

Congratulations to Governor's Award honorees



Paula Woodhouse
Interim Director,
Office of State
Human Resources

Dear State Employees,

I want to thank you for your dedication and efforts in serving the people of North Carolina. You do an outstanding job of providing the essential services that make North Carolina one of the fastest-growing economies in the nation... and a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

You serve the people of North Carolina in so many different and important ways. Collectively, you provide public safety, build and maintain our roads, preserve historical and cultural resources, provide healthcare, manage and maintain our state parks, and much more.

Although we have many exceptional employees working in state government, some take it to a new

The GAE honorees are nominated by their peers: by you, the people they work side-by-side with every day. Next year, perhaps we will be celebrating your contributions.

Thank you for all that you do to serve the people of our great state.

Sincerely,

Paula Woodhouse

level. Just last week, those individuals—16 of your colleagues—were honored at the 2016 Governor's Award for Excellence ceremony for going above and beyond the call of duty. Some of them stood out within the scope of their job, others contributed to their communities in special ways, and still others acted selflessly and with courage to literally save lives.



Governor Pat McCrory congratulates GAE honorees for their dedicated service to North Carolina.

State employees to receive October bonuses

State employees will see some extra money in their October paychecks. Included will be a compensation bonus and a merit-based bonus. These one-time bonuses are mandated in the 2016 Appropriations Act, which was signed into law by Governor Pat McCrory.

The compensation bonus amounts to 0.5 percent of an employee's annual salary. In order to be eligible, employees must be subject to the State Human Resources Act and employed in a state-funded position on September 1, 2016; this bonus will be based on annual salaries as of September 1.

The "merit-based" bonus is based on employees' 2016 performance ratings. Employees who "meet" or "exceed" performance expectations will be eligible for this bonus.

Fair Labor Standards Act Revision

In May 2016, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA),

the federal law governing overtime pay requirements, was updated and amended. Currently the threshold is at \$23,660/annually for automatic inclusion for overtime status, as of December 1, 2016, that threshold will be increased to \$47,476/annually. If you currently hold an FLSA nonexempt/subject position (meaning you are eligible for overtime pay) these changes do not affect you. If you hold an FLSA exempt position/non-subject (meaning you are not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time) you will receive a notice before December 1 explaining in what way, if any, the updates to the FLSA have affected your job classification.

More detailed communications will be coming your way. If you have any questions related to these changes, please contact your agency's HR Office.

Compensation Project Update

Due to coinciding with the budget approval timeline, legislative increases, and bonus processes, the new

Statewide Compensation System Project, originally planned for implementation in June 2016, has been rescheduled for implementation in February 2017. At that time, all state job classifications will transition to new classifications with new market-based pay ranges. The Project has been a tremendous collaboration between OSHR and agency HR offices, involving extensive research and applying best HR practices that will give agencies more flexibility in administering pay.

With this additional time, OSHR's Salary Administration Team will be training state agency managers and supervisors on the new Salary Administration Policy (developed out of the Statewide Compensation System Project) in October. In conjunction with new classification and pay structures, the new policy will provide more flexibility for state agencies to set and administer pay.

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

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Sixteen state employees receive prestigious award

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MAXIMIZE Your 2017 Pre-Tax Insurance Benefits

NCFlex Benefits* Offer the **BEST VALUE** for State Employees and their families

Enrollment Period October 1 – 31, 2016



UPDATED Cancer Insurance

- No Evidence of Insurability (EOI) required for 2017 Annual Enrollment
- No Evidence of Insurability required for new employees (within 30 days of hire)
- No rate changes for 2017 plan

UPDATED Voluntary AD&D*

- Plans offered in \$50K increments/\$50,000 to \$500,000
- New Rates – Cost Per \$1,000 of Coverage
Employee: \$0.017
Employee & Family: \$0.027

* Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance

UPDATED Life Insurance

- New lower rates for 2017
- Increase coverage by \$10K or \$20K at annual enrollment without Evidence of Insurability, up to \$200K

UPDATED Critical Illness

- NEW \$25K coverage limit option in addition to existing \$15K option
- No physical exam required

www.ncflex.org

* You are eligible to participate if you are an agency, university, select community college, or select charter school employee working 20 or more hours per week in a permanent, probationary, or time-limited positions. Check with your HR staff for eligibility.

