

From Inside The Lions Den, HR Insights

SEPTEMBER 2025

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for 2025 Staff
Representative on the
BOT

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Welcome back!

As we begin a new academic year, HR would like to extend a warm welcome to all returning employees and a special greeting to our new team members joining us this fall. With students back on campus and classes underway, this is a busy and exciting time for all of us here at TCNJ.

HR is here to help you navigate the year ahead, so be sure to stay informed and reach out with any questions. Here's to a successful and rewarding semester!

With love,

-The HR Team



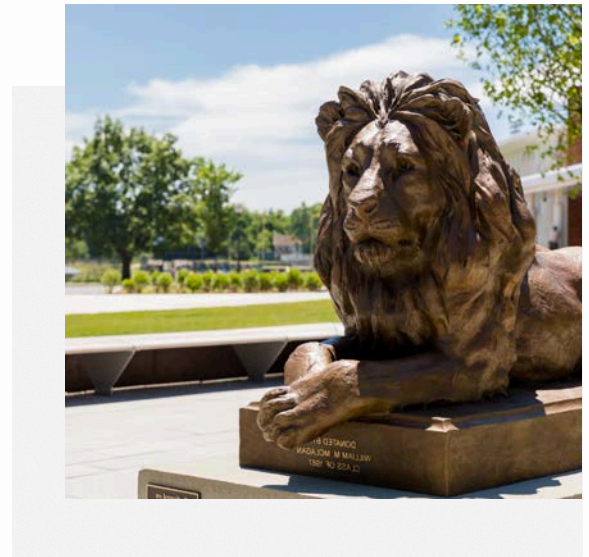
Employee Updates

Welcome Lions!

We are excited to introduce new employees who have joined The College of New Jersey this month.

Each new employee brings unique skills, experiences, and perspectives that contribute to the continued success of the TCNJ community. Join us in extending a warm welcome to our newest team members!

Lindsay Possiel, Records Specialist in the Department of Records & Registration
Estrella Rosario Gomez, Academic Advisor, in the Department of College-Wide Academics
Ma'Sum Abdul-Wadud, Admissions Counselor in the Admissions Department
Andrew Deak, Security Officer for Campus Police
Gianna DeDreux, Campus Police Officer for Campus Police
Michael Draps, Campus Police Officer for Campus Police



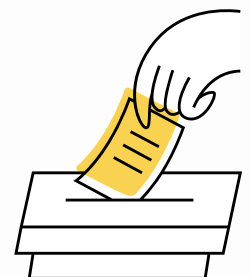
Vote NOW: Staff Representative on the Board of Trustees Re-Election

At the March 7, 2002, public meeting of the Board of Trustees, a resolution was passed creating Staff Representation on the Board of Trustees. In accordance with that resolution, there are to be two Staff Representatives elected who serve staggered, two-year terms.

Desi Fioravanti, from the Department of Campus Police Services, has left The College of New Jersey, resulting in a vacant staff board seat. The employee elected will serve the remainder of Desi's term, beginning immediately, and ending on September 1st, 2026.

View the [2025 Re-election of Staff Representative to the Board of Trustees Ballot](#) and vote now!

Thank you for your participation in this vital process.



Human Resources - Contact us!

Our Human Resources team is dedicated to supporting you. Below you'll find the direct contact information for each member of our HR department, along with their areas of expertise. Don't hesitate to reach out – we're committed to ensuring you have the resources and support you need to thrive in your role.

Leadership

Qadim Ghani - Vice President, Chief Financial Officer

Heather Boccanfuso - Interim Assistant Vice President of Human Resources

John Tuebner - Senior Director of Benefits and Administration

Lysandra Culotta - Assistant Director of Employee Benefits

Lea DeMarinis - Assistant Director of Development and Talent

Colleen Ramos - Assistant Director of Human Resources Operations

Compensation/Classification

Nichole Hardeman - Human Resources Business Partner (Classified Staff)

Recruitment

Tracey Sullivan - Talent Acquisition Manager (Faculty, AFT Staff, Grant Staff, Non-Unit Staff)

Fox Parks - Human Resources Recruitment Administrator (Adjunct Faculty, Independent Contractors)

Brianne Apostolico - Recruitment Coordinator (Temporary/Supplemental Employment)

Michael Haftman - Temporary Recruitment Assistant

Health and Wellness - Benefits

Antoinette DeLeon - Human Resources Benefits Specialist (Medical/Dental, Retirement, Tuition Waivers, Worker's Compensation)

Wesley Zimmerman - Human Resources Employee Leave Specialist (FMLA, Energy Time, Maternity, etc.)

