Benefits Team Advocates for Employees

AMELIA PAVLIK  COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

When the Board of Regents (BOR) shared its 2012 benefits decisions, Tech’s benefits team knew it had its work cut out for it.

“One of Tech’s benefits is provided through the University System of Georgia (USG),” said Darlene Wright, director of employee benefits. “And a lot of behind-the-scenes work goes into advocating for our employees and providing strong benefits options.”

One notable change for 2012 is that eligible employees who work between 20 to 29 hours per week will no longer be eligible for benefits; however, they will still earn vacation and sick time and be eligible to participate in all retirement plans. Employees must now work at least 30 hours a week to receive benefits.

“We made frequent calls to the USG seeking approval to broaden this new requirement to include employees who work an average of 75 percent time over the course of the year,” Wright said. “And we were successful.”

The 75% allocation will primarily benefit faculty members and researchers at the Institute, but it ensures that a larger group of employees may maintain health coverage. Also, Wright’s team has proactively identified employees who are affected by this upcoming change.

“We are reaching out to employees who are impacted by these changes so that we can provide them with individual guidance and resources to explore individual coverage options,” said Kim Watkins, benefits manager.

The BOR passed other significant changes for 2012, including increasing medical premiums, freezing enrollment into the HMO plans and discontinuing the BOR PPO and the BOR Health Savings Account (HSA) PPO.

“The BOR decisions reflect the negative economic reality that we are all facing,” Wright said. “Our goal is to educate and provide guidance to Tech employees to ensure everyone is equipped to make the best decisions as they relate to their benefits. We want Tech employees to know that we are working hard for them.”

That’s why offering several voluntary benefits specific to Tech employees is important to Wright and her team.

For example, a new, enhanced vision plan through EyeMed will be replacing the existing vision plan offered through United Health Care Spectera.

Also, the Tech benefits team has created a new Bank at Work program, in partnership with Bank of America, Georgia Unite Credit Union, State Bank & Trust and Wells Fargo. Each bank will offer unique employee discounts on a variety of services.

For more information about the benefits changes listed in this article, turn to page 3 for a breakdown of what will and won’t be changing in 2012.

Employees Participate in 2012 Charitable Campaign

AMELIA PAVLIK  COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

In June of 2009, Lee Montaña’s father, Carl Joyner, fell from a ladder onto a fence post, sustaining life-threatening injuries.

“They [the doctors] told us that he would never walk again,” said Montaña, an engineering operations manager in the Electronic Systems Laboratory at the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI). “And at one point, they told us it was probably time to say ‘goodbye’ to him.”

But with help from the Shepherd Center — a private, nonprofit hospital that specializes in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord and brain injuries — he was able to recover and develop the skills needed to live life using a wheelchair.

Last year’s $313,000 in contributions to Georgia Tech’s Charitable Campaign support nonprofits including the Shepherd Center, which is why Montaña was invited to share her father’s story at this year’s campaign kickoff breakfast.

Montaña is just one of the many people at Tech who contribute to the campaign, whether by volunteering time or donating money.

Celestine English, assistant director of payroll in the Office of Human Resources, has volunteered as a departmental coordinator for three years and donated to the Sickle Cell Foundation.

Andrew Young Addresses Tech Community

Andrew Young addresses members of the Georgia Tech community as part of the Freshman Reading Project. This year, students read a collection of King’s work, “I Have a Dream: Writings and Speeches that Changed the World.” The former United Nations ambassador and former Atlanta mayor was an early leader in the civil rights movement and is one of three surviving aides who was with Martin Luther King Jr. when he was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn.

www.whistle.gatech.edu
Changes Approved to Faculty Policies

Minor changes to the faculty dismissal policy and more significant changes to the intellectual property (IP) policy—both outlined in the Faculty Handbook—were approved during the Oct. 4 meeting of the General Faculty and Academic Senate.

The dismissal policy needed to be updated to bring it into compliance with Board of Regents policies, said Jeannie Balsam, chair of the Statutes Committee of the General Faculty.

Changes to Section 3.2 were approved during an April 26 meeting of the Academic Senate, Academic Faculty and General Faculty. During this meeting, modifications to Section 5.10 were presented for a first reading and received final approval on Oct. 4.

Modifications to the IP Policy, or Section 50, were recommended to address issues that arose during the Stanford vs. Roche lawsuit, Balsam added. The primary changes to this policy:

- clarify ownership of student IP, meaning that Georgia Tech Research Corporation (GTRC) would not own most student IP,
- provide for a license to use student copyrights, which allows Georgia Tech to showcase student work, while students maintain the copyright,
- add clarification of when students shall be required to execute an IP agreement,
- define an IP Committee, which will be overseen by the executive vice president for research (EVPR) and administered by the general manager of GTRC, and
- state that appeals will be made to the EVP.

In addition to the changes, Balsam also announced that the Faculty Handbook website has been updated and is now easier to use and search. An updated version that incorporates all of the recent changes will be available by the end of the month at http://facultyhandbook.gatech.edu.

Those with questions regarding the changes or the updated website should contact Balsam at jeanne.balsam@gtri.gatech.edu.

To view the agenda for this meeting and the supporting documents that were provided for each item, go to:

www.facultygovernance.gatech.edu

In Memoriam: Doug Fur Bush, MaRC

Douglas A. “Doug” Fur Bush, 63, project director in the Manufacturing Research Center (MaRC), died on Sept. 24 from complications after suffering a brain aneurysm.

“Doug was an important part of the MaRC family and will be deeply missed by all of his colleagues here and throughout Georgia Tech,” said MaRC Interim Director Shreys Melkote.

