

## Focus on Compensation Pays Off

Compensation is a top priority at the University, and several steps were taken in recent months to improve employee pay.

In March 2011, the University announced plans to increase the minimum starting pay rate for all regular employees to \$8.50 an hour. The



increase was a recommendation from UT's Compensation Advisory Board (CAB) and was prompted by recommendations from employees statewide to first focus on improving pay for those in the lower ranges.

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## Fall Employee Survey

A new statewide employee engagement survey will be launched this fall. The survey will address such topics as pay, benefits, work culture, performance evaluation, training, professional development and communication.

“Employee input is critical to making the University a better place to work,” UT President Joe DiPietro said. “We need help understanding both the areas where we are doing a good job and where we need to focus more attention. Change often takes time, but I am committed to this process and hope you will be too.”

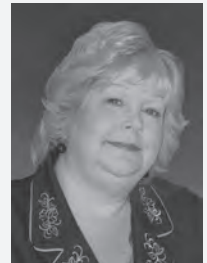


The survey will be administered by a nationally recognized, third-party vendor and responses will be confidential. Only non-personally identifiable feedback will be shared with the University, and employees should feel comfortable responding candidly.

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## Welcome

Welcome to the Fall 2011 issue of For Your Benefit, a newsletter addressing the benefits offered to you as a UT employee.



This issue brings information about recent pay increases, opportunities for feedback, important benefit information and events of interest. I hope you find the newsletter helpful and encourage you to reach out to your supervisor or human resources officer with any questions.

Connecting directly with employees about news and information of interest is important to the University and each Human Resources office across the state.

Employees are the University's finest asset. I want to thank you for all you do every day to make UT a better place to work and learn.

Linda Hendricks  
Chief Human Resources Officer

**1-888-444-UTHR**

From 865 area code, call 946-8847

Available 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET

Human Resources Call Center.  
Because Google™ can't  
answer it all.

## Focus on Compensation Pays Off *(continued from page 1)*

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In June, the Board of Trustees approved a budget that allowed all eligible employees to receive a 2 percent across-the-board increase in base pay. Minimum pay raise amounts were included to ensure greater increases for employees making less than \$50,000 annually. This was the first across-the-board increase in four years and was due, in part, to the support of the Governor and members of the Legislature.

Each campus and institute also funded pay raises in addition to the across-the-board increase. Plans varied by unit and included merit pay, equity adjustments and/or

market increases.

Eligibility and effective dates varied by campuses and institutes. Information has been shared with supervisors, and human resources officers also are available to answer questions.

The University will continue its focus on improving compensation, and work will not stop here. Employees are encouraged to remain engaged in the work CAB is doing and to share concerns and suggestions with employee relations groups, exempt staff councils and faculty senates.

## Fall Employee Survey *(continued from page 1)*

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All regular employees scheduled to work at least 50 percent time will be encouraged to participate. Instructions for taking the survey will be shared on Nov. 1, and the survey will be open through Nov. 15.

Survey results will be available in April 2012 and shared with all employees through open forums.

A taskforce will be appointed to analyze results, establish goals for improvement and monitor progress. Emphasis

will be placed on ensuring results lead to changes throughout the University.

The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete and will be re-administered every three years.

Look for additional information about the survey in coming weeks and direct questions to campus and institute human resource officers. Visit the survey website at: <http://yourvoice.tennessee.edu>.

## Enrollment Period for Health Insurance, New Benefits Enhancements

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The annual enrollment transfer period for UT's health insurance program is Oct. 1 through Nov. 1, 2011.

During this time, employees currently enrolled in a plan have the opportunity to make changes to coverage options for calendar year 2012.

Employees who did not elect coverage during initial enrollment periods also may enroll during this time. Certain monthly fees will apply, however, for late application and must be paid through December 2013, unless a qualifying event has occurred necessitating coverage. A listing of qualifying events can be found at: <http://insurance.tennessee.edu>.

continue to be the health insurance options offered to UT employees through the State of Tennessee.

Employees currently enrolled in one of the plans and wishing to keep the same coverage options do not need to take any action. However, employees participating in the Partnership PPO insurance plan during calendar year 2011 who failed to satisfy the Promise requirements automatically will be moved to the Standard PPO plan with the same provider for calendar year 2012, unless a new provider is specified.