Barbie Gomez - Human Resources Benefits Analyst (Voluntary Retirement Plans, Pensions)

Rachel Kaczinski - Temporary Benefits Analyst

Employee and Labor Relations

Nia McGowan - Employee and Labor Relations Specialist

HR Information Systems

Sonal Diwakar Kanaujia - Software Development Specialist

Important Reminders for Managers

AFT Staff Performance Evaluation & Timeline

The annual AFT Professional Staff Performance Evaluation cycle begins September 1st and runs through August 31st. This process provides an opportunity for staff and Supervisors to set clear goals, review progress, and support professional development.

Key steps in the process include:

- **Goal Setting:** Employees and supervisors establish at least three major objectives for the year.
- **Self-Evaluation:** Staff will complete a self-assessment of their progress and performance.
- **Supervisor Review:** Managers provide feedback, ratings, and recommendations.
- **Final Discussion:** Evaluations are reviewed and discussed with employees, with space for feedback and comments.



Evaluations are completed in Oracle HCM Cloud, and detailed instructions, timelines, and resources are available on the [HR Performance Evaluations webpage](#). This process helps ensure that responsibilities are clear, accomplishments are recognized, and opportunities for growth are supported.

Attention: Student Hiring Managers/Supervisors!

Happy Fall semester! At this point in the year, our processing times can be delayed. You can help manage your students workers' expectations using the following checklist:



Did they accept their offer in Taleo? If not, that is their first step!

Have they completed the onboarding process? This includes verifying I-9 documents with an HR representative. Processing time for I-9 documents is currently 1-2 weeks. A "fully hired" notification email will be sent to you and your student worker once verified to work.

Have they received final confirmation? Once hired, it may take up to 5 business days for Oracle Cloud and timecards to be active.

If you need assistance with your student worker process, please reach out to the recruitment team via the HR portal or email HR@tcnj.edu.

We thank you for your continued patience!

Back to School Tips and Tricks!

Back-to-School Stress Management - Tips

The start of the school year brings excitement — and often extra stress — for employees juggling work, family, and new routines. Here are a few practical strategies to help ease the transition:

1. Plan Ahead

Map out school schedules, after-school activities, and work deadlines on a shared family calendar.

2. Set Realistic Expectations

Accept that the first few weeks may feel hectic as everyone adjusts. Prioritize tasks and let go of less important items when needed.

3. Communicate at Work

Talk with your supervisor about flexible options if you anticipate challenges (e.g., school drop-off, appointments). Keep colleagues informed so they understand your availability.

4. Make Time for Wellness

Even short breaks for a walk, breathing exercise, or stretch can reduce stress.

5. Use Your Resources

Don't hesitate to lean on support systems: relatives, carpools, or after-school programs.

Remember, TCNJ's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers free and confidential support to help manage stress, family responsibilities, and work-life balance.



Stay on top of your Health with the NJWELL Program!

Did you know that employees enrolled in a State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) are eligible to participate in the NJWELL program? NJWELL is an employee wellness program designed to help actively employed members of the SHBP live a healthy lifestyle.

Active employed members of the SHBP and their covered spouses or partners are eligible to participate and earn rewards. Participation in the NJWELL program is voluntary, but there is a financial reward for those who meet the program's health and wellness goals.



NJWELL is included in your SHBP health plan automatically. You will need to register with Horizon or Aetna's online portal to participate and keep track of your progress. This program does not cost the employee or spouse/partner anything, but the value of the reward is considered taxable income and will be reflected as such on the last paycheck of the year.

To learn more or to sign up for the program, visit NJWELL Program Rewards, Calendar of Events, and Healthy Living to get started. If you have any questions, please check the Questions and Answers section of the website.

Professional Development Corner

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!

Effective Performance Management and Feedback Workshops

November 18th | Eveline Brownstein, Leadership Coaching and 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.



