

We're Bringing the AM to You in November

Because GSRA couldn't meet in person for its 2021 Annual Meeting, the Policy and Operations Board of GSRA recorded the Plenary Session of the Annual Meeting on October 14. We asked Jim Potvin, Executive Director of ERS, and Caylee Noggle, Commissioner of the Department of Community Health, to send a video message for our members with an update and outlook for 2022 for their respective agencies. We also asked Senator Randy Robertson, Chair of the Senate Retirement Committee, and Representative John Carson, Chair of the House Retirement Committee, to send us a video with their expectations for the 2022 Legislative Session. Clay Teague, who is President of the Macon Chapter of GSRA and a communication specialist, will produce a finished video once he (hopefully) receives all the requested videos. The finished video will be posted on the GSRA website (www.mysra.com) and the GSRA Facebook page on November 9, 2021.

In early October, in order to facilitate our annual reporting requirements, GSRA Communications sent an email or a hard copy ballot to all members to vote on three issues:

- Acceptance of the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes;

- Acceptance of the Treasury Report, including the Legal Fund Report, for 2021;
- Approval of nominees for the P&O Board and officers for 2022.

President Jim Sommerville will announce the results of the election on the video, to be included in the final production. Jim will also announce the winner of the door prize, a free one year membership to GSRA, randomly picked from all received ballots.

Once the video is posted, please take about 30 minutes to watch it. According to Georgia law, all not-for-profit 501c associations must have an annual meeting and reporting for its members. Until last year, we have always fulfilled that requirement with an Annual Meeting in person in what we hope is a fun, informative and entertaining conference. Last year and this year, we've had to fulfill this requirement virtually.

Despite all the challenges we've faced, GSRA has had a very successful, productive year, and you'll hear all about it in the video. Hopefully, next year we can again gather together for fellowship and renewing of friendships in person. Until then, enjoy the video and thank you for all your support of GSRA.

SHBP Vaccine Incentives

In August 2021, Gov. Kemp announced a vaccine incentive for those on the State Health Benefit Plan. Gov. Kemp's news release stated that SHBP members will be eligible to receive a \$150 Visa gift card or up to \$480 in healthcare expense credits (to expire on November 30, 2021) as a "vaccine incentive". The incentive is retroactive for those who have already been vaccinated.

This announcement resulted in a number of inquiries from GSRA members about possible incentives/rewards for getting COVID-19 vaccinations. **The \$150 Visa Gift card is a**

provision of the SHBP options for "under age 65" retirees and active employees However, these provisions are not applicable to the retiree Medicare Advantage options for over age 65 retirees. For our members who are not covered by Medicare Advantage plans, we are providing the following summary of the vaccine incentive offering for current SHBP members who are under age 65.

SHBP Wellness Programs Updates: COVID-19 Vaccination Incentives

WHAT: Points earned for receiving COVID-19 vaccinations as an addition to SHBP Annual Wellness Initiatives

WHO: Retirees under age 65, active employee SHBP Commercial Plan members, and covered spouses (non-Medicare Advantage)* who have received full COVID-19 vaccinations

WHEN: Any time since January 1, 2021 (beginning of the Plan Year) and by plan completion dates

PLANS: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield (Anthem), United Healthcare, and Kaiser Permanente

* The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services regulatory guidelines prohibit Medicare Advantage members from earning an incentive for participating in the COVID-19 Vaccination Activity.

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield (Anthem) and UnitedHealthcare

- Existing *Be Well SHBP*[®] Program administered by Sharecare
- Points awarded for completing such activities as completing the RealAge Test, required to start earning points and other activities such as completing a biometric screening (120 points), completed monthly coaching calls (60 points each), etc.
- Maximum of 480 points can be earned through November 30th.
- Redemption of maximum points for a \$150 Visa Reward card -- OR --

- Conversion of points to credits in 120 point increments to offset medical and pharmacy expenses
- Points must be redeemed by December 15th
- **COVID-19 Vaccination added as an activity worth up to the full 480 points, which eligible members can redeem for 480 credits or a \$150 Visa Reward card. This wellness program addition will also end November 30th.**
- Sharecare is updating its Be Well site to reflect the new wellness promotion. Eligible members will be required to log on to the Be Well site, complete the RealAge Test and provide their vaccination information to receive credits.
- Go to [Be Well SHBP[®] Vaccine Program - Be Well SHBP](#) for more information

Kaiser Permanente

- Current 2021 SHBP 5-Step Wellness program
- Opportunity to earn a \$500 reward card for completing certain wellness activities.
- **New promotion will add an opportunity for eligible members and covered spouses, whether they have already completed their 5-Step Wellness program or not, to earn a \$150 reward card for becoming fully vaccinated if completed no later than November 30, 2021**
- Note: *The link for Kaiser program information provided by DCH is not active as of the date of publication.*

For complete information on eligibility and benefits administration questions for all plans and programs, we strongly urge you to contact SHBP Member Services via email at SHBPservicecenter@adp.com or by phone at 800-610-1863. SHBP Member Services Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

REMEMBER – RETIREE OPTION CHANGE PERIOD – ENDING ON NOVEMBER 5, 2021

Your Retiree Option Change Period (ROCP) will end on November 5, 2021. If you decide to make a change in your coverage for CY 2022, please process according to instructions in your Decision Guide (Pages 13-14).

- If you do not process a change in option, your current option will be carried forward into CY 2022.
- As previously announced by the SHBP, there will be no increases in member premiums for CY 2022.
- Please familiarize yourself with **your** actions on page 12 of the Decision Guide that affect your coverage with the SHBP.



