

HR Connect

October 2020 (18th Issue)

Office of Human Resources

Dear Faculty, Students, and Staff,

Greetings!

We hope the Fall semester has proven to be an enjoyable and rewarding one thus far.

The OHR team is pleased to present the Fall 2020 edition of HR Connect. With so many changes and initiatives in motion at the GC, this edition should enlighten and bring our community up to speed on what is happening in OHR and at the GC. Enjoy!

Also, please feel free to share feedback on HR Connect via HR@GC.CNY.EDU.

Be safe and be well. And remember to vote!

David Boxill
Executive Director of Human Resources

New Staff Updates

Staff Introduction and Fun Facts

The most recent New Hire Informational Session was completed on October 21st on Zoom. This session aims to introduce new-staff to the functions and responsibilities of



Events

November 3

Election Day – REMEMBER TO VOTE!

November 11

Veterans Day – WE SALUTE OUR VETERANS.

November 27-28

Thanksgiving holiday observed.

GC Twitter Feed

Post your picture with your mask using the hashtag #MaskUpCUNY
<https://twitter.com/PresGarrell/status/1316411593215926284?s=20>



Office of Human Resources via Zoom
#MaskUpCUNY



various offices at the GC, SOJ and MHC. Below are a few fun facts about each new hire and how they contribute to their teams.

John Scully I was hired back in January and I am the Director of Public safety here at the School of Journalism. Previously, I was the Deputy Director of Public Safety at the Fashion Institute of Technology just down the road.

Fun Fact: I am an avid cyclist, riding 100+ miles each week when the weather cooperates.

Elvis Bakaitis As the Interim Head of Reference at the GC Library, I'm responsible for managing reference/outreach, developing our Mina Rees Conversation Series, supporting liaison Departments, and coordinating our Open Pedagogy Fellowship.

Fun Fact: I also make zines/comics.

Benjamin Inbar Currently responsible for lab management in the Casaccia Lab at the ASRC.

Fun Fact: I recently volunteered to be a poll worker and hope you all vote!

Alicia Bikram Responsible for Pre and Post Award administration of research programs.

Fun Fact: I was hired remotely and have yet to be physically on-site at the GC.

Jaquelyn Jahn Is a new postdoctoral scholar in the Stone Center on Socioeconomic Inequality, studying punitive social policies and racial inequities in health.

Fun Fact: I have a dog named Max who looks exactly like an ewok from Star Wars.

Pinar Ayata I am a new lab head at the Neuroscience Initiative at ASRC. The goal of my lab is to understand how the aspects of modern life affect long-term behaviors of microglia, the brain's primary immune cells, making them harmful agents during aging.

Fun Fact: Most weekends, I go rock climbing, hiking, or skiing with my husband and 3-year-old.

Bennett Callaghan I am a postdoctoral scholar at the Stone Center on Socioeconomic Inequality. I work primarily with Leslie McCall and the other scholars here to produce research on economic inequality and its impact on society. I am a social psychologist, so I primarily study Americans' perceptions of economic inequality and their support for policies that address inequality. In short, I mostly spend my days conducting research, analyzing data, writing up manuscripts for scientific articles, and collaborating with other researchers.

Fun Fact: My first name (Bennett) is actually my mother's maiden name. My parents wanted to name me after somebody on my mother's side, but they couldn't agree on any of the first names. So they went with my family name.

Kenneth Tirino I oversee the day-to-day operations of the Business Office leading the teams in Budget, Bursar, Purchasing, Accounts Payable, and Non-Tax Levy/Related Entities.

Fun Fact: When I am not putting out fires in the Business Office, I am putting out fires in my hometown in Northern Westchester where I have been a volunteer firefighter for the past 20yrs.

Phased Plan for Re-engagement and Return to Campus Activity

GC has been mentioned as one of the best CUNY Colleges as it relates to the safety and compliance measures enforced during COVID-19. Members of the Office of Facilities Services and Campus Planning are conducting frequent walk-throughs and ensuring areas are cleaned before and after each use. The below link includes information in the Graduate Center reactivation plan to safely reactive campus operations.

<https://gc.cuny.edu/News/COVID-19-and-Reactivation-Planning>

Tips for a Remote Work & Life Balance

Recipes

As we enter the 7th month of our quarantine / socially distancing lifestyle, you may have noticed you are cooking a lot more than usual. This recipe found on the food network site by Tyler Florence and vegan dish from Food & Wine could last days and excellent for families who may not have time to prepare a meal daily. We like to make this while working remotely since this is one that can be prepped in under 20 minutes and cooked low and slow for about 4-hours. Check out the recipe and feel free to send us an email at hr@gc.cuny.edu and let us know if you loved it as much as our family does. With the holidays also approaching, you may surprise yourself or your family if you decide to master this dish and make it for Thanksgiving!

