

NEWSLETTER

(TCNJ) Office Of Human Resources – December 2024



Festive feelings are upon us...

We hope you enjoy this year's last edition of the Human Resources Newsletter. Keep reading to learn about this special time of year as a TCNJ employee. We encourage you to use this time to reflect on how you can be kind to those around you. Turn to page 13 to learn how to share and spread kindness.

Happy Holidays and a very Happy New Year from all of us here in HR!



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BE KIND FOR MICHAEL



End of Year Remarks

TCNJ Faculty & Staff Members,

As the year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey Human Resources and the Campus Community had together over the past year. The year has been filled with challenges, growth, and remarkable achievements, and none of it would have been possible without the support of the Campus Community.

One of the highlights of this year has been witnessing the way all faculty and staff have come together to support each other and deliver outstanding results. Whether it was navigating unexpected changes, launching new initiatives, or simply ensuring that day-to-day operations ran smoothly, your efforts have made a significant impact. I and the entire Human Resources Department are continually inspired by the talent and passion the campus community brings to the workplace every day.

As we look ahead to the new year, there are exciting opportunities on the horizon in the Office of Human Resources. We remain committed to fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive. Your feedback has been instrumental in shaping our HR initiatives, and we will continue to prioritize programs that promote your well-being, professional development, and sense of belonging.

I encourage you to take some time during this holiday season to rest, recharge, and celebrate your accomplishments. Each of you has contributed to our success in meaningful ways, and for that, we are deeply grateful. Let us carry this momentum forward into the new year with optimism, determination, kindness, and a shared vision for what we can achieve together.

Thank you for all that you do. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful and peaceful holiday season.

Joe O'Brien



Associate Vice President, Finance
The College of New Jersey

Human Resources Employee Updates

TCNJ's HR department has grown!

Keep reading to stay in the loop about our exciting new additions and changes.

Human Resources is pleased to announce **Brianne Apostolico** has joined our team as a Human Resources Office Assistant.



Brianne graduated from TCNJ only this past May with a B.A. in Psychology and minors in Sociology and Marketing, and she is thrilled to be starting her career at a place she already knows and loves. During her time as a student, she was a member of the Honors and Scholars Program, worked as both a Teacher's Assistant and a Desk Assistant in the Residential Mailroom, and graduated magna cum laude. She also held a Human Resources Internship at USA Sport Group in Whitehouse, NJ, which piqued her interest in the field of HR. Brianne is excited to join this passionate team and work for her alma mater.

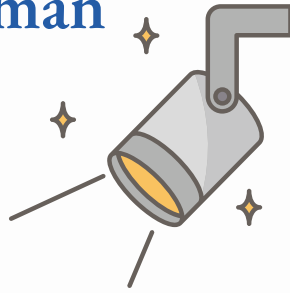
Human Resources wants to congratulate **Tracey Sullivan** for her new role as Talent Acquisition Manager.



Tracey Sullivan has been part of the TCNJ team for 10 years. She began as a temporary employee and has evolved to her latest role in October. The Talent Acquisition Manager helps make sure TCNJ continues to attract and hire the highest-level individuals who support our college community. Her main focus is the management of the hiring process and engaging/onboarding staff, faculty, and grant projects. She enjoys working with people interested in joining the college and loves the rewarding opportunity to notify individuals when they are awarded positions at the college. She says the best part of her job is when she extends an offer and gets to hear the excitement of the candidate learning they will join the TCNJ family. She also enjoys the collaboration and friendships she has developed with her colleagues to help our students and staff.

Employee Spotlight - December 2024

Wesley Zimmerman



Benefits Analyst - Leaves Specialist
Time with TCNJ: 1.5 Years

Wesley works in the Benefits unit of Human Resources as a Benefits Analyst for Leaves. Wesley is an employee's first point of contact when it comes to taking a leave of absence, questions about the accrual and use of benefit time, and how Energy Days are accrued and used. As part of the Benefits unit, Wesley is also able to assist with a variety of Benefit-related issues and works with the team to make sure all employees are addressed in a timely and proper manner.