Jim's View: Disappointment and Good News

On October 21, the Employees' Retirement System of Georgia (ERS) Board of Trustees (Board) held their bi-monthly meeting. While the ERS Board normally does not discuss or take any actions concerning COLAs at their October meeting, we did not want to pass on an opportunity to encourage the Board to proactively take steps now to lay the foundation needed to be able to vote yes on restoring the annual COLAs for retired state employees at their April 2022 meeting.

To that end, I sent a letter to the Board prior to their October meeting. The substance of my letter was to encourage the Board to be proactive concerning restoring COLAs for retired state employees. While not totally unexpected, it was still disappointing that there was no mention of GSRA's letter, nor was there any discussion about COLAs at the Board meeting.

However, our disappointment aside, there were a couple of positive items gleaned from the meeting. The Board's independent auditor provided the Board with an overview of the results of their most recent audit of the ERS. The Audit did not find any issues with the ERS Board's management of the ERS Fund.

The second positive item was found in Executive Director Potvin's report to the ERS Board. According to Mr. Potvin, the current return on investment for the ERS Fund is 3%. The stock market has been up and down since July of this year so it is good news that the Fund is not losing some of the fantastic return in investment achieved last year.

Let's hope that the good economic news continues into 2022.

Jim

Get to Know Your GSRA Organization Members

In an effort to provide membership more information about the various GSRA Board and Operating Committee members who perform the ongoing work of the organization, we will feature one or more board and/or committee members in the newsletter as space permits. This month, Sam Shepherd, Central Metro local chapter president and GSRA board member, is featured.



Sam Shepherd
Central Metro LC President and GSRA Board Member

Sam Shepherd joined State employment at 19 years old as a Co-operative plan student at GA Tech. He worked as an Environmental Technician sampling polluted waters of the state. He later ran computer models to estimate how much pollution a stream could handle. When he got out of Ga Tech in 1979 with a Bachelor of Civil Engineering (Tech folks never say graduated), he began working again at the GA Environmental Protection Division of the Dept. of Natural Resources in the Construction Grants Program. In his career in wastewater engineering, he

reviewed plans for water pollution control plants to make sure they worked appropriately. He worked in the Solid Waste Program and later became a Program Manager in the Municipal Wastewater Program. Governor Perdue commended the program for excellence in customer service in 2011. He retired in 2011 with 34 plus years of service. Sam joined GSRA as an active employee at the urging of his Waycross hometown neighbor, Sid Burden. After retiring, he attended a meeting to form a local chapter for Fulton and DeKalb Counties. He ended up being Central Metro Chapter president before his first ERS paycheck arrived. He has

served as president for 10 years. He joined the GSRA Board as a local chapter representative and later as a member at large. He feels the \$1.67 a month is the best investment an active employee or retiree can make.

In his spare time, Sam can be found at a classic car show, on the beach, at a brewery, or square dancing.

September New Members

Name	County	Name	County	Name	County
James Aziz	Bulloch	Martha Maney	Banks	William Sullivan	Mitchell
Sheila Bloodworth	Habersham	Lillie McLaughlin	Washington	Kimberly Syphore	Bulloch
Beverly Farris	Jones	Ernest Mincy	DeKalb	Angela Thompson	Henry
Tammy Foote	Clarke	DeDe Nalls	Douglas	Glenda Trawick	Hancock
Samantha Garrison	Floyd	John Sampson	Catoosa	Charles Vaughn	Tift
Ernestine Goolsby	Bibb	Jody Sanderson	Gordon	Pamela Walden	White
Lynn Green	Floyd	Angie Saturday	Tift	Rose Wilcox	Henry
David John	Liberty	Walter Smith	Hall	Latasha Williams	Laurens
Sabha Kaladi	Gwinnett	Veeraraghavan Sridhar	Gwinnett	Veryl Wingate	Early
Nathan Katzif	Fulton	Phyllis Strange	McIntosh	Barbara Wyche	Colquitt



Donate to GSRA Legal Fund

GSRA's Legal Fund was established as a dedicated legal fund in the event that leadership, on behalf of its members, ever has to retain legal counsel. The fund will be used to cover all appropriate legal fees related to ensuring that retiree benefits are not reduced or eliminated.

Every donation makes a difference. For more information and to donate to this fund click on the link below.

[GSRA Legal Fund](#)




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Learn more: 1-877-556-4582
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GEORGIA STATE RETIREES ASSOCIATION

YOU ARE OUR PRIORITY

OUR MEMBERS FORM **THE FOUNDATION** OF THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE.

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We're not salespeople, we're solutions people. That's why nobody can serve our members like we can.

APCU serves State and Federal workers, retirees and their families in Georgia. Visit APCU's exhibitor table at GSRA. For more information, visit apcu.com, or call us at (404) 768-4126 or Toll-free at (800) 849-8431.



APCU partners with Members Wealth Management, a financial services program, to help our members with financial planning, investments, insurance, as well as retirement and estate planning strategies.

APCU has invited Shavon Roman, a Managing Associate with Members Wealth Management, to offer a great workshop, "Money Talk 101", at GSRA. This seminar is designed to facilitate conversations around financial milestones for retirees.

Topics will include:

- ★ The importance of setting financial goals
- ★ Understanding your current financial position
- ★ Preparing for a successful retirement
- ★ Income tax considerations
- ★ What your loved ones need to know



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UnitedHealthcare® is proud to be a sponsor of the GSRA Annual Meeting.

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*2017 UnitedHealthcare Customer Experience Survey scores for Group Medicare Advantage plan members. Plans are insured through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or one of its affiliated companies, a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in the plan depends on the plan's contract renewal with Medicare.
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