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/tyler-florence/beef-brisket-recipe-1953114>

<https://www.foodandwine.com/recipes/chili-con-tofu>

The 12 Best At-Home Workouts You Can Do Without Any Equipment

As some neighborhood gyms begin to open back up, let's not forget about the exercises that do not require a gym and that can be done without any equipment, and still get amazing results. Here are the top 3 workouts that can be done and a guide on getting moving for each exercise. For others please visit the link below.

1. A Lower-Body Workout With Cardio Burnout
2. A 20-Minute HIIT Workout That's Kinder on Your Joints
3. A Full-Body Cardio Challenge

<https://www.self.com/gallery/best-at-home-workouts-bodyweight>

Organizing your Workspace from Home

There's no better time than now, to get your workspace in order and organized. The following [link](#) includes how you can make the best of your work area starting with connecting with your why - What motivates you, and what's your goal?

What's Happening

HR Virtual Retreat – September 2020

OHR held a retreat in September where HR team members spent the morning reflecting on the successes and discussed goals and plans for next year. We also used the time to learn more about our colleagues – via virtual games one being “Gotta Go Fast”. This game was an indoor scavenger hunt. A host called out a name of a common household objects and the first participant who runs to collect the item, bring it back to show it on screen and talk about how they obtained the object. This was a good game to get people moving around out of their seat and laughing! The activities we participated in during the retreat helped strengthen our team bond and cohesiveness even while working remotely.

Training & Professional Development

LinkedIn is currently offering 10 free business courses: All members of The Graduate Center community will have access to these free online courses facilitated by instructors from different backgrounds. The link below gives an overview of LinkedIn's robust learning resources available.

<https://www.linkedin.com/business/learning/blog/top-skills-and-courses/fy20-most-popular-courses-of-the-year-business>

Workplace Violence (WPV) & Employee Sexual and Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Response Course (ESPARC) Completion

The annual Workplace Violence (WPV) and the Employee Sexual Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Response Course (ESPARC) trainings for the 2019-2020 year are now complete. In addition to trainings via Blackboard, this year trainings were also held remotely with over 100 participants registered. We thank everyone who has attempted to complete this training and we are conscious of all the technical issues that all has experienced. We have made Central Office aware of these difficulties. In case you were wondering about how our school has done this year, we've included chart below which outline the number of GC and SOJ employees who completed the trainings this year. The below table serves as a comparison of completions from 2018-19 and 2019-20 cycle. Lookout for 2020-2021 mandatory training cycle coming soon!

Training Year	2019 – 2020 # of Completions	2019 – 2020 Total #of Employees	% Completed	2018 – 2019 # of Completions	2018 – 2019 Total #of Employees	% Completed
GC						
WVP	1004	2302	44%	206	2051	10%
ESPARC	1245	2194	57%	1120	2051	55%

This fall OHR will roll out the following workshops:

- **Overview on Talent Management** – This workshop is targeted towards employees with direct reports. The goal of the training is to enhance supervisor’s/manager’s/director’s/VP’s competencies to effectively manage performance by (re)introducing and developing core fundamentals such as: differentiating between goals and objectives, goal setting, the importance of an organization’s mission and vision, defining roles/duties and expectations, and motivating employees.
- **Managing Employees in a Unionized Environment: Full-time Classified Employees -** This workshop is for supervisors and managers of classified employees and will inform and guide supervisors on how to effectively manage classified employees.
- **Managing from a Distance** – This workshop will provide the necessary tools to manage your staff and projects remotely.
- **Reasonable Accommodations** – This workshop will cover rules and processes applicable to each employee.

ONE STOP

This year the OHR has the pleasure of meeting over 218 graduate assistants, but this time via zoom. Such a huge undertaking could not be achieved without the individuals who helped to ensure the days prior and the days after One Stop were a success. We want to recognize all those in OHR IT, Provost's Office, Registrar, Bursar, Student Affairs, Library, Financial Aid, International Student Office who worked diligently to ensure this process over the course of 2-weeks operated smoothly.

HR Operations

OHR and IT are partnering to create a central and secure system via SharePoint that will permit employees to access, complete and submit various forms and documents to OHR. The aim is to shorten turnaround time for processing, enhance user experience, and build out an electronic record management system.

