Opening Letter
GW Celebrates Dr. King’s Legacy

2014 Career Milestones
Dr. Richard Tollo Named “Professor of the Year”

News You Can Use

Reintroducing Your HR Client Partner

The GW Confucius Institute: A Bridge Between the U.S. and China

GW In Touch Staff Spotlight: Michael R. Tapscott

Robert Coles Brings Alexander Pushkin to Life

Coaching Conversations: Using the Three C’s as a Framework for Diversity

Ask UHR
In Memoriam

In this issue...

Spring Forward

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Opinions expressed here are those of the individuals and do not necessarily reflect official positions of the university.
Dear GW Faculty and Staff,

In March, we honored hundreds of GW employees who celebrated career milestones at the annual Career Milestones event on campus. One honoree included George Brittle, an officer of the GW University Police Department for 40 years. His experience mirrors that of other employees whose unique, tireless contributions have made our community a better place.

GW continues to evolve, attracting a diverse and talented group of faculty and staff. In this issue of GW In Touch, we highlight Michael R. Tapscott, director of the Multicultural Student Services Center; Robert Coles, professor in the Romance, German & Slavic Languages and Literatures department; and the GW Confucius Institute, which is one of hundreds of centers worldwide dedicated to the study of Chinese language and culture.

Readers can also find information about Colonial Community’s Walking and Running Club and new fitness promotions offered by the Lerner Health & Wellness Center.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue.

Sabrina Ellis
Vice President for University Human Resources

LOOKING BACK

GW Celebrates Dr. King’s Legacy

On Thursday, January 16th, students, faculty, and staff eagerly gathered to commemorate the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s 85th birthday. This event was part of a week-long celebration that highlighted the late civil rights leader’s commitment to nonviolence, service, and equality.

The Multicultural Student Services Center (MSSC) collaborated with the Center for Civic Engagement & Public Service, the Center for Student Engagement, the GW Business School, and the Office of Diversity & Inclusion to kick off the celebration with a screening of the History Channel’s documentary “King” in the Marvin Center. Activities later in the week included readings of Dr. King’s speeches in Kogan Plaza and a university-wide day of service.

“It was very exciting for me to see how engaged students were during my remarks,” said Dr. Fran Buntman, associate professor of sociology and author of Robben Island and Prisoner Resistance to Apartheid, who offered a moving tribute during one of the celebratory events and presented reflections on Dr. King’s legacy. “Dr. King recognized that you make social change by persistent organized struggle. Whether it was marching, writing, or praying, it was connective and active. His strategy did not take the short, easy route.”

More than 60 members of the university community listened to commentary about Dr. King’s legacy in the Marvin Center. Other speakers included Bernard Demczuk, associate vice president for District Relations, Robin Marcus, teaching instructor in the University Writing Program, and George Rice, associate director at the MSSC.
2014 Career Milestones

Hundreds of faculty and staff members recently gathered to celebrate the career milestones of nearly 500 employees during the annual Career Milestones program. Two ceremonies took place in the Marvin Center on March 4th and 6th where employees that reached 5, 10, 15, and 20+ years of employment at the university were honored.

Among the honorees was George Brittle, a lieutenant with the GW University Police Department (GWPD). Over the course of 40 years, he served the community through eight U.S. presidents, numerous student-led protests, and the university’s expansion in the heart of the nation’s capital. These days, he works in GWPD as a field training coordinator, a position that allows him to impart wisdom on incoming university police officers.

“University Human Resources, as well as the entire university community, is extremely proud to work with such dedicated colleagues who exemplify true commitment to excellence,” said Sabrina Ellis, vice president for University Human Resources. “Celebrating these career milestones helps to inspire and motivate others.”

LOOKING BACK

Dr. Richard Tollo Named “Professor of the Year”

Every year, GW student-athletes submit nominations for professors that they feel make the greatest contribution to their academic success. Dr. Richard Tollo, director of the Geological Sciences Program and a faculty member for more than 30 years, received the coveted honor on February 5th. President Knapp presented a plaque commemorating the distinction to Dr. Tollo before hundreds of visitors at the Smith Center during the GW men’s basketball game against Duquesne University.

