

TIAA-CREF Assistance

TIAA-CREF representatives are available to assist you by telephone. Call 1-800-842-2776, Monday to Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Review your TIAA-CREF account selections and make changes by contacting TIAA-CREF at www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate.

Attend a one-on-one retirement counseling session with a TIAA-CREF Representative, Tuesdays on the Stillwater campus, in 106J Whitehurst. Schedule at www.tiaa-cref.org/moc or call (405) 418-2943.

Insurance Terminology: Credible Coverage

Most group plans will qualify as "credible coverage" with a new employer for purposes of meeting the HIPAA requirements to waive the pre-existing condition exclusions. HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) allows you to inform your new insurance carrier if you had group coverage elsewhere before becoming employed. By providing a "Certificate of Credible Coverage", the pre-existing condition exclusion can be waived or reduced. It is to your advantage to provide evidence of prior coverage to a new employer.

Training Opportunities

Seminars

July 11	Endnote Training - Intermediate
July 11	Export Controls, Classified and Restricted Projects, and the Research Administrator
July 12	How to Hire International Employees
July 12	Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training
July 12	Endnote Training - Intermediate (Cancelled)
July 17	OSU Staff Pay Plan
July 17	Hiring Without a Hitch
July 18	Budget Development System (BDS) - General Information Session (Rescheduled)
July 19	Workplace Ethics
July 24	Purchasing Card Training
July 24	Airfare Training
July 24	Avoiding Litigation Landmines
July 25	FERPA Training
July 25	Exceptions to Normal Pay
July 26	Communication Skills
July 26	Change Management
August 2	New Employee Orientation
August 7	SIS Training Part I
August 7	Take a Deep Breath
August 7	SIS Training Part I

For a description of the classes, go to www.okstate.edu/osu_per/hr/training.html Training Services, (405) 744-5374



Human Resources

News You Can Use! Important Information for Employees of Oklahoma State University

July 2007

Increase in Minimum Wage Effective July 24, 2007

On May 25, 2007, President Bush signed into law the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (the "Act"). The Act amends Section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act to progressively increase the federal minimum wage. This is the first time in a decade that the minimum wage has been raised. The wage increase was added to the most recent Iraq war funding bill.

As a result, effective July 24, 2007, the federal minimum wage will increase from \$5.15 per hour to \$5.85 per hour.

Effective twelve months later on July 24, 2008, the federal minimum wage will increase to \$6.55 per hour.

Finally, effective twelve months after that, the federal minimum wage will increase to \$7.25 per hour. This is the final stage of the federal minimum wage increase.

OSU pay for continuous regular employees will exceed the \$5.85 per hour minimum as OSU implements a supplement increase program effective July 14, 2007, for some non-exempt employees. At that time the minimum pay for continuous regular staff employees will increase to \$6.75 per hour.

Students and temporary/periodic employees who are scheduled to make less than the \$5.85 per hour minimum will need a pay increase. We plan to increase pay of all employees who are below the \$5.85 per hour effective July 21, which is the first day of the workweek. We will do this change automatically so that no paperwork is necessary on your part. If, for parity or another reason, the unit administrator wishes pay to exceed the \$5.85 per hour, an *Employment Action* form will need to be completed. We request that the effective date be July 28, the first day of the following work week in order to avoid confusion over the proper pay rate.

While significant, this increase in minimum wage will not affect a great number of students and temporary/periodic employees and no additional funds will be provided to units.

If you have questions, please contact University Human Resources, (405) 744-5373. If you have questions regarding proper calculation and payment of the increase, please contact Payroll Services, (405) 744-6372.

OSU Human Resources developed this information for the convenience of OSU employees. It is a brief interpretation of more detailed and complex materials. If further clarification is needed, the actual law, policy and contract should be consulted as the authoritative source. OSU continually monitors benefits, policy and procedures and reserves the right to change, modify, amend, or terminate benefit programs at any time.

Special Adjustment Increase

Interim OSU System CEO and President Marlene Strathe has announced the Oklahoma State University/A&M Board of Regents approved a fiscal year 2008 budget of \$900 million for the Oklahoma State University System. The budget includes funding for a merit pay increase for both faculty and staff on the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses. While the program allocates 3% of funds for a pay increase, individual raises are based on merit and the amount will vary according to performance. Employees with less than satisfactory performance are not eligible for an increase.

