



*From the perspective of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's
Vice President for Human Resources, Curtis Powell, SPHR*

A Win - Win

Calling the Pinch Hitter® Back-up Dependent Care Service a win-win situation, RPI Vice President for Human Resources Curtis Powell, SPHR, knows the program has hit a home run with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) employees just by looking at the numbers. Since implementing the innovative, ground-breaking employee benefit in 2007, Pinch Hitter® usage hours have increased steadily with hundreds of employees registered in the program, and, according to Powell, "the return on investment has been tremendous."

The RPI Pinch Hitter® Service allows for temporary, back-up child and elder care in employees' homes — freeing employees to attend to work and their careers while knowing their loved ones are being cared for by professional, experienced caregivers who have been pre screened through a rigorous 10 point screening process. Created by GTM affiliate, A New England Nanny (ANEN) in 1991, the Pinch Hitter® Back Up Dependent Care Program offers back-up care as a company-subsidized employee benefit. It provides emergency and temporary back-up child and elder care so families can honor work obligations when their dependent is ill or when usual care has canceled at a moment's notice. The Pinch Hitter® Back-up Care program serves hundreds of employees throughout the United States and is a GTM Work Life Solution aimed at helping professionals balance their work responsibilities and family lives.

Looking Beyond The Day Care Center Option

When looking into establishing a benefit for child and elder care, Powell said he was not interested in pursuing the day care route, in which loved ones — usually only infants through five year olds — must be dropped off at a designated area only within certain hours and never when the family member is ill. In fact, he said, RPI tried the established on-site day care center option and it failed.

"I looked at the options — a flexible spending account, voucher system, vendor program and day care center," he said. "These were not cost effective and many (options) were not local. They simply were not feasible options for Rensselaer. Starting a day care center is cost prohibitive in this climate. We would have to cover salaries, operational costs; and, the changing demographic (needs are unmet).

"I sought to identify not only a child care provider but also looked to take care of elder care issues for that sandwich generation," Powell added. "Now, the baby boomers are sandwiched with caring for both their children and their elderly parents — or they are caring for their grand kids or their spouses. Pinch Hitter®, given our ROI and our costs, is a thousand times better benefit to our workers. The Pinch Hitter® program is one of the most innovative and creative ways to provide child and elder care services. To have a trained, qualified care provider come to your home and care for your loved one at a cost that is affordable no matter what your position. The service is above and beyond what anyone should expect. At RPI, the cost to the employee is \$3 per hour."

According to Powell, RPI's Pinch Hitter® program is part of RPI's competitive employee benefits package created to foster professional growth and development among its 2,200 employees in a technologically advanced work environment.

"Rensselaer offers its employees very competitive benefits plans," he noted. "These plans — valuable in themselves in that they may cost Rensselaer more than 30 percent of employee wages — can give the employee and his or her family peace of mind that can't be measured in dollars and cents. The biggest thing is the peace of mind that you have, knowing that there are fully trained, qualified and screened professionals caring for your loved ones. You want to be able to trust in someone, who you can call to come into your home and help."

ROI/ Productivity — 'Tremendous'

"I always equate ROI to productivity," said Powell. "(I) look at the major partnerships we have developed because our employees don't have the 'shackle' and worry of tending to their dependent's home care needs, and the service has been

Client:

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Need:

Employee Benefit Program providing professional back-up child and elder care services to assist employees with their family's work-life balance needs

Challenge:

Rensselaer's adoption of the program was critical to enabling employees to attend to work responsibilities when children are ill and unable to attend school or other care arrangement

Solution:

A New England Nanny's Pinch Hitter® Back-Up Dependent Care Program, which provides professional last-minute, back-up and emergency child and elder care services for company employees

Employer Benefits:

- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Decreased expenses on alternative staffing; day care administration costs
- Increased employee productivity
- Positive impact on employee morale
- Improved employee recruitment and retention

Employee Benefits:

- Immediate, reliable and pre-screened care
- Reduced loss of personal and sick time
- Peace-of-mind with vetted, insured, professional care givers
- Increased ability and flexibility to honor work commitments, including work-related travel

Program:

GTM Payroll Services and A New England Nanny's acclaimed Pinch Hitter® Back-Up Dependent Care Program.



tremendous in our faculty and staff expanding their scholarship (their knowledge gained after academic study). This is where the Pinch Hitter® program has really been wonderful.”

At RPI, Powell ensured Pinch Hitter® would be an available benefit for all employees — from deans and faculty to maintenance workers. “Making the service open to all employees across the board demonstrates RPI’s commitment to employees at every level within the university,” said A New England Nanny Agency Director and Pinch Hitter® Supervisor, Melissa Schoonmaker. “Pinch Hitter® has been such a success at RPI, which has done a tremendous job implementing and supporting the program. There has been an overwhelming response to the Pinch Hitter® Care program.”

Pinch Hitter Scores

The RPI Pinch Hitter® program has scored with employees and the university. With the HR office promoting the program and word of mouth, employee usage has steadily increased—often exhausting its contracted hours.

“Employers like Pinch Hitter® because it is a relatively low cost employee benefit program when considering the productivity lost each time an employee is absent or late,” added Schoonmaker. “Employees lose more than 5 work days a year because a dependent is ill. Add school closings, holidays and absent sitters or closed day care centers and this takes a toll on productivity and morale.”

