

The background of the entire page is a dark blue-tinted photograph. On the left, the Old Main building is visible, featuring a prominent portico with columns and a clock tower. On the right, a large, abstract sculpture made of dark metal rings is partially visible. In the foreground, a person is walking up the steps of the building.

2020-2021

ANNUAL REPORT



PennState
Human Resources



INTRODUCTION FROM LORRAINE

Welcome to the Human Resources (HR) 2020-2021 annual report. I am proud to present an overview of HR's highlights this past fiscal year and share the excellent progress made towards our strategic plan. As a community, we continued to come together and adapt to challenge after challenge, driven forward with our mission and vision in mind.

During this busy time, it can be hard to step back and reflect on how far our teams have come. I invite everyone to celebrate our successes and recognize the contributions of our fellow team members.

I look forward to the new heights Team HR will reach in 2021-2022!

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ADVANCING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN



HR's Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 guides every aspect of our organization and maps out a course for our collective journey of becoming a world-class HR function. The planning and execution phases of the strategic plan involve team members across the HR community. Our teams continue to make progress within the plan's goals, objectives, and action items. So much has already been achieved. Here are some highlights:

FOUNDATIONAL WORK

- Established portfolio management and governance structure to prioritize strategic initiatives and monitor project performance.
- Defined and evaluated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress toward goals and actions in the strategic plan.

1

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

GOAL:

Increase organizational effectiveness of Human Resources to better serve the University.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Assessed fifteen web applications utilized by HR and the Penn State community for inclusion in the Penn State Application Modernization Project, which once completed, will ensure we fully utilize existing technologies such as Workday and Neocase. Enhanced functionality and a common user interface will create a better experience for users across the University.
- Progressed in optimizing Labor & Employee Relations case management with new system and preparing to engage a vendor.
- Developed exit interview process and conducted a pilot in several administrative units, colleges, and campuses including: Student Affairs, the Division of Development and Alumni Relations (DDAR), Eberly College of Science, HR, Information Technology (IT), Finance & Business, and the Hazelton, Wilkes-Barre, and Scranton campuses.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Launched the Compensation Modernization Initiative, a large-scale, 18-24 month-long effort that will modernize Penn State's staff compensation and career structures. The goal of the initiative is to create modern, competitive compensation structures and clear, supportive career development resources for staff members to use.
- Led the University-wide Remote Work Task Force in researching flexible work and providing recommendations to senior leaders on how to proceed.
- Created the University Implementation team for Flexible Work Arrangements to implement recommendations from the Remote Work Task Force.

2

ENGAGE & REWARD

GOAL:

Systems and tools will be developed to enable managers to recognize and reward employees. Employees will be more engaged through creating a supportive culture that promotes their financial, physical, and emotional health & well-being, as well as their personal and career development.

3

DEVELOP & RETAIN

GOAL:

Enhance individual and organizational effectiveness by ensuring every employee feels welcomed and valued and has access to the training, tools and resources they need to be successful beginning with their first day of work and continuing throughout their career at Penn State.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Rolled out onboarding activities dashboard in Workday as part of New Employee Welcome Program to allow for better understanding and visibility into required onboarding tasks.
- Embarked on new strategic support efforts in several units, including:
 - New employee onboarding and mentoring process in Athletics.
 - New Employee orientation in Auxiliary & Business Services.
 - Re-designed orientation for new employees in the Office of the Physical Plant, including sessions for staff, technical service, and part-time employees.
- Enhanced business process, training, communication, and reporting related to the Performance Management Cycle.
- Launched Supervision Essentials curriculum to deliver critical information to all new supervisors.
- Introduced on-demand playlists on business skills for employee use.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Developed a new HR recruiting model.
- Realigned the Talent Acquisition Specialist role to provide direct support to unit HR Strategic Partners.
- Created a recruiter training program for Talent Acquisition Specialists.
- Developed a staff recruitment action plan to increase the quality of staff hires and decrease the time it takes to fill positions.
- Improved sourcing strategies to build diverse and highly qualified candidate pools.

4

RECRUIT & ACQUIRE

GOAL:

Build a strategic talent acquisition function that revolves around a competitive employer brand, engaging and standardized candidate experience, and streamlined service delivery.

