

Northwestern | HUMAN RESOURCES

February 2025

Employee Matters

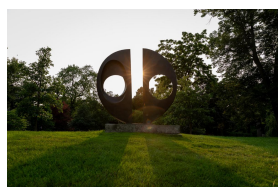
Message from HR Vice President and CHRO Lorraine Goffe

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As communicated in various University messages, Northwestern, like our peers, is navigating complex and uncertain circumstances.

As I have shared with my team, the goal before us is to keep our focus on the critical work we are doing daily to fulfill Northwestern's mission. Our charge is to support the community in the various ways that we do.

We also need to continue to support each other and to remind ourselves of the resilience we have shown during other times of uncertainty. I would ask our managers to recognize the work that your teams are doing and to communicate to them that their work matters. While this is always important, right now, communication and recognition can truly make a difference.



Benefits Spotlight

Virtual Benefits Information Session for Prospective Retirees

Are you considering retirement? The Benefits Office will offer a virtual information session on **Tuesday, February 18, 2025**, from noon to 1 p.m. The session will cover medical, dental, and vision plans, as well as

Via Benefits and the Legacy Retiree plans. In addition, a representative from United Healthcare will discuss the Medicare Advantage plan. [Please register for this event.](#)

Telehealth Cost Changes for Value PPO

As of January 1, 2025, BCBS Value PPO Plan participants are required to pay the full deductible for telehealth services before the Plan pays. This change is because the telehealth benefit from the federal CARES Act was not extended.

Use your Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) Funds by March 15, 2025

Faculty and staff with any unused funds from Plan Year 2024 (1/1/2024-12/31/2024), can still incur new expenses and spend those funds through **March 15, 2025**. All claims incurred between 1/1/2024-3/15/2025 must be submitted by 3/31/2025. Unused funds are forfeited and cannot be refunded.

Health Care Form 1095-C Coming Soon

Anyone employed by Northwestern in calendar year 2024 who was eligible for employee health insurance will receive Form 1095-C, including faculty, staff, postdocs, and retirees enrolled in the Legacy Retiree PPO. Form 1095-C, to be submitted with your taxes, will be mailed around mid-February. For future updates, visit the [Benefits website](#) or contact askHR at 847-491-4700 or askHR@northwestern.edu.

Schedule your Annual Health Screenings

The beginning of the year is a great time to have an annual health screening. Your annual physical, certain vaccinations and blood work, and cancer screenings are often covered by the plan at no cost to you (although some restrictions may apply). For more information on covered services,

assistance finding a provider and setting up appointments, or how to [shop and earn cash rewards for procedures and services](#), contact BCBSIL via the number on the back of your ID card or log into Blue Access for Members.

Don't Leave Money on the Table: Turn 5% into a 15% Investment in your Future

Employees eligible for the Retirement Plan who choose to contribute 5% will have their contributions matched dollar-for-dollar by Northwestern during each pay period. In 2025, faculty and staff can contribute up to \$23,500 to Northwestern's 403(b) plans, and those age 50 and older are allowed an additional catch-up contribution of \$7,500. Please review your elections in [NetBenefits](#) to ensure that your contribution amounts are as you intended.

On Your Radar

Federal Policies and Impacts at Northwestern

Northwestern is monitoring changes in federal policies and their potential impact on the University community. View the [federal policy updates website](#) and the website pertaining to [federal research funding](#) for updates and resources.



Learn and Grow

Manager Foundations Program Launch

The Manager Foundations Program Level 1: Awareness Building is now live! This self-paced on-demand program offers essential tools and resources to help managers navigate their roles with confidence.

The comprehensive redesign of this program captured feedback from our NU community to ensure the program is scalable, flexible, and aligned with the immediate needs of managers. [Visit the Manager's webpage](#) to learn more.

Engagement

Northwestern University in Qatar hosts Staff Star Awards

NUQ hosted its inaugural [Staff Star Awards](#). The awards pay tribute to individuals and teams whose efforts have significantly advanced the University's mission and values. Dean Marwan M. Kraidy underscored the importance of staff contributions in his remarks, while Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer Lorraine Goffe, spoke to the importance of recognition.



Black History Month

Screening: "Hearing Silences: 50 Years of Black Women Faculty at Northwestern University"

More than a dozen women academics are featured in "[Hearing Silences: 50 Years of Black Women Faculty at Northwestern University](#)," a film exploring the trials and triumphs of becoming pioneering figures in their respective fields and the impact they've made across University departments and campuses. Join the conversation at a screening Tuesday, February 25, from 5-7 p.m. at the MFC Forum.

