New Faculty and Staff... Welcome to the UAlbany Community!

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a New York State joint labor/management program that is a negotiated benefit for employees. Faculty members and staff from the various unions (CSEA, UUP, PEF, GSEU, and NYSCOPBA), Management/Confidential (MC), and other employee affiliations on campus (the Research Foundation, UAS, the Albany Foundation), family members, and retirees are eligible to use the confidential EAP Information, Assessment, and Referral Service and attend EAP-sponsored programs.

UAlbany EAP strives to enhance the maintenance of a healthy and productive workforce. We hope you’ll enjoy receiving the monthly EAP E-News and will take advantage of the EAP services and programs that are offered. And be sure to check out the EAP website from time to time throughout the year to discover helpful resources and learn about upcoming EAP events and programs. Best wishes for a productive and inspiring 2014-2015 academic year!

Contact UAlbany EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson if you would like to learn more about this employee benefit.

E-mail: bseckerson@albany.edu Phone: 442-5483

Trust in the Workplace: You Have One Second

You don’t have three seconds to make a good first impression. You only have one!

A study published recently in the Journal of Neuroscience found that the human brain decides whether a person is trustworthy or not almost instantly. To thwart this unfair biological response and be considered trustworthy, confident, relaxed, and knowledgeable, do the following:

- use a firm handshake,
- greet others with a smile,
- make eye contact,
- listen slightly more than you speak, and
- always practice the most important piece of advice to instill trustworthiness: Be genuine—be yourself.

Source: www.Psych.nyu.edu [Search: 10574]

Article Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Reaching Out For Help

With the sad and shocking news of comedian and actor Robin Williams’ suicide, there were reports that suicide hotlines had a surge in their calls soon afterward. People were reaching out for help. That is a good thing. The loss of a high-profile person through suicide can give us a jolt and raise our awareness about depression, substance abuse, and mental illness.

A depressed co-worker, family member, or friend who talks about “ending it all” is not being secretive about their desire to commit suicide. But would you notice more subtle signs of suicidal risk in someone who wasn’t as open about thoughts and feelings or who felt it was a sign of weakness to ask for help? Untreated depression is the most common cause of suicide. So the more you know about it, the easier it is to spot.

You don’t have to be a mental health professional to understand the signs of depression. You need only be aware of what the signs are to have an edge in knowing whether to ask if someone is feeling suicidal. (Never shy away from this question. It’s the #1 rule in helping prevent suicide.) In today’s information age, it’s easy to find information about depression. You will see there are many signs—not just sadness, but also changes in eating, sleeping, or working habits; severe weight loss or gain; changes in mood or self-image; or excessively talking about guilt or other negative feelings and thoughts. Having a greater knowledge of depression symptoms will help you gauge your concern so you can urge your co-worker, family member, or friend to consult with a medical doctor, mental health professional, EAP, or to call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.

If you are the one experiencing depression, reach out for help. With help comes hope.

For more information about suicide prevention, check out these online resources:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Local Chapter
- Helpguide.org—Suicide Prevention
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center—The Role of Co-Workers Preventing Suicide in the Workplace

For additional information, contact UAlbany EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson to access the confidential information, assessment and referral service.

bseckerson@albany.edu  442-5483

Article Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Balancing Work and Family

All of us must allocate 24 hours a day to the activities of life. How well we balance responsibilities with doing things we truly enjoy directly affects our quality of life. It also helps manage stress. Are you satisfied with your balance of time between work and family?

If you answered “no,” you are not alone. Achieving balance with work and family is an ongoing process of juggling responsibilities at work and the needs of family members. These needs change over time. The key to success is stepping back and periodically analyzing how things are going. You can then decide if changes are needed. The result will be enjoying your life more and being in harmony with the things you value most.

Answer the following questions to see if you could use some re-evaluation of work and family balance. If you answer “no” to any question, you may benefit from some of the steps that follow.

Steps For Balancing Work and Family—

1. **Work and Family Balance is a Conscious Decision.** Work and family don’t “balance” automatically. Achieving balance is an ongoing process. Understanding this can reduce frustration and help you act to gain control.

