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November 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Like many of you, HR has been working on our priorities for the coming year even as we navigate the daily realities of how our work has been impacted by the pandemic. In spite of the challenges, we remain committed to being the very best HR team that we can be for Wesleyan. HR's mission to lead efforts to RECRUIT, DEVELOP AND RETAIN the very best diverse talent available to the university is at the forefront of all that we do and we are guided by these principles:

- Align our priorities with University strategic goals.
- Be thoughtful stewards of University resources.
- Be innovative, creative, and flexible.
- Use data to support our work.
- Be courageous change agents.
- Partner with our colleagues, listen to their needs, and learn from their expertise.
- Focus on diversity in all of its forms.
- Create processes and policies that allow for successful outcomes.
- Question everything – this is how we will get better!

Later in this newsletter, you will find our priorities for FY21. In future newsletters, we will update you on our work in each of these key areas.

On another note, I've had many conversations with supervisors and staff about our collective exhaustion with Zoom meetings. My Outlook analytics show that I average 25 Zoom/Team meetings per week....I'm certain that I'm not alone in that statistic!

The B2B (back to back) meetings are proving challenging for many of us, so we have provided some tips on how to deal with Zoom fatigue. The important message here is about self-care and regaining control of our schedules, versus letting them control us. I've started putting 15-minute holds on my calendar in between meetings to give myself time to stand up, stretch, refocus my eyes, and just generally prepare myself for the next conversation. This helps minimize entire days of "B2B" meetings without these important breaks. While not always possible to maintain, regaining control of our schedules is an important first step to dealing with the Zoomies and I encourage everyone to block out some self-care time!

Stay Wesleyan Strong!

Lisa

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### **Human Resources Priorities for FY21.**

- Employee Retention, Well-Being, and Engagement
- Supervisor Development
- Metrics – Organizational and HR Data and Reporting
- Diversity in Recruitment
- Customer Service
- Compliance with Regulatory Requirements
- HR Process Improvement

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### **Helpful Tips to Minimize Zoom Fatigue!**

- Avoid Multi-Tasking – Reading/responding to emails or attending to other items while on a Zoom meeting just adds to our stress and weariness. If you are on a call, focus on that call.

- Breaks – Build 10-15 minutes between Zooms – during longer calls, look away from the screen periodically or minimize the window to give your eyes a rest.
- Video – If you are not talking, it is OK to turn off your video, especially in longer meetings. We all need to understand that it is possible to be engaged in the meeting without staring at each other on the screen.
- Social Zooms – We are all trying to remain connected with each other, but after a day of Zooms, it may be hard for some to jump on yet another call. No easy solution but just be mindful of this when scheduling check-ins.
- Use the Phone – A quick call is just as efficient as a Zoom appointment and gives us a break from Zoom overload.
- Be Patient – Technology glitches, barking dogs, crying kids, spouses who walk by your screen, ringing phones, cats who jump on your keyboard....these things are all going to happen (Who are we kidding? They have happened!).
- Give each other a break and laugh it off. Now more than ever....practice kindness and grace. We all need it.

### **2021 Holiday Schedule**

The [2021 Holiday Schedule](#) is available.

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## **Talent Acquisition and Employment**

### **Employees on the Move**

Human Resources welcomed 7 new staff members to the university since September 1, 2020. For a full list of new staff and departures from September and October 2020, visit [Employees on the Move](#).




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### **Staff Process Advocate Program**

Human Resources and the Office for Equity and Inclusion are implementing a new program that will prepare staff members to become Process Advocates.

Process advocates are active search committee members who will support staff search teams in the selection of candidates based on knowledge, skills, and abilities and help avoid implicit bias and cognitive errors that tend to take people

from underrepresented groups out of consideration in the hiring process.

The first group of 18 enthusiastic Process Advocates participated in a training session on November 5, 2020 in preparation to support future staff searches.

Questions regarding the Process Advocate Program can be emailed to [Anjali Tamhankar](#).

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## Recognition

Twenty-five employees celebrated a Wesleyan anniversary in September and October. A complete list of this year's employee anniversaries can be found at [Employee Service Recognition](#).

### Cardinal Achievement Award Recognition Program

The Cardinal Achievement Award program provides Wesleyan faculty and staff the opportunity to recognize colleagues who have demonstrated extraordinary initiative or service that advances the mission of the University. [Eligibility requirements and instructions](#) are located on the Human Resources website.

Congratulations to the following employees who were recently presented with Cardinal Achievement Awards.

- Joan Duignan, Lab Coordinator
- Logan Ludwig, Assistant Director of Events and Programs



### **TIAA & Fidelity One-on-One Consultations**

Meet with a TIAA or Fidelity financial advisor for an individual retirement consultation and to learn more about their services. Both companies offer one-on-one consultations at no cost to Wesleyan faculty and staff members. Due to COVID-19, the consultations will be telephonic or virtual, there are no “on campus” visits. Schedule your one-on-one consultation at:

**TIAA** or call 800.732.8353

**Fidelity** or call 800.642.7131

### **Cigna Prescription Formulary Changes**

Cigna reviews their drug formulary annually to ensure that the most clinically and cost effective drugs are covered at the appropriate tier (generic, formulary or non-formulary). These changes are effective January 1st of each year. Affected participants recently received a letter describing the specific changes. Before you fill a prescription, you can check on [mycigna.com](http://mycigna.com) to determine in which tier a prescription will be covered. Please see the [attached flyer](#) for the 1/1/21 changes.

