

## Enrollment Period for Health, Dental and Other Insurance Programs

The annual enrollment period for the State of Tennessee's health, dental, vision, basic and term life, long-term care, long-term disability and optional special accident programs is Oct. 1 – Nov. 1, 2012.

During open enrollment, employees can change, enroll in (subject to a monthly late applicant fee in some cases) or cancel coverage options for calendar year 2013. No action is necessary if no coverage changes are sought.

The State now offers an online self-service program, and instructions are at [partnersforhealthtn.gov](http://partnersforhealthtn.gov). Paper forms will no longer be accepted. Login and password information was mailed to home addresses by the state's benefit office. Direct questions to (800) 253-9981, option three.

The Partnership PPO and Standard PPO remain the two employee health insurance plans. The Partnership plan offers lower monthly premiums, a lower annual deductible, lower pharmacy co-pays and coinsurance, and a lower out-of-pocket maximum. To qualify for the Partnership plan, members must agree to terms of the Partnership Promise each year.

Employees participating in the Partnership plan in calendar year 2012 who failed to satisfy the Promise requirements will be moved to the Standard plan with the same provider for calendar year 2013, unless a new provider is specified.

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## New Vision and Improved Flexible Spending Programs Offered

Two new benefits are being offered to employees for calendar year 2013 during the Oct. 1 – Nov. 1, 2012 open enrollment period—a vision coverage plan and an improved flexible spending program with a debit card for eligible expenses.

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## Welcome

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



This issue brings information about our new vision and improved flexible spending programs, enhancements and changes to the state's existing insurances, stories from employees using our tuition waiver, wellness initiatives and many other important updates. I hope you find the newsletter helpful, and I encourage you to share feedback and suggestions on ways we can improve the publication by emailing me at [systemhr@tennessee.edu](mailto:systemhr@tennessee.edu).

Thank you for all you do.

Linda Hendricks  
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From 865 area code, call 946-8847

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Do you have an idea for the next newsletter? Email it to [systemhr@tennessee.edu](mailto:systemhr@tennessee.edu).

# Insurance: What's Changing for 2013? *(continued from page 1)*

The following Promise requirements were approved by the state for calendar year 2013 and will determine eligibility for calendar year 2014.

The following coverage enhancements and changes also were approved by the state for calendar year 2013.

## Partnership PPO Promise Requirements

1. Complete ParTNers for Health online health questionnaire between Jan. 1 and March 15, 2013
2. Completed or complete one of the following between July 15, 2012 and July 15, 2013:
  - a. Annual physical, well-woman visit, flu and pneumococcal shot or screenings for colon, breast and prostate cancers
  - b. Participate in a ParTNers for Health wellness challenge
  - c. Create a well-being plan on the ParTNers for Health website, select a focus area and complete three of the suggested action items
3. Keep address, phone number and email current with UT
4. Maintain tobacco-free lifestyle or participate in the cessation program
5. If identified at risk by the Healthways ParTNers for Health coaching staff, members also must:
  - Have completed or complete a biometric screening between July 15, 2012 and July 15, 2013
  - Participate in health coaching

## Coverage Enhancements and Changes

- New optional vision plan
- No-cost contraceptives for women
- Two percent increase in health premiums
- Three percent increase in dental premiums
- Increase in deductibles, out-of-pocket co-insurance maximums and network differential
- Increase in specialist office visit co-pays by \$5
- Increase in emergency room co-pays by \$45 (waived if admitted)
- Increase in pharmacy co-pays by \$5 for preferred and non-preferred brand medications (except drugs in maintenance tier)
- New pharmacy dispense as-written policy and preferred specialty drug plan
- Closing enrollment in optional universal life insurance

Detailed information about the above programs, processes and changes has been sent to home and office addresses and is available at [insurance.tennessee.edu](http://insurance.tennessee.edu). Direct questions to the UT System Payroll Office at (865) 974-5251.

# New Vision, Improved Flexible Spending *(continued from page 1)*

Employee feedback through employee relations councils and other forums led to emphasis on these additions.

Detailed information about the new offerings was mailed to home and office addresses and is available at [insurance.tennessee.edu](http://insurance.tennessee.edu).

Direct questions to the UT System Payroll Office at (865) 974-5251. Please continue to share suggestions for improving University benefits offerings.

## Vision Coverage

- Basic and extended plan options
- Affordable monthly premiums ranging from \$3.27 to \$16.84
- Large network of physicians
- Annual routine eye exams
- Frames, lenses, contact lens, discount on lasik surgery

## Flexible Spending Program

- Using pre-tax dollars to pay certain medical and dependent care expenses such as co-pays, daycare, prescriptions and prescribed over-the-counter medications
- Debit card for making approved purchases
- Smart phone app for accessing account information

# Balancing Work and Life: Tips from a Trainer

By Stefani Mundy, Trainer in the UT System Office of Employee and Organizational Development

Do you ever feel like you're pulled in too many directions to juggle it all?

