

# HR HIGHLIGHTS

SERVING. EMPOWERING. TRANSFORMING.



HR Highlights is the Official Newsletter of UNT System Human Resources.



## FACULTY & STAFF

# Spotlight

### ASHLEY PENNY

Sr. Director, Payroll  
Office of Finance

University of North Texas System

Somewhere there's a tongue twister about [Ashley Penny](#), in the payroll office, but it's certainly easy to say that she keeps everyone's favorite department running as smooth as a crisp new dollar bill. She joined UNT World a little more than two years ago and oversees several teams, from Payroll Production to Payroll Tax to State Reporting. She practically grew up on the beach and over the last decade her husband's jobs have had them moving 11 times between the beautiful beach-boasting states of California and Florida. We're betting beach vacations will now suffice to keep her around our parts. Maybe the two kiddos that arrived during those moves will be reason to plant roots and enjoy a North Texas lake or two. Click below and get to know Ashley Penny.

[READ MORE](#)

If you'd like to nominate a faculty or staff member to spotlight, please email [communications@untsystem.edu](mailto:communications@untsystem.edu).

## This Just In! News, Notes & Resources



UNT System HR brings you UNT World experts with this periodic and always timely installation called "Ask An Expert." So, let's ask...

**EXPERT:** [Mary Atkins](#), UNT System Human Resources Benefits Advisor, has the answers to all your HR-related questions. The start of a new year always generates numerous calls to the HR department for questions on everything from retirement and retirement plans to health insurance deductibles and co-pays to how to make a family status change to benefits. We figure if one person is calling with a question, there's probably plenty more out there with the same question who just didn't call or maybe don't know who to call. That's why we enlisted Mary. She gathered the questions she gets asked most this time of year and provides us with expert advice -- as well as how to reach HR experts at each campus for more info. So, click the button below and let's get started...

[READ MORE](#)



**YOUR  
BENEFITS  
DID YOU KNOW?**

***You know which holiday is up next >>***

**Benefits available to UNT World faculty & staff**

Yep, Valentine's Day is just around the corner -- and you know you better not show up empty-handed. Maybe you never associated your UNT World benefits with Valentine's Day, but as sure as Cupid's arrow, you most certainly should. Go to the [UNT System HR](#) website, hover over "Benefits," click on "[Perks](#)" and then "[Beneplace](#)." After logging in or signing up, enter "Valentine's Day" in the search bar and [fall in love with the savings](#). Find UNT World discounts on flowers, desserts, fresh fruits and gourmet gifts and more. Whether for your spouse, mom, sibling, friend or special co-worker, we've got you covered. We also advise against procrastination.



**HIGH FIVE: UNT History professor provides expert commentary on gripping Netflix WWII series**

A frequent contributor to several shows on the History Channel, [Geoffrey Wawro](#), UNT Department of History professor and Director of the [Military History Center](#), brings his knowledge and expert commentary to the new Netflix series, [WWII in Color: Road to Victory](#). The 10-part series delivers amazing, colorized footage never seen before. The gripping footage and commentary give detailed insights into the leading figures and decisive turning points of World War II. This is a [must-see series for all](#). While on the topic of world wars, don't miss Wawro's latest book, "[Sons of Freedom: The Forgotten Soldiers who Defeated Germany in World War I](#)," which chronicles America's decisive role in turning the tide of the war and ultimately leading to an Allied victory.



### HIGH FIVE: UNT Dallas College of Law professor awarded grant focusing on Native American tribes

UNT Dallas College of Law Associate Professor [Monika Ehrman](#) is the principal investigator of a [multi-institutional team recently awarded more than \\$450,000](#) by the [Alfred P. Sloan Foundation](#). Her team will study the effects of a clean energy transition on certain petroleum-producing Native American communities and community members. The grant research focuses on historically marginalized Native American tribes, which are currently addressing important issues such as climate change and energy poverty. Ehrman joined UNT College of Law in August 2021. Prior to that she was professor of law at the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where she was also faculty director of the Oil & Gas, Natural Resources and Energy Center.



### HR UPDATE

UNT System Human Resources has numerous programs and tools available at no cost to assist you with health or well-being issues, work-life balance, financial issues and more. Explore your [UNT System benefits](#), and follow this space weekly for tips, programs and promotions.

>> **PRIORITIZE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH:** Mental health impacts us emotionally, psychologically and socially, and it's central to how we handle the stresses and crises of daily life. Make a New Year's resolution to seek support to help you alleviate strain, stress or other issues impacting your mental wellbeing by accessing the [mental health benefits](#) through your Health Select and Consumer Directed Health Select insurance plans. Coverage can help with alcohol and drug-use issues, anger management, depression and grief, among others. [Virtual visits](#) are available via Doctor on Demand or MD Live. In addition to mental health benefits through your insurance coverage, UNT World also offers our [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) available at no cost to you and anyone in your household. It includes great resources to support your mental health, including six short-term counseling sessions.

>> **GET FIT CHALLENGE REMINDER:** Join the UNT System team in the Get Fit Texas Challenge through March 21. The challenge is to be physically active for 150 minutes per week for at least six of the next 10 weeks. We compete against other Texas agencies to claim the title of *Fittest State Agency*. [Register now](#) and begin logging your activity. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) will track the percentage of completion of each state agency and recognize agencies in each size group with the highest completion rate.



### ON THE AIR: How Dallas built Klyde Warren Park. And can we build more?

[The Deep Side of Dallas](#) podcast is a collaboration between UNT System and *The Dallas Morning News* that dives into local news and issues, and explores the past, present and future of Dallas and North Texas. In our [latest episode](#), co-hosts [Paul Corliss](#), UNT System Chief Communications Officer, and DMN editor [Rudy Bush](#), welcome Sheila and Jody Grant, who have been on a nearly two-decade mission to construct, open, program and expand one of the most innovative parks, as well as park president Kit Sewers. They tell the history of making the dream reality and what is next. And they talk about what Dallas and cities around the country are doing to repeat Klyde Warren Park's success.



# Save The Date. UNT World Well-Being Calendar.

*Upcoming well-being opportunities from UNT World HR.*

*Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#); Visit our [website](#)*

HealthSelect Wellness: How to Take your Health Assessment

[Feb. 2, 10 -- 10:30 a.m.](#)

Fitness Connect Community Discussion: Excuses Debunked

[Feb. 8 10 -- 10:15 a.m.](#)

Weight Management Benefit Highlight: What is Real Appeal?

[Feb. 9, 11 -- 11:30 a.m.](#)

Matters of the Heart with Michael Harper M.Ed.

[Feb. 10, 10 -- 11 a.m.](#)

Deepak Chopra, MD: The Future of Well-being (FREE Center for Brain Health Event): [Feb. 10, 7 -- 8:10 p.m.](#)



## We Are North Texas. Campus News.

Click our member institutions' logos for the latest news



*If you have an HR question or topic you'd like covered in the newsletter, please email [HR@untsystem.edu](mailto:HR@untsystem.edu).*



Miss an issue of HR Highlights? [CLICK HERE](#) to catch up.