Fur Bush is survived by his wife, Margaret; children, Gael-Marie and Daniel Fur Bush; his sister; and two grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on Sept. 28.

In Memoriam: Paul Marseglia, GTRI

Paul Marseglia, 40, a senior network support engineer for the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), suffered an apparent heart attack on Oct. 12 while working and later died at the hospital.

Marseglia came to GTRI in June 2011 after working for five years for the Office of Information Technology.

GTRI Employee Lee Montañía’s father, Carl Joyner, spent three months at the Shepherd Center as he recovered from a serious fall. The Shepherd Center is one of the many charities supported through the Charitable Campaign.

www.charitable.gatech.edu

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

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www.charitable.gatech.edu
This year’s open enrollment period will run from Oct. 24 to Nov. 18. Read on to find out what benefits will be changing in 2012 and what will remain the same. Employees can find additional information using the following resources:

- **2012 Benefits Guide.** These will be mailed to employees’ homes this week.
- **Onsite Meetings.** The benefits team is hosting numerous meetings across campus to educate employees about upcoming changes.
- **Benefits Fair.** The fair will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Student Center Ballroom (look for an article on the fair in the Oct. 31 issue of The Whistle.)
- **Send an Email.** Contact a member of the benefits team at benefits@ohr.gatech.edu.

**www.ohr.gatech.edu/openenrollment**

### What’s Changing

#### Board of Regents-Approved Changes for all University System of Georgia Employees:
- **Frozen HMO Plans.** The Kaiser HMO and the BlueChoice HMO plans are closed to new enrollees in 2012. Those currently enrolled may continue to participate in the plans.
- **Elimination of the BOR PPO Plans.** The Board of Regents (BOR) PPO and BOR Health Savings Account (HSA) PPO medical plans will be discontinued. Employees enrolled in these plans will automatically be enrolled in the Open Access POS plan (known as the BOR POS Alternative plan) or the HSA Open Access POS plan (known as the BOR HSA Alternative plan), respectively.
- **Rx Out-of-Pocket Maximums (Open Access POS Plan Only/Member).** The existing quarterly out-of-pocket maximums will be replaced with an annual out-of-pocket maximum. The new annual maximum is lower than the yearly combined maximums, so employees potentially save money on future prescriptions.
- **Employee Eligibility for Medical Plans.** Employees must work a minimum of 30 hours per week (currently 20) and/or an average of 75 percent time over the course of a year to be eligible for benefits. Employees who do not meet the new eligibility requirements will continue to be eligible for vacation/sick accruals and participation in the retirement plans.

#### What’s Not Changing

- **Dental Plans.** Providers, plan design and premiums will remain the same. The BOR Metlife dental plan is open to new enrollees.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs).** FSAs allow you to use pre-tax money to pay for your qualifying out-of-pocket health and dependent care expenses. Employees may contribute up to $5,000 to a dependent care FSA. Employees who do not participate in high deductible HSA medical plans may also contribute up to $5,000 to health care FSAs.
- **Basic Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance.** Eligible employees will continue to be automatically provided with $25,000 of basic term and AD&D insurance.
- **Supplemental Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D).** Employees may elect supplemental employee and dependent life and AD&D insurance or opt to increase existing coverage levels for an additional cost.
- **Voluntary Short- and Long-Term Disability Plans.** Both short-term and long-term disability options will remain the same.
- **Long-Term Care.** To enroll and/or obtain additional information, visit http://gatech.jhancock.com (username: gatech; password: mybenefit) or call 888-334-6498.
- **Critical Illness.** You may enroll in critical illness or opt to increase existing coverage levels for an additional cost by contacting UNUM, the plan administrator, at 866-441-6973.
- **Whole Life.** Coverage information and rates can be obtained by contacting UNUM at 866-441-6973.
Williams Enjoying Connecting with Employees

AIMEE PAYLIK COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Trying to understand the Georgia Tech benefits options can be a confusing and often frustrating task for students — unless you have someone like BeNedra Williams helping every step of the way.

“My job satisfaction comes from being able to help those I come in contact with,” said the senior benefits counselor in the Office of Human Resources (OHR). “I’ve received numerous thank you cards and emails from employees and their families expressing thanks for taking the time to help them along the way. After all, in OHR our mission is, ‘We exist to ensure a recognition that all employees and their families expressing their emotions of the moment are past,’” he said.

What did you want to be when you were a child?

“I wanted to be a state trooper. I loved the authority they had — and they got to drive fast.”

What is the best advice you’ve ever received?

“You are responsible for your life, and your ultimate success depends on the choices you make.”

What is your favorite spot on campus?

“The garden on the Clough Commons roof is nice, because you can lose yourself in the clouds above or watch people on Tech Walk. I also like Tech Rec, because it’s just a fun space with a lot of games and activities.”

What is the best advice you’ve ever received?

“You are responsible for your life, and your ultimate success depends on the choices you make.”

Which do you prefer: Facebook, Twitter, or a world without all of this social media stuff?

“I like Facebook, because I’m a social butterfly and enjoy keeping up with my friends and acquaintances.”

What is the idea of leading a ThinkBig Living Learning Community, now is the time for you to submit a proposal to lead a program in 2012-2013.

These communities are faculty-led and each focus on a topic ranging from humor and innovation to sustainability. Each community has between 20 to 40 students. Faculty leaders define their own topic based on interest and receive a stipend for their work, depending on the number of students participating in their program.

The deadline for submitting a proposal for academic year 2012-2013 is Oct. 31.

Questions? Email Dana Hartley, director of Undergraduate Studies, at dana.hartley@gatech.edu or call 404-385-4407.

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