

Subject: Instant HR/Payroll: New Year's Resolutions, Mason-Style

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To: DEPARTMENT-CONTACTS-L@listserv.gmu.edu

New Year's Resolutions, Mason-Style

It's 2017! The start of a new year is a terrific time to pause and reflect on what you hope to achieve in the coming months both personally and professionally. Here are a few resources that have come our way that we thought might be of assistance as you make your plans. This is, of course, not a complete list but a sample of opportunities and information. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at hr@gmu.edu.

With every good wish to you and yours for a happy, healthy, and joyful 2017!



1. *Check your pay stub every pay period.* You know it wouldn't be HR & Payroll if we didn't list this first! Things change over the course of time and it's important for all of us to check our paystubs to make sure that everything is correct.

Pay Stub Resources:

- [2017 Payroll Calendar](#)
- [Solving the Mystery of the Paystub](#)

2. *Practice Gratitude*

- "Feeling gratitude isn't born in us – it's something we are taught, and in turn, teach our children."

~Joyce Brothers

"Gratitude is the sign of noble souls." ~Aesop

- Gratitude Resources:

- Don't miss the opportunity to recognize your colleagues on any of these upcoming National Appreciation Days:
 - [1/19 – Thank Your Mentor Day](#)
 - [1/24 – National Compliment Day](#)
 - [2/12 – 2/18 – Random Acts of Kindness Week](#)
 - [2/27 – Random Acts of Kindness Day](#)
 - [3/7 – Employee Appreciation Day](#)

Reward and Recognition offers many opportunities to show your [gratitude](#), extend a [thank](#)

[you](#), share a [compliment](#), and we're offering a [new award](#) that will help you spread warmth and cheer this winter. Questions? Contact Beth Baroody at 3-2739 or awards@gmu.edu.

3. *Be kind*

"Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate." ~Albert Schweitzer

"When words are both true and kind, they can change the world." ~Buddha

Kindness Resources:

- [Random Acts of Kindness](#)
- Kind Bar [#kindawesome card project](#). Send a kind person a Kind snack.

4. *Give Back to Your Family and Community*

"I sustain myself with the love of family." ~Maya Angelou

"To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Family Resources:

- Mason's [Parent Guide](#)
- [Affinity Groups](#) at Mason (Adult Caregiver Support Group, Working Mothers, Working Dads, Toastmasters, Vegan Society and more!)

Volunteer Resources:

- Let Mason help you make a difference in your community with [School Assistance and Volunteer Service Leave](#).
 - [Volunteer Arlington](#)
 - [Volunteer Fairfax](#)
 - [Volunteer Prince William](#)
- [Wear Red Day](#) is Friday, February 3. Mason has been participating in Wear Red Day since 2009 encouraging the Mason community to wear red in support of heart health. For details on how to participate in Mason's recognition, please visit our [Go Red Gallery](#).

5. *Be mindful of your body.*

"The part can never be well unless the whole is well." ~Plato

"Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far." ~Thomas Jefferson

Physical Well-Being Resources:

- [Who's Walking Wednesday](#) (scroll to Who's Walking Wednesday). Exercise your leadership and sign up to lead a walk. Invite your colleagues. Walk. Repeat.
 - Inclement weather doesn't have to stop you from taking a walk! Check out Mason's indoor walking routes at [Mason Walk In'](#).
- [Center for the Advancement of Well-Being](#)
- [CommonHealth's Well-GO-nomics: How you move matters.](#)
 - Throughout your day, utilize the 20-20-20 rule.
 - Every 20 minutes
 - Take your eyes off your work and look 20 feet away
 - For 20 seconds

- And stand up!
- [Environmental Health and Safety's Ergonomics Program](#)
- [Mason Recreation](#) (membership information)
- [Freedom Center](#) (membership information)
- [Every Body Walk](#) (film) and [EveryBodyWalk.org](#)

