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| **GEAR UP**  **Monthly Update** | |  |
| February 2020 |
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| Only four more months until the end of the school year! As we reach the peak of the winter months, I think keeping perspective is often times nice to hear. We still have much to accomplish this year at school and in GEAR UP. I encourage everyone to take a moment and reflect on our first month in the new decade, take a breath, and recharge your batteries.  Last month learners took some time to learn about simple programming of robotics. We set up a course that learners had to collaborate in groups to get their robot through the course first.  Tucker down and stay focused. The finish line is getting so much closer. We only have a few more months until the sun really starts to shine again. I know I can see the light at the end of the tunnel and I hope you can as well. I will leave off with this: try to find one thing to smile about every day by 9:00 am. Starting the day off right can make a huge difference in your day; make the best of every single day!  Have a wonderful month!  -Anthony A Note from YourStudent Coordinator By Anthony Rospierski | | |
| “If you knew they could have learned anything, what would you wish you would have taught them?”  -Dr. Paula Kluth  INSIDE THIS UPDATE   1. Student Coordinator Update 2. What is Leap Year? 3. Having Conversations across Cultures 4. Recovering from Holiday Spending |  | |

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| Everyone should be aware that a year is the amount of time that the earth completes one whole orbit around the sun. Typically, our year is described by 365 days. However, using the specific time the earth takes 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes and 46 seconds to complete one orbit.  https://tinyurl.com/r3p4rww  To keep the seasons synchronized with the calendar we place an extra day into every fourth year to make up for the lost time when the previous three years only held 365 days. If you take the remaining 5 hours 48 minutes and 46 seconds and multiply that amount of time by 4 you come to a total just shy of 24 hours, which is one calendar day.  This extra time is then added to the fourth year. The extra day is placed at the end of February. Typically, there are 28 days in February, this year in 2020, we have 29 days in February making this year leap year.  The question is then what do we do when someone’s birthday falls on the 29th of | February? Often referred to as Leap Year Babies, Leapers, or Leaplings have some choice in celebrating their birthdays. While their birth certificates will say the 29th of February, many states recognize March 1st for legal purposes such as the age of majority. In the United States, each state holds the right to determine how to recognize the age of Leap Year Babies.  Some people born on February 29, however, decide to only celebrate their birthday according to their birth certificate. In 2016, a woman in the United States celebrated her 25th birthday, however, then-President Obama issued her a centennial certificate because her legal age was recognized as 100.  https://tinyurl.com/v9p5c6u  “To keep the seasons synchronized with the calendar we place an extra day into every fourth year to make up for lost time…” |
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# What is Leap Year and how do People born in a Leap Year Celebrate?

By Anthony Rospierski

GEAR UP

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| Having Difficult Conversations across Cultures By Anthony Rospierski  Most of us do not enjoy having difficult conversations, period. However, if we must have them we prefer to have them with likeminded and similar peers. A sense of familiarity lessens tensions often, especially when we compare that same conversation to one between peers who are not similar. Whether the goal of a conversation is to persuade someone to think one way or just conveying bad news, there are cultural trip-ups that one must navigate.  There are a few things to consider when approaching conversations with people from backgrounds different from your own. First, is whether to get down to business and hash out the conversation or do you build relationships with those you are conversing with first? The question of being task-oriented or relationship-oriented can be the difference between someone leaving the conversation feeling like the issue is resolved without the need to discuss further or even someone leaving the conversation feeling devalued as a peer.  Direct or indirect communication techniques are also important to consider when discussing across cultures. Speaking clearly with no room for misinterpretation can sometimes come across as | “Being task-oriented or relationship-oriented can be the difference in the takeaway from a conversation. One may feel issues are resolved the other may feel completely devalued by their peer.”  abrasive, insensitive or ill-mannered, while indirect communication can come across as scattered or shifty.  The final thing you may consider when having difficult conversations across cultures is low and high context interpretations. Low context cultures take the words at face value and without much consideration about presentation. Whereas high context cultures dig into the sounds, pay attention to the environment in which the conversation is being held, and the body language of their peer.  Simple solutions to having difficult conversations always revert back to the ability to build meaningful relationships with the people around us. Using positive and strong relationships as a springboard for having difficult conversations is bound to be a great starting place to come to mutual agreements.  https://tinyurl.com/ja8qkxa |
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| By Meredith Waara  Here are a few tips and tricks from the experts to help you take care of those high bills you might have run up over the holidays.   1. Make a list of all your holiday purchases made on your credit card. If you can’t pay them all off at once, then check out the interest rates on your credit cards and pay down the ones with the highest interest rates first. If you can, consolidate all your charges on one card, with a 0% interest rate, or the lowest rate you can find. 2. Did you know that you could make weekly payments? If you do that, the amount of interest you incur will be less every month because your total average balance will be lower. 3. If all of your interest rates are high, call your credit card company and see if you can negotiate a lower rate. Ask to speak to a supervisor, if necessary. 4. Always make more than the minimum payment whenever you can. This will also lower the amount of interest you owe. You will not be paying interest on interest then. 5. If you have a cash-back option on your credit card, use it to get cash to pay down your balance. Every little bit helps. Watch to make sure you are getting a good deal on these rewards plans. Maybe you would be better off using those points/cash-back options for your frequent flyer miles than taking a cash payout. |  | 1. Did you get a gift that you don’t really want, won’t wear, or have absolutely no use for? Take it back to the store and get cash back. Then apply that cash to your credit card bill. It’s best if you have a gift receipt to get back the actual amount paid, and not any reduced amounts that the item actually sold for during sales or clearance events. 2. Did you know you could sell back unwanted gift cards, too? Check out online marketplaces, but make sure you read any and all fine print so you understand all the requirements and exactly how much cash back you will get, minus any transaction fees or sales fees. 3. If you get a holiday bonus, you could use that to pay off your credit card debt. 4. Don’t add any more debt to your credit cards, if you can help it. Take a break from charging things and just use cash for your purchases. 5. Lastly, don’t ignore the bills. They won’t go away. Late fees may accrue in addition to interest amounts and you could be reported to the credit bureaus. |

# Recovering from Credit Card Charges after the Holidays



Multicultural Education and Resource Center

GEAR UP

3001 Hedgcock

Northern Michigan University

Marquette, MI 49855