“It’s extremely gratifying to be recognized in such a way by our students,” said Dr. Tollo. “They are the primary reason for our existence. We in academia serve as vessels for knowledge, passing on what we know and happily sharing what we learn so that our students can move forward intellectually.”

ON THE COVER

It’s that time of the year again! Nearly 2,000 cherry blossoms lining the Tidal Basin bloomed in early April. The vibrant colors of the cherry blossoms attract millions of visitors to the nation’s capital every year, many of whom take part in the Cherry Blossom Festival, a celebration that commemorates the gift of the Japanese cherry trees to Washington, D.C. from Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo in 1912.

Photo by Jessica McConnell Burt
Health and Wellness

Colonial Community now offers walking and running meet-ups for faculty and staff members. Walkers and runners of all skill levels are welcome to join. Groups meet every Monday and Wednesday from 5:30pm to 6:30pm at Kogan Plaza on the Foggy Bottom Campus. For more information or to register and receive updates about the club, please visit [http://hr.gwu.edu/gw-faculty-staff-runwalk-club](http://hr.gwu.edu/gw-faculty-staff-runwalk-club).

The Department of Exercise Science offers free yoga and pilates classes for faculty and staff. All who participate are asked to bring comfortable clothing, a yoga mat, a towel, and water. The days and times that the sessions take place are below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Walking and Running Club</td>
<td>Pilates</td>
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<td>Kogan Plaza</td>
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<td>Enterprise Hall, VSTC</td>
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Counseling at No Cost

Colonial Community offers an employee assistance program as part of GW’s Wellbeing Hotline, which is a free and confidential counseling service for faculty, staff, their dependents, and household members. Enrollees can discuss personal issues such as stress, relationships, grief, job pressures, and substance abuse with clinicians over the course of five sessions.

For more information about the Wellbeing Hotline, please visit [http://hr.gwu.edu/wellbeing-hotline](http://hr.gwu.edu/wellbeing-hotline).

UnitedHealthCare NurseLine

Benefits-eligible employees can access the UnitedHealthCare's NurseLine to talk with experienced registered nurses that help them make smart health care decisions and choose the best health services. If you have such questions, please call 1-888-887-4114 or visit [http://myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com) to find a doctor or hospital, seek answers to medication questions, and locate other health-related resources.

New Fitness Promotions

The Lerner Health & Wellness Center now offers one month of free membership to all who enroll in the Weight Watchers program. Those who sign up today receive a complimentary 30-minute consultation from a certified health coach who will help participants focus on fitness, nutrition, and guidance towards optimal well-rounded health.

University departments are eligible for a 10 percent discount when at least five of its employees sign up for a gym membership. Members can participate in department-wide fitness competitions and receive complimentary gym services as a prize for meeting their fitness goals.

For more information about these promotions, please visit [http://campusrecreation.gwu.edu](http://campusrecreation.gwu.edu).
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ODE Revamps Its Website

New Features Help You Reach Your Potential

UHR’s Organizational Development & Effectiveness (ODE) unit recently redesigned its website. Visitors may now utilize an array of new tools that serve as key resources in professional development such as:

- **Learn Now Guides** - This section provides resources related to on-the-job learning by using performance factors and tips to improve development goals.

- **Leaders at all Levels** - Employees can use this tool to build leadership skills or enhance skills while in supervisory roles.

- **Performance Management (PM)** - This guide provides an overview of the PM process and suggests tools to help employees progress throughout their careers.

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**Value Diversity with the Learn Now Guide**

Improve your ability to appreciate the diverse ideas and perspectives of those around you. Review the Learn Now Guide for Valuing Diversity and explore the tools and resources available to enhance this important component of your professional development by visiting [http://ode.hr.gwu.edu/valuing-diversity](http://ode.hr.gwu.edu/valuing-diversity).

