

WorkLife Program Offers New Resources and Referrals Web site

By Pamela Lewis, *Institutional Advancement*

A greatly expanded resource and referral program is now available through the WorkLife Program for any faculty, staff, fellow, resident or student and/or family member where you can confidentially consult a work/life specialist about almost any work or personal need. The services can be accessed via the phone, Web site-assisted search function or through the “real time live connect instant messaging option,” said WorkLife Coordinator Sam Hester at the recent Leadership Forum.

“Now, you can call our office, 713-500-3327, and, if you need to speak with someone about getting child care, after a brief conversation, you will be connected directly to a child care resource person who will try to determine exactly what your wants and needs are. The resource person will send back to you via e-mail,



WORK/LIFE PROGRAM

fax or snail mail, three to five referrals on which they have checked availability,” Hester said.

To access on the Internet visit <http://www.utworklife.org> and click on Resources and Referral. This will take you to the confidential Web site where you can get information on a multitude of subjects.

One example of the help available is looking for college scholarships. “Say you have a daughter who wants to major in political science and also plays high-level soccer well enough to get a soccer scholar-

ship,” he said. “The resource person can plug in her skills and wishes and get back a variety of schools or foundations that have scholarships that match her skills and desires.”

In addition, the Web site has about 3,000 articles, videos, assessment tests and more covering emotional well-being, health and wellness, and workplace issues.

As an added benefit, if you go to the Savings Center and register, a host of national companies offer a wide variety of discounts that you and your family mem-

bers can use to save on the purchase or lease of new cars or trucks from over 5,200 dealers in 48 states. This exclusive dealership network provides the lowest Internet price on the purchase of most new vehicles in their inventory.

Also, Hester said, there are assisted search capabilities with a consultant for child care, elder care, education and adoption needs. Be sure to check out the “assisted search function” on the left hand side navigation under the Family & Caregiving Section for help from a live consultant. The consultant will send, within approximately 12 business hours, information that most closely matches your request.

The Web site is <http://www.advantageworklife.com/site/1529/login.htm>. The user name is UTEAP, the password, UTH. ★

New UT Clinic Offers ‘One-Stop’ Care for Tuberous Sclerosis Patients

By Melissa McDonald, *Institutional Advancement*

Experts at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, along with partners at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital, opened Oct. 2 the region’s first clinic dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC).

Hope Northrup, M.D., professor and director of medical genetics in the Department of Pediatrics at the UT Medical School, said the clinic will provide compre-

hensive care to patients while expanding opportunities for tuberous sclerosis research.

Tuberous sclerosis is a genetic disorder that causes benign tumors to grow in the brain and on other vital organs such as the kidneys, heart, eyes, lungs and skin. It commonly affects the central nervous system, and in some cases leads to serious medical problems. It is estimated that one in 6,000 babies will be diagnosed with tuberous sclerosis.

One special aspect of the clinic is that it serves both children and adults and is one of only 20 tuberous sclerosis clinics nationwide. Houston’s tuberous sclerosis clinic is specifically designed to meet the needs of patients and their family members.

Because this disorder can affect several areas of the body, eight specialists in the fields of genetics, neurology, neurosurgery, epilepsy, dermatology, nephrology, cardiology and

ophthalmology will be part of the clinic. Patients will be able to book appointments with any of those specialists.

The tuberous sclerosis clinic is in Suite 1010 of The University of Texas Professional Building, 6410 Fannin St. It is open, 9 a.m.-noon, the first Monday of each month. For more information on tuberous sclerosis or the clinic, call 713-500-7032. ★

UT Health Services Receives Study Recognition

UT Health Services-Houston, the employee health clinic administered and staffed by faculty from the School of Nursing, has been recognized for its active participation in PPRNet, a national primary care practice-based research and quality improvement organization. UT Health Services Executive Clinic Director Elizabeth



Elizabeth Fuselier, D.N.P.

Fuselier, D.N.P., explained that participating practices pool anonymous clinical data for research and quality improvement activities. A nationwide study, ATRIP, is designed to accelerate translation of evidence-based medical guidelines into practice. The guidelines are for prevention and treatment of heart disease and stroke, diabetes mellitus, cancer screening, immunizations, respiratory disease, mental health and substance abuse, nutrition and obesity, and safe drug prescribing in the elderly. The study is funded by the U.S. Public Health Service Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. ★

Starck Elected President of Regional Nursing Council

Patricia L. Starck, D.S.N., the dean of the School of Nursing at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, began a two-year term in October as the president of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing. The council works to increase diversity among nursing faculty and to



Patricia L. Starck, D.S.N.

end the nationwide nursing shortage.