At RPI, the Pinch Hitter® program has garnered significant success in just a few years of service.

- **A significant decrease in absenteeism.** Faculty are no longer missing class and staff are no longer missing work due to dependents' care needs.
- **Increased productivity/reduced number of adjunct professors needed.** Full-time faculty are taking on more classes and expanding their work schedules, secure in the knowledge that Pinch Hitter® is available if unexpected needs to crop up at home. This unexpected but welcome Pinch Hitter® benefit is extremely important due to current worldwide financial difficulties, which led RPI to decrease its hiring to a limited number of positions.
- **Increased faculty scholarship and staff development.** The peace of mind Pinch Hitter® offers allows employees to concentrate on their careers.
- **A significant recruitment and retention advantage.** “When you don't have a family-friendly work environment, people walk,” said Powell, adding that Pinch Hitter® is “a big selling point” for the university especially with the dual career couple — a major cohort in RPI’s HR recruitment and retention initiatives. Also, Pinch Hitter® helps in the expanded competition in recruiting nationally and internationally. According to Powell, with programs and services like Pinch Hitter® “We can turn the tide of jobs going off shore and keep workers here.”
- **Improved morale.** With less absenteeism there is less resentment among workers who no longer have to “pick up the workload” when coworkers took time off to attend to dependent care issues. “They feel like we've found a program that is a win-win,” said Powell.
- **Extremely affordable.** While A New England Nanny's Pinch Hitter® Care program is customized to each company's needs, a main component of the program is that employees do not pay a fortune for dependent care as it is a subsidized employee benefit. At RPI, the \$3/hour fee the employee pays was specifically incorporated to allow all employees to be able to utilize the program. At present, RPI has no plans to increase the \$3/hour visit fee.

Pinch Hitter Recognition

The unique RPI Pinch Hitter® program has brought Powell and his staff recognition among academia and the business world, and Powell has been called upon to explain the program. “I share with them that it is a wonderful, cost effective, quality care program that will yield significant results for the university and for the individuals well,” he said. According to Powell, his staff and he presented the Pinch Hitter® benefit at TIAF, a national HR forum to an audience of “overwhelmed” professionals. “People automatically see the value,” said Powell. Powell also presented the service to the RPI Board of Directors and was later called by individual board members interested in the program for their businesses.

People, people, people

“People are the major investment here at RPI,” Powell said. “Before, we had the agricultural worker, then the factory worker. Now, we have the knowledge worker. The knowledge worker of today requires more time to be innovative... To stay on top of what they do to be competitive... Their jobs are almost 24/7; they are always thinking about it. We (in HR) have to change and adapt. We have great things in place: medical benefits, life insurance, long and short term disability and additional benefits like Pinch Hitter® in which we are working on work and family life initiatives. Of the work generations I talked about, every one has a different need. We want to have activities to address those needs...It's human capital you have to invest in. Some times that is the missing link leaders don't recognize: it's people, people, people...”



About GTM Payroll Services Inc.

GTM Payroll Services is a proven leader in payroll and human resource management for both business and household employers. Founded in 1991 and backed by a SAS-70 Type II certification,

GTM Payroll Services is recognized as one of Tech Valley's entrepreneurial success stories and honored as an INC. 5000 company (2007-2010). GTM has also been recognized as a Best Places To Work company for three consecutive years, and among The Fastest Growing Companies in the Capital Region for seven consecutive years. GTM's brands include Tech Valley Payroll®, GTM Household Employment Experts® (The Original Nanny Tax & Payroll Company), GTM Employment Benefits®, and A New England Nanny®. Privately held, GTM Payroll Services combines the highest levels of customer service, premium solutions, industry-leading software, and secure and compliant payroll and tax solutions, delivering better advice, better service and better value for an *easier life!*™ Visit www.GTM.com.



A GTM Work Life Affiliate

About A New England Nanny, Ltd.

A New England Nanny®, a GTM Work Life Affiliate, is Upstate New York's premiere nanny, baby sitting, elder care and household staffing agency. Since 1991, A New England Nanny has provided high-quality, experienced and professional long-term, short-term, on-call and occasional child and elder care services for thousands of families throughout New York's Tech Valley. Recognized among the Top Permanent Placement Agencies and Top Temporary Placement Agencies in the Capital Region for multiple years, A New England Nanny® is also recognized among the region's Top Child Care Centers by the Capital District Business Review. A New England Nanny® is consistently chosen as the professional child care service provider by corporations and executives nationwide; and is a proud member of the International Nanny Association and the Alliance of Professional Nanny Agencies. Visit www.ANewEnglandNanny.com.



About Pinch Hitter® Back Up Dependent Care

Pinch Hitter® Back Up Dependent Care, a service of A New England Nanny®, is a unique company-subsidized employee benefit program. The Pinch Hitter® Back Up Dependent Care program provides emergency back up child and elder care services for employee-families to assist them in honoring work obligations when a dependent is sick or when regular care is unavailable. Launched nationally in 1993, the acclaimed Pinch Hitter® Back Up Dependent Care Service utilizes an extensive network of affiliate placement agencies and pre-screened, professional care givers. Visit www.PinchHitterCare.com.