5

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, & BELONGING

GOAL:

Provide leadership and establish partnerships throughout the University to strengthen efforts at embedding Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at all levels of the organization.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Hired new Assistant Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) to support University leadership's ongoing commitment to fostering and supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Progressed on infrastructure, marketing, onboarding, performance evaluation, and policies around diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
 - Created new positions in preparation to build a full DIB team in HR. Planned for new roles, including a programs manager, a trainer, and an analytics specialist.
 - Planned and designed new web pages for diversity.psu.edu website.
 - Embedded DIB into onboarding and performance evaluation, including adding a diversity competency to the performance evaluation process.
 - Reviewed several policies to ensure inclusivity and began working on new guidelines to help the HR team handle bias incidents and to provide assistance for supporting employees who are transgender.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

The University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to involve extensive contributions from every HR team. For the most part, HR continued to work remotely this past fiscal year and found innovative ways to deliver our services while diligently working to respond to the pandemic. Many of HR's teams have thrived in a remote environment. HR has increased communication efforts significantly over the course of the pandemic, including participating in internal town halls and University-wide town halls. While HR's pandemic-related work continues, some highlights from the past fiscal year include:

HR BUSINESS CONTINUITY

- Continued remote service and maintenance of key relationships in units. Received excellent feedback from unit customers regarding remote customer service.
- Established an effective virtual recruitment strategy to meet the demands of the University's Back to State initiative, including developing strategic sourcing channels, creating marketing and communications collateral, and offering virtual information sessions and interview plans. Over **350** fixed-term and part-time COVID-19 positions were sourced, an effort that required consistent collaboration between Talent Acquisition and the HR teams in units, colleges, and campuses across the University.
- Implemented temporary policies University-wide to function in a fully remote environment, including adjusting HRG02 – Alternate Work Arrangements to streamline documentation, adjusting various leave policies including federal and union-specific leave entitlement, and creating masking policies.
- Transitioned all Talent Management classroom-based trainings to virtual, instructor-led trainings, laying a foundation for expanding course offerings and continuing to use a virtual format to increase access to programs for those outside University Park.
- Implemented and administered legislative changes related to benefits, including the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), changes to personal spending accounts, and modification of retirement distributions.
- Managed the closing and reopening of the University's childcare centers amidst changes in leadership and numerous pandemic-related challenges.
- Utilized the current pandemic to analyze and assess business needs and adapt to shifting expectations around work arrangements.

RETURN TO WORK

- Continued to create guidelines, plans, and communications within the Return to Work Task Force for employees returning to on-site work. New guidelines included an updated Back to State guide, a staff transition strategy and process, and a supervisor's guide to assessing suitability for remote work.
- Worked with units, colleges, and campuses on three distinct efforts: a return to on-site research, the return of students to campus, and the return of employees to on-site work.
- Implemented Return to Work guidelines within each unit, college, and campus with extensive participation by unit HR in task forces, committees, and town hall meetings related to COVID-19.



HEALTH AND SAFETY



- Supported COVID-19 reporting, contact tracing, and rapid testing through collaboration between Absence Management and Occupational Medicine.
- Pivoted to drive-thru flu vaccine distribution, with **1,832 vaccines** administered to Penn State employees and their families during the Fall 2020 semester.
- Guided and oversaw health and safety of the Applied Research Lab workforce, which continued to maintain on-site operations throughout the pandemic due to government requirements.
- Helped create Student Affairs contact tracing and quarantine/isolation programs, which included extensive hiring, redeployment of existing staff, and subsequent transition of staff as needs decreased.
- Established priority levels for the early vaccine initiative and worked to safeguard those most at risk due to the nature of their work.
- Managed follow-up and tracking for random testing program.

REDUCTIONS RESPONSE

- Managed various layoffs and recalls of Technical Service employees, completed a reduction in workforce within IT, and facilitated transfers of employees to mitigate job losses.
- Provided CareerLink programs to employees who were laid off due to COVID-19, including a Dislocated Worker Program and Rapid Response Team dedicated to assisting those facing job losses.
- Tracked and modeled various avenues for cost savings throughout Penn State's units, including extensive planning within Athletics, the Applied Research Lab, and IT.

SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS

HR has continued offering effective customer service despite the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions. Many members of Team HR have become experts in delivering virtual service and bridging gaps in communication through effective use of technology. HR's creativity and commitment to customer service this year was noted by many of our customers, and HR continues to embrace virtual collaboration and maintain our high standard of service. As Team HR moves into a year with a renewed focus on customer service as an organization-wide goal, here are some customer service highlights from the 2020-2021 year:

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

- Prioritized leadership development, coaching, and strategic goal setting for leaders and supervisors in various units.
- Provided information sessions at Abington, Brandywine, and Great Valley on Social Security Retirement benefits and Medicare eligibility.
- Created training for graduate administrative staff.
- Continued delivery of instructor-led Workday recruiter training for hiring managers.

LABOR RELATIONS



- Renegotiated renewal of the Teamsters Local 8 collective bargaining agreement for a three-year term, from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024. The contract renewal met all of HR's strategic priorities despite pandemic-related challenges.
- Negotiated a one-year renewal of the University Police and Public Safety (UPPS) contract.
- Implemented Super Seniority categorization for technical service job bidding, a designation given to employees on layoff status that grants them primary consideration for open positions.

CHILDCARE

- Facilitated the formation of a Faculty Advisory Committee for the University's two childcare centers, Hort Woods and Bennett Family Center. This committee is tasked with providing insight and support in consideration of how early childhood care and education fit within the context of the University and its operations.
- Engaged in an environmental scan of the University-based childcare centers, which includes researching childcare models from other universities and applying this information to improve Penn State's centers.

BUSINESS & SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

- Staffed Enrollment Management Services initiative to better serve World Campus students.
- Guided employees through several key migrations, including transferring all files from Box and HR servers to Sharepoint/OneDrive.
- Collaborated to ensure a successful Benefits Open Enrollment period for 2021 benefit elections.
- Delivered tailored training and job aids for Learning Center Directors on the hiring and onboarding of student tutors.
- Contributed to the SIMBA Research Administration task force.
- Created job aids to support hiring managers in filling technical service vacancies.

CULTURE & SUPPORT

- Conducted welcome and check-in calls with new hires in DDAR, as well as key DDAR fundraising leaders.
- Provided leadership for committees, councils, task forces and other essential groups across the Commonwealth that focus on employee needs, perspectives, and goals.
- Developed UPPS Voices to Action initiative to understand and improve culture and employee engagement within UPPS.
- Kicked off a monthly supervisor series in IT that serves as an open forum for supervisors to share ideas on timely topics and trends, facilitated by HR.
- Drafted bylaws for Brandywine's first Staff Advisory Council and developed scope, goals, and content for Brandywine's Advisory Board Staff Mentoring Program.

EVOLVING OUR PROCESSES AND RESOURCES

HR has produced a multitude of improvements in the way we work. Members of Team HR have worked together in the spirit of continuous improvement to evolve processes and improve key resources. Some highlights include:

NEW PROCESSES

- Developed a process in Athletics to support reallocation of internal staff and maximize productivity for those whose positions were impacted by COVID-19.
- Piloted and delivered a new in-person I-9 document verification process.
- Established a process to prioritize Workday enhancement requests across all HR teams.
- Created a new process to track all HR contracts.
- Created a business process for reviewing non-personnel requests.
- Increased budgetary reporting to better manage our operations.

ENHANCEMENTS & UPDATES

- Updated Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes.
- Created several new HR standard operating procedures at the Applied Research Lab regarding the hiring process, alternate work arrangements, off-boarding, and temporary work assignments.
- Transitioned standing and fixed-term positions to regular and limited term, a new model that bases position type on intent of work instead of funding source.
- Modified I-9 partner roles for more efficient and effective onboarding service at Commonwealth campuses.
- Made extensive enhancements to online staff Job Responsibilities Worksheets (JRW) for the Compensation Modernization Initiative.

- Improved Teamsters temporary transfer process and better defined whether a position should be classified as staff versus technical service.
- Finalized the supplemental pay audit and process improvement plan.
- Updated Performance Management reporting capabilities to increase visibility of key data points.
- Reconfigured HR cost centers and increased visibility of resources allocated by units using SIMBA.

DOCUMENTATION REVISION

- Revised all core DDAR documents and processes, including the job position and search process, standardized posting language with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) information, and templates for phone screens and interview schedules.
- Completed document migration for Records Management Standardization Project with a total of **408,837 documents** relocated to the new, central instance of DocFinity. Subsequent compliance efforts resulted in the purging of **340,455 documents** from central DocFinity.

EXPEDITING & AUTOMATING

- Developed an automated enrollment solution for the Tuition Discount program for dependents of eligible employees.
- Created an expedited hiring and onboarding process in Student Affairs to meet critical needs for Fall 2020.
- Automated daily Neocase reports and moved Neocase PowerBI report data to SharePoint.
- Automated the hiring exception process.

