

Employee Matters

February 2026

Message from HR Vice President and CHRO Lorraine Goffe



Over the last few years I have used this column to describe HR's strategic focus—that is, a focus on being proactive, innovative, and planning for the future. Currently we have several initiatives under way in this respect, including the responsible adoption of University-approved AI tools such as Microsoft Copilot.

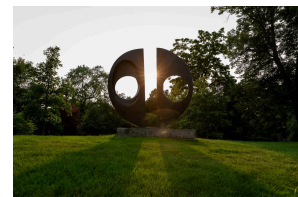
Because we are in the people business, I want to note from the outset that this is not about automation—we will not lose the “human” in Human Resources. This work is about enabling HR professionals to spend more time on thoughtful, high-impact work that supports employees and advances institutional priorities.

What will this look like? This initiative aims to enhance the employee experience, streamline processes, and provide clearer insights across hiring, talent development, compensation, benefits, and HR services. And through human oversight and adhering to Northwestern policy and HR's new AI policy, we will ensure our priorities of transparency, equity, and data security. Recognizing the transformational potential of this technology, we are taking a pilot-based approach and will share insights as the work evolves. Beyond its impact within HR, this initiative is designed to leverage what we learn to advance our evergreen goal of supporting the Northwestern community.

Benefits Spotlight

Virtual Info Session for Prospective Retirees (Medicare Eligible)

Are you considering retirement? The Benefits Office will offer a virtual information session for Medicare eligible faculty and staff on Thursday, February 19, from noon to 1 p.m. The session will cover retiree eligibility, an overview of Medicare, the Medicare Advantage plan, other Northwestern benefits, and enrollment timelines. Please register for this event.



Use your Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) Funds by March 15, 2026

Faculty and staff with unused funds from Plan Year 2025 (1/1/2025-12/31/2025), can still incur new expenses and spend those funds through March 15, 2026. All claims incurred between 1/1/2025-3/15/2026 must be submitted by 3/31/2026. Unused funds are forfeited and cannot be refunded.

Tell Us How About Your 2026 Benefits Transition Experience

We welcome feedback on your experiences with NU's new medical, prescription drug (Rx), and dental plans since January 1, 2026. Your feedback helps us understand the participant experience and identify opportunities for greater communication and support. Please send your feedback to benefits@northwestern.edu. Please note, this email should only be used to submit feedback. If you need assistance with your coverage, please email askHR@northwestern.edu or call (847) 491-4700.

Reminder: Important Information About Your UHC plan

In case you missed it! Review last month's [Benefits announcement](#) for information on Transition of Care options, Behavioral Health coverage, and Prior Authorizations for the prescription drug plan.

Have Questions About Prescription Drug Coverage?

Faculty and staff can find the prescription drug formulary and utilize the online formulary search and pricing tools on the [Prescription Drug website](#). If you have questions about a covered medication, contact CVS Caremark directly at **(833) 844-5348**.

Enhanced UHC Customer Support

The enhanced UHC support model remains available to faculty and staff through the first calendar quarter. You may contact UHC directly in three different ways.

1. For general questions about medical coverage, contact UHC at **(833) 314-1787 for PPO and HSA plans**, and **(855) 828-7715 for the HMO plan**.
 2. You can [schedule a one-on-one meeting](#) with UHC to discuss how your medical treatment will be covered and transition of care questions.
 3. You can email northwestern@uhc.com UHC your coverage questions.
-

Health Care Form 1095-C Coming Soon

Anyone employed by Northwestern in calendar year 2025 who was eligible for employee health insurance will receive Form 1095-C, including faculty, staff, postdocs, and retirees. Form 1095-C, (which is kept with your tax returns for reference), will be mailed at the end of February. For future updates, visit the [Benefits website](#) or contact askHR at **(847) 491-4700** or askHR@northwestern.edu.

HSA Tax Form 1099-SA Now Available

Inspira Financial has mailed the 2025 Health Savings Account Form (HSA) 1099-SA to account holders with distributions in 2025. Individuals who did not withdraw or use HSA funds in 2025 will not receive a form. Account holders who elected paperless delivery may access their form by logging into their [Inspira account](#). All forms—paperless or mailed—are available online. Form 1099-SA is required when filing your 2025 Federal Income Tax returns. Inspira will submit copies to the IRS by March 31, 2026. For additional details, please see the [insert included](#) with the mailing.

Well-being



February is American Heart Health Month

SupportLinc is highlighting American Heart Health month, [learn more](#).

Register for a Care Talks webinars through your [NU Care.com account](#) on a variety of well-being topics including heart health.

Upcoming sessions take place over the noon hour.

- Succeed at work: Emotional intelligence – February 19
 - Your healthy lifestyle: Your Healthy heart – February 24
 - Emotional wellness: Get smart about brain health – March 5
 - Financial wellness: Talking about money in uncertain times – March 11
-

Register for the Calm Health App

UHC members can access the Calm Health App at **no cost**. The Calm Health App provides programs and tools to support your mental health and well-being. [Learn more](#) about this benefit and download the app.

Explore OnePass Select

NU employees participating in UHC plans (and their eligible family members) can enroll in [OnePass Select](#) and choose a fitness membership tier for accessing nationwide network of gym brands and local fitness studios.

