3 Reasons to Read Our Newsletter

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter, *The HR Review*. Given the demands on all employees for their time and talent, you might be wondering why you should take the time to read our newsletter. Here are three reasons why you should persist:

1. **You said communication is important** — Last fall, in partnership with Institutional Planning, the Office of Human Resources launched the College Employee Satisfaction Survey. Regarding campus culture and policies, the greatest gap between importance and satisfaction was in response to “There are effective lines of communication between departments.” In response, we launched our semi-annual newsletter last spring, as well as our annual report over the summer, in an effort to improve communication between our department and our stakeholders.

2. **You need the information it contains** — From annual enrollment to changes to the Student Employment Program to our new training and development initiatives, our newsletter is chock-full of important information about upcoming events and activities that employees should be aware of — and take advantage of.

3. **You have nothing to lose and much to gain** — Research indicates that good communication in the workplace using a multitude of methods has myriad benefits, including increased engagement, consistency in institutional practices, two-way feedback, improved compliance with regulations, a common understanding of strategy and goals and a positive attitude towards change.

So, sit down, grab a coffee and read up. If you have thoughts or ideas on how to continue to improve communication between departments, let us know.

What’s Coming Up?

- **Annual Enrollment** — November 16-November 30 (see page 3).
- **HR Customer Service Satisfaction Survey** — To be launched in mid-November.
- **Next UST Managers’ Forum** — Thursday, February 11, 2016, 8:30-10am.
- **Continued Onboarding and Immersion for New Staff (COINS)** — November 12, 8:30am, Woulfe North.
- **Employee Resource Groups for Working Moms and Eldercare Issues** — Two trainings will launch these groups; see Leadership Academy for details.
Enhancing Engagement Through Training

In September, we welcomed Terri Brooks, our new Training and Development Manager. Terri came to St. Thomas from A’viands, where she spent 12 years as the director of training and development. Since starting, Terri has spent many hours in conversation with stakeholders about their training needs. Armed with that information, we have created the following goals for our training and development function:

- To provide learning opportunities that support the mission of the University of St. Thomas and create a culture of employee engagement.
- To provide organized, developmental programs for supervisors, managers and emerging leaders.
- To design and offer learning opportunities that target identified personal and professional needs of our employees and the organization.
- To include experiences within and outside of training sessions to help employees develop connections and partnerships between departments across campus.

Revamping the Leadership Academy

One of Terri’s first tasks is to explore enhancements to our Leadership Academy to better support the personal and professional development of all employees, as well as our mission. Through online learning, instructor-led courses and employee resource groups, employees will be able to build on strengths and skills. You will have the opportunity to choose from a variety of general courses, including customer service and wellness, as well as sessions specific to the development of supervisory, managerial and leadership skills. Courses will be identified by development tracks and will be offered on a rotating basis throughout the year.

COINS: Adding Value to the New Employee Orientation Experience

The results of last year’s College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS) indicated that staff tend to be less satisfied than faculty with their orientation experience. We spent some time taking a look at which aspects of the faculty orientation experience might be replicated for our new staff. As a result, we are launching a new initiative known as COINS — Continued Onboarding and Immersion for New Staff. Twice a year, we will bring new staff together to network, reconnect, share their successes and frustrations and experience more in-depth learning on a topic introduced at New Employee Orientation. At our first COINS session on November 12, Dr. Artika Tyner will present on the topic of Unconscious Bias.

Developing Our Professional Staff

The results of the CESS also indicated that staff are seeking more opportunities for professional development. To address this need, we are piloting a “Professional Development for Professional Staff” initiative with four staff from HR. As a cohort, Natasha Rodich, Maria Riles, Michelle Theilen and Alicia Firkus attended the week-long Leadership and Management Program offered through Executive Education. Using what they learned, they are working together on an action learning project to create a more centralized “intake” process for hiring officials, which was identified as a need during a recent two-day kaizen event conducted by HR. Depending upon the success of the pilot, we hope to implement this opportunity across the University in fiscal year 2017.

Student Employment: A Path to the Future

During any given academic year, we employ approximately 3,000-4,000 students in a variety of positions across campus. The growth and popularity of the Student Employment Program (SEP) has prompted our Talent Management team to take a look at our entire student employment system and consider an overhaul that will vastly improve the program for both student supervisors and our student workers.

The first step we took was to hire Mary Ruce as our new Student Employment Specialist. Mary was employed previously by the Carlson School at the U of M, where she worked in career advising. Mary has initiated several changes to the SEP thus far, including implementing the second of three minimum wage increases and establishing a formal pay structure for student worker positions across campus.

Future improvements to the SEP include the following:

- Common job profiles
- Customer service training for student workers
- Developing SEP resources for student-worker supervisors

Eventually, our goal is to create a tool for supervisors and student workers that helps students consider how their employment on campus will set them up for success in their future career.

