

Personnel Newsletter

Attention Glenn Civil Service Supervisors

This is a reminder that performance assessments and feedback sessions for the appraisal cycle must be completed by March 15, 2004. Please forward all four pages of NASA Form C-160, to Mail Stop 500-301. These forms should be received by OHRWP no later than March 19, 2004.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Opportunities for Leadership Development and Fellowships | 2 |
| Integrated Financial Management Program (IFMP) Update | 2 |
| Third Quarter External Awards | 3 |
| Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Designation of Beneficiary | 4 |
| Thrift Savings Plan Current Information | 4 |
| The Windfall Elimination Provision | 4 |
| 2004 Retirement Seminar Schedule | 5 |

Automated Employment and Income Verification

Buying a Home? Renting an Apartment? Leasing a Car? Establishing Credit? Applying for a Loan? Purchasing a Car?

NASA has implemented an automated employment and income verification service for all NASA civil service employees called The Work Number®.

The Work Number, provided by TALX Corporation, provides immediate employment and income verification. This fast, secure service is used when applying for a mortgage or loan, for reference checking, leasing an apartment or any other instance where proof of employment or income is needed. You benefit from having control of the process – authorizing others access to your information.

The Work Number can be used anytime, anywhere – available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via the Internet or telephone. In addition, you can access The Work Number via a new icon on your Employee Express screen (www.employeeexpress.gov).

See page 4 for details and instructions on how to use The Work Number.



America's leader in automated employment and income verifications.

(Continued on page 5)

Religious Observances

The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Acts of 1978 made it possible for Federal employees to observe the various established religious holy days of their faith; for example, Good Friday, Yom Kippur, etc. Whenever practical, employees who wish to attend or participate in religious observances will be granted, upon request, annual leave, credit hours, leave without pay if annual leave or credit hours are not available, or compensatory time off. In order to earn compensatory time for religious observances, employees may work compensatory overtime before or after the grant of compensatory time off. Advanced compensatory time off should be repaid by the appropriate amount of compensatory overtime worked within 7 pay periods following the pay period in which it was used. Overtime pay provisions do not apply to compensatory work performed for religious observances.

Leadership and Management Development

As part of NASA's Integrated Strategic Human Capital Plan, the Leadership Development Plan is a key succession-planning tool aimed at ensuring that the Agency has the right kind and number of diverse leaders to achieve mission success.



Fellowship Program

NASA's vision and mission necessitate that its workforce is ready and able to lead the world in space exploration, scientific discovery, technology development, and managerial excellence. NASA's Fellowship Program plays a key role in this pursuit by ensuring that employees have the opportunity to obtain best-in-class development at the finest educational institutions.

Opportunities for Leadership Development and Fellowships Coming Soon

The annual call for the NASA Leadership Development Program and NASA Fellowships will come out in May or June of 2004. These programs are stepping stones to positions of greater responsibility and leadership roles. Now is the time to research what program you might be interested in and plan for the application process.

The NASA Leadership Development Program is aimed at GS-13 to 15 employees. This program is a key piece of NASA's succession planning efforts and has the goal of developing effective leaders who align with NASA's

mission and vision of the future. For more information and to see if this program could assist you in achieving your future goals, please visit the following Web site:

<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/ldp/>.

The NASA Fellowship Program plays an important role in the development of NASA's workforce by giving employees the opportunity to obtain best-in-class development at the finest educational institutions. Some examples include programs in Software Engineering, Public Administration, and Management at very prestigious schools

such as Harvard, MIT, Penn State, and Carnegie Mellon. For more information, please see the fellowship program Web site at:

<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/training/fellowship/fellowlinks.htm>.

It's never too early to start planning for your future. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Forde, Organization Development and Training Office, at extension 3-8021.

Integrated Financial Management Program (IFMP) Update

There are currently two IFMP implementation projects underway: ePayroll and Budget Formulation, soon to be joined by the Integrated Asset Management project. Budget Formulation rolled out release .5a in October and release .5b in February. NASA will use the Budget Formulation system to perform its budgeting process this year.

ePayroll is part of the eGovernment initiative of the President's Management Agenda. All Federal agency payroll processing will be consolidated to two to four payroll processing systems. This does not just mean printing paychecks but includes processing all the data that today is stored in the NASA Personnel and Payroll system (NPPS). Because NPPS data is used by many people

across the Center and because the Federal Personnel and Payroll System (FPPS) does not include all the data fields found in NPPS today, changing systems is not as easy as one might think. Rick Bailer, Sandra McWhirter, Diane Duly, Darlene Jackson, Mary Jo Waeltz, and Darlene Walker all get to travel to Huntsville to be trained on the new system. Ken Kirkland will also be trained in Huntsville so that he can in turn train "casual" users of FPPS.

Integrated Asset Management (IAM) is scheduled to begin sometime in March, after the integrator is named. The IAM system will provide a tool to

manage capital assets including logistics (inventory, fleet management, and scientific instruments), facilities (real property and equipment), aircraft, and environment-related assets (hazardous materials, solid waste, and permits). IAM will encompass the life of the asset including planning, project management, real property management, operations, maintenance, and disposal.