In addition, the budget includes additional faculty positions to support research as part of the *Restore, Reward and Grow Program*. OSU also is funding a special program to improve salaries of some of the lowest paid and below-market positions.

University Human Resources has worked with college and division officials to select non-exempt positions in job clusters. The posi-

tions were selected because they were below the market average as a group and among the lowest paid at OSU. Other non-exempt positions in the same job group were included in order to maintain equity in the work group. The job clusters were police, custodial, house-keeping, mailing, food services, laundry, vending, and power plant.

College and division officials have been extremely supportive in making this adjustment program available, which in many cases has been funded directly from their funding resources. Last year, Staff Advisory Council had recommended increase adjustments. Pay of approximately 400 employees will be affected. These increases will be effective July 14, 2007. If your position is one of those receiving the special adjustment, you will be notified by letter.

If you have questions regarding the increase, contact Human Resources, (405) 744-5373.

Healthcare and Wellness Task Force Update

The HealthCare and Wellness Task Force appointed by President Schmidly last winter has continued to explore options to provide more affordable healthcare for OSU employees and their families and provide additional opportunities to encourage wellness.

A *Request for Proposals* was issued and two responses are under active consideration by the Task Force. By the end of July, the Task Force will take a recommendation to the OSU/A&M Board of Regents for healthcare insurance beginning January 1, 2008. The proposals offer some savings in some catego-

ries when compared to current premiums with HealthChoice. A change in vendor creates some disruption in providers, favored prescriptions, and plan design.

Individual behavior changes which focus on improving wellness will have a positive effect on claims in the future, but such improvements are not immediate. The Task Force is committed to a recommendation that will reduce current premiums and build a healthier campus for the future.

More information will be in the August 2007 issue of *News You Can Use*.

Staff Advisory Council - Voice of Staff to OSU Administration

OSU Staff Advisory Council (SAC) was established in 1975 as the voice of the staff to OSU Administration. SAC, as it is commonly referred to, aids the President and Administration by providing information about the way decisions can and do effect the University staff through policies and procedures.

The Staff Advisory Council is made up of 27 representatives throughout the campus and has members from each of the branch campuses. SAC meets monthly, and all meetings are open to the public with OSU staff being encouraged to attend.

The Staff Advisory Council annually conducts the *Staff Scholarship Program*, and the *Staff Awards and Recognition Program*. SAC also conducts two programs through the year, the *Staff Appreciation Day* and the *Staff Appreciation Picnic*.

Through the **SAC Scholarship Program**, numerous staff have been afforded the opportunity to further themselves and improve their lives through the attainment of higher education. Funds are generated annually through faculty and staff participation in various SAC fund raisers. Money raised is combined with additional money from OSU Administration. Additionally, SAC has an OSU Foundation Account which, when endowed, will provide monies.

A special committee of SAC members is formed each year to select scholarship recipients. More information about the *SAC Scholarship Program* can be found on the SAC website, http://fp.okstate.edu/sac/sac_scholarships.htm.

The **OSU Service Awards and Recognition Program** is held annually in the Student Union Little Theater. The event, sponsored by the OSU Staff Advisory Council, is an awards

and recognition program for approximately 4,000 members of OSU staff.

Each year, seven OSU staff are recognized with the Distinguished Staff Award for going above and beyond their normal job duties.

OSU staff who have reached an employment milestone by being employed for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 or 40 years receive service pins. Also recognized are recent OSU retirees, along with staff members who have graduated from the *Leadership Development Program* or the *Advanced Leadership Program*, or who have received a SAC scholarship.

More information can be found on the SAC web site, <http://fp.okstate.edu/sac/awards.htm>.

Staff are also invited to an annual **Staff Picnic** on Willard Lawn near Theta Pond. The Picnic is a time for staff to gather and relax with friends and the University family and for OSU to say thank you to the many hard working men and women who make up the OSU staff. Lunch tickets to the Picnic are sent out through campus mail.

SAC also participates in several **community activities**, including Coaches vs. Cancer, United Way, Harvest II Food Drive, and the Can OU Food Drive.

Do you want to be the first to know when things happen on campus? Subscribe to the SAC listserv! Send a message to the Listserv server at listserv@listserv.okstate.edu. Put the following message in your email message box (where you normally write messages): *subscribe SAC-L YourFirstname YourLastname*.

Do you know who your SAC representative is? Find out at <http://fp.okstate.edu/sac/members.htm> or contact Carey Warner, Chair, (405) 744-8474.