Without balancing our priorities and taking time to recharge, we end up feeling drained and ineffective, our response to stress is heightened, we become scattered and impatient, and our behavior affects everyone around us.



When teaching the “Balancing Your Life and Career” training course, I work with employees to understand how to manage stress and balance physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual needs to live an effective and rewarding life.

If you're interested in learning more about living a balanced life, email me at [Stefani.Mundy@tennessee.edu](mailto:Stefani.Mundy@tennessee.edu) to arrange a class offering. Traveling courses require participation by at least 15 employees and may involve a fee. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* training is offered at all UT campuses and institutes and also discusses self-renewal.

The UT System Office of Employee and Organizational Development offers more than 150 courses, many of which are held statewide, and offers more than 300 e-learning courses. For more information, visit [humanresources.tennessee.edu/eod/training\\_information.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/eod/training_information.html).

## Tip 1: Set Boundaries

It's important that we first understand how much time we have available to complete tasks or projects. The key is to schedule only priorities, not prioritize every item on our schedule. To do this we must say no from time to time to what's not important. What if saying no isn't an option? We should delegate, ask for help managing the workload or negotiate projects with our supervisor. Maybe something we understood to be a priority can be postponed, allowing us to take on a different task.

## Tip 2: Imagine the Big Picture

When feeling overwhelmed, we tend to focus on what's right in front of us and often get lost in our to-do list. Instead, we should think about the roles we play (father, spouse, friend, colleague, etc.) and ask ourselves what is the most important thing we can do in each role this week.

## Tip 3: Renew Self

Every area of our lives will begin to break down without getting proper attention. We have physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual needs that require nurturing. Getting enough sleep, exercising, reading, journaling our thoughts, meditating, apologizing when we make mistakes and spending time with friends and family are some renewal techniques.

# Pay Continues to be a Priority

Pay was the primary area of concern among those who completed the 2011 statewide employee survey. While progress will take time, the across-the-board increase awarded in July 2012 was a step in the right direction.

With help from the state, all eligible staff and faculty with satisfactory job performance evaluations received a 2.5 percent increase, or \$1,000, whichever was greater.

Merit, market or equity increases also were considered by each campus and institute based on entity-specific needs and budgets, and decisions were influenced by results of the 2011 Sibson market assessment.

In addition to these increases, UT's Compensation Advisory Board (CAB) continues working behind the scenes to create a long-term plan for achieving the University's goal of fair and competitive pay and benefits for all employees.

Merit pay, incentive pay, pay for certification and degree completion and career ladders are current areas of focus.

Learn more about CAB's work at [humanresources.tennessee.edu/cab/index.html](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/cab/index.html).

# Working Out at Work: Employees Share Ways to Burn Calories and Motivate Colleagues

Working on a college campus can make fitting exercise into your daily routine convenient.

These UT employees have found creative ways of using their work surroundings and friendships to their advantage.

## Friendship Leads to Walking Routine, Exercise Just a Bonus

UT Chattanooga employees are so used to seeing Rae Landrum and Cindy Williams walking before work that the slightest change to their routine causes concern.

“If we’re off schedule or take a different route, we get calls asking if we’re all right,” said Landrum, an administrative specialist in UTC’s financial aid office.

Their friendship began 17 years ago when Williams first came to the University, and the two have been walking daily for the past five years.

Their 40-minute route through campus and downtown allows these “sister girls” to share what’s going on in their lives while exercising at the same time.



“We walk because we enjoy it, and it’s a social time for us,” Williams said. “The health reasons just go along with it.”

Watching what they eat, taking the stairs instead of the elevator and delivering paperwork instead of using campus mail are some of the other ways these women fit exercise into their workday.

## Group Workouts Make Training Easier

Lee Leonard knew that group exercise drives motivation when he formed a running and walking club at the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma in July.

“I wanted to provide an opportunity for those interested to meet and train together on our campus,” said Leonard, a research associate in biomedical engineering. “I’ve found that group activities make training easier and strengthen friendships at the same time.”



More than 20 faculty, staff and students regularly participate in the workouts held three times a week.

“We have a beautiful campus that encourages outdoor activities. In fact, I would call it a runner’s paradise,” he said.

Starting a regular exercise regimen had been on Rebecca Layman’s to-do list for some time when the club was formed.

“Not only am I benefiting in terms of my health, but I am thoroughly enjoying the social interaction and the sense of unity as we come together to walk or run,” said Layman, an administrative specialist at UTSI.

