

## Message from Michael



As the weather gets warmer and the academic year comes to a close, our attention begins to turn to the things of summer. Whether you're planning to travel a great distance or just enjoy the summertime offerings in the city and

environs, this edition of *HR Matters* has tips and leads that will help you do it less expensively and more safely.

Our lead article, "What a Deal! Part II," lists summer and travel-related deals and discounts that are available to you just because you're a Brooklyn College employee. This issue also offers advice from the Environmental Health and Safety Office about how to avoid heat-related maladies and tips on how to handle identity theft. And if you're looking to shed a few pounds this summer, check out the news about the Weight Watchers group on campus.

This issue also includes news about some of the events that Human Resource Services brought to you during spring 2006, including a free screening of the Oscar-nominated film *Good Night, and Good Luck.*, our Brown Bag Luncheon seminar series, and our fresh and improved new employee orientation program.

For our retirees, this edition brings, among other things, news about the twenty-eighth annual retirees' luncheon, scheduled for June 22.

On behalf of the entire staff of Human Resource Services, have an enjoyable and safe summer, whatever you do. As the old song goes, see you in September.

## What a Deal! Part II

The last issue of *HR Matters* introduced the many bargains available to you as a Brooklyn College employee. Now we have more deals geared toward your summer plans.

Start reaping the rewards of working at the College by logging onto the CUNY portal at [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu) and clicking on "Log In." If you already have an account, sign in and begin saving. If not, you can easily register by creating a username and password. Click the brown bag eMall icon to get started.

### Get Happy at the Hyatt

Sneak away to the **World Premier Hyatt Hotels and Resorts** and sleep easy. You can save a considerable amount of money by purchasing vouchers for a stay at a Hyatt Hotel and Resort of your choice. The most popular level, the Premier, is \$165 per night and is redeemable at almost two hundred locations worldwide. Other available levels are the Classic (\$99), the Choice (\$135), and the Elite (\$249). Alternative room accommodations and other amenities apply with the various levels. Additional information is available by clicking on the "Working Advantage" tab or calling customer care at (800) 555-9655.

### New Jersey Thrills

If you are headed to **Six Flags Great Adventure** in New Jersey, be sure to purchase your tickets on the CUNY portal and save more than half the cost of a regularly priced ticket! Take in all the park has to offer, including the world's fastest, tallest roller coaster, Kingda Ka; the world's largest drive-thru safari; and much more. All this for only \$29.50 (regular price is \$63.59)!

### See SeaWorld for Less

Planning a trip to Florida? Brooklyn College employees receive a 20 percent discount on tickets to **SeaWorld**. Feed the dolphins, visit with Shamu, and enjoy the theme park attractions for only \$53.98.

### Cinematic Savings

If you would rather be indoors in a climate-controlled theater, get out of the heat and take in a movie. You can save up to 43 percent by purchasing movie tickets in advance by clicking on "Working Advantage" on the CUNY portal.

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## *How to Secure Your Home Before Going on Vacation*

You have your airline ticket, your sunglasses, and your paperback novel, totally prepared for some well-deserved rest and relaxation. But before you head out the door, keep these tips in mind to make sure that your R&R isn't entirely ruined when you return to find your home burgled.

If you're going to be out of town for an extended time, say, for two or more weeks, try not to tell too many people. Alert only your family and close friends that your home will be deserted for a while. For those who live in a house, make sure all windows and doors (front door, back door, basement door, doggie door) are closed and locked. If any of those entrances have an outer and inner door, be sure to lock both. Double-sided locks are particularly useful when secure. Check to see that any alarms, lighting timers, and detectors you may have are activated.

Like homeowners, apartment dwellers should take the same preventative measures. Don't advertise your prolonged vacation too loudly, but informing the doorman in your building is a good idea. Make sure that all your windows and doors that can be accessed from fire escapes or neighboring terraces are locked. Double-sided locks can be installed on your apartment door *only* if you live on the first or second floor; it is illegal to have these locks above the second floor, as it creates a fire hazard.

In addition to securing your home, try to keep any evidence of your absence to a minimum. Ask a family

member or trusted neighbor to collect your newspaper and mail deliveries (or call your carrier and the Post Office to temporarily suspend them). Leave your car parked in your driveway. If you don't have a driveway and must keep your car on the street, alternate-side-of-the-street parking may affect you while you're gone. Drop off your car keys with someone you trust and ask him to move your vehicle on the specified days so that the tickets don't pile up.