Tell us how you used some of the ideas in the guide for the chance to receive a gift. The first 10 people to send an email to askode@gwu.edu with “Valuing Diversity” in the subject heading will receive a copy of *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell, a guide to understanding the effects of unconscious biases.

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**SAVE THE DATE**

**Tobacco-Free Day**
May 31, 2014

Millions of smokers across the world will attempt to kick the habit for 24 hours on Tobacco-Free Day. The annual event encourages all to stop smoking and draws attention to the negative health effects of tobacco use.

GW employees who want to quit smoking are encouraged to enroll in “Quit for Life,” the university’s free smoking cessation program. Professionals will help those who join embark on a journey to a smoke-free lifestyle. For more information about “Quit for Life” and other resources, please visit [http://smokefree.gwu.edu](http://smokefree.gwu.edu).

**Staff Summer Softball League 2014**
June 2, 2014

The Staff Summer Softball League kicks off on the Mount Vernon Campus. For more information about joining the league or to register your team, please email Aubre Jones at aubre@gwu.edu.

**Proud to be GW Festival**

Join the university in the celebration of community, diversity, and teamwork at the fifth annual Proud to be GW Festival. Every year, faculty and staff join senior leadership in fellowship and fun while eating food, listening to music, and taking part in healthy activities. The details are below:

- **Virginia Science & Technology Campus**
  Tuesday, June 3, 2014, 11:30am–1:30pm, Enterprise Hall

- **Foggy Bottom Campus**
  Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 2:00–4:00pm, University Yard

For more information about the festival or to see photos from the previous years’ events, please visit [http://hr.gwu.edu/proud-be-gw-employee-festival](http://hr.gwu.edu/proud-be-gw-employee-festival).
University Human Resources (UHR) Client Services provides faculty and staff with comprehensive and personalized HR services. Client partners assist divisions and schools with the development and implementation of effective human resources management practices such as:

**One-on-One Consultation** - meeting with employees about issues related to common university employment practices. Employees, whether they are new or have worked at the university for several years, are often unaware of policies and/or policy changes.

**Advising HR Leadership about Employee Initiatives** - providing feedback to senior leadership and management prior to the implementation of new policies and initiatives.

**Recruitment** - working with hiring managers to review, post, and fill university positions.

**Professional Development** - connecting employees with resources and programs that assist with organizational development, customized learning and training opportunities specific to the needs of the school or division.

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**Client Partner Testimonials**

In this issue of GW In Touch, employees reflect on past experiences with their client partners. Their comments are below:

*Mike Kohn is extremely helpful in our office. I recently ran mock interviews for our graduate assistants and Mike volunteered his time and talent to help them prepare for their post-graduation job search. I feel very lucky to have Mike as our client partner and as a colleague.*

Ellie Hansen,
Coordinator, Student Involvement, Center for Student Engagement

*Suzanne Ayres has been an exceptional resource and a true thought partner in helping us to make strategic decisions and to adopt consistent best practices. I am a huge fan of the HR client partner concept, and of our specific client partner!*

Laurie Koehler,
Senior Associate Provost, Division of Enrollment Management

*Natasha Kazeem and Yury Metelski make sure department faculty get what they need, while they ensure that we are thinking about ways to meet our challenges and increase the career opportunities for all of our community. We have been able to do this work in large part because of Natasha and Yury's patience, persistence and creativity.*

Josef J. Reum,
Associate Dean, Milken Institute School of Public Health

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For more information about Client Services, please visit http://hr.gwu.edu/client-services.
Dr. Xiaofei Kang’s interdisciplinary approach to studying and explaining Chinese culture has fostered her status as an expert on Chinese history, language, and literature. She has been recognized around the world for her unique research and viewpoint on contemporary Chinese culture.

As the research director of the Confucius Institute, one of Washington, D.C.’s innovative global language and culture programs, she has spearheaded collaborative research efforts between GW and Chinese scholars while promoting cultural exchanges with China.