In Development:

On-Boarding and Off-Boarding policy and protocols: Revamping how employees are acclimated to their campus , and ensuring employees are properly separated from the college

Incorporating Qualtrics into OHR's operations to create and disseminate surveys, perform data analysis, monitor and act on trends. Qualtrics is a web-based platform that allows users to create surveys, collect and produce reports. The aim is to establish metrics, and benchmark service and performance.

HR Assist: OHR – Time & Leave unit has successfully selected a vendor for the GC's time and leave solution: HR Assist. HR Assist was selected because of the vendor's extensive experience with other CUNY colleges, and familiarity with CUNY's time and leave rules. HR Assist will replace our current contingency time and leave system and paper-based timesheets and serve as our central point of service for time and leave information. Our aim is to rollout HR Assist to employees in phases. Executive Compensation Plan (ECP) Employees will be phase one of the rollouts and will take place in November 2020. HR Assist is currently in testing phase, and a training manual is being developed

Key Features of HR Assist:

- Employees can report, submit and access their timesheets on-line
- Supervisors/Managers can review, complete and correct employees' timesheet prior to approving them, and view direct reports' up to date leave balances
- Supervisors/Managers may designate alternate approver(s) for their unit
- Employees can view their leave balances and leave time reported after their timesheets have been "posted" on-line
- Timely submittal and approval of timesheets on a biweekly basis will produce up-to-date monthly leave balances

- Systematic email reminders can be sent to employees and approvers regarding
 - Timesheet submission deadlines;
 - Timesheets not yet approved before the deadlines; and
 - Missing timesheets.
- Employees can submit leave requests on-line and supervisors/managers are able to review and approve submittals on-line

Benefits

Flu Shot available at participating pharmacies for Emblem Health members

It's that time of year again. Flu season begins in the fall and often ends in the spring. Since we will be working remotely for the remainder of 2020, we will not offer flu shots available in our offices.

Below is information on how you can utilize your benefits to obtain flu shots elsewhere.

Flu Vaccines are available at Pharmacies and are free for most are free for most members. Emblem Health members ages 18 and over can save time by getting their flu vaccine at a local pharmacy. These pharmacies may be able to provide you with vaccine appointments more quickly and conveniently than your doctor's office. Be sure to call ahead to make sure your pharmacy is giving flu shots and to make an appointment.

Fall 2020 Health Benefits Program Annual Transfer Period

It's that time of the year to make changes to your current health coverage. The Fall 2020 Annual Health Benefits Program Transfer Period will run from **October 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020**. Please take the time to review your benefit coverage choices for 2020 and consider whether new choices will better serve you and your family's needs in 2021. You can make the following changes:

- Change your health plan
- Add or drop coverage for your dependents
- Add or drop Optional Coverage to the health plan
- Contribute to a Health or Dependent Care Spending account for the upcoming year.
- Elect to participate in the Buy-Out Waiver Program
- Switch Dental Plan coverage between Guardian and DeltaCare USA (PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund members).

Many of the health plans will offer informational webinars for employees. To participate in a virtual presentation, please click [here](#). Please visit the Health Benefits Program website at www.nyc.gov/hbp for information on the health plans.

The Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) Program Open Enrollment Period for Plan Year 2021

Enrollment period runs from **October 1, 2020 - November 13, 2020** for an effective date of January 1, 2021.

The Plan Year 2021 FSA Program Brochure and forms are available on the FSA Web site under "Forms and Downloads".

Employees should periodically refer to the FSA website at www.nyc.gov/fsa for any updates to the HCFSA/DeCAP program for Plan Year 2020 and Plan Year 2021.

MSC Health Benefits Buy-Out Waiver Program for 2021

Plan Year 2021 enrollment is automatic for current active participants. If participants would like to withdraw from the MSC Health Benefits Buy-Out Waiver Program for 2021, the participants must complete the 2021 MSC Enrollment/Change Form in addition to completing the Health Benefits Application. Please note that the annual incentive payment amount is \$500 for waiving individual coverage and \$1,000 for waiving family coverage for Plan Year 2021.

The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment Period for Plan Year 2020

The Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Program (CSLB) is a depository of sick and annual leave that is donated annually by full-time employees for potential use by other full-time employees who are also donors to the program. The open enrollment for the program will run from **October 15, 2020 to November 15, 2020**.