Managers/Supervisors Workshop

10 AM - 12 PM

(35 seats available, registration required)

This course will equip supervisors with tools to ensure performance evaluations are meaningful and feedback is effective.



Open to All Employees

1 PM - 3 PM

(35 seats available, registration required)

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

Registration Form to be released - keep an eye out for more!

Shared Workspaces - Get yourself out there!

Unlike traditional office settings where employees remain siloed within their departments, these spaces are designed to bring together staff members from across the college to work on their individual projects while benefiting from the energy and insights of a diverse group of colleagues.

Some benefits include:

- Enhanced Creativity & Energy - Working in isolation can lead to mental blocks and decreased motivation. Shared workspaces combat this by creating an atmosphere of focused productivity.
- Cross-Functional Knowledge Sharing - When you're working alongside colleagues or other departments, casual conversations during coffee breaks or lunch can reveal insights that directly benefit your current projects.
- Expanded Networks - Working regularly alongside colleagues from different areas helps you understand their roles, challenges, and expertise, creating a foundation for future collaboration.

Through Book-It, employees and student organizations at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) have access to multiple shared workspaces across campus.

Webinar Alert - Pensions and Benefits

State of NJ Employee Retirement Webinars - Sept. 2025

The New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits is pleased to offer the following webinars for State employees, of which employees of The College of New Jersey are a part of.

Please note that the NJDPB webinar recordings and PowerPoint presentations are not available for distribution, and only a selection of topics are available for viewing on the [state of NJ website](https://www.nj.gov/treasury/pensions).

Monday, September 15, 2025

- 1:00 PM - Retirement Planning for PFRS (Police & Fire) Members - [Register here!](#)

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

- 1:00 PM - Deferred Compensation (NJSEDCP) Plan Overview for State of N.J. Employees - [Register here!](#)

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

- 10:00 AM - Overview for Employees in the DCRP - [Register here!](#)

Thursday, September 18, 2025

- 1:00 PM - Understanding Your Pension Benefits for PERS & TPAF Members (State Employees Only) - [Register here!](#)

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

- 9:00 AM - Retirement Planning for PERS & TPAF Members (State Employees Only) - [Register here!](#)

Friday, September 26, 2025

- 10:00 AM - Retirement Readiness for State Employees - [Register here!](#)

Monday, September 29, 2025

- 1:00 PM - Overview for Employees in the DCRP - [Register here!](#)

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

- 1:00 PM - Social Security Benefits for Members of all N.J. State Administered Retirement Systems - [Register here!](#)

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



Phone: (609) 292-7524 | Email: pensions.nj@treas.nj.gov

Campus News Corner

Welcome to our Campus Corner, a place where we can spotlight campus announcements! The following September events are courtesy of Colleen Schmidt, Staff Senate President.

TCNJ School of Business and TCNJ Career Center - drop off!

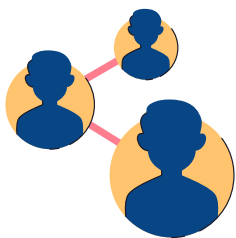
If you have new or very gently used professional clothing and accessories, we are collecting them for our students.



Collections will be ongoing, but in preparation for the Career Fair on September 24th, please drop off items at the School of Business Dean's Office (Business Building, room 114).

Staff Senate's New Staff Member Connections - drop in!

Contact any member of the Staff Mentoring Council if you wish to join a drop-in connection gathering, where TCNJ staff get to connect with



new staff to welcome them to the campus, share some tips and tricks, and network. You can reach them via email at staffmentoring@tcnj.edu.

Staff Senate - Monthly meeting

Staff Senate Monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 17th, in the Science room P101, beginning at 12 pm.

Spirit Friday Planning Team

The Spirit Friday Planning Team is looking for more volunteers to drive golf carts on their '*Taxi Days*'. On taxi days, they drive around campus offering rides to students wherever they are going on campus. They have TCNJ-themed trivia that they ask while driving, as well as taking pictures for their social media.

If you're interested in being a TCNJ Taxi Driver, please sign up for the September 23rd event.

More events will be scheduled throughout the year for you to volunteer for!



Sign up by entering your name in the available date and time slot: **TAXI DAY STAFFING**.

