

### **News On Flu Shots**

Mark your calendar! The State Health Plan is again sponsoring three flu shot clinics for members. The clinics will be held October 21, 22 and November 9 in Highsmith Union.

The clinics are available for employees, retirees and dependents above the age of 9 who are covered by the State Health Plan, Medicare Part B or another BC/BS policy.

More information about the clinics will be released by Human Resources as it becomes available.

### **Spotlight on: 457 Supplemental Retirement Plan Gets More Employee Friendly**

To assist employees in saving for retirement, the Board of Trustee's for the NC Deferred Compensation Plan (457 Plan) recently approved several changes to the Plan.

The 457 Plan is a supplemental retirement option where employees can elect to contribute funds toward retirement above and beyond the mandatory 6% required.

Effective immediately, **all employees are eligible to be part of the 457 Plan including full-time, part-time and temporary employees including adjuncts, as well as appointed officials and rehired retired employees.**

In addition, the minimum contribution requirement of \$20 per pay period has been discontinued. There is now no minimum contribution amount.

Recent plan changes also remove a requirement for withdrawal of accounts with 'small balances' by separated employees. Funds can now stay in place with the Plan with no minimum balance requirements. This will be especially beneficial for adjunct faculty, who may teach regularly, but not every semester.

For more information regarding the changes, employees can refer to the official [announcement](#) from Tim Bryan, the Supplemental Plans Director.

Employees considering enrolling in a supplemental retirement plan have a variety of options in addition to the 457 Plan. The UNC system offers a 403(b) program and the state offers a 401(k) program, both with pre-tax and post-tax options. All supplemental retirement plans offer 100% vestment and can be started and stopped through payroll deduction at an employee's direction.

For more information regarding the various supplemental retirement programs available for UNC Asheville employee, visit the Human Resources website at [www.unca.edu](http://www.unca.edu). A tabled comparison of each program can be found [here](#).

### **New State Budget Includes Expanded Retirement Reserves**

As part of the recently passed state budget, further steps were taken to properly preserve and anticipate upcoming Retiree Health Benefit costs. Effective July 1, the state of North Carolina will now contribute 8.75% of an employee's salary on behalf of those enrolled in the Teachers and State Employees' Retirement System (TSERS). The change includes a .4% increase in the Retirees Health Plan Reserve from 4.1% to 4.5%.

Once remitted to the Retirement division, the contributions will be deposited as follows:

- Retirement Systems Pension Fund (3.57%)
- Death Benefit Trust Fund (.16%)
- Retirees' Health Plan Reserve (4.50%)
- Disability Income Plan (.16%)

The Optional Retirement contribution will remain at 11.86% with the breakdown as follows: 6.84% ORP Participant Account, 4.5% Retiree Health Insurance and 0.52% Disability Income Plan.

The mandatory employee contribution will remain at 6%

### **Did You Know?**

The State Health Plan has launched an electronic newsletter.

*Member Focus* will be delivered electronically every third Tuesday of the month following its initial launch on August 18th. Articles will include money-saving advice for medical and pharmaceutical costs, tips to help members stay healthy including fitness tips and recipes as well as timely and pertinent updates on benefit changes.

Visit the State Health Plan web site to subscribe at [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org). New subscribers will be asked to provide a business or personal e-mail address.

### **Schedule Those Routine Eye Exams Now!**

Remember that effective December 31st, the State Health Plan will no longer cover routine eye exams for in-network doctors. If you wish to keep a vision exam as part of your benefit package, you must enroll in the supplemental Superior Vision plan offered by the NC Flex program. Open enrollment for NC Flex benefits will take place October 5 - October 30, 2009 for the upcoming calendar year.

There is a hitch: Superior Vision plan does have a lock-out clause. If you have opted for the vision plan in the past but then dropped it within the past two years, you are typically 'locked out' of enrolling in any vision program again for two years. However, due to the SHP vision changes, the NC Flex program is eliminating the lock out period for Plan Option 3 which provides a \$20 co-pay benefit for vision exams with a doctor in the Superior Vision network plus an annual lens and frame allowance with benefits for lens options and upgrades included. The cost for this plan is \$9.98 per month for individual coverage or \$25.10 for the entire family.

Other plans available through Superior Vision and the NC Flex Program include a materials only plan and a budget plan that includes eye exams. While 2010 benefit information will not be available until September, current plans can be viewed at [NCFlex.org](http://NCFlex.org)

### **SECU Announces New Services For Members**

Given the current economic climate, the State Employee's Credit Union (SECU) has attempted to provide a wealth of financial resources available for employees and members.

To assist members with maintaining payments on their primary residence, SECU has developed the Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP) for those who have a mortgage with SECU. The MAP program is designed to provide options for members to stay in their homes offering a number of options including loan extensions, a 24-hour call center and mortgage adjustments that may include partial payment options, extensions, refinancing, rate modifications or term extensions. For more information about the MAP program, visit the mortgage loan portion of the SECU [website](#) or call the UNC Asheville branch at 253.8009

Additionally, SECU partners with BALANCE - a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Consumer Credit Counseling Service of San Francisco. BALANCE provides financial counseling and employee assistance programs to numerous companies and credit unions nationwide. This financial counseling service is available to SECU members free of charge and encompasses counseling and debt management. Most services can be accessed over the phone. Employees can learn more about the BALANCE program online through SECU's [website](#) or discover more about the program at [balancepro.net](http://balancepro.net). Phone inquiries can be directed to 1-866-747-7328 and callers must mention that they are members of SECU.