6. *Be mindful of your finances*

“Beware of little expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship.” ~Benjamin Franklin
 “Money is only a tool. It will take you wherever you wish, but it will not replace you as the driver.”
 ~Ayn Rand

- Financial Well-Being Resources:

- [Financial Well-Being Portal](#) including:
 - [On-site and online classes](#)
 - [Individual Retirement Counseling Sessions](#) with Fidelity Investments, TIAA, and ICMA-RC
 - [Life/Work Discount Page](#)
 - [Life/Work Financial Resources](#)

You don't have to be a member of Fidelity, TIAA, and ICMA-RC to utilize the array of information and resources they offer through the financial well-being portal.

- [America Saves Week](#) – Mason is participating again this year! Check the Financial Well-Being Portal for information as it's available. In the meantime, please see the email below from America Saves with tax refund information and their "[Save Your Refund](#)" contest. Regarding your taxes, please exercise care when conducting financial transactions online, including your taxes. For resources from the IRS on fraud, please visit [IRS Security Tips](#).



From: On Behalf Of America Saves

Sent: Monday, December 19, 2016 1:07 PM

Subject: Tax season is coming! Here's what you need to know for 2017 📧

Free tax help, the EITC, and refund delays.

[View this email in your browser](#)





Planning for tax season could put you ahead on your **Pay Off Home Loan Early** savings goal.

Tax season is almost here!

We know, we know. The holiday season isn't even over yet and we're already talking about taxes! But there are some important details you need to know as you prepare to file your taxes and plan for your refund this year:



Free tax help and free tax preparation are available – in person and online. Unless you know your return is going to be complicated this year,



You might be eligible for the **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** and not even know it! The IRS estimates that about 25% of taxpayers who



A new tax law will delay refunds that claim the EITC or the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until **Feb. 15.** [The law](#) provides additional

paying someone to file a tax return should be a last resort.

are eligible for the EITC fail to claim it.

time for the IRS to review claims on these credits to detect and prevent identity theft and fraud.



What do these 3 things mean for your return?

1. Your first step is to determine which of the free filing options you will take advantage of this year. You can:

- [Use Free File on IRS.gov](#) – This free software walks you through a Q&A format to help prepare your return and claim every credit and deduction for which you may be eligible.
- [Try the Free File Fillable Forms](#) – If you're comfortable preparing your own returns, this option is for you! It allows you to file electronically using online versions of IRS paper forms.
- [Visit a free tax preparation site](#) – If your total household income is less than \$54,000 a year, you can seek [free tax prep](#) at one of thousands of Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), Military Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (M-VITA), and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) sites. To locate the nearest site, you can [search online](#) or call the IRS at 800-906-9887.

2. You can't get the EITC unless you file a federal tax return and claim it.

Each of the options above should be able to help you determine your eligibility, but you can also visit [IRS.gov](#) for additional information. And, if this is the first year that you are claiming the credit, you can use the [EITC Assistant](#) to see if you qualify for tax years: 2015, 2014 and 2013. You can file any time during the year to claim an EITC refund for up to three previous tax years. Talk about a bonus!

3. The IRS cannot issue refunds before February 15 for tax returns that claim the EITC or ACTC. But that doesn't mean you can't file when you normally would. Early filers can make the most of this delay by:

- *Avoid refund anticipation products.* — These products are provided by many commercial tax return preparers. Although they can have your tax refund to you quickly, the loan fees will have you seeing red.
- *Plan to save that refund.* — If you had plans for your refund early in the year, we know it can be hard to come up with those funds elsewhere. However, if you start by dedicating your refund, or at least part of it, to savings, you can get ahead of these New Year needs each and every time.

Need a little extra incentive to save this year? Enter the [SaveYourRefund](#) promotion for a chance to win up to \$35,000 in cash prizes simply for saving a portion of your refund. For more information and how to commit to saving prior to start of tax season, visit [SaveYourRefund.com](#).



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