Fun Facts about 'Wes':

- Wesley is a 2001 Graduate of Pennsylvania State University.
- Wesley and his spouse, Jodi have been married for 13 years.
- They have an 11 year old daughter named Maxine.
- Wesley has 18 years of leave of absence and other HR experience.
- He is the Travel Soccer Commissioner for Valley AA Soccer Club of Bensalem.
- He is also the Coach of U12 Girls Travel Team in Venom.
- His hobbies include: spending time with family and friends, being a fan of all Philly sports teams, Wednesday night bowling league, flea markets, fishing and anything outdoors.
- Wesley is a proud pet parent of an 8 month old English Cream Golden Retriever.





2025 Benefit Plan Updates

Below you will find important information about your medical benefits and financial saving plans all employees should be aware of for the 2025 calendar year.

If you have any questions regarding these 2025 updates, please submit a ticket in the [HR Portal](#).

2025 Medical Plans

As in the past, both Horizon and Aetna will be the medical plan providers for 2025. Each company has a number of different health plans that they offer to employees of TCNJ. During Open Enrollment this past October, you had the opportunity to make any changes that you wanted. Please note that these changes take effect on January 1, 2025.

2025 Dental Plans

The State has made changes to the dental plans offered to State/TCNJ employees. Starting January 1, 2025, there will be two Dental Expense Plans (DEP), one administered by Aetna, and the other from Horizon. During Open Enrollment last October, you had the opportunity to move to (or stay in) one of these plans, as well as the only remaining Dental Provider Organization (DPO). Aetna DPO. Employees who were enrolled in one of the DPO plans that the State is eliminating as of December 31, 2024, and who did not make any change in October, will be automatically moved to the Aetna DPO.

2025 Prescription Drug Plan

The only prescription drug plan remains with Optum Rx.

2025 Flexible Spending Accounts

For those employees who elected to participate in either the Medical Flexible Spending Account and/or the Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account last October, your new deduction amount will be shown on your January 3, 2025 paycheck. If you see any errors with this, please send us a ticket by [clicking here](#).

IRS Contribution Limits – 403b and 457

The Internal Revenue Service has increased the amount that an individual can save for retirement through the 403b and 457 plans. The new limits (effective 2025) are:

- Employees under age 50 - \$23,500. The maximum for both plans is \$47,000.
- Employees age 50 and over - \$31,000. The maximum for both plans is \$62,000.

AGE 26 - PROCESS FOR DEPENDENTS

As is the rule with all dependents covered under the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), employees may cover dependent children through age 26. Coverage for these children will terminate on December 31st of the year that the child turns 26. All affected employees have already been notified and BenefitSolver will provide them options for coverage if the children do not have access to their own health insurance.

Winter Break and Energy Leave - 2024

President Bernstein has extended Winter Break from December 23, 2024, to January 1, 2025. Our first day back will be January 2, 2025.

TIME FLIES. DON'T FORGET TO INPUT ENERGY TIME!

Full-time staff employees who worked these Energy Days: Indigenous Peoples Day (October 14th), Election Day (November 5th), and Veterans Day (November 11th); should enter their earned Energy Days into the Oracle Cloud.

Just as you would enter Vacation or Sick Time in Oracle Cloud, you would choose 'Energy Time' to have the following days for winter break off:

- Tuesday, December 24th
- Thursday, December 26th
- Friday, December 27th
- Monday, December 30th
- Tuesday, December 31st

