

From Inside The Lions Den, HR Insights



Dear Campus Community,

As the crisp air settles over campus and we enter the season of gratitude, November brings fresh opportunities to connect, learn, and prepare for the close of the calendar year. This month's HR newsletter is your guide to upcoming events, professional development, and seasonal updates designed to support and celebrate our TCNJ community.

Let's embrace the season of thanks together.

-The HR Team

Inside this edition:

Employee Updates: New Lions!

Seasonal Reminders

Professional Development

NJDPB Live Webinars for November

Campus Corner: Staff Senate Updates

Fall Quiz Trivia

HR's Cozy November Recipe



A Season of Thanks

A message from Heather Boccanfuso, Interim AVP for Human Resources

As we enter November, I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to each of you. This time of year reminds us to pause, reflect, and give thanks - and here at TCNJ, there is so much to be thankful for.

Across every division and department, our employees continue to demonstrate remarkable dedication, teamwork, and care for one another. Whether supporting our students, maintaining our beautiful campus, leading academic programs, or keeping our daily operations running smoothly, your collective efforts make a tremendous difference. You are the heart of this institution, and your work helps TCNJ thrive!

I know the fall months can be demanding, and I deeply appreciate the time, energy, and commitment you give to this community. It's your collaboration and shared purpose that make TCNJ such a special place to learn and work. As the semester winds down and the holiday season approaches, I hope you'll take time to rest, recharge, and reflect on the impact you've made this year.

Thank you for all that you do and for the spirit of kindness, excellence, and care that you bring to our campus every day.

Warm regards,

Heather Boccanfuso

Heather



Employee Updates

Welcome New Lions!

Ashwath Trasi, Assistant General Counsel

Rebecca Joseph, Security Officer, Campus Police

Kayla Woods, Program Assistant for the School of Business

Jaimie Orland, STEP Certification Coordinator

Lauren Nicolosi, Assistant Director of Career Center

Joseph Pietromonico, Associate Director of Career Services

George Paulick, Senior Human Resources Business Partner

Abigail Gould, Program Assistant for Humanities & Social Sciences

Lenie Torres, Associate Controller for Finance & Business Services

Doneita Wilson, Director of Conference & Event Services/Executive Events

Aaliyah Pope, Technical Specialist for School of the Arts and Communication

Tristan Schmittinger, Assistant Director of Financial Aid/Scholarship Coordinator



AFT Evaluation Timeline - Reminder to Finalize

Please review the timeline below to finalize the AFT Evaluations for 2025-2026.

November 7th | Employees and managers meet to discuss the evaluation.

November 14th | Final evaluation points are submitted via Oracle Cloud

November 24th | Finalization of major goals for the 2025-2026 evaluation cycle.

Ongoing discussions between managers and employees should continue to take place to focus on coaching, development, and achievement, preferably weekly.



Seasonal Reminders

HR Fall Networking Event

November 14th | Office of Human Resources

Brower Student Center 225 | 11 AM - 2 PM

[Fall Event Flyer](#) - please share!

Join the Office of Human Resources for a Fall Event where employees can meet individuals from our team, learn about our services, network with other colleagues, and participate in some seasonal fun and refreshments!

Donations are being accepted to help support the TCNJ Food Pantry. View their [donations flyer](#) and receive a raffle ticket for each item donated at the event.

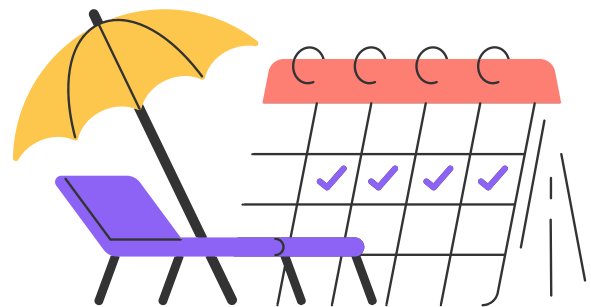
Energy Days and the 2025 Thanksgiving Break Schedule

Thanksgiving Break will be observed November 26rd through the 28th. All TCNJ Offices will be closed until Monday, December 1st.