CAAH/Chabraja Lecture with Dr. Robin Kelley

Join the Black Studies Department on Thursday, February 27, 2025, from 4-7 p.m. for a lecture featuring Dr. Robin Kelley, author of *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*. A reception will follow. [View PLANIT Purple](#) for details.

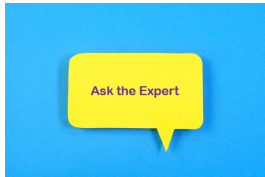
Annual Women's History Month Keynote Address: Alexis Pauline Gumbs

The annual Women's History Month Keynote Address is happening on March 4, 2025 from 4:30-

6:00 p.m., and is a great opportunity for staff to engage with a major campus tradition. Led by [the Women's Center](#), and aligned with [the Center's annual theme for 2024-25](#), writer Alexis Pauline Gumbs will address the topic "Earth is A Relationship: Feminist Ecologies of Survival." This event is free and open to all. ASL & CART will be provided. For more info and to register [visit this site](#).

Civility in the Workplace: Leveling Up Your Strategies & Resources Virtual Workshop

Creating a positive effective work environment for ourselves and for our teams can be challenging at times. Join the [Office of the Ombuds](#) and HR for a practical discussion about civility and bullying in the workplace on Friday, March 7, Noon-2 p.m. [Register](#).



Ask the Expert

Ask the Expert is a monthly Q&A column authored by experts from across the University and focused on common workplace challenges. This month we are pausing to collect your feedback. Please [complete this anonymous Qualtrics Survey](#) to let us know what topics you are most interested in for future columns.

[Visit the Manager's webpage](#) to read the archived columns.

Well-being

Find Support When You Need It: Through the Employee Assistance Program

The EAP SupportLinc provides [free and confidential short-term counseling](#) for University employees and their household members.

Counseling options include individual, couple, family, virtual support group therapy, and text support. [Learn more about our EAP](#).



Cooking with Anti-inflammatory Foods Webinar

Join Vicki Shanta Retelny, RDN on Friday, February 28, 12:30 p.m-1 p.m. for this culinary demonstration to learn about dietary practices that can help fend off inflammation in the brain and body. [Register for the webinar](#).

Stress Management in the Workplace Support Group Begins Next Month

We've partnered with the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\) SupportLinc](#) to offer a free short-term, four-week, Stress Management in the Workplace support group March 11-April 1. The group will be participant led and facilitated by a licensed counselor. [Learn more here, including how to register](#).

Mental Health First Aid Virtual Program

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a skills-based training on how to identify, destigmatize, and provide initial support for someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge. This two-day virtual training on March 26 & 27 requires 2.5 hours of asynchronous pre-work before participating in the virtual training. [Learn more about MHFA, including how to register](#).

Well onTarget Program Updates

The BCBSIL wellness portal, [Well onTarget](#), and Fitness Program updated their programs in the new year. Through the [Well onTarget Blue Points](#) program, insured members can now redeem points for digital gift cards, and the [Fitness Program](#) expanded its gym network and monthly membership fees.



Caregiving

Cariloop Webinar: Navigating a New Diagnosis and Cancer Journey

In recognition of National Cancer Prevention Month, Cariloop will host a Coffee Talk webinar to share more on how to help ourselves and our loved ones navigate a chronic illness or a cancer journey.

Understanding care plans, managing appointments, and finding the right resources can feel like an uphill battle. [Join Cariloop on February 25, Noon-1 p.m.](#)

Don't Wait! Start Planning Summer Camps Now

Did you know summer camps can open registration as early as winter with spots filling up quickly? Now's the time to start planning; use your [Cariloop benefit](#) to research options, find camps that match your child's interests and schedule, and help you prepare to enroll as soon as registration opens. Check out Northwestern's [summer camps](#) and more throughout the [Chicagoland area](#).

Manager's Tip

Addressing Burnout: Redesign with the SMART model

Managers play a crucial role in team morale and productivity, yet many struggle to address burnout effectively. The [SMART work design model](#) challenges the "fix-the-worker" approach and suggests reshaping work itself by focusing on five key dimensions: Stimulating Work, Mastery, Autonomy, Relational Work, and Tolerable Demands.



Learn more about this topic and interact with the Northwestern Manager community by joining [Manager's Corner](#).

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



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