Office of Human Resources 651.962.6510
The CHRO Corner by Michelle Thom, AVP and CHRO

The Challenge of Managing Change

From my perch as head of Human Resources, I observe change occurring all around us on a daily — sometimes hourly — basis. Some of us are well-equipped to manage change or seem to possess a natural talent for communicating the rationale and bringing others along on the change journey. Some of us have a strong desire to grasp change and get excited by its promise. For others, the ongoing change we’re experiencing both in higher education generally and as a campus is overwhelming and exhausting, which results in decreased productivity and engagement. In addition, as we move forward with implementing our strategic plan, we can expect many more accompanying changes. So, what can we do as a campus to better manage the changes we are making as a result of our strategic plan or that we are experiencing as a result of trends beyond our control?

At the beginning of the fall semester, I was approached by Dr. Rama Hart from the College of Education, Leadership and Counseling about hosting graduate students needing to fulfill a practicum requirement for their capstone course. Shortly thereafter, I began working with students Justin Welk and Brian Long, who are in the process of assessing the changes that are occurring on campus, examining HR’s role in it and creating a tool kit that we can bring to departments and their leaders to help them better navigate change with their employees. Our tool kit will be designed to assist departments with managing change brought about by new structures and initiatives as a result of the strategic plan. Stay tuned for further details.

Coming Soon: Annual Enrollment

The 2016 employee annual benefits enrollment will be conducted Monday, November 16 through Monday, November 30. This is the only time during the year when you can make changes to your benefits without a “qualifying event” (e.g., a change in job/marital/familial status). Benefits elections made during this enrollment period are effective January 1, 2016.

If you plan to participate in the Health Care or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) and/or the Health Savings Account (HSA) in 2016, you must complete the online enrollment process to confirm your 2016 election(s). All other benefits require re-enrollment only if you wish to change your current enrollment selections.

What’s changing for 2016?

- No changes to the medical plan design or coverage levels.
- The dental plan will move from Delta’s standard plan to its enhanced plan. Changes include additional covered services and less employee out-of-pocket expense for certain services, such as posterior white fillings. The University will pay all additional costs associated with the dental plan design change.
- The vision plan will move to EyeMed’s Access network, its most extensive network available.

According to MetLife, 14% of employees make their annual enrollment selections at the last minute and 37% of employees say they need more help in understanding how their benefits work and which benefits meet their needs. We encourage employees to enter their annual enrollment information as soon as possible to avoid any unexpected issues that may arise at the last minute. And, if you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Benefits team:

Phone: (651) 962-6520
Fax: (651) 962-6524
Benefits@stthomas.edu

Office of Human Resources 651.962.6510
Leadership Excellence à la Walt Disney

HR was approached last spring by the local chapter of the Association for Talent Development (ATD) about the prospect of partnering with them on their annual conference. In exchange for partnering with ATD on their event, we received a FREE 90-minute training by the Disney Institute on the topic of Leadership Excellence. On September 11, almost 200 UST employees gathered to hear Kathy Van Tassel from the Disney Institute talk to us about Leadership Excellence as practiced by Walt Disney and the entire Disney enterprise.

The Disney Approach

We learned that Disney’s results are driven by what they refer to as “overmanaging” the engineering and execution of their processes. By overmanaging their processes and then hiring the right talent, employees are able to thrive in their roles as “cast members.” In addition, Kathy shared five of Disney’s philosophical underpinnings to Leadership Excellence:

- Leaders establish, operationalize and sustain the values and vision by which their organizations thrive
- Great leaders proactively establish values
- There is an inherent interdependency between leaders’ personal values and the organization’s values
- The more a vision can be expressed in a vivid, imaginative way, the more it will motivate people to action in the present
- The best legacy is not one that is fondly remembered, but one that is actively emulated

In the coming semester, we will continue the conversation about attaining leadership excellence through ongoing leadership development efforts. Our goal is to work with the experts in our Leadership Programs in the College of Education, Leadership and Counseling to bring ongoing leadership development to St. Thomas employees.

“...it all starts with a wish.” — Jiminy Cricket

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HR Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We posted 14 faculty, 87 staff and 108 student worker positions from January 1 through June 30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We processed and entered 38 one-year contracts for adjunct faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 new employees attended New Employee Orientation from January 1 through June 30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>745 employees now participate in the Vitality wellness program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162 supervisors and managers attended UST Managers’ Forums in February, May and August.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emphasizing Accuracy and Reliability

The HR Data Infrastructure Team has taken on a new look and feel this year. We reorganized our resources and created two HR Data Specialist positions in which Dane Aadland and Nancy Peterson reside. Their shared responsibilities include collecting, processing and managing consistently all HR-related data within the University’s Banner-HR employment record system. Our goal is to maintain and ensure the accuracy and consistency of HR-related data and reporting through standardized processes and procedures. We are continuously improving and building an infrastructure that will ensure the highest level of accuracy, integrity and consistency of HR-related data. As the impact of this function unfolds we look forward to providing you with future updates.