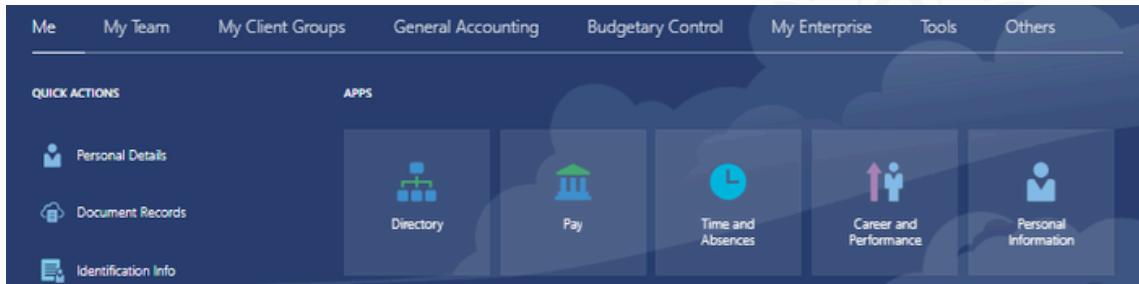
Energy days should be entered into the system BEFORE the day(s) occur. If you fail to do so in a timely fashion, your record will not be properly reflected.

Those who worked the Energy Days earlier in the year, but failed to properly record your time off for the Summer Fridays, please send a ticket to HR by [clicking here](#), selecting Benefits Support, and in the subject of the ticket write ENERGY DAY(S) NOT ENTERED, so that we can best address your concern.

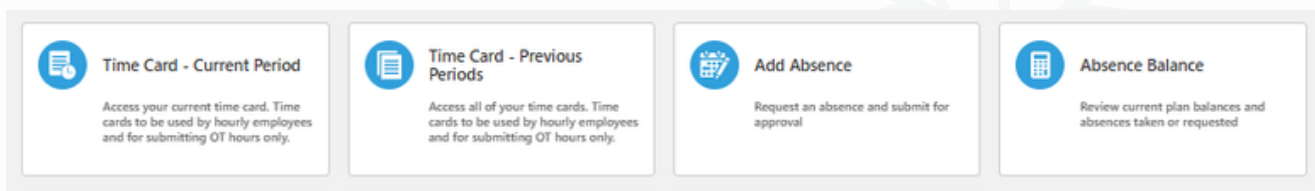
Continue reading for step-by-step instructions for entering your Energy Leave days!

Entering Your Energy Leave in Oracle

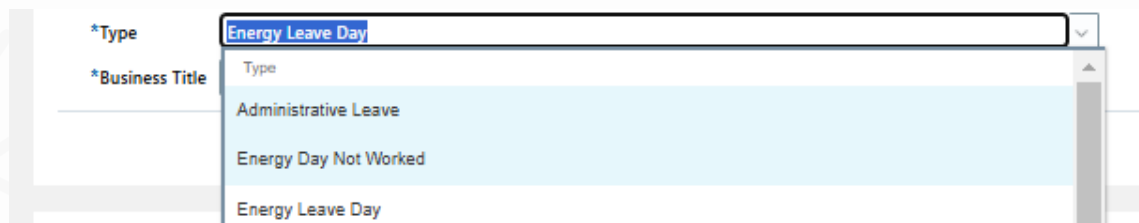
1. Log into Oracle Cloud and locate the Time and Absences tile under the Me tab:



2. Select the Add Absence tile:



3. Select a type, Energy Day Not Worked, or Energy Leave Day:



If you do not work an Energy Holiday, you must select Energy Day Not Worked. 7-hour employees will have 10.5 hours deducted from their leave accrual bank and 8-hour employees have 12 hours deducted automatically.

TIP: Employees should schedule their Energy Hours. For example, the Energy Hours earned by working the first three Energy Holidays of the year are to be used for the 4 Summer Day dates, and the 3 Energy Holidays at the end of the year are used for the 5 Winter Break Days. Employees will enter Energy Day Not Worked as the type in Oracle Cloud, and enter the hours used for those dates (this information can be found on the TCNJ website/Human Resources/Employee Resources/Holiday and Energy Leave).

If employees work the full Energy Holiday, no action is needed in Oracle Cloud. If partial hours are worked, the employee will need to open a ticket in TeamDynamix so that an HR Representative can make the adjustment and correct the employee's Energy Hours.

