We Thrive Together...
Welcome to the New Academic Year!

At the beginning of any new journey it’s important to reflect on the accomplishments of the past and make firm goals for the future. As you can see below, Mason has continued to be recognized nationally for many workplace initiatives on campus.

In this year’s newsletter we highlight a sampling of what makes Mason the unique and wonderful place it is. We also reassert our commitment to the Mason idea and pledge to continue to work hard to support its values and commitments.

At Mason, it’s true that we do indeed thrive together. Each one of us are responsible for nurturing a positive and collaborative environment that contributes to the well-being and success of every member. In HR & Payroll we are dedicated to maintaining an enriching work environment and will continue to invest in recruiting, retaining, and developing talented and diverse faculty and staff. We will do our best to help create a vibrant campus life in which all members can grow and thrive.

Thank you for making Mason a great place to work and learn. Your hard work, dedication and teamwork truly make a difference.

With every good wish for the academic year!

Your HR & Payroll Colleagues

“I am so lucky to work in an institution that values diversity and encourages all of us to thrive.

- Peter Pober

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Mason in the national spotlight for workplace programs and initiatives.
Nurturing a Positive and Collaborative Work Environment

Winter Wellness Day, October 15

Student Health Services and HR & Payroll are teaming up again for the second annual one-day, all campus Winter Wellness Day on Tuesday, October 15 when faculty, staff and students in Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William will be able to get a flu shot on campus.

Free for faculty and staff with health insurance though Mason, Kaiser Permanente and SUPERVALU pharmacy (for COVA Care, COVA HDHP and COVA Health Aware) will be on campus providing free flu shots as part of your wellness benefit. Free, voluntary biometric screenings will also be available for eligible COVA Care, COVA HDHP and COVA Health Aware participants.

Student Health Services will be providing lower cost flu shots to students and to and faculty and staff who are not eligible for the Kaiser and COVA flu shots.

New to the Fairfax campus this year, Financial Wellness information from TIAA-CREF, Fidelity and MetLife will also be available during Winter Wellness Day.

Additional flu shot clinics will be held by Student Health Services this fall. HR & Payroll will also sponsor its annual COVA Care clinic (with SUPERVALU) at Faculty-Staff Enrichment Day on November 5.

Flu shot registration information will be available on the HR & Payroll homepage.

If you’re a COVA or Kaiser member and you can’t make it to one of the on-site clinics, there are other ways for you to obtain your free flu shot. See the HR & Payroll homepage for details.

Well-Being:
The state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous

Looking to increase your overall well-being? Maybe we can help!

Work/Life
http://hr.gmu.edu/worklife/
Life planning seminars, elder care services, child care resources, flexible work options, mentoring, discounts and other work resources

Employee Relations
http://hr.gmu.edu/emp_relations/
Confidential assistance to university employees and their supervisors to help identify and resolve work related problems or proactively avoid potential problems

Reward & Recognition
http://hr.gmu.edu/awards/
Celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of faculty and staff at Mason.

Benefits
http://hr.gmu.edu/benefits/
Are you taking advantage of all available tax deferred savings? Contact the benefits team today!

Payroll
http://hr.gmu.edu/payroll/
Assistance with questions about semi-monthly and biweekly payroll, paychecks, timesheets and leave, direct deposit, and federal and state withholding.

Mason Moves!
Moving is one of the keys to maintaining health. Check out Mason Moves today! It's a fun and easy way to incorporate movement into every day. And you can do it at your desk!

Mason Moves is brought to you by Mason's Department of Dance.

Please remember to consult your doctor before beginning any exercise program.
Success of Every Member

Thanks for All Your Great Work!

Mason is committed to a culture of recognition. The Reward & Recognition team has many ways to say, “Thanks, for a job well done.” Check out your choices at [http://hr.gmu.edu/awards](http://hr.gmu.edu/awards).

We hope you’ll take a few minutes and read *The Mason Star*, Mason’s annual recognition newsletter.

It’s also time to send in your nominations for the Outstanding Achievement Awards. Nominations are due September 6 and the presentation ceremony will be Wednesday, October 16. For a detailed list of awards, please go to [http://hr.gmu.edu/awards/](http://hr.gmu.edu/awards/).

Life Planning Resource and Referral

Aging well is the goal for all of us whether we’re 25 or 75. Part of that planning is for life’s changes. Life Planning Services can assist with seminars and resource & referral information tailored to your personal situation.