Requirements for the Partnership PPO Promise will be different each year. Requirements for calendar year 2012 will focus on engaging members who will most benefit from health coaching related to behavior change

 The Partnership PPO and Standard PPO will

and disease management. Adult members will not be required to fill out an online questionnaire or have a health screening this year.

Some enhancements to coverage options recently were approved by the state and will be effective for calendar year 2012.

Additional information about enrollment and change options and benefit enhancements will be mailed to home addresses and office email accounts in the coming days and also can be found at:

<http://insurance.tennessee.edu>. Questions can be directed to the UT System Office of Payroll at (865) 974-5251.

## Requirements for 2012

- Members and spouses covered under the plan must participate in health coaching if an opportunity to improve their health is identified by Partners for Health Wellness staff during 2012

- Members must keep their postal address, phone number and email address current

## New Benefits Enhancements for 2012

- Lowering co-pays at convenience clinic and urgent care facilities
- Limiting out-of-pocket co-pays for in-network primary care and specialist office visits

- Inclusion of a new pharmacy maintenance drug tier for 90-day supplies of certain generic and preferred brand medications purchased at 90-day network pharmacies or by mail order

# Analyzing UT's Pay and Benefits

Understanding how pay and benefits offered to employees compare to those offered by other institutions is key to identifying areas needing improvement.

A comprehensive, statewide market assessment was conducted in July 2011 to compare pay and benefits offered to UT employees to those of higher education institutions and general industry from where the University recruits talent, loses talent or competes with for talent.

It came as no surprise that average salaries for both faculty and staff are a little below market medians. On the other hand, when considering benefits such as health insurance, retirement, tuition assistance, time off and long-term disability, the University's strong benefit programs compare well. Overall, benefits for both staff and faculty are above average compared to general industry. Compared to selected higher education institutions, faculty benefits align with the average and staff are slightly below.

"This is the first time we have conducted a comprehensive,

statewide study of this nature, and the results serve as a launching pad for improving employee compensation, recruitment and retention," UT President Joe DiPietro said.

Findings from the assessment are being used to create a long-term, statewide compensation plan for addressing market gaps in pay and benefit offerings. Findings also will be used in both statewide and entity-specific strategic and compensation planning.

More information about the market assessment is available at: [http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/cab/market\\_assessment.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/cab/market_assessment.html). Campus and institute leaders received entity-specific results in late August and will share them with employees in the coming months.

Creation and implementation of a compensation plan will take time, and the market assessment was the first critical step in that process.

# Open Enrollment for Flexible Benefits Plan

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The flexible benefits plan is an important part of UT's overall benefits package. It allows employees to pay certain predictable medical and dependent care expenses, such as co-pays, with pre-tax dollars. Employees with high out-of-pocket expenses for medical and dependent care can establish reimbursement accounts to plan for these expenses and take advantage of substantial savings.

It is important to remember that monthly health and dental insurance premiums are taken from paychecks before taxes are deducted. Therefore, premiums cannot be paid using the flexible benefits plan.

Employees interested in joining the plan can enroll during this year's open enrollment period Oct. 15 through Nov. 30. Employees who already participate in the flexible benefits plan and want to continue enrollment must re-enroll each year. Forms are available at: <http://flexiblebenefits.tennessee.edu>.

Additional information about the flexible benefits plan can be found on the above-referenced website. Questions can be directed to the UT System Office of Payroll at (865) 974-5251.

# Importance of Updating Beneficiary Designations

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Most decisions about benefits are made during new employee orientation, and for some employees, that was a long time ago. It's also possible life changes have occurred since then, making it necessary to update benefit information.

One important update not to overlook is keeping beneficiary designations current.

To enroll in most benefit programs offered through UT, employees are required to designate beneficiaries to receive money or other benefits in the event of death.

For most UT benefits, a beneficiary can be a person, institution or trust.

Beneficiaries are selected for such benefits as life insurance, retirement, optional accidental death and dismemberment, deferred compensation (401k, 457, 403b, etc.) and death benefits.

Life-changing events such as marriage, divorce, adoption and birth could affect beneficiary designations.

To confirm or update beneficiaries, employees can contact each benefit provider directly. A list of providers and contact information is at:

<http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/benefits/>. The HR Call Center also is available to help identify contact information and can be reached at (888) 444-UTHR.