The program description and the forms to receive, donate or change can also be found at this link: <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/hr/benefits/#benefitsforms> [cuny.edu]

Learn more about The NYS Deferred Compensation

CUNY Faculty and Staff may participate in the NYS Deferred Compensation Program in addition to their supplemental retirement annuity or tax deferred annuity accounts. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, plan representatives are unable to meet with employees in person. If you would like to learn more about the Plan and how it can help you save for retirement, please visit the website www.nysdcp.com. Weekly online workshops on a variety of topics are also offered. To review and register for a workshop, click [here \[nysdcp.com\]](#).

Enrolling in a 529 College Saving Plan

If you wish to learn the basics about the New York State College Savings Plan including eligibility and advantages in investing in an account for your child, grandchild, yourself or other loved ones, please visit the website www.nysaves.org. The program continues to host free webinars on the **first Tuesday of every month** at 1 pm (Eastern Time). Employees must register in advance for meetings:

<https://ascensus.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0udOGvrT4pG9N7EGfAp9qqBq5kYWui8liV>
[\[ascensus.zoom.us\]](https://ascensus.zoom.us)

Please note that the webinar originally scheduled for Tuesday, November 3, 2020 (Election Day) will now be on the following day, **Wednesday, November 4, 2020, at 1 PM (Eastern Time)**.

Notification to HR-Benefit of Family Changes and current address

Throughout the year, employees who experience a change in family status – such as marriage or birth of a child- must notify The Office of Human Resources about the change and supporting documentation (e.g. birth certificate, marriage certificate, or divorce decree) must be submitted.

Please be sure that The Office of Human Resources has your correct address on file so that we may update your records. Employee must also contact their retirement plan to notify them of the change.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) - CCA

Please visit [CCA's website](#), which offers a series of articles and information on popular topics, and connects employees and their families to exclusive resources and tools. Feel free to access CCA services by signing in and typing "CUNY" as the company code. If you should need assistance getting started with any of the services provided through CCA, please contact Kaleema Caesar (kfreeman@gc.cuny.edu) in the OHR for guidance.

Reminders

Change of Address

It is important to notify OHR when your address changes so the information can be updated for payroll, benefits, etc. To request a change of address, please complete and submit the [Change of Address Form](#) to hr@gc.cuny.edu. Please be sure to include your apartment # on the form, if applicable. **Permanent address changes should be in commutable distances of the Graduate Center. There may be ramifications in terms of access to health coverage and taxes.**

Evaluations

Graduate Assistant Workload Reporting Form:

Graduate Assistants are required to submit a Workload Reporting Form (WRF) to ensure that the maximum threshold for annual hours are not exceeded. Workload Reporting Forms must be completed each semester by all active graduate assistant. The WRF should be signed by the Chair of the school where you are working, your program Executive Officer and submitted to the Office of Human Resources. **The Workload Reporting Forms for Fall 2020 are due October 30, 2020.**

Adjunct and Graduate Assistant Teaching Evaluations:

Teaching evaluations are conducted every semester for Adjuncts and Graduate Assistants with a teaching assignment. Observation dates should be set in advance and the completed evaluations should be sent to the Office of Human Resources. The teaching evaluations are retained in the employees personnel file. Non-Teaching Adjunct Evaluations are also conducted every semester. Evaluations for Fall 2020 are due November 20th (Adjuncts) and November 30th (Graduate Assistants).

VOTING DURING THE 2020 ELECTION

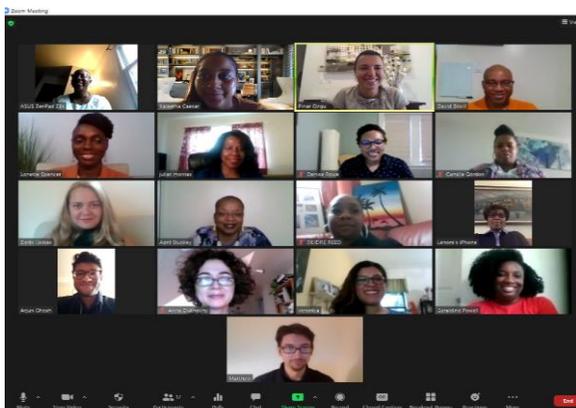
CUNY will provide up to 3 hours of paid leave to employees who are registered voters, for the purpose of voting in most local or federal elections. This applies to primary and general elections, as well as any special elections called by the Governor. Note the time off to vote provisions do not apply to early voting periods. Click [here](#) for official policy.

2020 Holiday Schedule

The 2020 holiday schedule is available [here](#).

Closing Remarks

The Office of Human Resources wish you well during this upcoming season. Stay Healthy and Smart!



“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” ~ Mahatma Gandhi