For employees considering starting a similar program, Leonard recommended keeping activities simple and fun and maintaining a consistent schedule.

## Alternate Commute Relieves Stress While Saving Money

The health benefits of daily exercise are not the only motivator for Richard Saunders, a UT Martin employee who has been walking more than a mile to and from campus each day for the past 12 years.

“It also allows me to leave the car parked at home, cutting our fuel bill by more than half, and decompress from the stresses of a day,” said Saunders, librarian and interim director at Meek Library.

Though he admits “high summer heat can sometimes make the stroll less comfortable.”

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# Working Out at Work

(continued from page 4)

IPS: 48 lbs.



LEIC: 172 lbs.



CIS: 189 lbs.



## Friendly Competition Results in Shrinking Waistlines

A shared commitment to healthy living among UT Institute for Public Service employees led to a friendly competition to track pounds lost and celebrate successes.

Twenty employees from three IPS agencies currently are participating in the challenge.

“We started walking three to four times per week during lunch in October 2011, and we support one another however we can,” said Martha Kelley, a coordinator with IPS’s Center for Industrial Services (CIS) in Nashville.

*“Many of our lunch conversations revolve around tips for healthy eating and offering encouragement when people get off track,” said John Erdmann, a consultant with CIS and the challenge organizer.*

Each month agency coordinators gather weight loss totals for Erdmann to collect in a spreadsheet and share. The group wants to celebrate everyone’s success, regardless of time-frame, so the challenge does not have a beginning or ending date. It’s just become a way of life.

So how much weight has the group lost so far? As of Oct. 1, challenge participants had lost a combined total of 409 pounds. And one employee has even shed more than 100 pounds.

### Have a similar story to share?

Do you have a similar story or know someone who does? If so, please email [systemhr@tennessee.edu](mailto:systemhr@tennessee.edu).

# 2011 Employee Survey Update

More than 7,000 faculty and staff participated in the 2011 Employee Engagement Survey and gave feedback on topics ranging from pay to performance evaluations.

Campus- and institute-specific results were shared through open forums at each location in spring 2012, and summary information is available at [humanresources.tennessee.edu/yourvoice](http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/yourvoice).

So what’s next? How are results being used to drive change? A statewide team formed in summer 2012 by UT’s Compensation Advisory Board (CAB) is using results to make broad recommendations for improving the University’s work culture.

Based on review of the results, the team identified three system-wide priorities and recommended to CAB the following goals be established:

### Communication

Create a “culture of communication” throughout the UT System that fosters employee engagement and information sharing and also places an emphasis on employee recognition

### Supervisory/Managerial Training

Implement enhanced supervisory/managerial training at all campuses and institutes to improve the quality of workplace experiences for all employees

### Work/Life Balance

When needed, create additional policies and programs that support work/life balance and implement wellness programs to support physical and mental well-being

The statewide team also recommended that campus- and institute-specific groups be formed to determine initiatives and actions aimed at achieving the above-referenced goals.

These teams are being established now and will include faculty, exempt and non-exempt staff. Please remain engaged in the survey implementation process and continue sharing suggestions for workplace improvements.

## New Employee Code of Conduct

UT has developed a new employee code of conduct to better facilitate a workplace culture that promotes responsible and ethical behavior. The code is not intended to replace existing University policies, but rather to supplement and clarify procedures and rules in areas such as:

- Respecting others
- Reporting violations
- Avoiding conflicts of interest

All regular and term employees will be asked to familiarize themselves with the code and sign an agreement of acknowledgment during a two-week promotional period Nov. 5 – 16.

Signing the agreement to honor the code is voluntary, but not signing does not remove responsibility for complying with University policy and ethical behavior.

To read the revised code and agree to the terms, visit [compliance.tennessee.edu/code.html](http://compliance.tennessee.edu/code.html).

# Taking Time Off

One of the most talked-about benefits at UT is the ample time off employees receive, known as annual leave.

Employees earn between eight and 16 hours of annual leave a month and can accrue between 240 and 336 hours before excess hours roll to sick leave, depending on job type, percent of time worked and years of service. In addition to annual leave, employees receive 13 paid holidays and administrative closings per year.

So with all that time off, what are some of the unique and interesting ways employees use their annual leave?

## Come on Down

When Marty Conley scheduled a trip to California this past May for a friend's wedding, she expected dancing, sightseeing and a trip to the beach.

But she didn't expect Drew Carey to invite her to "Come on down!"

"One of my friends surprised us with tickets to The Price is Right show," said Conley, a staff assistant in student affairs at UT Martin. "Being invited to stage was surreal, like it wasn't really happening. It was truly an experience of a lifetime."