## Mark Your Calendars

### Chattanooga:

*Employee Service Awards Luncheon*  
Nov. 30, 11:30 a.m.  
University Center, Tennessee Room

*Model-Netics Organizational and Managerial Concepts Training*  
Sessions begin Jan. 20, 2012  
Cost: \$200. Space limited to 20 participants.  
Register: Dan Webb, [Dan-Webb@utc.edu](mailto:Dan-Webb@utc.edu) or  
Melanie Sadler, [Melanie-Sadler@utc.edu](mailto:Melanie-Sadler@utc.edu)

### Knoxville:

*Fall Festival*  
Sept. 30, 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
TRECS Complex

*Office Professionals Super Seminar*  
Oct. 20, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Conference Center Building, 4th Floor  
Register: (865) 974-6657

*Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*  
Dec. 6-8, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Conference Center Building, Room 238  
Register: (865) 974-6657

*Seven Habits of Highly Effective Managers*  
Jan. 25-26, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Conference Center Building, Room 238  
Register: (865) 974-6657

### Martin:

*Flu Shots*  
Late September  
University Center  
More details will be shared soon.

*Clerical and Support Coffee*  
Oct. 25, 9 a.m.  
Boling University Center, Room 206

# Discounts Every Employee Should Know About

Sometimes it's the small things that make a big difference.

Benefits such as health insurance, retirement and time off are common among employers. But partnerships with several national companies allow UT to offer additional benefits with the potential to significantly impact budgets.

The discounts listed below are available to all employees statewide.

To learn how to take advantage of these discounts, visit: <http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/>.

“I have taken advantage of many of our corporate

discounts over the years, most recently the Verizon Wireless discount, and am so appreciative of the additional benefits offered to us as UT employees,” said Marie Vesser, an administrative assistant with the UT Institute for Public Service. “I recommend everyone check to see which benefits will work for them.”

Additional entity-specific discounts are available, and questions should be directed to campus and institute human resources officers.

For a complete listing of UT's benefit offerings, visit: <http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/benefits/>.

## Statewide Employee Discounts

Wireless providers such as AT&T and Verizon offer discounts of up to 20 percent off monthly recurring charges and accessories.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car and National Car Rental offer various discounts on upfront costs and insurance plans.

Staples offers automatic discounts in retail stores across the country to registered employees.

The UT Knoxville Bookstore Technology Center offers discounts on computers, software and accessories to all employees and allows direct deposit payment.

Biltmore Estate in Asheville, N.C. offers discounts on admission tickets.

Affordable Travel of Orlando offers discounts on tickets and travel packages at Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World, Discovery Bay and Aquatica.

Tennessee's more than 50 state parks offer discounts of up to 50 percent off lodging and camping fees.

From You Flowers offers 20 percent off all regular-priced floral and gift items.

*Employee Assistance Program  
Supervisor Training*  
Nov. 1, 1-3 p.m.  
Gooch Hall, Room 206  
Register: Karen Sliger, (731) 881-7940

*Service Awards Brunch (Five Years)*  
Nov. 17, 9:30 a.m.  
Dougherty Tennessee Room

*Service Awards Luncheon  
(10 Years or More)*  
Nov. 17, Noon  
Boling University Center, Room 206

*Holiday Open House*  
Dec. 9, 3:30-5 p.m.  
Boling University Center, Room 206

**Memphis:**  
*Benefits and Educational Fair*  
Oct. 3, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Plaza Lobby

*Life Planning Seminar*  
Nov. 15-16  
Student Alumni Center  
Register: Debbie Jackson, (901) 448-8547

**Tullahoma:**  
*Benefits Fair*  
Oct. 19, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Dining Hall

*Technology Training*  
Nov. 7-9  
Main Academic Building, Room B113  
Computer Lab  
Register: Pam Ledford, (931) 393-7504

# Improving Job Search and Hiring Processes

Is there anything more frustrating for a job seeker than applying for a position that has already been filled? Or finding the perfect candidate and learning a lengthy hiring process led the candidate to accept another offer?

Recruiting and retaining a talented workforce are critical to the University's success, and an up-to-date and effective hiring system is a good place to start.

Plans are in the works to implement software to enhance the job search, application and hiring processes for all staff positions across the University.