This year, the institute has collected nearly one dozen faculty research proposals from GW faculty members that seek to further study on Chinese history, literature, linguistics, communications, and museum studies. Dr. Kang hopes that they can secure funding to carry out the projects.

“We’re trying to see what kind of research and collaborative projects our faculty members are interested in and have completed,” said Dr. Kang. “Some are long-term research projects related to China and some seek collaborative opportunities with the Chinese and other scholars.”

In April 2014, faculty, staff, and students gathered at 2147 F Street to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the Confucius Institute, a center within GW’s Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS). It counts among hundreds of Confucius Institutes across the country and around the world that promote cultural exchanges between the U.S. and China. However, it is the first of its kind in Washington, D.C. and its inception culminated nearly four years of negotiations between the university and Nanjing University in Jiangsu, China.

The institute’s team of faculty and graduate students from Nanjing University organized personalized Mandarin language instruction and free public cultural events that included the Lunar New Year celebration in January and a lecture series about the life and teachings of modern Chinese philosopher Xiong Shili in March.

Dr. Ben Vinson, dean of CCAS, applauded the university’s efforts in establishing the Confucius Institute. He said it has become a vital component of what he considers to be one of the strongest liberal arts programs in the country.

“We believe that regardless of discipline or areas of regional focus, there is much to be gained within the intellectual community from reflecting on and learning about China,” said Dean Vinson. “The GW Confucius Institute presents the opportunity to generate a fertile scholarly discourse that blends the best of Western academic approaches with knowledge that was honed in China. In a truly globalizing world, our Confucius Institute aspires to model an effective East/West partnership with the foundation being academic knowledge.”

For more information about the Confucius Institute and its programs, please visit http://research.columbian.gwu.edu/confucius.
Every spring before our GW Commencement, Michael R. Tapscott stands before hundreds of excited, open-minded graduating seniors in the Smith Center and offers gems of wisdom that he believes will place them on a path toward future financial stability as well as personal and professional fulfillment.

His speeches during the Multicultural Student Services Center’s (MSSC) annual graduation celebration have compelled graduates to reflect on a four-year journey that has been filled with personal challenges and triumphs. Over the years, students have grown fond of Mr. Tapscott’s...
enthusiastic yet earnest words of advice and encouragement. His memorable words elicit genial periods of laughter and moments of deep thought. For many students, he embodies a sense of stability throughout important steps of their undergraduate experience.

Mr. Tapscott goes beyond his role as director of the MSSC, which is the main campus hub for multicultural communication, community building, and leadership. He helps to provide the quintessential GW experience for students of various racial, social, and cultural backgrounds. His desire to create a family-oriented atmosphere at the center has earned him the title of “Papa T” among his students.

“I must remain committed and visible,” said Mr. Tapscott. “It’s like being a father to hundreds of sons and daughters and helping to guide them through four of the most important years of their lives. That often means providing advice and insight to my students, as well as being engaged in their interests and successes.”

The MSSC is one of six offices and initiatives within the Office of Diversity & Inclusion, whose mission is to help integrate students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds into the university campus culture. The center oversees the university-affiliated multicultural student organizations and programs that highlight aspects of black, Latino, Asian, South Asian, Native American, and LGBT culture.

Mr. Tapscott, along with his team of associate directors, program coordinators, student coordinators, and federal work study employees, ensures that students can explore their culture while maturing into well-respected leaders. His students include former members of the Student Association and the Colonial Cabinet, representatives of multicultural organizations, and recipients of the GW Presidential Administrative Fellowship, which provides scholarships to students pursuing GW graduate degrees and offers employment within one of the university departments.

