



HR Update

February, 2016

Black History Month

The story of Black History Month begins in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by black Americans and other peoples of African descent. Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs and host performances and lectures.

In the decades that followed, mayors of cities across the country began issuing yearly proclamations recognizing Negro History Week. By the late 1960s, thanks in part to the Civil Rights Movement and a growing awareness of black identity, Negro History Week had evolved into Black History Month on many college campuses. President Gerald R. Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

Since then, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme. The 2013 theme, At the Crossroads of Freedom and Equality: The Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington, marks the 150th and 50th anniversaries of two pivotal events in African-American history.

Article from the History Channel: <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month>



2016 Health Assessment Information

Don't miss your chance to learn about your health status and save up to \$600 in 2016! The wellness program annual health assessments, administered by Froedtert Workforce Health, began January 4th and will end March 3rd. In order to qualify for the medical premium reduction employees must complete an online questionnaire and a fasting biometric health screen by March 3rd. All employees who completed the health assessment in 2015 need to complete the assessment in 2016 in order to continue receiving the reduction in their medical premium.

Visit the following websites to get started:

To schedule your fasting biometric health screen:

<http://www.pickatime.com/mkecountyhra>

To take your online questionnaire: <http://www.workforcehealth.org/milwaukeecounty>

For more detailed information: <http://county.milwaukee.gov/Wellness>

Issues regarding scheduling an appointment and the questionnaire can be directed to Workforce Health at 414-777-3446. Otherwise, contact Claire Schuenke, wellness coordinator, via [email](#) or 278-4938 with questions.

Dementia - Friendly Employers Toolkit

Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, is a national health epidemic ([link is external](#)) that cannot be ignored - particularly in the workplace, where an increasing number of employees are balancing career responsibilities with the challenges of caring for a loved one. A 2006 study by the MetLife Mature Market Institute ([link is external](#)) found that caregiving costs American employers between \$17 billion and \$34 billion in lost productivity annually, taking a significant toll on both employers and caregiving employees.

Caregiving creates many life changes for caregivers. Serving as a caregiver can impact a person's physical health, create financial strain, and increase general stress levels, which can lead to depression. These changes have the potential to affect an employee's job performance, but with the proper workplace support, employed caregivers can successfully manage both their caregiving and workplace responsibilities. This Dementia-Friendly Employers Toolkit is designed to provide employers with the knowledge and tools needed to successfully support employees who are caring for a loved one with dementia.

To access the toolkit or for more information, please visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dementia/employers.htm>



High Fives

“Excellent work, **Benefits Team**

(Matt Hanchek, Heather Giza, Marco Gruchalski, Bruce Nall & Claire Schuenke)!

I think this enrollment period has been the quietest yet; you've built a well-oiled machine and continue to offer so much support in answering everyone's questions. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring the 2016 enrollment went smoothly!” ~ *Kerry Mitchell, Chief Human Resources Officer*