Carry Over - Don't Forget To Use Your Vacation Time!

As a reminder, employees who earn vacation time are allowed to carry over up to one year of accrued time into the following calendar year. Any vacation time an employee has that is greater than a full year will be lost if not used.

With Thanksgiving and Winter Break quickly approaching, you should work closely with your supervisor to ensure that you can take your earned vacation time accordingly.



You can view your time in Oracle under the Me tab.

Seasonal Wellness: Gratitude & Mental Health

Practicing gratitude is crucial for mental health as it helps to shift focus from negative thoughts to positive aspects of life, fostering a sense of well-being and improving overall emotional resilience.

Take a few minutes each day to recognize something - or someone - you're thankful for. Research shows that expressing gratitude can reduce stress, boost optimism, and strengthen relationships. Consider writing a short note of appreciation to a colleague, or simply take a pause to reflect on one positive moment from your day.

Let's finish the semester strong - with gratitude, balance, and kindness toward ourselves and one another.



Professional Development

Discover upcoming opportunities to advance your skills, expand your network, and strengthen workplace relationships. Mark your calendars, and save the date(s) for these professional development offerings!

LinkedIn Learning Course & Discourse

Are you taking advantage of your LinkedIn Learning Access? Join Lea in some TCNJ Course & Discourse, where you can partake in a self-paced learning module, and bring your impressions, comments, or questions to a shared working space. Connect with our community, and reflect on some themed subject matter to apply it to real-life scenarios. Lunch will be provided!

Theme | Date & RSVP

[Protect Your Boundaries](#) | Thursday, December 11th (12-1 PM) RSVP by 11/28/25

[Generational Differences](#) | Tuesday, January 13th (12-1 PM) RSVP by 1/8/26

Resume Refresh Recap

Thank you to all who participated in our Resume Refresh event! We hope you left with tools to showcase your strengths and continue collecting valuable experiences for your resume. Your investment in professional development makes a difference.



Effective Performance Management and Feedback Workshops

November 18th | Eveline Brownstein, Leadership Coaching & Training Expert

Human Resources will be hosting two in-person workshops for the campus community with facilitator Eveline Brownstein. Employees will actively participate in practical exercises to enhance performance conversations and gain insights that can be added to their professional toolkit. Lunch will be provided between sessions for all registered attendees. Location details will be shared upon confirming your registration.

[Click Here to Register](#) - due November 7th

SESSION IS FULL - 10 AM - 12 PM |

Managers/Supervisors Workshop: This course will equip supervisors with tools to ensure performance evaluations are meaningful and feedback is effective.

5 SEATS LEFT - 1 PM - 3 PM | Open to All

Employees & Supervisors: The course will cover how to foster a culture of shared accountability for goal achievement, and effectively manage the prioritization of tasks and work.

Not able to attend this time around? Let us know by emailing hr@tcnj.edu - we will be sure to notify you of other similar workshops!



New Jersey Division of Pension and Benefits Webinars

NJDPB Live Webinars for November

The New Jersey Division of Pension and Benefits is once again providing FREE webinars to employees for a variety of retirement and retirement readiness topics throughout the month of November. Below is a list of currently scheduled webinars that are being hosted by NJDPB:

DATE	TIME	TOPIC	REGISTRATION LINK
11/5/2025	1:00 PM	Social Security Benefits for ALL Employees	Click Here to Register
11/7/2025	10:00 AM	Deferred Compensation (NJSEDCP)	Click Here to Register
11/13/2025	1:00 PM	Retirement Planning for PFRS Members	Click Here to Register
11/17/2025	10:00 AM	Social Security Benefits for ALL Employees	Click Here to Register
11/18/2025	9:00 AM	Retirement Planning for PERS and TPAF	Click Here to Register
11/18/2025	1:00 PM	Deferred Compensation (NJSEDCP)	Click Here to Register
11/20/2025	1:00 PM	Understanding your PERS & TPAF Retirement	Click Here to Register
11/21/2025	10:00 AM	Overview for Employees in DCRP	Click Here to Register
11/21/2025	1:00 PM	Retirement Readiness for State Employees	Click Here to Register

Please Note – The link to register will take you to ALL available sessions for the topic that you chose.



