank members who have exhausted all of their leave due to a personal illness or injury.

**Q:** I have several hundred leave hours, why should I join?

**A:** A major illness or injury can wipe out even large leave balances. In many cases these types of situations have long term impacts and cause reoccurring absences from work. If you are in the fortunate position of having hundreds of sick leave hours you can certainly afford the donation to secure your income in the event that you face a major illness or injury.

**Q:** How many hours do I have to donate? When do you take the hours?

**A:** Full time employees donate 3 days (24 hours of sick leave). You are required to have a balance of 48 hours as of June 30, 2011 in order to join. Hours are deducted in early July. Donations for part-time employees are pro-rated according to their percent of effort.

**Q:** If I previously enrolled do I need to sign up again each year?

**A:** No, if you previously enrolled your membership remains in force throughout your employment.

Currently only 28% of the UTHSC campus participates in this benefit. HR Benefits would like to encourage all eligible employees to enroll. Employees should consider how they would provide for their financial obligations if an illness or injury were to prevent them from working.

Those interested in enrolling may visit the HR Benefits Website at [http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/Benefits/sick.htm](http://www.uthsc.edu/hr/Benefits/sick.htm) to print the enrollment form. The Open Enrollment period ends on Thursday June 30, 2011 at 5 pm. All forms should be completed and returned to Human Resources Benefits 910 Madison Ave. Suite 727 or via fax to 448-7497. For additional information, employees may contact the HR Benefits Department at 448-8481.
The University of Tennessee and the Health Science Center Administration is very supportive of training for employees. When external factors result in budget reductions, oftentimes, training and professional development opportunities are among the first to be reduced or eliminated. Fortunately, that has not been the case on this campus.

However, even in light of administration support, formal training and professional development may be a challenging prospect for employees and department managers. The day-to-day business needs of each college and department are unique. Managers and employees are charged with meeting those needs while attempting to coordinate time for all employees to grow through training.

One solution to training challenges may be computer-based training (CBT). CBT options provide many benefits to both employees and managers. Among them are:

- **Cost Effectiveness** – CBT courses are available to faculty and staff free of charge!
- **Time Flexibility** – CBT courses are completed online and are available 24 hours-a-day/7 days-a-week. Participants are able to complete modules all at once or in segments. The system allows you to stop a module at any place and return to the same place when you login again.
- **A Broad Range of Subjects** – CBT features soft skill training through courses that focus on business skills, leadership, and environmental, safety, health and transportation with close to 300 offerings. Employees also have free access to Microsoft E-Learning online training. These courses offer beginner, intermediate, and advanced level modules for many packages in the Microsoft Office Suite.
- **HR 128 Credit** – Employees may receive HR128 credit for courses completed by submitting a copy of the certificate of completion (printed at the end of each module) and the Request for Additional Training Credit form to the HR Benefits Office at 910 Madison, Suite 722.

Learn more about computer-based training options in one of two sessions, Overview of Computer-Based Training on Wednesday, May 4th at 10:30 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. You may register through the training portal. Until then, feel free to explore on your own at www.uthsc.edu/hrtraining. Choose “Online Training” and enter your user name and password to begin. Contact Darnita Brassel at dbrassel@uthsc.edu or 901-448-2784 for additional information.
Did You Know?....

...that the Career Development Fund (CDF) provides up to $200 grant toward training each year to non-exempt employees! Visit the CDF webpage for eligibility and application guidelines.

Ask HR!

How are my benefits effected if I take an approved Leave of Absence?

If an employee is approved to take a leave of absence for education, personal, etc. it can be taken with-pay or without pay. If the leave is taken with pay, benefits will continue without change. However, if the leave is taken without pay, all benefits will be effected. Below is an explanation of how those benefits will change.

Medical, dental, life insurance, LTD: employees may choose to suspend or continue coverage. If suspended, the employee will be without coverage until their return. If continued during a leave without pay, employee must submit payment to UT for all benefits each month. There is a 2 year maximum to maintain insurance during a leave of absence.

Retirement: there is no retirement credit received during the leave period. There is an exception to this rule if the leave is for educational purposes, extended military leave and workers compensation.

Annual and Sick leave: leave accruals cease during this time and cannot be used.

Longevity pay: employee is not eligible to receive longevity pay and will not receive service credit during this time. In most instances the longevity date will change.

Educational assistance: employee is not eligible to use this benefit during unpaid leave.

Refer to the Leave of Absence policy for more details and exceptions: HR0355