For this fall’s Life Planning Seminars, including a new financial planning and retirement workshop series for all ages kicking off this October, please go to [http://hr.gmu.edu/learning](http://hr.gmu.edu/learning).

To set up an appointment for assistance with eldercare, dual career or relocation needs, contact ecare@gmu.edu.

Caregiving at Your Fingertips With SelectPlus

Faculty, staff, and graduate students have complimentary access to the SelectPlus database of caregivers which offers two programs:

- **Sittercity**, which offers individual in-home caregivers including babysitters, full and part time nannies, pet sitters, tutors, housekeepers and individual senior caregivers

- **Years Ahead**, which offers a nationwide network of senior care providers, including certified senior care advisors for guidance, specialized facilities including memory and hospice care and independent and assisted living communities, and in-home healthcare and senior care companions

Get started today at [http://www.selectplus.com/georgemasonu](http://www.selectplus.com/georgemasonu)

Important note: Mason does not own, sponsor, or endorse SelectPlus.com. It is your responsibility to carefully screen and check the references of any caregivers, including those who are listed on SelectPlus.com, before you retain their services.

Work/Life Discounts

As a Mason faculty or staff member you are eligible for discounts throughout the area. Please visit [myMasonHR](http://myMasonHR) for a list of participating vendors. Log in using your email user name and password and select “myDiscounts” from the left-hand menu. Check the site regularly for new discount opportunities — everything from local restaurants to day spas, oil changes, and more.

Emergency Preparedness App

The Environmental Health and Safety Office has recently created an emergency preparedness app for smart phones that contains important information on how to respond to emergencies that may occur on campus as well as links and emergency phone numbers that can be accessed directly from the app. Scan the QR code or download the “In Case of Crisis – Education” app to your phone (be sure to select the *Education* version). Follow the instructions on how to add a plan and select “George Mason University.”
**Enriching Work Environment**

*We will invest in recruiting, retaining, and developing talented and diverse faculty and staff. We will create a vibrant campus life in which all members can grow and thrive.*

![Photo by Evan Cantwell Creative Services George Mason University](image)

**Mentoring at Mason**

Are you wondering how to take your next career step at Mason? There are formal mentoring programs available for tenured faculty, administrative/professional faculty, and classified staff. Learn more about Mason Horizons and Mason Footsteps at [http://hr.gmu.edu/learning](http://hr.gmu.edu/learning) (click on the mentoring tab).

**Faculty-Staff Enrichment Day**

**Connect, Collaborate, and Create** at this year’s Faculty-Staff Enrichment Day (FSED), Tuesday, November 5, 2013. Senior Vice President, Jennifer (J.J.) Wagner Davis will begin the day with an engaging talk on collaboration at Mason. Participants can attend sessions on well-being, negotiation, global citizenship, and how to get involved at the university. Registration opens on October 7th at [http://hr.gmu.edu/learning](http://hr.gmu.edu/learning) (click on the course calendar tab).

**Learning and Professional Development**

Take advantage of learning and professional development on a range of topics at Mason. Offerings include a New SUPERvisor Series, Customer Service Certificate Program, and much more. Additionally, the HR Learning team can work with supervisors or departments to design customized learning opportunities. Examples of recent workshops are the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, goal setting, and professional etiquette. For information on programs and to register, please visit [http://hr.gmu.edu/learning](http://hr.gmu.edu/learning) and click on “course calendars.”

**Spring Break Travel Opportunities**

Looking to take a break from campus? Browse Mason's 2014 spring break programs to Barcelona and the French Riviera, which are led by Mason faculty and open to all Mason faculty and staff. Learn more about them at the [Center for Global Education (CGE)](http://hr.gmu.edu/learning).

**IS YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION CURRENT?**

It’s important to keep your contact information updated should an emergency arise. Please make sure your personal contact information is current. This is particularly important for new faculty and staff who may have relocated. Please take a minute and check it out by going to [https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/](https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/)

1. Log in using your net ID and password
2. Select Personal Information
3. Select View Address(es) and Phone(s)
4. Verify your PERMANENT address. If it is not correct, select Update Address(es) and Phone(s)
5. Then Insert a new PERMANENT address

Note: If your health insurance plan is through Mason you also need to update your permanent address in EmployeeDirect. Please also remember to update your new address with your retirement plan vendors, VRS, TIAA-CREF, Fidelity Investments or ING.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER / EMERGENCY CLOSURE REMINDER**

University closings, late openings, or other weather related changes in the University’s schedule will be announced on Mason’s switchboard 703.993.1000, Mason Alert, GMU-TV, the university’s homepage, and local media outlets.