Training classes are currently being offered for new purchase requisitioners and for existing purchase requisitioners and for new business warehouse end-users. Resume Manager training is available once a month. Additional training classes are available via the Web. For all the details on available IFMP training, contact Christine Sedelmeyer at extension 3-2665.



Third Quarter External Awards

Every quarter, the Center receives requests for nominations for a wide variety of non-NASA awards. A call letter with nomination criteria summaries is sent to the directorate offices for distribution. Please call the Awards Office at extension 3-2493, for specific information. Additional information regarding external awards can be found at: <http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/employeebenefits/awards/nonnasa.htm>.

| External Awards | Categories 1, 2 or 3 | Due Dates | |
|--|-------------------------|--|---|
| | | To the Awards Office M.S. 500-314 through Dr. Earl's Office | To the Sponsoring Organization through Dr. Earl's Office cc: Awards Office |
| William A. Jump Memorial Award | 1 | March 15, 2004* | |
| National Academy Engineering Awards | 1 | March 8, 2004* | |
| Laura Taber Barbour Air Safety Awards | 3 | | March 15, 2004* |
| Federal Energy and Water Management Awards | 3 | | April 19, 2004 |
| Energy Leadership Awards | 3 | | March 15, 2004* |
| Cliff Henderson Award for Achievement | 3 | | March 31, 2004* |
| Innovations in American Government | 1 | April 19, 2004 | |
| Admiral Luis De Florez Award | 3 | | April 19, 2004 |
| OPM Director's Pillar Award | 3 | | April 19, 2004 |
| GSA Achievement Award for Real Property Innovation | 3 | | May 3, 2004 |
| Heroism Award | 3 | | May 3, 2004 |
| Elder Statesman of Aviation Award | 1 | May 10, 2004 | |
| Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy | 1 | May 10, 2004 | |
| Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards | 1 | May 10, 2004 | |
| National Medal of Science | 1 | May 10, 2004 | |
| Federal Property Manager of the Year Award | 3 | | April 5, 2004 |
| Aviation Week and Space Technology/ Distinguished Service Award | 3 | | May 3, 2004 |
| American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Awards | 3 | | Various Dates |
| Women in Aerospace Awards | 2 | May 24, 2004 | |

*These award nominations are due in March because NASA Headquarters/Sponsoring Organizations need time to prepare nomination packages for approval and distribution in early April 2004.

Awards in categories 1 and 2 are forwarded to Headquarters for final submittal to the sponsoring organization. Awards in category 3 may be submitted directly to the sponsoring organization with the approval of the Center Director. See details to the right.

Category 1 Awards

These awards are considered very prestigious, and NASA has had significant participation in the past. In accordance with the requirements of the sponsoring organization, nominations must be submitted by the head of the Agency. Awards that include a stipend and/or grant that exceeds \$7,500 or are of special interest to the Administrator, such as those pertaining to minorities and females, have been retained in this category by the Administrator's Office. All award nominations in this category are forwarded by the Agency Personnel Policy Branch (Code FPP) to the Administrator for submission to the sponsoring organization.

Category 2 Awards

These are also prestigious awards; however, the criteria has limited application and solicitation from the sponsoring organization is often made to multiple addressees in NASA. Since these award nominations may be submitted by someone other than the Head of the Agency, the responsibility has been delegated to the Associate Administrator for Human Resources and Education (Code F). In addition, because the sponsoring organizations limit the number of nominations from the Agency, nominations must be submitted to the Agency Personnel Policy Branch (Code FPP) for processing and submission to the sponsoring organization.

Category 3 Awards

Annual solicitation from the sponsoring organization in this category is not consistent and sometimes is made through professional society membership, mass distribution, or below the Administrator's level. There is no limit on the number that can be nominated or need for Agency-wide screening; therefore, the Agency Personnel Policy Branch (Code FPP) forwards these solicitations for awards to the Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices or Center Directors for submittal of nominations directly to the sponsoring organization.

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Designation of Beneficiary

Under FEGLI, a child is considered a minor until he/she reaches the age of 18, unless the state in which the "minor" lives has set a lower age; in that case, the lower applies. In Ohio, a child is considered a minor until age 18.

FEGLI cannot, by law, pay benefits to a minor.

If an employee designates a minor as beneficiary, there are three possibilities for payment:

1. Payment will be made to the child's guardian. Please note that being a child's natural parent does not make a person the child's guardian. The guardian must be appointed by a court. This can be expensive and cause a delay in receiving the funds.
2. If there is no court-appointed guardian, payment may be made to the child's natural parent(s) if the benefits are less than \$10,000.
3. If there is no court-appointed guardian (and there are no plans to appoint one) and benefits exceed \$10,000, the money will be held in an interest-bearing account, until the child has reached age of majority.

This is a reminder to periodically check your records and, if necessary, update your beneficiary forms. The most recent copy of your FEGLI beneficiary form can be found in your Official Personnel Folder located in Building 500, Room 1145.

The FEGLI Designation of Beneficiary Form (SF-2823) can be accessed at: www.opm.gov/forms/index.htm.



THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

Current Information

Open season dates: April 15 through June 30, 2004

IRS elective deferral limit for 2004: \$13,000

- FERS employees whose salaries exceed \$92,857 could exceed the IRS elective deferral limit. An updated version of the Fact Sheet, [Annual Limit on Elective Deferrals](#), is now available in Forms & Publications on the TSP Web site, www.tsp.gov.

TSP contribution limit for FERS employees for 2004: 14 percent (up to the IRS limit).

TSP contribution limit for CSRS employees for 2004: 9 percent (up to the IRS limit).

Participant statements are available online in [Account Access](#) on the TSP Web site. Click on [Your TSP Participant Statement](#) for more information.

TSP CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS: If you are age 50 or older and you are already contributing the maximum amount of regular TSP contributions for which you are eligible, you may elect to make up to \$3,000 in catch-up contributions for 2004. *You must make a new election each calendar year.* (This [limit](#) changes annually.) Elections for the TSP Catch-Up Contributions are made through Employee Express at www.employeeexpress.gov.

Windfall Elimination Provision

The Social Security Administration has developed a chart showing the maximum monthly amount that social security benefits can be reduced because of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) if a person has less than 30 years of substantial earnings. The chart can be found at:

www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/wep-chart.htm.



*Putting Federal employees
in control of their payroll-
personnel information.*

Employee Express Options

Home Address

Allotments

Tax Information

Federal Employees Health
Benefits

Thrift Savings Plan

Earnings and Leave State-
ment

Combined Federal Campaign

(Continued from page 1)

How to Use The Work Number

For Proof of Employment

Step 1) Give the person needing proof of your employment, the verifier, the following information:

Your Social Security Number: _ _ - _ - _ - _ - _ -

NASA's Employer Code: 11338

The Work Number Access Options:

Option a) www.theworknumber.com

Option b) 1-800-367-5690

For Proof of Employment plus Income

Step 1) Obtain a Salary Key

The Work Number Access Options for Employees:

Option a) www.theworknumber.com

Option b) 1-800-367-2884

Step 2) Select to Obtain a Salary Key and write down in the boxes provided below

Step 3) Enter the following information:

NASA's Employer Code: 11338

Your Social Security Number: _ _ - _ - _ - _ - _ -

Your PIN (your PIN will be the last 4 digits of your SSN and the full 4 digit year you were born)

IMPORTANT: DO NOT GIVE THE VERIFIER YOUR PIN

Step 4) Give the person needing proof of your employment plus income, the verifier, the following information:

Your Social Security Number: _ _ - _ - _ - _ - _ -

NASA's Employer Code: 11338

Your Salary Key (from Step 3): _ _ _ _ _

The Work Number Access Options for Verifiers:

Option a) www.theworknumber.com

Option b) 1-800-367-5690

Step 5) Request that the verifier contact The Work Number at: www.theworknumber.com/Verifiers/ or call 1-800-367-5690.

The Work Number Client Service Center

Monday – Friday; 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. (EST)

1-800-996-7566

1-800-424-0253 (TTY – Hearing Impaired)

<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/employeebenefits/Talx/Default.htm>

A concern was raised that some verifiers, such as mortgage companies,



using this service may attempt to charge the employee. The TALX Corporation has a policy to reimburse any employee charged a fee. Although this policy has been in effect for a long time, TALX indicated it is rare that anyone takes advantage of it. But just in case an employee does request reimbursement, he/she must submit a receipt from the verifier for the fee charged and the receipt must have either "TALX" or "The Work Number" on it. The request and receipt should be submitted to the following address:

Debbie Meyerpeter

Call Center Manager-TALX Corporation

1850 Borman Court

St. Louis, MO 63146

Questions concerning The Work Number should be directed to the Client Service Center, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. (EST). The number is 1-800-996-7566 and 1-800-424-0253 for TTY.

Retirement and Financial Planning Seminars in 2004

The Organization Development and Training Office will offer the following retirement planning seminars during 2004. All seminars will be held in the Auditorium in Building 500 (DEB).

Mid-Career Financial Planning – May 18 & 19, 2004 (8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.) For GRC Federal employees with more than 5 years of service and who are at least 5 to 10 years away from retirement. Attendees will learn the basics of financial planning and investment concerns; entitlement and eligibility of various Federal benefits; how to relate TSP, Retirement, Disability and Survivor benefits; and key points of estate planning.

Retirement Refresher – Sept. 14, 2003 (8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.) For employees who have previously taken a retirement seminar and would like to have information updates.

My Spouse and Our Federal Benefits – Sept. 14, 2004 (6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.) An evening seminar for spouses of civil service employees to learn about the Federal retirement program and the impact it will have on their retirement years together.

Benefits Orientation for Newer Employees – Sept. 15, 2004 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) For employees with less than 5 years of service.

Retirement Planning Seminar – Oct. 13-15, 2004 (8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.) Targeted for all employees who plan to retire from Federal service. The time to attend this seminar is now, regardless of how far away from retirement you are.

Oct. 13—CSRS

Oct. 14—FERS

Oct. 15—Financial Planning

Nola Bland, extension 3-9343, is the point of contact for questions.