Staff Senate's Bi-annual Scavenger Hunt - Fall 2025

Are you competitive and love TCNJ? Build a team, or be matched with other staff members for the Fall 2025 Staff Senate Scavenger Hunt!

Learn more about TCNJ and its history while you search for answers to the scavenger hunt's clues.

More details to follow.

This September....

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15)

This month celebrates the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans. It's a time to honor traditions, recognize achievements, and highlight the diversity that strengthens our campus community.



Visit the [Division of Inclusive Excellence calendar of events](#) to get involved in the celebration!

Self-Care Awareness Month

Self-care isn't selfish — it's essential. This month is a reminder to take time for your physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

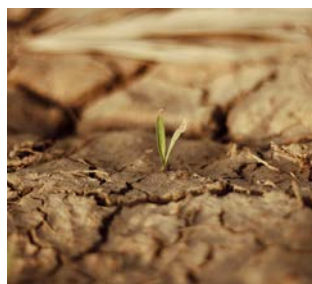


Whether it's a daily walk (on the TCNJ Campus), practicing mindfulness, or simply pausing for a deep breath, small acts of self-care can make a big difference.

National Recovery Month



National Recovery Month promotes the message that recovery from substance use and mental health challenges is possible. It recognizes the strength of individuals in recovery, celebrates treatment providers, and highlights the importance of supportive communities.



Visit TCNJ's Alcohol and Drug Support Services '*Recovery Support*' webpage to learn more about recovery initiatives on campus.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month

This observance is dedicated to raising awareness about mental health, reducing stigma, and providing resources for prevention and support. Together, we can build a supportive community where open conversations about mental health are encouraged.

Reminder: All TCNJ employees and their families have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for free confidential counseling, referrals, and resources to help with stress, anxiety, or personal challenges.

You don't have to navigate tough times alone — support is available 24/7 at TCNJ.

Coming soon!

2025 Benefit Open Enrollment Reminder

This October is the perfect time to get your benefit matters in order. Want to change health or dental plans? Need to talk to an investment carrier about your retirement savings accounts? Want to set up a Flexible Spending Account for your medical or dependent care needs for 2026?

The 2026 Open Enrollment period begins on October 1, 2025, and runs through October 31, 2025. During the month of October, you will be able to make changes to your medical and dental insurance plans, sign up for or renew your flexible spending account(s), as well as learn more about your benefit and retirement saving offerings.

We plan to have representatives from all of our investment carriers at our Open Enrollment Benefits Fair, scheduled for Tuesday, October 21st, at the Brower Student Center, to answer any questions you may have.

More information will be made available on or about October 1st to all employees regarding the upcoming 2025 open enrollment period, and the fun-filled Benefits Fair with giveaways and raffle opportunities!

We hope to see you there TCNJ!



The 2024 raffle baskets, jam-packed with goodies!

HR Learning Opportunity: Search Committee Basics

Time and location TBD | Presented by: Fox Parks, Recruitment Administrator

TCNJ managers will be invited to join us for comprehensive training on conducting successful employee searches from start to finish. What You'll Learn:

- Job Description Development - Creating or updating clear, compliant, and compelling position postings
- Recruitment Strategy - Identifying a thoughtful search committee and working with Human Resources
- Application Review Process - Establishing fair and consistent evaluation criteria
- Interview Planning & Execution - Designing structured interviews that assess key competencies
- Decision-Making Framework - Using objective methods to select the best candidate
- Timeline Overview and Expectations
- How to use the systems involved (if applicable)

This Learning Opportunity is available for current and future search committee members, supervisors, and HR partners. Strengthen your hiring skills and help TCNJ attract top talent!



THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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



hr@tcnj.edu



(609) 771-2282



**Administrative Services Building
(ASB) Room 101
(8:30AM - 4:30PM, Mon - Fri!)**

Share HR's NEW brochure
'Why Work At TCNJ?'



WHY WORK AT TCNJ

TCNJ

THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

- ✓ INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE
- ✓ COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS
- ✓ LEAVE PROGRAMS & PTO
- ✓ WELL-BEING AT TCNJ
- ✓ EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

READ MORE ➔

TCNJ's dynamic team of Faculty, Staff, and Students is among our most valuable assets.

Read more to embark on a career of growth and opportunity in our passionate campus community dedicated to making a difference.