Do you know about all the benefits, the ins and outs, and the not so well known opportunities available to Purdue employees?

Human Resources is rolling out a new program, and is looking for applicants (www.purdue.edu/newsroom/purdutoday/releases/2016/Q1/human-resources-introduces-benefits-ambassadors-program,-encourages-applicants.html). ‘Benefits Ambassadors’ as they have been named, will help inform and motivate colleagues to achieve healthier lifestyles by providing information on the variety of benefits resources available, sharing suggestions and ideas in committee meetings, and actively advocating health and wellness benefits among their co-workers.

I am going to touch on a few of the more significant benefits Purdue offers, but also include links to more information (like this one: summaries/administrativeProfessional.html.) I am personally passionate about learning everything I can about benefits that are provided to me as an employee. With unexpected surgeries, prescriptions, and broken arms - the endless list of things that can spring up - keeping controllable circumstances in check is important to me.

I often refer to the Blue Cross Blue Shield website (https://www.anthem.com/health-insurance/home/overview), Castlight (http://www.purdue.edu/hr/Benefits/castlight/castlight.html), Express Scripts (https://www.express-scripts.com/consumer/site/login), and PayFlex (https://purdue.healthhub.com/EmployeeLogin.aspx) to stay on top of my family’s medical situations, and make the best possible choices.

When I was expecting my first and second child, I worked closely with HR to make sure I understood the terms of Paid Parental Leave, FMLA, sick, and vacation time to make sure to use it all correctly. If I do what I can to keep myself healthy, I hope in turn, to help the University keep our insurance premiums constant, add to our current benefits without an increase (like dental was added most recently with no premium increase), and I, of course, benefit because I continue to stay healthy.

I can also save money using the Center for Healthy Living when possible (this list includes some atypical no cost options: www.purdue.edu/hr/CHL/no-cost_Wellness/index.html), and with CSSAC’s employee discounts (www.purdue.edu/cssac/Employee_Discounts/index.html), I can save on products and services around Tippecanoe County, which I think is amazing!

I encourage you to empower yourself and learn all you can about the numerous benefits we are afforded as employees of Purdue University outside of the typical health insurance, retirement plan, and paid leaves.

While I know there has been a lot of changes to our benefits in recent years, let’s make a joint effort to help keep future changes positive!

Students, faculty and staff connecting a laptop, tablet, smartphone, or another device to Purdue’s wireless system on March 25 and after could see a prompt asking them whether they want to accept a new security certificate.

Accepting the new certificate once should set up the device to use Purdue Air Link (PAL) throughout campus for the next three years, without having to go through the process again. If they connect more than one device to PAL, users also may have to go through the process of accepting the new certificate on additional devices one time.

Individuals with questions or problems can contact the ITaP Customer Service Center by phone at 49-44000, by email at itap@purdue.edu, or by visiting the help desk on the main floor of the HSSE Library, in Stewart Center room 135.
NOMINATIONS END APRIL 4 FOR APSAC EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Administrative and Professional Staff Advisory Committee is now accepting nominations for the annual APSAC Excellence Award, which recognizes A/P staff members who consistently perform at an outstanding level.

Nominations are being accepted for the award through April 4th.

The award is sponsored by the Office of the Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer.

The award will recognize a full-time administrative or professional staff member from the West Lafayette campus who demonstrates excellence by:

• Showing initiative
• Leading by example
• Showing exemplary customer service
• Acting as a University ambassador
• Being a high performer

The winner of the award will receive a plaque and $1,500 (subject to tax withholdings). Current APSAC members cannot be nominated.

Any member of the University community can make a nomination.

To nominate someone, go to https://engineering.purdue.edu/apsaccao/staffaward/.

Nominations must include a statement that outlines how the nominee meets the areas of excellence listed above. Two letters of support from any faculty, staff or student also are required.

Details of nomination requirements are explained at the website, which requires a career account to access.

The 2015 Excellence Award winner was Scott Kepner, senior research engineer in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences.

For more information, contact Carrie Hanson by phone at 49-47397 or email carrie@purdue.edu.

FREEHAFER DATA CENTER MOVES BEGIN

Purdue’s main central data center, which houses University business and educational systems used across campus, will be migrating to a new location in 2016.