Taking these simple precautions can help prevent a thoroughly unpleasant shock when you return home. You want your first phone conversation to be a pleasant chat with your sister about the fantastic time you've just had, not a distressed call to your local precinct.

## *Workers' Compensation and You*

Full- and part-time Brooklyn College employees who receive a paycheck issued by New York State are covered for workers' compensation benefits if they sustain a work-related injury during the course of their scheduled work day.

If you sustain an on-the-job injury, it's important to report it to your supervisor immediately and follow the steps below within five days of the incident:

- Complete the **New York State Department of Labor Form SH-900.2**, "Injury & Illness Incident Report."
- Have your supervisor complete **Form WCD 201**, "Supervisor's Report of Injury."
- If there was a witness, have him or her complete **Form ECD 26**, "Witness Statement."

The above forms, which may be obtained in the Payroll Office, and all medical documentation must be forwarded to Gwendolyn Harewood, 1156 Boylan Hall, no later than five days following the date of injury.

Note: Persons on the payroll of the Research Foundation, Auxiliary Accounting, and various independent grants are covered for workers' compensation benefits through the payroll employer of record, not CUNY.

As we strive to keep the number of reported cases to a minimum, we ask that you report any hazardous conditions to either the Security or Facilities office right away. Your safety is very important to us!

## *Brown Bag Luncheon Seminar: Identity Theft*

### **Did you attend the Brown Bag Luncheon in March?**

Carolyn Paytner, senior attorney with the Federal Trade Commission, spoke to the crowd about ways to fight back against identity theft.

Following are some of the highlights of what to do if you become a victim of identity theft.

- Review your credit reports and place a fraud alert on them. Fraud alerts can help prevent an identity thief from opening any more accounts in your name. Contact the toll-free fraud number of any of these major consumer reporting companies to place a fraud alert: Equifax (800-525-6285), Experian (888-397-3742), or TransUnion (800-680-7289). You only have to contact one of the companies; that company is required to contact the other two, which will place alerts on their versions of your report, too.
- Close the accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently. Speak with someone in the security or fraud department of each company. Follow up in writing and include copies (not originals) of supporting documents. It's important to notify credit card companies and banks in writing. Send your letters by certified mail, return receipt requested by certified mail, or return receipt requested so that you can document what the company received and when. Keep a file of correspondence and enclosures.
- File a report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place. Then get a copy of the police report or, at the very least, the number of the report. This will help you with creditors who need proof of the crime. If the police are reluctant to take your report, ask to file a "Miscellaneous Incidents" report, or try another jurisdiction, like your state police. You also can check with your state's Office of the Attorney General to find out if state law requires the police to take reports for identity theft. Check the Blue Pages of your telephone directory for the phone number or check [www.naag.org](http://www.naag.org) for a list of attorney generals.



- File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. By doing so you will provide important information that can help law enforcement officials across the nation track down and stop identity thieves. The FTC can refer victims' complaints to other government agencies and companies for further action as well as investigate companies for violations of laws the agency enforces.

Additional information and booklets are available in the Office of Human Resource Services. Call Anne Balsomo at (718) 951-5131 for a copy.

## *Retirees Page*

### **Retirees Luncheon**

The twenty-eighth annual **Brooklyn College Retirees Luncheon** will be held on Thursday, June 22, in the State Lounge, Student Center. Come and listen to our special guest speaker Murray Koppelman Professor Jerry Kruse (emeritus) deliver a talk on "Brooklyn College: Bridge to the World."

If you have not received an invitation in the mail, please contact Anne Balsamo at (718) 951-5131.

### **Enjoying Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days**

Summer is the time of year you want to spend more time getting out and about. Below are travel and safety tips for enjoying the next three months.

Reduced-fare MetroCards are available to anyone who is at least sixty-five years old. You can purchase a card with proper identification at the Walk-In Center at 3 Stone Street, in lower Manhattan, or call Easy Pay MetroCard Account Information at (877) 323-RIDE (7433). Subway and bus maps are available at station booths and online at [www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/travel.html](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/travel.html).

While you're exploring the city with your brand new MetroCard and trusty map, remember that heat, sun, and mosquitoes can create a dangerous situation for senior citizens. When the temperature reaches ninety degrees, precautions need to be taken, especially among the 6.5 million baby boomers who begin to turn sixty next year. As always, prevention is your best defense. See the "Environmental Health and Safety" column on page 6 for some helpful tips.