Like any proud star, Conley came back to campus and told everyone to tune in when the show aired two weeks later "primarily because when I spun the big wheel, I gave a shout-out to UT Martin," she said.

In addition to her trip to California, she's taken several family vacations and spent time traveling with friends due to the leave she's built up since starting work in January 2011.

"I know others who have trouble scheduling vacations and trips because they are only allowed so much time per year," she said. "The benefits offered at UT reflect that the University cares about its employees and is willing to give them time to spend with family and friends."



## Sweet Romance

Cheryl Hodge has helped her church prepare homemade candy apples for the Tennessee Valley Fair in Knoxville for almost as long as the tradition has been in place. And this year marks the fundraiser's 60th anniversary.

"We buy the apples, remove the stems, insert the sticks, mix and cook the candy, dip the apples, wrap and box them and transport them to sell," explained Hodge, an administrative specialist at UT Knoxville.

"I've worked at UT for 33 years and have always taken off up to 10 days in September to do the apples," she said. "Being able to request, and usually receive, the time I need is one of the benefits that has kept me at the University for so long."

Hodge added that she earns enough annual leave to take time for the apple production and still manage a vacation now and then.

"Believe me, working the apples is NOT a vacation," she insisted. "But they have always been a large and very important part of my life."

It was at the apple stand, in 1978, that she met her husband.

"He was selling cotton candy at the booth right across the way," she said. "We always say that we have a sweet romance."



## Passion for Racing

Billy Hatcher came to the UT Health Science Center in 1989 for two reasons—the annual leave and the opportunity to work with new and exciting technology.

"I'd just discovered cycling, a sport that's spread across the country and one that isn't a weekend hobby," said Hatcher, director of IT infrastructure.

As his passion grew, so did his need to travel. Hatcher's cycling eventually took him to Europe for two or more weeks at a time to train with various coaches.

"I made at least six trips to Europe between 2000 and 2005 and even won a minor race in Italy," he said. "It's one of the greatest things I've ever done."

"These trips also allowed me to experience life in other countries, and not from the tourist perspective," he said. "Having annual leave allowed me to do all of this."

For Hatcher, the best way to deal with stress is to recharge.

"The older you get, the more you care about the time to relax and unwind," he added. "We get enough leave to do all the things we have to do and still have time to do the things we want to do."



# Tuition Waiver Allows Employees to Earn Degrees at Little to No Cost

The cost of simultaneously pursuing PhDs in higher education administration from UT Knoxville would have been extremely difficult for Jamia and Eric Stokes, if not for UT's tuition waiver program.

"The tuition waiver has saved us at least \$50,000," said Jamia Stokes, associate director of undergraduate advising in the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences at UT Knoxville. "The waiver is one of the greatest benefits to working at UT, and we have not taken it for granted."

## Regular full-time employees can:

- Enroll in up to nine hours of undergraduate or graduate courses per semester at any UT campus without paying tuition fees
- Enroll in one course for credit per semester at any Tennessee Board of Regents school

## Regular part-time employees scheduled to work 75 to 99 percent time can:

- Enroll in up to six hours of undergraduate or graduate courses per semester at any UT campus

## Regular part-time employees scheduled to work 50 to 74 percent time can:

- Enroll in up to four hours of undergraduate or graduate courses per semester at any UT campus

To learn more about the tuition waiver program and tax requirements, visit [tennessee.edu/feewaiver](http://tennessee.edu/feewaiver).

Some exceptions apply to executive MBA programs and similar concentrated degrees. If the value of the graduate fee waiver exceeds \$5,250 per calendar year, the excess must be reported as taxable income unless the course is job-related.

"Having a degree from a four-year institution opens doors for you that otherwise would be closed," said Stacey Savidant, a purchasing coordinator with UT Extension.



The Stokes family

"And knowing that I would not have student loans hanging over my head was wonderful."

Savidant graduated from UT Knoxville with a bachelor's degree in business management in 2005 and said the experience boosted her self-esteem, sharpened her business skills and even allowed her to transfer to a higher-level position.

"I won't say it was easy, but I accomplished something that at one time I thought I couldn't," she said. "I hope employees really take in how lucky we are to have the opportunity to get a free education."

Stokes and husband Eric, an assistant director in undergraduate admissions at UT Knoxville, hope to complete their dissertations during the 2013-2014 academic year.

"I would encourage more employees to take advantage of the educational benefit," she said.

"It's a great way to get more connected to your institution and to advance yourself personally and professionally."

*"Knowing that I would not have student loans hanging over my head was wonderful," Savidant said. "I hope employees take in how lucky we are to have the opportunity to get a free education."*



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