Cultural groups within the MSSC have achieved popularity and success with the guidance of faculty and staff advisors. With their aid, groups such as the Organization of Latino American Students successfully hosted Noche de Cultura, an annual celebration of Latino culture with live music, food, and dancing. The GW South Asian Society showcased dance groups during Bhangra Blowout, an annual event at DAR Constitution Hall. During another memorable occasion, faculty, staff, and students joined in solidarity with the LGBT community on “Coming Out Day” and took part in activities that allowed people of all backgrounds to take pride in their identity.

“Faculty and staff have an amazing impact on our students,” said Mr. Tapscott. “When they encourage students to try a new perspective or to attend events that are hosted by cultural groups different from their own, they help expand cultural competency throughout the university.”

As the end of another semester nears and the MSSC prepares for the arrival of another enthusiastic group of freshmen during Colonial Inauguration this summer, Tapscott hopes to take the efforts of the center to the next level. Goals include bringing in more university departments to participate in diversity initiatives and increasing staff attendance at cultural events. He believes that all have a stake in creating a culturally inclusive community at the university.

“The MSSC has been working on building university-wide relationships that are centered on celebrating the beauty of diversity,” said Mr. Tapscott. “We have been effective in bringing a lot of new cultural events to campus while changing the mindset of many toward a more inclusive, comprehensive worldview of other people.”

For more information about the Multicultural Student Services Center, please visit http://gwired.gwu.edu/mssc.
Robert Coles leads lively class discussions about Pushkin’s most prominent works, which include “The Gypsies” and “Peter the Great.” The course aims to provide detailed insight into Pushkin’s personal and societal experiences as a man with African heritage living in Russia during the early 19th century.

This highly specialized course dedicated to Alexander Pushkin is a culmination of more than 15 years of research that Mr. Coles started at Hampshire College in Massachusetts. He carefully tailors each class lecture to include discussions about Pushkin’s literary masterpieces, viewing of related films, and student-led debates about Pushkin’s work that might even challenge the instructor’s own literary perspectives.

Matt Kostman, a senior in the Elliott School of International Affairs, says his study of Russian literature has become more meaningful after taking the course. “Everything in Russian literature comes from Pushkin,” said Kostman. “Because of this unique class and the breadth of information that Mr. Coles brings to his students, I was able to draw connections between other Russian writers and how they were influenced by the unparalleled legacy of Alexander Pushkin.”
Coaching Conversations
Using the Three C’s as a Framework for Diversity

By Sabrina Ellis, Vice President for University Human Resources

Individuals who understand the importance of diversity often ask what they can do to demonstrate their commitment. Admittedly, articulating a commitment and demonstrating one are two very different ideas. In 2010, President Steven Knapp created the Council on Diversity & Inclusion, which recommended the creation of the position of Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and the Office of Diversity & Inclusion as a very visible and meaningful demonstration of that commitment. He charged the Council to make the George Washington University the school of choice for more students, the employer of choice for more faculty and staff, a more inclusive life-long community of learners for alumni, and a more effective partner in addressing the challenges of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area community of which the university is a part.

In 2013, University Human Resources embarked on a new initiative, affectionately called C3, shorthand for communication, collaboration, and community. The philosophy behind this is rather simple: we hold ourselves accountable to communicate in a focused and deliberate way to members of the university community on strategic initiatives, and to engage in constructive dialogue that guides our decision making. That dialogue then leads to collaboration, where we seek out knowledgeable individuals to partner with us on key HR projects, and by doing so, we build a community of people across the university who gain an understanding of what we do and who continue with us in our journey to elevate the quality of the services we provide. By all accounts, it is a win-win. This does not presume that by communicating and collaborating we are able to achieve the outcomes that each individual desires, but it does help the university achieve the best overall outcome for all concerned.