### **Become a Part-Time Grandparent**

Do you want to spend some free time doing something worthwhile? Become a foster grandparent! Join 250 seniors who are already sharing their time and their love with New York City kids.

The volunteer Foster Grandparent Program offers seniors age sixty and older a paid, nontaxable stipend to serve as mentors, tutors, and caregivers for children and youth with special needs.

For more information, call the Department for the Aging at (212) 442-3117 or visit the Web site, [www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/volunteering/foster.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/volunteering/foster.shtml).

### *Weight Watchers at Brooklyn College*

Weight Watchers meetings, according to their Web site, offer coaching and real-life insights that help you lose weight and keep it off, and we here at Brooklyn College are living proof! With the help of instructor Lynda Browning and receptionist Anna Warren, twenty-four members of the College community have lost a total of 176 pounds in just six weeks. The ten-week program costs \$120, and any member will tell you it's worth every penny. A new ten-week session is tentatively scheduled to begin in June. Anyone interested in joining should contact Lillian Pomponio at [Lillian@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:Lillian@brooklyn.cuny.edu) as soon as possible.

## Retirees Go Back to School and Love It

Here I was in my mid-fifties, retired from a job with a comfortable pension. I do not need or want to get back into the rat race, but I also felt that "it was better to wear out than to rust out." How to spend the final third of my life?

It was while taking a clay sculpture class at a local "Y" that I heard about the program that was the answer for me: an organization at Brooklyn College called the Institute for Retirees in Pursuit of Education (IRPE).

The fall semester had already ended, but the spring semester was coming up when I got to check out the catalog of courses. It seemed like there were almost too many to choose from—there were about eighty-five courses each semester. I soon learned that there are classes, concerts, trips, and art festivals directly within the IRPE program and also access to College facilities and activities, such as the College library and talks by distinguished guest lecturers, all on one of the most beautiful campuses in the country.

What would an ideal school be like? IRPE's answer is: We are a community of adults with active minds and a lifetime of interests and accomplishments. We keep our minds active and share our interests and passions. The faculty of over sixty teachers (some teach several courses) are all volunteers, doing what they do for the joy of it.

There are no exams, no prerequisites, and no grades. There is no charge for tuition or registration: a small general membership fee covers admission to all classes. Classes are somewhat informal. Members can sample a class and, if it does not meet their interests, try another class in that period the following week.

IRPE was founded in 1977 with about 150 members. It is now about 1,000 strong, with members from all walks of

life and ages from mid-fifties to mid-nineties. It is one of the largest organizations of its kind in the country and differs from many in that it provides a self-contained program, rather than opening college classes to seniors on a space-available basis, or hiring outside teachers. The members share, providing the students, faculty, and staff with an example of lifelong learning.

*This article, by Gene Reiser, appeared in the February 2006 issue of Senior News. For more information about IRPE, stop by 3160 Boylan Hall or call (718) 951-5647.*

## Senior Strollers

Walking is an easy and fun way to stay fit, especially when you walk with friends. The Big Apple Senior Strollers walking clubs offer a great opportunity to enjoy both health benefits and good company.

These walking clubs are active in a variety of facilities that provide services to seniors throughout New York City. Each club walks to achieve a target number of steps, anywhere from 25,000 to 100,000. You must be a member of a senior center before you can join its club. Please check with your doctor before joining a club.

To find a Walking Club near you, log on to the New York City Department for the Aging Web site at [www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/home/home.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/home/home.shtml) or call 311.

The Department for the Aging is located at:

2 Lafayette Street  
New York, NY 10007

Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

## *E-Appointments Update*

We continue to move forward with our implementation of an e-appointment process that will reduce paperwork, increase productivity, and pay employees in a timely fashion.

Appointments for teaching and nonteaching adjuncts are now being processed electronically, and the pilot for college assistant appointments is under way. During the spring 2006 semester, there was a 250 percent increase in the number of adjuncts paid on the first pay date established by the University!

We have initiated a number of process improvements that will be implemented in fall 2006 and expect that appointments for all categories of staff will be incorporated into the process within the near future.