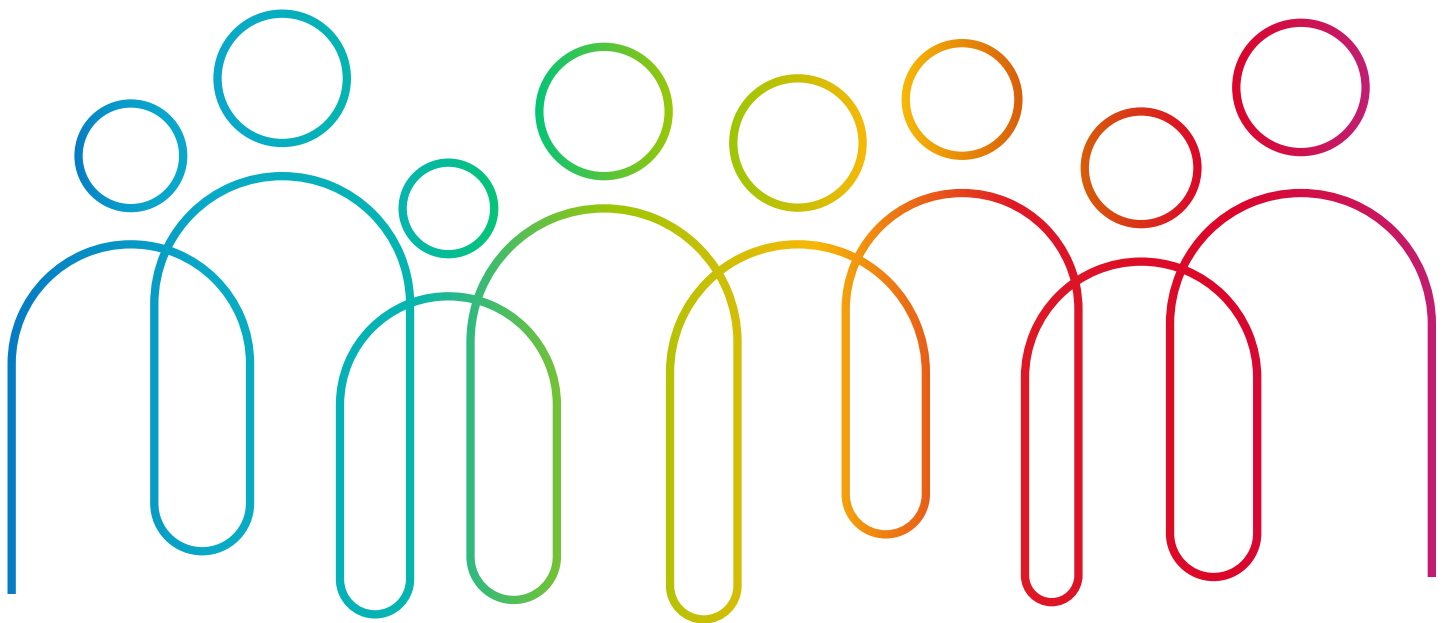


BUILDING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

The University's commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DIB) relies on the development of strong programs and policies in HR. HR has orchestrated rapid developments in the advancement of diversity throughout the Penn State community. With extensive work taking place in HR to build a DIB team as well as vibrant programs and training efforts at our Commonwealth campuses, HR's goal to strengthen and embed DIB across the organization is coming into focus. Some highlights include:

PROGRAMS & TRAINING

- Delivered diversity workshops to the Academic Leadership Council.
- Conducted several workshops on unconscious bias to various units.
- Offered "Linguistic Bias Against Foreign Names" program, sponsored by Great Valley's Diversity Action Council.
- Coordinated a four-part diversity and inclusion learning series at Harrisburg.



LEADERSHIP GROUPS & INITIATIVES

- Shared HR's DIB plan and information on current representation trends at Penn State with the Committee on Equity and Human Resources of the Board of Trustees.
- Restructured Outreach and Online Education's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Council, appointed formal leaders, and assisted in creating required training for all council members.
- Advanced Auxiliary & Business Services and Finance & Business DIB initiatives.
- Provided leadership and support for commissions and committees across the Commonwealth, including Brandywine's Chancellor's Commissions on Empowering Women and on Disability and Advancing Accessibility.
- Rolled out diversity and inclusion initiatives, including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committees at Fayette, Greater Allegheny, and New Kensington, including an Interrogating Bias course on mitigating bias within search committees.
- Advanced activities within the diversity committee at the Wilkes-Barre campus.