Caregiving

Visit the [Caregiving webpage](#) to find resources and programs to support your caregiving journey. Whether you need childcare, elder care assistance, or connection with other caregivers, the University is here to help.



Bright Horizons Open House in Evanston 2/20

Looking for childcare near the Evanston campus? Visit Bright Horizons' Evanston center during their open house on Friday, February 20, from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Bright Horizons Evanston offers a tuition discount to the Northwestern community. [RSVP and learn more.](#)

University Children's Center Open House 2/25

Looking for childcare near the Chicago campus? Visit University Children's Center in Chicago (UCC) for a tour of their recently remodeled center during their open house on Wednesday, February 25, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. UCC offers a tuition discount to the Northwestern community. [Learn more.](#)

Upcoming Caregiving Talks Through Care.com

View upcoming Care Talks webinars or recordings of previous sessions through your [NU Care.com account](#). Sessions take place over the noon hour.

- Childcare & parenting: Plan ahead for summer childcare – Wednesday, February 25
- Navigating life with disabilities: Guiding your child with disabilities into adulthood – Tuesday, March 10

Learn & Grow



Show Your Team Some Love this Valentine's Day

A little appreciation goes a long way, in the spirit of Valentine's Day, managers are invited to strengthen their recognition skills through the [Building a Culture of Appreciation](#) course via LinkedIn Learning, free to all NU employees.

This course is also a foundational module in the [Manager Foundations program](#).

Learn simple, authentic ways to recognize your team and create a more positive, connected workplace. You can also show your appreciation by submitting a gratitude post to NU's [Gratitude Wall](#).

Performance Excellence

Performance Excellence Review Forms are now available

Separate and distinct from performance goals, the PEx review form is where staff write their annual self-review and where supervisors input their staff member's performance review and rating. Connect with your supervisor to find out when reviews are due in your school or unit.

Check out the [Performance Excellence Resources for Staff webpage](#) to help you prepare for review-related conversations. Review this [job aid](#) to learn how to enter, edit and copy goals to your review form. Log into [myHR Learn](#) to access technical job aids under the HELP tab.



On Your Radar



Staff Recognition

Human Resources celebrates **Seletta Goodall** as the 2025 recipient of the **Jean E. Shedd University Citizenship Award**. HR is proud to steward this exemplary service award annually in partnership with a committee of faculty & staff from across the University. Goodall serves as Head of Administration for the Department of Medical Social Sciences (MSS) in the Feinberg School of Medicine. Check out the [Northwestern Now](#) story to learn more about her career trajectory at Northwestern, the impact she's making and her advice to fellow staff members.

Breakthrough Podcasts

Did you know that the Feinberg School of Medicine produces a series of podcasts with an academic/research audience in mind aptly titled *Breakthrough Podcasts*? Visit their [webpage](#) to listen to the people behind science and explore current and past podcasts to stay up to speed on all things research.

Northwestern Magazine

Have you checked out the newly released Winter 2026 issue of [Northwestern Magazine](#)? Give it a look to read a profile on former Wildcat and actor Richard Kind '78. Delve into a variety of topics from the Environment to Health & Science, Innovation, Social Issues and more!

Manager's Tip

Support a Safer Community

Don't forget to check in with your teams about completing the annual [NU Preventing Harassment and Discrimination](#) training by **Feb. 22, 2026**.

This training provides a high-level understanding of harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct, related laws and University policies, and available resources at Northwestern — including the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance. It is essential that we hold each other accountable for creating a culture in which our community members feel comfortable coming forward to report discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. For all questions about the training, including technical support, please read the [FAQs](#) or email OCRTrainings@northwestern.edu.



Engagement



Celebrating Black History Month

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Black History Month, Evanston institutions are hosting a variety of free events highlighting the history and impact of Black Americans on the local community and country. View The [Daily Northwestern](#) for a list. Chicago-based community members can explore the nation's oldest independent African American Museum, [The DuSable Museum of African American History](#) for events.

Introducing the *NU Ideas* Podcast

Hosted by the Office for Community Enrichment, [NU Ideas](#) is a podcast about belonging, imagination, and transformation. The series explores how learning can be a vehicle for cultural growth—amplifying voices from within Northwestern and the broader Chicago community, including researchers, public artists, educators, organizers, and civic leaders. [Listen here](#).

Take me out to the Ballgame!

Northwestern Baseball will make all mid-week home games (Monday–Thursday) FREE for all guests this season. Attend a game with your friends and family or make it a team-building outing with your co-workers. Mark your calendars for the home opener scheduled for Tuesday, March 10 against UIC. [Learn more](#).

Soap Making Workshop with AHEAD

Looking for an interactive lunchtime activity on the Chicago campus? Join AHEAD for a soap making extravaganza, on February 18 at Abbott Hall. This event will also take place on March 24. Submit your [RSVP](#) for either date.

Inside HR



Missed a past issue of the *Employee Matters* newsletter? Check out our [newsletter webpage](#) for an archive of issues dating back 6 months.

The mission of **Human Resources** is to promote an innovative and inclusive workplace where all individuals thrive and collaborate to advance our Northwestern directions.

Northwestern University



Northwestern University | Human Resources | 1800 Sherman Ave | Evanston, IL 60201 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!