Performance Management: It's an ongoing process

When the new performance cycle for North Carolina Valuing Individual Performance (NCVIP), our statewide performance management program, began on July 1, 2016, thousands of state employees engaged in the Annual Performance Evaluation and Performance Planning processes.

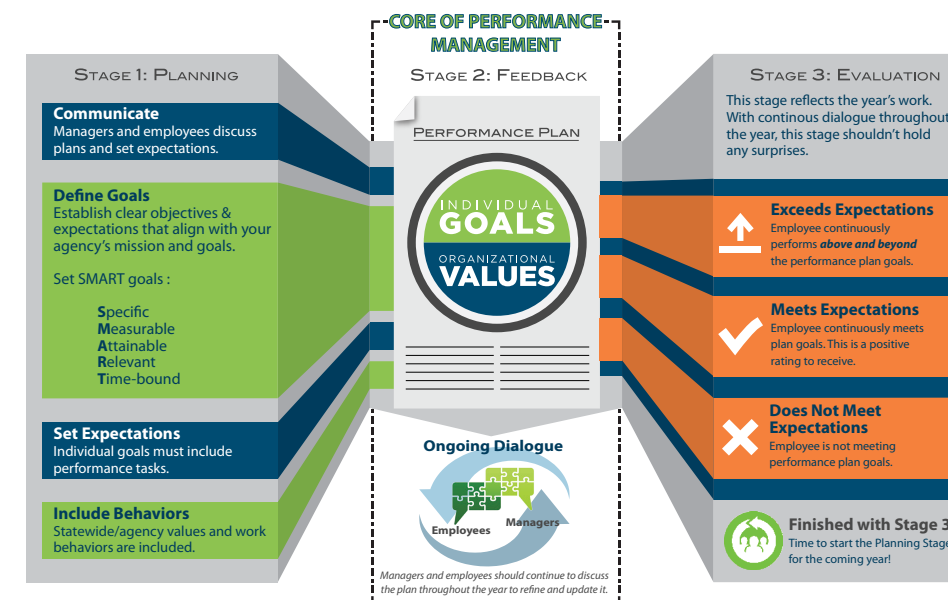
In September 2016, 95.46 percent of Annual Performance Evaluations and 85 percent of Performance Plans were complete. The NCVIP team, as well as your agency HR leadership, thank you for participating in these key performance management processes.

What's Next?

Remember that performance management (PM) is not an activity that happens only three times a year. Instead, it should be an ongoing conversation: employee and manager engagement is critical! Here are some strategies:

Employees

- Remember to regularly use the NCVIP System to document performance results:
 - Update progress on tasks associated with each performance goal.
 - Add comments to each performance goal. Describe specific examples to update your goal progress. Comments can also inform your manager/supervisor on your performance.
 - Add attachments to each performance goal, which can be examples of your work or letters of recognition.
- If priorities shift during the performance cycle, you can cancel existing goals and/or add new goals to reflect new priorities.



- Track performance plan deadlines to ensure you are making steady progress.

- Create and track an Individual Development Plan to set professional development goals.

Managers/Supervisors

- Remember to use the NCVIP System to document results and monitor progress:
 - Routinely set aside time to monitor goal progress in the NCVIP System. If you also approve employee time and leave, you can schedule NCVIP reviews at the same time.
 - Regularly set aside time to meet with each employee to talk about performance.
 - To help with Interim Reviews and Annual Performance Evaluations, create an electronic

folder for each employee to store e-mails regarding performance.

- If you or your employee transfers or separates, it is critical that you launch the Performance Evaluations for Transfers & Separations (PETS) task. Job aids are available in the NC Learning Center to assist with the task prior to the departure.

Need technical assistance?

For help, contact your agency Performance Management (PM) Liaison or PM Administrator. Go to oshr.nc.gov/document/ncvip-performance-agency-administrators to find your agency's PM expert.

To read more about NCVIP, go to ncvip.nc.gov.