## *Focus on:* *Environmental Health and Safety*

### **Protecting Yourself from Heat Stress**

Performing prolonged strenuous physical activity when the temperature hits ninety degrees, especially when the humidity is high, can lead to heat stress, heat exhaustion, and the more severe heat stroke. Heat exhaustion typically occurs when you work or exercise vigorously in a hot, humid environment and body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Blood flow to the skin increases, causing blood flow to vital organs to decrease. This can result in a form of mild shock. Heat cramps, muscle pains, and spasms are early signals that the body is having trouble with the heat. If action is not taken promptly, heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke. Start to recover by retreating to a cooler place and rest in a comfortable position. Replenish fluids by taking a half glass of cool water every fifteen minutes.

The National Weather Service has developed a Heat Index (HI) to alert the public during periods of excessive heat and humidity or a heat wave. The index is a number in degrees Fahrenheit that tells how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature. Exposure to full sun increases the index by an additional fifteen degrees.

Keep the HI in mind before you take on any strenuous activity. You can further protect yourself from heat stress if you follow some simple tips:

- Wear light, loose-fitting, breathable (such as cotton) clothing.
- Drink plenty of cool water (one small cup every fifteen to twenty minutes).
- Take breaks in a cool or shaded area to allow the body to cool down.
- Avoid eating large meals before working in a hot environment.
- Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages; they make the body lose water and can increase the risk of heat stress.
- Protect exposed skin from the sun. A sun protection factor (SPF) of at least fifteen blocks 93 percent of ultraviolet rays.
- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses that block UV.

## *Welcoming New Employees to Brooklyn College*

On February 7, the Office of Human Resource Services showcased a new and improved New Employee Orientation. These formal orientation meetings start in Human Resource Services with light refreshments and are followed by a tour of the campus plus a ten- to twenty-minute tour of the Brooklyn College Library. The remainder of the orientations is presented in the Woody Tanger Auditorium in the library.

The goal of the orientation is to welcome new employees and provide basic information regarding payroll, benefits, time and leave, human resource services, and other topics. More importantly, the purpose is to make each new employee feel like a part of the Brooklyn College community from the beginning of his or her career here. We try to make all new employees aware of and committed to the College's mission, which is, in part, "to educate a student body representative of its location, deserving of success as well as access. Aware that the quality of life of our students is crucial to their success, the College is dedicated to fostering a hospitable campus environment."

We try to accomplish this goal by inviting guest speakers to each orientation. We were proud and delighted to start the February 7 orientation with guest speaker Professor Timothy Gura, chairperson of Speech Communication Arts and Sciences Department and chairman of Counsel on Administrative Policy Liaison. Future guest speakers will include Assistant Provost Jerrold Mirotznik, Assistant Security Director Ursula Chase, and students who will share insights with new employees on how we can achieve the College goals as a team. The New Employee Orientation is a work in progress, and exciting new concepts will be included at a later time.

## *Payroll News*

### **Adjunct Pay Dates—Summer 2006**

June 22 • July 6 and 20 • August 3 and 17

## *Classified Staff News*

### **Upcoming Civil Service Exams**

Title	Filing Period
Project Manager	June 5–31
Information Systems Aide	July 3–31
Information Systems Assistant	July 3–31
Information Systems Associate	July 3–31
Information Systems Specialist	July 3–31

### **Recent Retirees**

**Custodial Assistants** Juan Mercado and Bennie Ross

### **Welcome to New Employees**

**Custodial Assistant** Albert Morton



## *Murrow, McCarthyism, and a Movie*

The Brooklyn College community enjoyed an afternoon at the movies on March 28. The Oscar-nominated film *Good Night, and Good Luck*, which features the celluloid version of two Brooklyn College alumni, brought in a record-breaking crowd. Joe Wershba, '41, and Shirley Lubowitz Wershba, '43 (above), are broadcasting pioneers who played important roles during the early days of television news. Portrayed in the film by Robert Downey Jr. and Patricia Clarkson, the Wershbas were intimately involved in the behind-the-scenes drama at CBS News depicted in the film. The screening concluded with a discussion with the Wershbas led by Professor Anthony Mancini, director of the journalism program, and Professor of Film Foster L. Hirsch.



## *Summer School Made Fun*

Searching for something to do with the kids this summer? Look no further than the Summer Youth Programs at Brooklyn College, available for children in grades 1 through 12. Registration is now open for the 2006 season. Brooklyn College employees are eligible for a \$100 discount. For further information, visit the Web site, <http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/adulted/>.

BROOKLYN



COLLEGE

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