DIVERSITY

INCLUSION

BELONGING

ENHANCING COMMUNICATIONS

The importance of effective communications reached new heights this year, as teams across the University faced new challenges and continued to collaborate remotely. Some highlights include:

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

- Utilized technology across HR teams to maintain customer relationships and collaborate effectively.
- Created a Sharepoint site for supervisors in Outreach and Online Education.
- Introduced a Recruitment News Page and developed virtual career fair booths for the Applied Research Lab.
- Implemented a monthly HR newsletter in IT to keep employees up to date with HR-related information and news and to serve as a tool to recognize employees' years of service.
- Built out and updated the HR website, including new Talent Management pages.



INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Hosted monthly HR town halls and launched summer newsletters.
- Created a strategic communications plan.
- Continued development of the HR Intranet, with new information on key projects, a new HR portfolio related to the strategic plan, and more.

MARKETING & OUTREACH

- Refreshed and re-launched our HR Instagram, with our number of followers increasing by over **36%**.

Follow us on
Instagram
@pennstatehr!



LOOKING AHEAD

Team HR has a lot to look forward to as we progress in our strategic plan and gradually return to normal operations. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, HR has continued advancing within ambitious strategic goals. Our roadmap for the 2021-2022 fiscal year includes:

Developments across all areas of the HR strategic plan.

Strengthened synergy between HR teams based in units, colleges and campuses, and all other HR teams through process alignment and effective communication, guided by the goal of working as “One HR.”

Recommitment to customer service as the foundation of all we do.

Exploration of remote and hybrid work arrangements during HR’s Flexible Work Arrangements Pilot, with the goal of gathering detailed, actionable data to inform HR’s future and offer insight to units considering hybrid and remote work arrangements.

HERE A FEW CLOSING THOUGHTS FROM SOME OF OUR HR TEAMS:

- The Academic HR team looks forward to working on new initiatives beyond managing the pandemic and plans to focus on rebuilding workplace climate and messaging the expectation of workplace civility.
- The Commonwealth Campuses HR team is looking forward to focusing on customer service initiatives and more strategic HR work, utilizing data and metrics to analyze trends to better support the critical work of our campuses.
- The Administrative HR team eagerly awaits a post-pandemic state of affairs. The team looks forward to taking on innovative and creative projects to reinvigorate and increase engagement among the PSU workforce, driving the overall employee value proposition through dedication and commitment to implementation of the HR Strategic Plan.
- HR's Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging team has a lot to look forward to this year. There's much more in the works for making PSU the employer of choice – be on the lookout for some new DIB related efforts in talent acquisition, training and development, and programs. We are working to cultivate a vibrant, diverse community across all of Penn State.
- HRIT is jumping into the Technology Enhancement Strategy and Roadmap with a completed charter and a team and goals identified.



- The Operational Excellence team is ready to help Team HR accomplish its strategic goals. The team looks forward to partnering with many HR colleagues in the coming year in people analytics, business process analysis, and project and portfolio management.
- The Labor and Employee Relations team continues to review its own processes to ensure quality and timely service, and the team looks forward to partnering with the Talent Management team to update Labor Relations and Employee Relations trainings.
- The Compensation & Benefits team looks forward to advancing HR's strategic goals around total rewards and health and well-being, ensuring that we are providing competitive pay and benefits programs which attract and retain employees, and supporting our employees and families to thrive in the communities in which they live and work.
- Occupational Medicine has played a critical role in the management and mitigation of COVID-19 for Penn State's employees across all campuses. As those efforts hopefully become less necessary, Occupational Medicine will collaborate with the Benefits and Absence Management teams on how to more effectively manage the University's Workers Compensation expenditures.
- As we close out this fiscal year and look forward to the next, the HR Shared Services team continues to place a heavy emphasis on customer service and process improvement. Through partnerships with the WorkLion Management Office, Unit HR, IT, Office of Ethics and Compliance, Faculty Affairs, and others, we are excited to build out new services such as FBI fingerprinting and electronic signature, while also making significant enhancements to current initiatives within records management, compliance, content management, and onboarding.