The data center’s move from Freehafer Hall comes as the building is set for demolition as part of the State Street Redevelopment Project. Many of the systems run on software-based “virtual machines.” Those can be transferred from the hardware in Freehafer to hardware set up at the new location in the Mathematical Sciences Building, for the most part without interruption.

ITaP is working with the campus units that use systems running on dedicated physical hardware to move those machines at times convenient for users, and that minimize down time. As much as possible, work should take place during regularly scheduled maintenance windows, on weekends and evenings. High-demand periods during the school year also will be avoided.

Currently, the plan is to start moving the facility to MATH in April, and to complete the move by the end of 2016.

“Relocating the University’s primary data center is a huge undertaking that’s taking a year to plan and execute,” says ITaP’s Dan Schumacher, interim executive director, IT Infrastructure Services. “Many of the services will move seamlessly without disruption while others will require coordinated down time to relocate. Our goal is to minimize the impact and all service outages will be communicated beforehand to the West Lafayette and regional campuses.”

For more information, see the full news release on ITaP News. For a calendar showing planned moves, see the link below “View Freehafer Data Center Schedule.”
HUMAN RESOURCES INTRODUCES ‘BENEFITS AMBASSADORS’ PROGRAM, ENCOURAGES APPLICANTS

Human Resources recently implemented a Benefits Ambassadors Program on its West Lafayette campus. In an effort to promote overall health campus-wide, the goal of the program is to recruit interested and able faculty and staff to act as liaisons to Purdue’s benefits team.

Human Resources is asking that all interested faculty and staff submit his or her application by March 25. Applications can be completed and submitted electronically. Notifications will be sent to all applicants via email no later than March 30.

Please note, employees should obtain supervisor approval prior to submitting an application.

Since the dissolution of the WorkLife Programs area on campus, a program of this type has not existed.

“We wanted to create a program with even more reach than the former ambassador program that some employees might remember,” said Candace Shaffer, benefits administrator, family programming, who is overseeing the ambassadors program. “This program will touch all aspects of the benefits department in an effort to create overall wellness in regards to physical, mental and financial health for Purdue employees. Ambassadors will essentially be the voice of our benefits department to bring benefits-related information and initiatives directly to employees across campus.”

The ambassadors will help inform and motivate colleagues to achieve healthier lifestyles by providing information on the variety of benefits resources available, sharing suggestions and ideas in committee meetings and actively advocating health and wellness benefits among their co-workers.

Benefits ambassadors will have the opportunity to learn about initiatives and schedule programming pertaining but not limited to: Family Friendly, Retirement, Financial Benefits, Medical Benefits, Center for Healthy Living and Leaves/Time Off.

Benefits ambassadors’ responsibilities are:
• Attend a half-day, detailed training about the role of a Benefits Ambassador. Orientation will take place April 7 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Hall for Discovery Learning and Research (DLR), Room 131;
• Serve a 1-year term;
• Work in conjunction with the benefits team;
• Attend quarterly meetings to receive up-to-date information on benefits initiatives;
• Share information that is received with their respective departments/areas;
• Organize a minimum of four workshops, events or activities for their represented area;
• Assist with distribution of benefits posters throughout campus;
• Share suggestions and ideas in committee meetings and
• Actively advocate health and wellness benefits among their co-workers.

The time commitment, outside of the initial training and quarterly meetings, is at the discretion of the ambassador and may be based on the resources and information provided by the benefits department. Those selected as ambassadors will serve in paid status.

Human Resources has created an overview and frequently asked questions for the program. Any additional questions can be directed to Human Resources at 49-42222 or via email at hr@purdue.edu.
The Organizational Effectiveness team was created last summer to consolidate resources focused on supporting the University while identifying new opportunities, improvements and capabilities to further enhance the effectiveness of our organizations, leaders and workforce.

The August issue of HR Connect shared the first look at the Organizational Effectiveness unit, and since then the team has been on the move partnering with the Purdue community. While the majority of its reach affects HR and the Treasurer’s organization, the team also touches projects campus wide.

Let’s take a look at what the areas within Organizational Effectiveness are doing.

The communications team works behind the scenes on strategic communication planning, editorial, photography and web services. Recently, members of the communications team were awarded a Silver ADDY in the 2015 American Advertising Awards for their work on the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention Brochure.