For more information, please see the university inclement weather/emergency closure policy.

**FRA EXPENSE DEADLINE: 9/30/13**

If you had a dependent care or medical flexible reimbursement account, the last day to file a 2012-13 plan year reimbursement claim through Wageworks for expenses is September 30, 2013. Eligible expenses had to be incurred during the plan year which ran from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.
Policy & Procedural Reminders

Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and VaLORS

If you are in the Virginia Retirement System or VaLORS (law enforcement), your annual Member Benefit Profile (MBP) is available online. Your MBP outlines projected retirement benefits, your member contribution account should you leave state employment before retirement, and life insurance benefits. Please Note: The MBPs are for the earning period ending June 30, 2013.

The MBPs are available at the VRS website through its myVRS page. To view your MBP, all you have to do is register at myVRS. And registering is easy! Go to the VRS website and click on the “myVRS Access” button on the upper left side of the page.

Accessed your MBP online before? If you’ve accessed your MBP in previous years, simply click on Members login from the drop down menu.

Is this your first time? If this is your first time, select Members register from the drop down menu. Be prepared to provide your social security number, last name, date of birth and name of first VRS-participating employer (George Mason University). Follow the screens to set up a personal profile.

To learn more about myVRS, please review a handy fact sheet.

In addition to reviewing MBPs at myVRS, you can also view your member information and check on a range of retirement matters.

If you do not wish to set up a myVRS account and would prefer a paper MBP or if you have questions about how to access your retirement information, please send an email to benefits@gmu.edu. Include your name, G number and your mailstop.

Please note: VRS is undergoing a transition to their technology systems. If you have any questions, please contact the benefits team.

Part-Time Working Hours

A reminder that recent state law requires that wage and other non-benefited part-time employees cannot work in excess of 29 hours per week on average over the course of a year. The measurement period began on May 1, 2013 and continues through April 30, 2014. Going forward, hours will return to zero each May 1st. If you have more than one position at Mason, the total of all positions cannot exceed 29 hours on average per week or 1500 hours for the year.

Performance Evaluations

While informal feedback can and should be given throughout the performance year, the start of the new academic year heralds the beginning of the formal evaluation process for administrative/professional faculty and classified employees. Employee Relations is offering several sessions this September and October that provide a refresher on the process. The presentation, which is geared towards both employees and supervisors and discusses Mason’s classified employee and administrative/professional faculty performance evaluation processes from first draft to final signatures. Participants will also learn how to make the most of the performance evaluation meeting. Supervisors will gain tips on writing and conducting effective evaluations and aligning employees’ efforts with departmental expectations.

For dates and locations, please go to http://hr.gmu.edu/learning and click on the course calendar tab.

Full details on the performance evaluation process are available in the Annual Compensation and Performance Evaluation memo.
VIBRANT CAMPUS LIFE

Happy Heart Walk

Faculty, staff and students will join together on Wednesday, September 25 at 12 noon for the annual Happy Heart Walk. It is a unique opportunity for everyone on the Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William campuses to simultaneously take a one-mile walk around campus. Registration will be available soon on the Wellness by Mason website or just join us on the 25th. Remember, the largest team wins the coveted Happy Heart Award. In 2012 Team Prince William won; who will it be in 2013?

DMV2Go

Take care of your DMV business at a convenient Mason location. DMV2Go will be at Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William this September. For details and for the 2014 schedule, please visit the Work/Life website.

Vision Series

Evenings of thought provoking discussion by members of the Mason faculty and hosted by Dr. Peter Stearns. Details on the Vision Series website.

Alumni Weekend

Alumni Weekend is scheduled for October 4-6. During the weekend there are great opportunities to reconnect with our alumni, be entertained or simply taste the finest that the DC Metro area has to offer. Take a look at the schedule of events for more information. All events are open to faculty, staff and friends of Mason.

“I’m so proud of Mason. It’s the best place in the world to me.”
- Glenda Weston McCray

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50% Discount on Subscription Tickets

Mason faculty, staff, and retirees receive a 50% discount on subscription tickets — 3 performances of your choice equals a subscription — at either the Center for the Arts (Fairfax) or the Hylton Performing Arts Center (Prince William). And remember, for individual performances, children grade 12 and younger are 1/2 price when accompanied by an adult (no adult companion is required for grades 9-12). Contact either venue for details.

Don’t forget to check out Arts by George “an evening like no other” with special guest Laura Benanti.