Risk Management: Protecting University’s Property and People

Spotlight

Statewide Office of Risk Management

(continued from last issue)

The University of Alaska has had a formal Risk Management Program since 1979, and the purpose of the office is really pretty simple according to Director Julie Baecker.

“We’re charged with protecting the university’s assets, its property and people,” she said. There are three distinct but complementary areas of Statewide Risk Management. In the last issue, On the Move covered Environmental Health and Safety. The other two areas are claims and risk management itself.

“We also train and educate,” says Julie. “Our office looks at different situations to determine the risks involved, and then advises program managers so they can make informed decisions.” Not long ago, for example, UAA wanted to add flight instruction to the aviation program’s curriculum, and the department head called on Risk Management to help. “We worked with them to analyze all the risks involved, and then helped them make decisions on program structure that were in the university’s best interest,” Julie said. In most cases, it is possible to structure programs in ways that minimize the university’s exposure.

The University of Alaska is self-insured. That means we maintain a reserve fund to pay claims instead of buying insurance. For that reason, and also to ensure high quality service, Statewide Risk Management has the staff in-house to handle worker’s compensation, general liability, auto liability, property, employee and marine liability. Health insurance is handled by Human Resources.

Two members of Julie’s risk management claims team, Laura Jackson, claims manager, and...
Ryan Wilson Wins Award

Student employee, Ryan Wilson, who works as a student assistant in the President’s office was inducted into the Golden Key International Honor Society November 15th. Ryan was also awarded a national scholarship from the organization. The $500 award was for the top junior inductee into the UA chapter. Criteria for the award includes academic achievement, community service and work experience. Ryan is a wildlife biology major.

Time to Add, Drop or Change Your Benefits

It’s time to add, drop or change your health benefit selections during this month’s open enrollment period. All employees, except those hired after Oct. 1, 2001, should have received a packet of information in the mail to make any changes such as adding or dropping dependents, supplemental life insurance, accidental death or dismemberment insurance or reimbursement accounts for health or dependent care.

Completed forms are due in the Human Resources office by Nov. 30, and changes will become effective Jan. 1, 2002. Current benefit selections will remain the same if changes are not made except for reimbursement accounts, which must be applied for each tax year. If you have questions, call Human Resources at 474-7894.

University’s Health Care Costs Go Up

The university’s health care costs are on the rise this year, just as they are across Alaska and the rest of the country. Despite efforts to slow the rise in costs, market forces and claims experience will result in an increase in employee charges this year for both of the university’s plans: the UA2000 plan which covers non-union staff, and the Traditional Plan which was chosen by the unions for the faculty and staff they represent.

Despite increases, the university continues to pay over 90 percent of employee health care costs through a defined contribution on behalf of every faculty and staff member. University costs have increased because of an increase in the average number of claims submitted, a higher average cost per claim, and several very large claims, according to Janet Jacobs, executive director of the university’s Human Resources office.

Beginning with the paychecks for January 11, 2002, those employees in the UA2000 Plan will pay an employee health care charge of $7.10 per pay period. For union-represented employees on the Traditional Plan, the charge per pay period will be $35.94.

A Special Thank-You!

To the WONDERFUL people in the Butrovich Building!!
I would like to say thanks to all the many people who assisted me in looking for the dogs that I was missing. It’s a wonderful feeling knowing that I work with such great people who are always willing to help out in my time of need!

Thanks Again!
-Laura Letuligasenoa

Deadline for the next issue is Monday, December 5th by the end of the day.

From the staff of On The Move
Have a Blessed Thanksgiving!