2. **Write Down Family Goals.** Family needs change over time. Opportunities to build a tree house for the kids or participate in a new family pastime don’t last forever. Decide what is important and write it down. Assign a date and make these goals “absolutely-will-happens.”

3. **Stick to Your Values.** Sometimes it can be tough to make a choice between a family and a work activity. Knowing where you stand on your values can make tough choices easier.

4. **Recognize that Imbalance is Sometimes Inevitable.** It is important to recognize that jobs and responsibilities are important and that they sometimes take priority.

5. **Revisit Your Schedule.** When your work schedule changes, new opportunities may become available to participate in family activities. Claim the high ground!

6. **Recognize the Benefits of Balance.** Balancing work and family has pay-offs for children, home relationships, and everyone’s future happiness. Recognizing this can help you keep balance in mind.

7. **Manage Distractions and Procrastination.** Working long hours causes stress that sometimes finds relief naturally through work place distractions and procrastination. If you are at the office for 12 hours, do you really work only 10? If you are searching for more family time, it might be found here.

8. **Discuss Expectations and Responsibilities.** When one family member is taking on too many responsibilities at home, resentments can build. Periodically discussing the perceptions of others can provide the awareness you need to consider opportunities and choices for work and family balance.

9. **Organize Your Work Better.** Improving your delegation and time-management skills can buy you time needed for family life. Learning how to put work down, say “no,” and let go of workplace worries are skills that are learned through practice.

10. **What the EAP Can Do.** Despite these suggestions, improving balance of work and family may be a lot easier said than done. Contact UAlbany EAP to help you find sources for defining priorities, acquiring assertiveness skills, making tough decisions, or even identifying family goals that you want to pursue.
Sometimes an issue at home or work can have an effect on your ability to be as productive as you need to be. You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available as an employee benefit.

Here are just a few of the concerns or stressors that might prompt an employee to reach out to EAP for information and support:

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder Care
- Psychological Concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Therapist referrals

**Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.**

To schedule an appointment for confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

Brenda Seckerson  
EAP Coordinator  
442-5483  
bseckerson@albany.edu

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.

“Worrying is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.”  
~ Unknown
How to Use EAP in the Workplace

For Faculty and Staff in a Supervisory Role

EAP’s goal is to help maintain workplace productivity by assisting employees when personal and/or professional issues may be adversely affecting job performance. As a supervisor, you know that there are times when an employee’s productivity is being impacted due to personal or professional concerns. Making a referral to EAP may be called for to give the employee an opportunity to address concerns outside your realm as a supervisor.

Topics include:

- An overview of EAP and its services
- How to identify and manage performance issues
- When to make a referral to EAP

Join us as we discuss UAlbany’s EAP and explore how supervisors can utilize the program more effectively in the workplace.

Thursday, September 4
10:00 - 11:30 am
University Hall (UNH)
Room 306
Deadline to Register September 3

TO REGISTER
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
CALL 442-5483
OR REGISTER ONLINE
HTTP://WWW.ALBANY.EDU/EAP/EVENT_SIGN-UP.HTM
Notes to Those in a Supervisory Role...

Want a good way to support your staff’s health and well-being? Encourage your employees to take advantage of the noontime EAP wellness program offerings when topics are of interest to them. By now we all know that it is a myth to think that not taking a lunch break and working practically non-stop throughout the day will allow more work to be done. The body needs to stretch and move. The mind needs a change of scenery to help us refresh and keep on keeping on. Getting away from the work area during lunchtime (instead of eating at your desk or work station all of the time), meeting other employees, and gaining new information designed to support well-being can help to promote productivity AND boost morale. Remember that the EAP Lunchtime Wellness Programs can provide a great way to help accomplish this. And don’t forget to attend a program that you are interested in, too. EAP wellness programs are a benefit for ALL UAlbany employees!

Understanding Your EAP Benefit

Not sure if your employees are aware of all of the services and programs that the UAlbany Employee Assistance Program provides to faculty and staff? EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson is available to come to a staff meeting to offer a program orientation for you and your employees.