The new applicant tracking system will integrate job postings across the University into one, easy-to-navigate database with search features allowing customized queries by geographic region and campus or institute. Other employers using the same system include Cornell and

Purdue universities, Target and Hilton Hotels. Current and prospective employees will find it easier to search open positions, upload required materials and submit employment forms after accepting a position. Job postings also will be removed automatically once positions are filled.

Staff tasked with filling positions will find it easier to post jobs, search applicant materials and request and receive necessary approvals from HR throughout the hiring process.

The new system will allow staff to review important hiring trends such as time-to-fill, diversity and pay metrics to better identify areas needing attention.

The new system is expected to launch in early 2012, and training will be provided in advance. Look for more information to come soon.

# Career Development Fund Makes Training Affordable

Employees interested in job- and career-related development opportunities can apply to UT's Career Development Fund to receive up to \$200 per fiscal year to assist with costs.

During fiscal year 2011, more than \$28,000 from the fund was awarded to 236 employees across the state to enable training.

Employees should speak to supervisors first about training opportunities, but if departmental funds are not available, applications for assistance can be made to the Career Development Fund.

"I've used the Career Development Fund to attend the University's Administrative Professionals Retreat held every November in Gatlinburg," said Rebecca Layman, an administrative assistant with the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma.

*"It's nice to have the fund to help make opportunities like this one possible."*

Rebecca Layman  
UT Space Institute



"Of all the training I've completed, I benefit from this retreat more than any other," she said.

Nichole Wright, a patient account specialist at the UT Health Science Center in Memphis, used the fund to help cover the costs of the Certified Administrative Professional Exam.

*"It was surprising to me how simple the application process was and how quickly I was reimbursed."*

Nichole Wright  
UT Health Science Center

"I'm not sure how many people are aware of the fund, but I recommend it to everyone interested in taking the exam," Wright said.

Applications must be made a minimum of three weeks in advance of training. Employees must be classified as non-exempt status and have been employed by the University for at least six months to be eligible.

Funding cannot be applied to travel expenses, training outside Tennessee, textbook costs, membership in

organizations or used in conjunction with the University's fee waiver program.

Additional information about the fund and an application form are available at: <http://www.tennessee.edu/cdf/>.

The fund was established and is maintained by donations through the University's Annual Giving Program.

Donations can be made at:  
<https://web.dii.utk.edu/alumni/Default.aspx>.

UT Chattanooga operates a separate Career Development Fund, and employees can apply at: <http://www.utc.edu/Administration/HumanResources/Training/CareerDevFund.php>.

## The HR Call Center is Here to Help

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Since opening in January 2010, the UT Human Resources Call Center has answered more than 36,000 questions about topics such as benefits, policies, training and recruitment.

While the center receives approximately 98 calls per day, staff members ensure waiting is kept to a minimum.

Dan Trentham leads the center and has worked at the University in various capacities for almost 30 years, the majority of which have been with Benefits and Retirement.

*"It is such a good feeling to hear that sound of relief after we take care of a frantic caller regarding a pressing HR concern."*

Dan Trentham  
Human Resources Call Center



Michelle Whited also works in the center assisting employees. She has been with the University for 22 years and has experience working in several areas within Human Resources.



The toll-free hotline is available 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET and does not replace campus and institute human resources officers or walk-in offices. It simply provides another avenue for quickly and efficiently meeting employee needs.

Please continue to take advantage of this statewide resource.

**1-888-444-UTHR**

**From 865 area code, call 946-8847**

**Available 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET**

## UT Human Resources Officers

Linda Hendricks  
Chief HR Officer, System Administration  
and Vice Chancellor for HR, UT Knoxville  
(865) 974-8170  
linda.hendricks@tennessee.edu

Phil Bright  
Martin  
(731) 881-7847  
pbright@utm.edu

Herb Byrd  
Institute of Agriculture  
(865) 974-7245  
hbyrdiii@utk.edu

Patricia Burks-Jelks  
Space Institute  
(931) 393-7226  
pjelks@utsi.edu

Jerry Hall (Manager, West Regional Service Ctr.)  
Health Science Center  
(901) 448-5600  
jhall3@uthsc.edu

Judie Martin  
Institute for Public Service  
(865) 974-1535  
judie.martin@tennessee.edu

Dan Webb  
Chattanooga  
(423) 425-4221  
dan-webb@utc.edu

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