SECC video highlights the power of giving

The 2016 State Employees Combined Campaign theme is "Power of Giving" and, according to the SECC website, "highlights the powerful difference that each donation makes as well as the tremendous power in the combined donations of all state employees."

Last year, state employees donated about \$3.8 million dollars. Learn more by clicking on the video link to the right or by visiting ncsecc.org.



Governor McCrory honors exceptional state employees



Click on the winners' photos to watch a short video about each award recipient



Special Agent Glen Webb touched the lives of two children and their communities by rallying law enforcement to give them the best birthday celebrations ever.



Glen Webb
Public Safety

Officers Isaac Hannah and David Descourouez, along with Dispatcher Teresa Beasley, showed patience and compassion for a veteran when he needed it most.



Isaac Hannah
Wildlife Resources Commission



David Descourouez
Wildlife Resources Commission



Teresa Beasley
Wildlife Resources Commission

Dr. Angela Smith found a way to leverage the buying power of government to get deep discounts on medications, and she's spearheading a program that makes medications more affordable for patients.



Dr. Angela Black Smith
Health & Human Services

Liani Yirka works at the Museum of Natural Sciences and is passionate about making the museum accessible to everyone. She's implemented some innovative programs to enhance the museum for visitors with disabilities.



Liani Yirka
Natural & Cultural Resources

Retired Colonel Edward Timmons revitalized the Tarheel ChalleNge Academy, and in the process, continues to give at-risk youth a second chance.



Col. Edward Timmons
Public Safety

Domestic violence affects individuals in every community. TaWanna Archia founded an organization to provide resources and support for people in abusive relationships.



TaWanna Archia
UNC School of the Arts

Lebra Nance makes the college experience a little easier for students. From the first time students set foot inside the college of engineering to their graduation day, Lebra makes those around her feel like family.



Lebra Nance
University of North Carolina – Charlotte

It takes a person with a special heart to give the gift of life. That's what Lindsay Recchie did when she learned that a co-worker was in need of a kidney donation, she willingly stepped up.



Lindsay Recchie
North Carolina State University

Robert Walker created a new mail delivery system that greatly reduces waste, saves space, and delivers mail to students the way they like it.



Robert Walker
University of North Carolina – Greensboro

Terry Kuhn works on board the USS North Carolina Battleship. He led a team to install much-needed Wi-Fi connectivity throughout the World War II-era ship.



Terry Kuhn
Natural & Cultural Resources

Master Trooper William Hemphill heard about a young boy riding his bike without a helmet who was struck by a car. Since that day, he has made child safety a priority in his community.



William Hemphill
Public Safety

Through some quick actions, Trooper Jonathan Gouge saved an elderly woman and her pets from a burning home.



Jonathan Gouge
Public Safety

George Revels witnessed a woman crash her car on the highway when she suffered from a seizure. When the car subsequently burst into flames, George jumped in to help.



George Revels
Agriculture & Consumer Services

Jay Mozingo saw a car crash into a large pond. He put his own life at risk, waded into a dangerous situation, and saved a man's life.



Jay Mozingo
Transportation

State employees help build a culture of safety

As many of you are aware, the push for Hazard Recognition began in earnest in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 when Governor McCrory signed Executive Order 13. We ended that fiscal year with 5,431 workers' compensation claims filed. That number was reduced to 4,385 claims in FY 2016 representing an impressive 19 percent reduction in just three years.

This shift indicates that employees and employers are paying greater attention to workplace hazards and addressing them before an injury occurs. However, there is still much work to be done to continue reducing the number of employee injuries.

In 2014, we started the "Be A Hazard Hero" program with the goal of proactively identifying and eliminating hundreds of hazards in the workplace. Over the past three years, many Hazard Hero events have occurred, including:

- a poster contest
- safety training programs
- the Governor's Hazard Awareness Leadership Conference
- a Hazard Hunt Contest
- a Safety Stand Down
- June Safety Month Proclamations

But most importantly, state employees are empowering themselves to recognize and eliminate hazards.

Constant vigilance to reduce workplace safety hazards, ongoing safety and hazard awareness training, and continuing management commitment to a strong safety culture have made our workplaces safer.