EAP is a New York State joint labor-management program that is a negotiated employee benefit. Faculty members and staff from the various unions (CSEA, UUP, PEF, GSEU, and NYSCOPBA), Management/Confidential (MC), and other employee affiliations on campus (the Research Foundation, UAS, the Albany Foundation), family members, and retirees are eligible to use the confidential EAP service and attend the programs it sponsors.

Take advantage of this employee benefit and resource! Contact Brenda for more details.

Brenda Seckerson, MA, CEAP
UAlbany EAP Coordinator

bseckerson@albany.edu
442-5483
The Secret to Causing and Sustaining Positive Change: An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Join us for this overview of one of the most engaging and powerful change methodologies ever developed – Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Through the use of real life examples, participants will experience the power of Appreciative Inquiry and understand why it is being used worldwide in organizations such as Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, US Navy, United Nations, Springfield, MA School District and the Nevada Department of Social Services to cause unprecedented results. Attendees will be introduced to the principles of Appreciative Inquiry and experience firsthand the four phases of AI (Discovery, Dream, Design, Destiny) as well as how to apply them to their day-to-day work to enhance their ability to achieve results. Discover why changes never thought possible are suddenly being realized and sustained through the use of Appreciative Inquiry.

Presenter: Lisa Giruzzi is a best selling author, an accomplished speaker, an award-winning trainer and a peak performance consultant. She is the owner of the consulting firm Transformational Conversations. Ms. Giruzzi is a leading authority on Appreciative Inquiry (AI) who has been practicing AI for more than ten years. More information is available at www.LisaGiruzzi.com

*Supervisor’s Approval Required to Attend

To register, contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
442-5483
bseckerson@albany.edu

Or, register online:
http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

Wednesday, October 1
9:00 am — 12:00 pm
Room 375
Campus Center

Registration Deadline:
Monday, September 29
Learning to say “no” is a common assertiveness skill, but also learning to say “yes” and asserting yourself is key to taking advantage of opportunities and experiences you want in your life. Assertiveness is about being aware of your needs and aligning your thinking to match them. For example, is work-family balance an important value to you, yet you’re always too busy to achieve it? If yes, use assertiveness to grab opportunities for fitting in a family picnic, an evening family card game, or a day together with your family at a farmer’s market. It’s easy to avoid the stress of juggling priorities by simply not doing things like this. Assertiveness can help you behave more opportunistically so things you truly value don’t pass you by, leaving you to regret later what you didn’t do. So, say “yes” sometimes, and see what opportunities appear for you!

Plan a Surprise!

We all love pleasant surprises. Research shows they play a strong role in our assessment of what makes life happy and meaningful. It turns out that pleasant surprises give life that extra “zing” which makes it more satisfying. The catch—it’s not so easy to surprise yourself, but it’s easy to surprise others.

Remembering this life dynamic can lead to improved relationships. It’s that simple. Recall the 1980s “random acts of kindness” movement and the more recent “pay it forward” surprise —sometimes experienced at a drive-in window when you are delighted to learn the customer ahead of you paid for your coffee. Whether it’s buying flowers or surprising a friend with a token gift, the power of a pleasant surprise to add some zing to everyday life can help to really make someone’s day! And the act of doing so can add some “zing” to your day, too!

Source: twitter.com/RobbRutledge [Search: “road to happiness”]

Resource for Articles Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Did you know that there is a meditation group on the Downtown Campus?

This meditation group was formed in the fall of 2007 for faculty, staff, and students to help restore balance in our often-hectic lives. This group is not designed to provide any formal mediation instruction. Meditations will last from 20-30 minutes. Perfect for that break between afternoon or evening classes—or before the commute home! You do not need to commit to coming every week. Just come when you can!

All are welcome! For more information, contact:

Lara Kaye at lkaye@albany.edu,
Heather Larkin at hlarkin@albany.edu, or
David Pettie at Pettie@albany.edu.

NOTE: This is NOT an EAP-sponsored meditation group. EAP provides information about campus and community resources for your health and well-being.