When it comes to employee training and development across campus, this team is making a major impact. For instance, the Supervisor Springboard pilot program kicked off Monday, March 21.

“We are excited to be partnering with the Council for Manager Development (CMD) project team on this important initiative focused on supervisory training,” said Senior Director of Organizational Effectiveness Kevin Vedder. “It was very apparent from the results of the Quality of Work Environment Initiative survey that there is a desire and need for more training focused on supervisory skills and competencies related to supervision,” he added. “Since training and professional development are integral components to Organizational Effectiveness, the pilot training sessions will provide us with the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the program and make refinements.”

According to Vedder, this initiative was so well received that once the pilot is completed and refined, the training will be offered on a recurring basis to all supervisors across campus.

The team also offers regular supervisory skills courses to all Purdue University departments. Continued, next page >
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Course subjects include project management, coaching and more.

Additionally, the team provides an exhaustive list of even more training that touches most facets of business on the Purdue campuses and engages virtually every department in some way.

“Our goal has always been to provide the best, value-added services that target specific needs, in the most timely and cost effective manner possible,” said Jon Biggs, senior technical training and design specialist.

OSHA Safety Training, for example, is conducted by Biggs for all Purdue University departments. In addition to the OSHA training, Biggs also conducts more than 100 classroom and hands-on training programs open to most departments, featuring skills in many trades, including communications, masonry, electrical and a mechanical skills series which covers all aspects of the mechanical systems and equipment at Purdue.

“We believe our offerings are important to our University peers and associates simply because each one offers an in-house opportunity at a convenient time and location for employees to enhance their overall abilities to work as safely, effectively and efficiently as possible,” Biggs said.

Bringing additional training options – and more – to the table comes out of Organizational Effectiveness’s Leadership and Organizational Development (LOD) area. LOD is positioned to support Purdue managers and staff in the areas of career development, performance evaluations/management, leadership development and 360 feedback assessments for administrative officers and supervisors.

The team recently partnered with Chris Martin, director of business managers, to establish a comprehensive framework for delivering leadership and management training to his DFAs and business managers.

“We are using a global best practices framework,” Adedayo Adeniyi, director, leadership and organizational development explained. “We have customized the model to meet the unique needs of the business offices in a practical, meaningful way.”

Another initiative that recently launched is the DevelopMe career development tool pilot.

While safety and supervisory skills training makes up a substantial amount of the courses offered, there is even more. Take travel: the necessary training it takes to ensure successful travel for employees is actually very detailed. The team’s travel offerings also demonstrate how Organizational Effectiveness team members join various project teams across campus to help communicate and train on specific topics.

According to Tiffany Weathersford, instructional designer and training specialist, travel is a unique topic that is full of variables and personal choices. Currently the team offers five classes throughout the year to provide the necessary travel-related information.

“As a University, we want to help guide our travelers to be smart consumers and get them to and from their business in a timely and economical fashion,” she added. “We try to set up the business office and support staff who assist with travel to be prepared for any scenario and provide the appropriate tools and resources for them to navigate the world of travel at Purdue.”

With each partnership comes additional support – in the form of processes, manuals, Quick Reference Cards (QRCs) and more – created by the Organizational Effectiveness team members to further assist employees beyond the actual training course. For a quick look at a one-stop-shop for travel, visit the Travel page at Business@Purdue.

Another tool that the Organizational Effectiveness team helps organizations across campus utilize is SharePoint. According to Cathleen Cline, communications designer/trainer, SharePoint provides organizations the ability to build communication, provide transparency and organize information in a concise, effective manner.

“I take what always has been done and give it a new look, feel or overall new face,” Cline said. “I think adding ease to communicating between departments and transparency creates a healthier work environment.”

The SharePoint site for the Business Intelligence Competency Center (BICC) is a great example of how SharePoint can be utilized within in a department.

As you can see, the Organizational Effectiveness team brings a unique mix of talent, skills and experiences to the University in its effort to provide high-quality, valued, responsive service and assistance not only within Human Resources and the Treasurer’s organization, but across the entire campus.

For more information on Organizational Effectiveness, visit its website or contact the team at oecomm@purdue.edu.