Going forward, we can't stop the progress! We have to continue working together. As a part of your everyday duties, make it your responsibility to recognize and eliminate hazards that may be around you. Recognizing and



**Do Your Part
Report Hazards**
hazards.nc.gov

eliminating hazards are probably the two most important safety responsibilities you have.

If you are injured at work, please immediately report your injury to your supervisor. You will be referred for medical treatment, if needed, and your claim promptly handled and managed by your agency's workers' compensation administrator and contracted vendors. Employers are prohibited from discharging or discriminating against employees for reporting injuries.

The Office of State Human Resources' Workers' Compensation team is working closely with state agencies to educate them about effective claims handling and management with the goal of providing state employees with the best medical treatment to get them fully healed and back to work as soon as possible. We are also closely monitoring vendor services and billing to ensure they fully adhere to new contracts.

Enjoy the upcoming holiday season and continue to recognize and eliminate hazards at work and also at home!

adoption agencies, education, pets, volunteer opportunities, attorneys, certified financial planners, and medical providers. Spanish resources are also available.

Access the work-life web site:

1. Go to www.mygroup.com, and click on Work-Life Login
2. Username: (Agency specific), Password: guest

To speak with a work-life representative, call 704-717-5295 or 888-298-3907. You can also watch an orientation on the EAP website to learn more about this free program.

WeSave offers train discounts

Save gas between Raleigh & Charlotte

Did you know that state employees receive a 15 percent discount on rail tickets? Riding the train is a great way to save gas and, with free Wi-Fi service, you can be productive while traveling between Raleigh and Charlotte.

Paul Worley, Director of NC Rail Division, encourages state employees to utilize the state's passenger rail system, NC BY TRAIN. It provides six daily passenger trains that serve nine cities in the Piedmont I-85/40 corridor between Raleigh and Charlotte.

State employees should enter Special Fare Code "V706" to get the 15 percent fare discount when making reservations and purchasing tickets.

For information about routes, schedules and fares, go to NCBYTRAIN.org or call 1-800-BY-TRAIN.

Check out more savings available to state employees at wesave.com.



SECU: Credit card reward programs aren't as great as they seem

State Employees' Credit Union employees are frequently asked why the SECU doesn't offer a credit card rewards program. Because they strive to offer programs that members want, the SECU investigated these programs. After all, how could a rewards program *not* be beneficial?



some consumers pay off their balance each month, that is not the reality for most consumers. The cost of the rewards program is subsidized by the interest paid. This extra interest usually amounts to much more than the rewards are worth.

After examining other lenders' rewards programs, the SECU determined the following:

To answer this question, the SECU examined rewards programs and determined the following:

- Rewards programs are usually offered in conjunction with "risk-based pricing." According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, "risk-based pricing occurs when lenders offer different consumers different interest rates." This means that consumers with high credit scores receive lower interest rates, and those with low scores get higher rates.

When combined with a rewards card program, "risk-based pricing" often means that the program is subsidized by the higher interest charges paid by consumers with lower credit scores. This practice requires one group of borrowers to pay for the benefits enjoyed by another, and it goes against a core SECU belief—that every member is entitled to the same interest rate for the same loan product with the same terms.

- Rewards programs usually only offer the appearance of benefits. Although you receive "rewards," you pay more (in interest) than the "rewards" are worth.
- In order to offer a rewards program, the SECU would likely have to implement one or both of the above strategies to fund it.

Because over 80 percent of SECU credit card holders carry a balance each month, the perceived advantages of a rewards program would not benefit most members. Instead, the SECU chose to offer a simple low-interest card with no annual fee. However, if you're considering a rewards card from another lender, stop by or call a SECU branch to talk with a lending officer to make sure the card will benefit you.

- Interest rates for rewards cards are higher than interest rates for non-rewards cards. Although

State Employees' Credit Union®

EAP offers work-life services

North Carolina offers Employee Assistance Program to aid state employees and their families

The NC EAP is managed by McLaughlin Young and provides work-life assistance in the areas of parenting, aging, balancing, thriving, working, living, and international.

Go to www.mygroup.com to access more than 11,000 articles, which are updated continually. When you access the site, you can search multiple databases on topics such as child care, elder care, summer camps,



DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS OR STORY IDEAS?
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