Join the Green Workspace Challenge

Creating a healthy environment is certainly part of supporting our personal health and well-being. UAlbany’s Office of Environmental Sustainability recently unveiled the Green Workspace Challenge, an eco-certification program for campus offices. The self-assessment framework guides faculty and staff through a process to design a more sustainable workplace. After the process is complete, the team will be recognized with a bronze, silver, gold, or the enviable green award!

The concept for the eco-certification sprung up when folks in the Office of Environmental Sustainability noticed that many UAlbany professionals had taken up environmentally-friendly habits, such as taking the stairs or decorating an office with plants, without a sustainability intention. “Many people do not realize all the positive behaviors they practice on a daily basis,” affirms Program Assistant Many Alexis Leciejewski. “We mostly want to encourage UAlbany staff and faculty to keep up the good work and suggest relatively minor changes that have significant outcomes.” The Green Workspace Challenge offers tips and tricks and goes beyond the realm of electricity use and recycling. Colleagues are encouraged to take a closer look at how they plan meetings, arrange their kitchen, and get to and from work. Director Mary Ellen Mallia applauds the community-building aspect of the program. “Fostering a more sustainable atmosphere begins with a conversation. Being mindful of our everyday actions is made easier with a support system.”

For information on how to participate in the Green Workspace Challenge, go to: http://www.albany.edu/gogreen/5.green_workspace_challenge.shtml

Article Submitted by Mary Alexis Leciejewski, Office of Environmental Sustainability Program Assistant
Employee Assistance Program

Meet & Greet Event

Join us for this informal “Meet and Greet” opportunity for Downtown Campus employees to learn more about the EAP benefit. Stop by to chat with your EAP Coordinator and EAP Committee Members. Check out an array of health and wellness materials. Light refreshments and EAP giveaways will be available, too!

Meet Brenda Seckerson,
EAP Coordinator

AND

EAP Committee Members including
Downtown Campus Representative
Kathy Gurney

For information about EAP, go to:
http://www.albany.edu/eap/

Tuesday, September 9
12:00 - 1:30 pm
Draper Hall
Room 115
Understanding Your NYS Retirement Pension Benefits

Presented by an Information Representative from the NYS Employee Retirement System (ERS), this interactive session is for employees/family members who are members of ERS. Participants will have the opportunity to experience the following:

⇒ learn the critical elements involved in the calculation of their pension benefits,
⇒ know what they can do to ensure they receive all of the benefits they are entitled to, and
⇒ obtain information about how and when to contact NYS Local Retirement System to obtain their specific information.

Participants will also have the opportunity to ask questions related to pension benefits during and after the presentation as well as receive a guide that covers pension information in more detail.

No matter what your age or how many years you have in the retirement system, this presentation will help you better plan for your financial future!

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
call 442-5483 or register online
http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

12:00 - 1:00 pm
UPTOWN Campus
Wednesday, September 17
Room 375 Campus Center

EAST Campus
Tuesday, September 23
Café Conference Room A Wing
Get to Know
Your Campus

School of Business Building Tour

EAP brings you another Get to Know Your Campus tour! First offered in 2011-2012, these tours provide employees with an opportunity to learn about the great resources we have on campus and to meet the interesting people who work at UAlbany doing fascinating things. Join us for this half-hour tour of our new state-of-the-art School of Business Building. Connect with other employees while touring this high-tech academic building, and discover more about our workplace surroundings here at UAlbany!

**To Register Contact:**
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
call 442-5483 or register online

http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

**Tuesday, September 30**
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm
Business Building
Meet at North Entrance/ Facing Collins Circle
Registration Deadline: Monday, September 29
Safety and Security Tips From UPD

With the new semester upon us, let’s take a few minutes to review some safety and security tips.

1. Don’t ever be afraid or hesitant to call 911. In an emergency, seconds count. The sooner you can get help on the way, the better off everyone will be. The Police will NEVER be “angry” with you for calling, even if we find nothing.

2. Be sure to record the make, model, and serial number of all your valuables. In the event your property is lost or stolen, this will make recovery efforts that much easier for the responding officer.