Active in a number of nursing organizations, Starck has served as the chair of the Graduation Rate Taskforce of The WorkSource Greater Houston Partnership and as the co-chair of the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies.

SREB has 16 member states: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. ★

Total Rewards Program Offers Supervisors Guide to Responsive Recognition

continued from page 1

Professional Development

This is another area that is vital to employee recruitment and retention. Because the university has moved from being state supported to state assisted (which has limited the funds available for raises), it’s important to help those employees who have the desire and skill move to the next level on their career path.

“We want to help supervisors design more rewards and recognition programs,” Maher explains. “Most of us come here to accomplish something on a daily basis. We don’t want to come here, spend 40 hours a week accomplishing little or nothing and feel unfulfilled with what we’re doing.”

Why are professional development options and the ability of staff to develop their career path so important?

In 2010 — just three years from now — research and futurists are telling us *there will be 10 million job openings in this country that we won’t have workers to fill*. So we have to start looking at ways now to:

- develop our people,
- make sure we know where we are going and that our employees are positioned to take us there.
- We’ll need to look at:
- individual skills, talents, abilities;
- who wants to step up to the plate;

- who is happy doing his or her job and doesn’t want to change and grow (a strategy Maher warns doesn’t always serve the employee.)

So, Maher says, “I encourage us to offer each other environments in which we feel empowered, where we’re given an opportunity to succeed and are rewarded in a variety of ways, promoting a really positive environment as part of our total rewards.”

Flexibility & Merit

Besides giving people annual raises, which is not always possible in this economic environment, supervisors could offer them work schedule flexibility that fits their particular duties, possibly telecommuting options. “If you can’t pay someone more, if you let them flex or telecommute, it can help them save money that they wouldn’t be spending on day care or gas to get to work that day or days,” Maher says.

While merit is not an entitlement (something you get annually), it is possible to provide merit bonuses or raises to those who accomplished outcomes better than the norm or did them so well that you want to recognize their contribution. This throws in a lot of variability. It starts to differentiate and value contribution and is an important element of merit.

Strategic Planning & Processes

“In Compensation we are looking at the

institution’s pay structure — whether what we have in place fits where we are going,” Maher says. “Will it help catapult us into the future through our strategic plan?” Traditionally, some higher education institutions never looked at this.

“We need to make sure that people are getting paid a fair, market-competitive wage. But we also need to fit in some of the realities, the market considerations. As our culture changes, so should our strategy,” she says.

“Among the greatest of our challenges going forward is restricted budgets. That makes it difficult for deans and department heads to follow a mandate of the institution that every area must devote funds toward merit raises for people on your staff that you want to recognize, mentor and provide professional development offerings,” Maher says.

So, she says, the organization’s supervisors would demonstrate sound HR management by:

- focusing on the future and
- aligning performance management programs with achieving outcomes and performance that bring value today and prepare us for tomorrow.

Supervisors and staff should take an in-depth look at processes. “Maybe we’re doing things today in terms of rewarding performance that brought value five years ago, but now there’s new technology, more efficient

ways of doing things, partnering with a different organization. All of that changes the way we do our work and the way we reward it,” Maher explains.

As leaders, are we actively inviting staff along as we move forward? As staff, are we seeking out new opportunities to contribute to our institution’s future, and thus our own?

Rarely does it work to expect staff to be able to use new technology if leaders do not partner with them to help them learn the skills they need. And it is unrealistic to expect to gain significant ground without investing in the development of sound leadership skills.

We must, Maher says, take a look at school and unit-specific challenges and build rewards programs that are unique to those areas. Consider:

- What is your plan to reward staff?
- How are you communicating what your merit program is rewarding?
- What tools are you using?
- How do your employees know what they are working toward every year?

“I encourage us as an organization to challenge each other and regularly entertain options and strategies outside our own biases,” Maher says. “Innovative and responsive recognition of staff contribution and achievement can stretch our limited resources farther than you think. Let’s explore the possibilities together.” ★