COMING 2025...

Health and Wellness

We are excited to provide additional employee wellness opportunities in the new year! Check out some of the things we are working on for 2025:

- Financial Wellness Seminars – We are inviting some of our Alternate Benefit Program vendors on campus to provide ALL employees with education opportunities that focus on their finances.
- Mental Wellness Month – May 2025 – Join us for some programming and seminars centered around creating a healthier and more supportive workplace.
- Drink More Water Challenge – Get ready to keep yourself hydrated and possibly win a prize during July in celebration of Hydration Month.

For more information, please reach out to our benefits unit via the HR Portal.



Ten Month Employee Payroll Schedule Update 2025

Please note that 10-month employees will receive 22 paychecks rather than 21 paychecks recognized in 2025. Certain deductions, such as FSA and your 403b and/or 457 accounts will be funded over a longer period of time.

The 2025 payroll calendar can be found here:
[Downloadable 2025 Payroll Calendar](#)

Thank you,
Payroll and Benefit Teams

Holiday and Energy Leave 2025

Be on the look out for the updated holiday and energy leave calendar in the next few months!

And more!...

Be on the look for updates to:

- The HR Website
- The process for Hiring Regular and Temporary Staff
- Team Dynamix Knowledgebase Articles
- Hiring Manager Resources
- New Hire Orientation Procedures

These 2025 updates will be covered thoroughly in the January edition of the HR newsletter - stay tuned!

The Employee Assistance (EAP)



We hope you take advantage of the benefits available to employees and their adult household members provided by Penn Medicine Princeton [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#). The EAP is free to you as a benefit of working at The College of New Jersey. Common EAP requests include:

- Struggles with - or concern for a family member struggling with addiction
- Feelings of Depression or anxiety
- Marital tension
- Managing life during a pandemic

As an employee, you are entitled to up to three (3) counseling sessions. Also available at no cost is a 30-minute legal and/or financial consultation with an attorney or financial professional, respectively. Employees may obtain consultations for any legal issue, except for those involving employer-related and tax-related issues. Counseling services are offered in person in the Princeton office or via telehealth.

The EAP will work with you to provide barrier-free access to services that you can access right through your computer or mobile device. As a TCNJ employee, you and your adult household members are entitled to up to three (3) counseling sessions per issue, not per year.

EAP also offers access to new work/life services, with thousands of up-to-date, topic-related articles, videos, podcasts, calculators, interactive checklists, webinars, and more related to:

- Financial & Legal
- Child Care & Education
- Eldercare
- Health & Wellness
- Career & Military
- Everyday Living and more.

Create an account at [MyLifeExpert.com](https://mylifeexpert.com) and use company code PR046.

To access services, call the EAP directly at 1.800.527.0035. Your call and all appointments are made directly with the EAP, and do not go through your employer.



December Holidays Celebrated around the World



December is a special time of year, marked by celebrations that bring people together across the globe. Here's a quick look at some of the key holidays celebrated around the world in December.

Hanukkah (December 25 – January 2)

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, commemorates the miracle of oil that lasted eight days in the ancient Temple. Families light the menorah for eight nights, enjoy traditional foods like latkes (potato pancakes), and exchange gifts.

Christmas (December 25)

Celebrating the birth of Jesus, Christmas is observed by Christians with church services, festive meals, and gift-giving. The holiday has become widely celebrated across cultures with customs like decorating Christmas trees and Santa Claus traditions.

Kwanzaa (December 26 – January 1)

Kwanzaa honors African heritage and culture. Over seven days, families celebrate the Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles) of unity, purpose, and community with lighting candles on a kinara, sharing meals, and reflecting on cultural values.

Winter Solstice (December 21)

The Winter Solstice marks the longest night of the year. Celebrated by many cultures, including Pagans and Indigenous peoples, it is a time for rituals, feasts, and honoring the return of the sun.