Phone: (609) 292-7524

Email: pensions.nj@treas.nj.gov

Visit the NJDPB's website: www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions



Campus News Corner

The following November events are courtesy of Colleen Schmidt, Staff Senate President.

AI Learning Lab hosted by IT

IT is sponsoring another AI Open Lab! If you are interested in learning about the AI options at TCNJ, please join us on Wednesday, November 12th from 11am to 12pm in Library 2 computer lab. This session will cover the same material as the two previous sessions.



AI Training: Methodologies & Applications

Bryce Liskovec will be hosting a training session on AI - Join us for practical ways to use Artificial Intelligence in the workplace to help unlock your AI productivity. They will cover real life ways to help resolve common problems with email, data overload and AI workflow methodologies to ensure quality and oversight.

AI Practical applications session on November 13th from 1pm to 2pm in Bliss 28. Sign up using this [Google form](#).

New Staff Connections

Monday, November 17th at 3:30 PM in room SSB 331

These are drop-in connection gatherings, where TCNJ staff connect with new staff hires to welcome them to the campus, share some tips and tricks, and network. Contact them via email at staffmentoring@tcnj.edu.

Social Action Summit

Wednesday, November 19th from 9AM - 3:30PM

This year, our theme is "Rooted in Community Care" and will feature sessions about mutual aid efforts, grassroots cooperative initiatives, and human-centered services.

The sessions will feature a broad range of topics, such as harm reduction around substance abuse, inclusive approaches to religious practices, art as a community healing tool, and developing caring supervisory relationships within a workplace. They will also be introducing some dynamic, interactive components into this year's conference!



All participants will be provided lunch through Campus Dining Services. This event is free and open to any member of the TCNJ community (employees and students). We encourage everyone to attend during any portion of the day that they are available.

You can [RSVP](#) through Friday, November 14th.



Festive Fall Quiz

How well do you know the season? Take a moment to test your fall knowledge! (Answers at the bottom!)

1. What official date marks the start of fall each year in the Northern Hemisphere?
 - A. September 1
 - B. September 21
 - C. September 22 or 23
 - D. October 1
2. What color were pumpkins originally before they became orange?
 - A. Green
 - B. White
 - C. Yellow
 - D. Blue
3. Which country did Halloween originate?
 - A. England
 - B. United States of America
 - C. Ireland
 - D. Germany
4. Which bird is often associated with Thanksgiving?
 - A. Chicken
 - B. Eagle
 - C. Turkey
 - D. Pigeon
5. Bonus Question Campus Edition: What year did TCNJ officially adopt Roscoe the Lion as its mascot?
 - A. 1998
 - B. 2004
 - C. 2012
 - D. 1990

Answers: 1. C 2. A 3. C 4. A. 5. Bonus: B (2004)



HR's Cozy Recipe Corner

Apple Pie Cookies

These taste like autumn at its best — sweet, spiced, and shareable.

Ingredients:

1 sheet pie dough

½ cup apple pie filling (chopped finely)

¼ cup brown sugar

1 tsp cinnamon

1 egg (for brushing)



“Gratitude in Every Bite”



Directions:

Cut the dough into small circles, spoon the apple filling into the center, top with another circle, crimp the edges, brush with egg, and bake at 375°F for 18 minutes.

Cool for 5 - 10 minutes and enjoy!

HR Reflection: Gratitude is homemade - it's built one small, thoughtful action at a time.

You can view other recipes from [HR's 2025 newsletter editions](#) on the HR webpage under the About tab.

Have a recipe you'd like to share? Contact hr@tcnj.edu to submit your recipe to be featured in the next edition. Be sure to include a picture!



Thank you for reading our newsletter!

Human Resources is here to help. Please contact or visit us if you need assistance with anything.



HR Service Portal



Administrative Services Building (ASB) Room 101 (8:30 AM - 4:30 PM) Monday - Friday!



hr@tcnj.edu



(609) 771-2282

Share HR's NEW brochure

'Why Work At TCNJ?'