But what does this have to do with diversity? The C3 concept is a framework that we use as a guiding principle for all of our interactions with faculty, staff and each other. We are thereby challenging ourselves to think about the communication and collaboration component each time we launch a new HR initiative or project. Who do we need to engage? How will we ensure that their feedback is incorporated into our approach? Who can we tap within the GW community to lend expertise on a project? This approach has strengthened our ability to work with other departments and individuals from multiple functional groups such as finance, IT, external relations, general counsel, research, student affairs, academic affairs, development, etc. And individually, we are making the world smaller, by expanding our outreach to areas that have not historically engaged with HR. This has helped us tackle problems through a shared vision. This shared vision allows us to utilize the collective talent, expertise and experience of many, whose diversity includes a mix of almost every representative group and function. Alas, the beauty and benefit of diversity!

But there are other ways to use the C3 framework in demonstrating a commitment to diversity. Leaders play a significant role by setting an example in their hiring practices which includes seeking out opportunities to search out the best qualified candidates and exploring ways to tap a talent pool that is diverse. Making every effort to ensure that searches yield a diverse talent pool is important. Searches that yield diverse candidates, improve the opportunities to yield diverse hires.

Over the last two years, the university has embarked on a bold and innovative strategic plan called Vision 2021, which centers on four themes: innovation through cross-disciplinary collaboration, globalization, governance and policy, and citizenship and leadership. Communication, collaboration and community served as the foundational elements in developing this plan. The three C’s serve as an effective framework for achieving our goals as an organization and most importantly for maximizing the individual talents and strengths that will propel GW forward for years to come.
Ask
UHR

Dear UHR,

The university has affirmed its commitment to diversity and inclusion with the establishment of the Office of Diversity & Inclusion. What part do its hiring practices play in ensuring that the employee population reflects the diversity of today’s globalized society?

Dear GW Employee,

President Knapp has been an active and visible champion for promoting diversity and inclusion at the university. In 2010, he formed the President’s Council on Diversity & Inclusion, which is comprised of faculty, staff, students, and alumni that outline best practices to cultivate an inclusive environment. The Office of Diversity & Inclusion and UHR have also taken steps to continuously review areas of improvement.

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) at GW serves as a resource for managers and employees to address and to improve upon the promotion of diversity and employment compliance. EEO also works in partnership with the Division of University Human Resources (UHR) and the Office of Diversity & Inclusion to support, encourage, and improve upon equal employment policies and procedures.

The university strongly encourages its hiring managers to explore all avenues—including affinity groups based on race, gender, disability, and veteran status—when recruiting candidates for our faculty and staff positions. UHR has a vested interest in leveraging its resources to promote campus-wide diversity, build and sustain relationships with all affinity groups, and develop partnerships by helping to establish diversified hiring initiatives throughout with GW’s offices, divisions, and departments. We aspire to attract highly qualified candidates eager to utilize their skills and talents while continuing to create a workforce that is reflective of our ever-changing global community.

For more information about the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, please visit http://hr.gwu.edu/equal-employment-opportunity.

Do you have an HR-related question you have struggled to answer? E-mail askuhr@gwu.edu and your question could be featured in a future issue of GW In Touch.

IN MEMORIAM

In this issue, we remember faculty and staff members who are no longer with us and whose memory we celebrate. We honor their contributions to the university community. They are as follows:

Phillip Aspden
Milken Institute School of Public Health
3 Years of Service

Yelena Buchmuller
Division of Information Technology
13 Years of Service

Dr. William J. Chambliss
Department of Sociology
28 Years of Service

Anthony Fiacco
Operations Research
28 Years of Service

Thomas Grant IV
Division of Information Technology
5 Years of Service

Dr. William B. Griffith
Philosophy Department
49 Years of Service

Zacchaeus Johnson
Benefits Administration
33 Years of Service

Lucien Levy
Medical Faculty Affairs
14 Years of Service

Nancy Spann
Medical Faculty Affairs
27 Years of Service

Margaret “Peggy” Sweitzer (Retired)
Graduate School of Education and Human Development
17 Years of Service

Thomas Williams
Department of Anatomy and Regenerative Biology
5 Years of Service

Turner Wright, Jr.
Division of Operations
23 Years of Service

This is your newsletter! Please forward any article suggestions, ideas, and comments to askuhr@gwu.edu.