### **Cigna Summaries of Benefits and Coverage (SBC)**

The 2021 SBCs for our Cigna plans are available on the website. ([OAP](#); [OAPIN](#); [HSA](#) ). Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), you must receive an SBC annually. It explains your benefits and has examples of how much you might pay out of pocket for specific health services. All SBCs follow a standard format, which makes it easier to compare plans and costs. For example, since your spouse’s employer also must provide SBCs, you can easily compare Wesleyan’s plans to theirs utilizing the same format. Please contact [benefits@wesleyan.edu](mailto:benefits@wesleyan.edu) with any questions.

### **2021 Benefit Contribution Maximums**

The IRS annual limits for the SRA 403(b) and 457(b) employee contributions remain unchanged at \$19,500 for 2021, as does the Age 50+ catch-up limit for the SRA 403(b) Plan at \$6,500. You can make changes to your contributions anytime throughout the plan year through WesPortal, under the SRA Contribution Change link on the My Information tab.

The 2021 Spending Account limits also remain unchanged from 2020 levels, \$2,750 for the MERA account and \$5,000 for the dependent care spending



Please remember to **book testing appointments** online in advance to avoid unnecessary crowding inside Beckham Hall.

#### Additional Reminders!

- Twice weekly testing will continue on weekdays through Tuesday, November 24 for students, faculty, and staff working on campus.
- Testing will be closed from November 25–30 for the Thanksgiving holiday.
- For the months of December and January, we will move to once weekly testing—Wednesdays from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.—for all students remaining on campus and for staff and faculty who continue to work on campus.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of illness or believe you may have been exposed to COVID, please stay home and contact your personal healthcare provider or get tested at a local drugstore or urgent care center. **Do not come to the Wesleyan test site to be tested if you are ill, believe you have been exposed, or are experiencing any COVID-like symptoms.**

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#### A Message from Wesleyan's Ombudsperson

As Wesleyan's Ombudsperson, Israela Brill-Cass serves as an objective, independent resource for faculty and staff, providing a safe space where individuals can talk through workplace issues they may be experiencing without automatically triggering an investigation or required next steps.

"It's like triage. I'm the first step where people can say, 'Am I really perceiving it this way? Or is this something I might be feeling because \_\_\_\_\_?'" Brill-Cass explains. "I talk to them about their options. 'If you want to address it directly, here's how you can proceed from here. If you don't want to address it directly, here are ways that you can manage the issue.' People can then use the information to decide whether or not they *want* to take the next step. It's completely voluntary."

The role is one that complements the work of other Wesleyan resources such as Human Resources and the Office of Equity and Inclusion, but unlike those departments, which are part of the University organization, the ombuds is an independent contractor position, and therefore completely neutral.

"Because I'm not a mandated reporter, because I'm actually a contractor for Wes

and not an employee, it's unbiased and completely confidential," says Brill-Cass. "It's a different lens than HR, or a department chair, or a colleague might have. It's an outside lens separate from the history that folks at Wesleyan might have with each other or the institution."

From Himeka Curiel's August 8, 2018 piece in News at Wesleyan "*Wesleyan's Inaugural Ombuds Celebrates Her First Year*"

To schedule an appointment, access the Ombudsperson website through WesPortal – Employee Information, or go directly to [www.fixerrr.com](http://www.fixerrr.com).

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## Success at Wes

Since July, Success at Wes has offered 102 (duplicative) sessions and 367 staff members participated in at least one of those sessions.

The feedback has once again been overwhelmingly positive. If you participated in a session but have not yet provided your feedback, please do so [here](#). Your input is important to help us plan for future programming. Below are a few of the comments from recent participants:

*"I hope more and more supervisors and supervisees are encouraged to attend this training."*

*"As always, we had a great instructor who adjusts the training based on the audience and questions. Just keep up the good work!"*

*"It was perfect. The group ended up being smaller than anticipated but that was great as we shared more tips and I feel like I got to know participants."*

*"Excellent instructor!"*

*"It was informative and I appreciate the opportunity to attend!"*

*"The presenter was clear, thoughtful and extremely knowledgeable."*

We look forward to continuing to learn with you! **Spring sessions are available** for registration at Success at Wes. If you are not on campus, VPN is required. Instructions for connecting to VPN can be found [here](#).

Questions can be directed to Lauren Stumpf at [lstumpf@wesleyan.edu](mailto:lstumpf@wesleyan.edu).

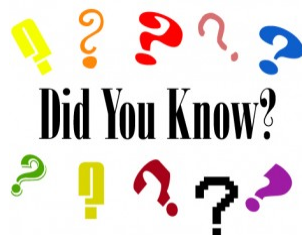
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## Celebrating Accomplished Wesleyan Staff

Tracey Stanley shared her recent accomplishment.

"This quilt is special because I made it for me and is called "Mine"! Much of my craft is given away as gifts and now increasingly being commissioned. So taking time out to sew something for me was very special. Quilting is my therapy and to see this as award is definitely a win for me."



**How many Zoom meetings were conducted at Wesleyan in October?**

A total of 24,637 meetings! 89 of those were Webinars.  
We talked for 9,615,306 total minutes!

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