3. Remember to secure your valuables in your office or vehicle. Secure office doors and lock desk drawers when you are away. If you leave items in your vehicle, be sure they are kept out of sight and placed in either the glove box or trunk of the vehicle. Always manually check that your doors are locked. Keyless locking systems are not always 100% reliable.

For more information on crime prevention, be sure to contact UPD. Upon request we also offer security surveys for any building or office on campus.

Safety Begins With YOU!

The University at Albany Police Department is staffed 24/7, 365 days a year. Please make sure you note our emergency numbers and store them in your phone. 518-442-3131 or 911 from any campus telephone. Be sure to visit our website at police.albany.edu You can follow us on Twitter @UAlbanyUPD and like us on Facebook at University at Albany Police Department.
Flu season will be upon us soon!

A note from UAlbany Health Center...

The Health Center has coordinated its annual flu shot clinic for October 14. Provided by MAXIM Healthcare Services, the clinic is open to faculty and staff, too! The vaccination fee is $25.00 with some insurance being accepted. (More details to come!)

Even healthy people need a flu vaccine.
- Even healthy people with the flu can get sick enough to miss work or school for a significant amount of time or even be hospitalized.

Is the flu vaccine safe?
- Yes, the flu vaccine is safe.
- Flu vaccines have been given to hundreds of millions of people for more than 50 years and have a very good safety track record.

The most common side effects of flu vaccines are mild.
- The flu vaccine cannot cause flu illness.
- However, it can cause mild side effects that may be mistaken for flu symptoms such as body aches and stuffy nose or sore throat (with the nasal mist flu vaccine). These side effects are NOT THE FLU.

Even if I get sick, won’t I recover quickly?
- Not necessarily. Influenza can be serious, and anyone can become sick with flu and experience serious complications.
- Even if you quickly recover, those you have infected might not be so lucky.
- Some people can be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, you can still spread the virus to others. Don’t be the one spreading flu to co-workers, students, friends, and family members.

Can’t I wait and get vaccinated when/if the flu hits my community?
- It takes about two weeks for the flu vaccine to provide full protection. The sooner you get vaccinated, the more likely it is that you will be fully protected.

Flu vaccines can’t give you the flu.
- Even if you get the flu vaccination, there are reasons why you might still get flu or a flu-like illness.
- You may have been exposed to a non-flu virus before or after you got vaccinated.
- The flu vaccine can only prevent illnesses caused by flu viruses. It cannot protect against non-flu viruses that may cause flu-like illness.
- You might have been exposed to flu after you got vaccinated but before the vaccine took effect.
- It takes about two weeks after you receive the vaccine for your body to build protection against the flu.
- You may have been exposed to an influenza virus that was very different from the viruses included in that year’s vaccine.

Make plans to get your vaccination this year!
Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors, and the most patient of teachers.

~Charles W. Eliot

American Academic, Harvard President
(1834-1926)

For many of us working in an academic setting, the start of a new school year is a time for fresh beginnings and setting goals. It’s kind of like New Year’s! The EAP Lending Library offers a number of books and DVDs/CDs that can support your efforts to learn and grow. Check out these titles that are available for borrowing.

- 10 Simple Solutions to Worry: How to Calm Your Mind, Relax Your Body & Reclaim Your Life
- The 100 Simple Secrets of Happy Family
- The Art of Happiness at Work
- Couple Skills: Making Your Relationship Work
- The Gifts of Imperfection
- Inspire! What Great Leaders Do
- The New Diary: How to Use a Journal for Self-Guidance and Expanded Creativity Thunderbolt Thinking
- My Stroke of Insight
- The Passion Test: The Effortless Path to Discovering Your Life Purpose
- Retire Smart Retire Happy: Finding Your True Path in Life
- The Season’s of a Man’s Life

Contact the EAP Office to make arrangements to stop by to browse, or you may request materials be sent to you via campus mail. bseckerson@albany.edu 442-5483 To discover what other materials are available, go to: http://www.albany.edu/eap/eap_library.htm