Las Posadas (December 16-24)

A Mexican tradition, Las Posadas reenacts Mary and Joseph's search for shelter. Over nine nights, families go door-to-door singing carols before gathering for food and celebration on Christmas Eve.

Saint Lucia Day (December 13)

In Sweden and Scandinavia, Saint Lucia Day celebrates light in the darkest part of the year. Young girls dress in white with candle crowns, and families enjoy traditional foods like saffron buns.

Boxing Day (December 26)

Observed in the UK, Canada, and other countries, Boxing Day is a time for giving to those in need. Traditionally, it was a day for employers to give gifts to workers, but now it's often marked by sales and family gatherings.

New Year's Eve (December 31) The day every new year is met with anticipation around the world, as revelers party, set off fireworks, and countdown to midnight to welcome in new beginnings. Beyond the celebrations, the New Year also brings a time for personal growth and renewal. Many of us take this opportunity to set resolutions—small or big goals that inspire us to improve, grow, and make the most of the year ahead. Whether it's committing to healthier habits, pursuing a long-held dream, or simply striving to be kinder to ourselves and others, the New Year offers a blank slate to start fresh.

Though these December holidays come from different traditions, they all celebrate themes of love, unity, and renewal. As we embrace the festive spirit, let us take a moment to reflect on the values these celebrations inspire: kindness, connection, and gratitude.

Whether you're gathering with loved ones, lighting candles, or simply enjoying quiet moments of reflection, December is a time to cherish and celebrate.



Soles for Souls and Holiday Toy Drive

The Staff Senate is holding its annual holiday drive. This year is shoes for Soles for Souls. Please donate new or gently used shoes of all types. The shoes don't have to be a pair...if you can't find its friend, bring the one you can find!

In addition, Human Resources has collaborated with TCNJ PD in their annual toy drive along with TCNJ's Bonner Center and TCNJ's Student Governance. This year's drive will be collecting new unused toys benefiting Mercer Street Friends "Community Schools". The Community Schools (B.C. Gregory Elementary School, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, and the Luis Munoz-Rivera School) will be accepting toys for K-3 and select toys for 7-8. Each school representative will be picking three special students to receive a well-deserved holiday toy! By collecting as many toys as possible, we can all help spread holiday cheer to a wonderful group of students!

Boxes for both holiday drives are located outside the HR office in the first floor lobby of ASB until December 18th.





THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES INVITES
YOU TO JOIN US FOR A

HOLIDAY

Meet & Greet

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS - TOKENS OF APPRECIATION -
SPECIAL VISIT FROM SANTA

DECEMBER 12TH, 2024

10:00AM - 12:00PM

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BLDG, ROOM 103

**TOY DRIVE 2024 WILL BE COLLECTING
NEW UNUSED TOYS BENEFITING MERCER
STREET FRIENDS
"COMMUNITY SCHOOLS"**

Let's celebrate together!



Be Kind for Michael

In honor of her son Michael, Heather Boccanfuso, Director of Classification, Compensation, and Recruitment, started Be Kind for Michael.

Staff are encouraged to place kindness rocks around TCNJ's campus to bring smiles to the faces of employees, students, and visitors. If you see a rock on campus let it be a reminder to do even one small kind gesture for someone in your day.

Please stop by HR in the Administrative Services Building to decorate a rock and place it around campus!

You can follow this project on Instagram [@kindess_rocks_for_michael](https://www.instagram.com/kindess_rocks_for_michael) and share your rock with #BeKind4Michael.



The Office of Human Resources is here to help.



We want to remind all TCNJ employees that the fastest way to reach us is by visiting the HR portal and [submitting a ticket](#). Your ticket will be routed to the appropriate team member for assistance.

If you prefer an in-person visit, please feel free to stop in to speak with an HR representative or call our front desk at x2282 to set up an appointment. You may also submit a ticket. Our office is located in the Administrative Services Building, room 101 and we have now expanded our hours to be from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday!

Wishing you all Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
The Office of Human Resources

