

# Celebrities Staffing Newsletter

www.celebrities-staffing.com

Holiday 2011 • Volume 103

Welcome to the Holiday edition of our newsletter, our tool for keeping you informed about the latest happenings in the celebrity service industry.



**Nordstrom "Eyelash" Cashmere Wrap, \$88, nordstrom.com**

## HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE FOR UNDER \$100



**Boots by Colin Stuart, \$98, victoriasecret.com**



**Platform Pumps by Steve Madden, \$99.90, nordstrom.com**



**G.H. Bass Signature Dempsey shoes for him, \$90, shoegasm.com**



**Sebago Spinnaker shoes for him, \$95, sebago.com**



**BB Dakota Sydney Leopard Sweater Dress, \$98, urbanoutfitters.com**



**BCBGeneration "Finito" Booties, \$83, bluefly.com**



**'Martini' Pump by Enzo Angiolini, \$89.95, nordstrom.com**



**Timberland Classic Two Eye boat shoes for him, \$75, bonobos.com**



**Steve Madden "BKyla" satchel, \$69, bluefly.com**



**Lock Crossbody Bag, \$59, ninewest.com**



**Michael Michael Kors Gloves, \$98, michaelkors.com**



**Reversible Canadian Vest by Eddie Bauer, \$99, eddiebauer.com**

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**MORE  
HOLIDAY GIFTS  
FOR UNDER \$100**



**Eau de Toilette for him, by Ben Sherman, \$55, nordstrom.com**



**Studded Leather Cuff by Juicy Couture, \$68, polyvore.com**



**Beyoncé Pulse Gift Set, \$62, macys.com**



**Dodocase for iPad, \$60, dodocase.com**



**Luxe Rachel Zoe Bracelet for QVC, \$85, qvc.com**



**Kate Spade Twirl Gift Set, \$70, sephora.com**



**Slim USB line by Victorinox Swiss Army, \$52.99 for 8GB, swissarmy.com**



**Harlow Bracelet by Rebecca Minkoff, \$95, rebeccaminkoff.com**



**Fogless Shower Mirror \$39.99, vat19.com**



**Marc Jacobs "Lips" iPhone cover \$34, nordstrom.com**



**Akkad Medallion Ring, \$50, hsn.com**



**Sleep Tee Legging Set, \$29.50, victoriasecret.com**



**Knomo Slim Laptop Bag, \$80, knomobags.com**



**Tori Spelling Snake Wrap Bracelet Watch, \$49.95, hsn.com**

# How to Adjust to Working on Holidays

As a staff member of a celebrity, you already work longer hours than the average Joe, and you likely know with the holidays approaching those hours are about to get longer. When it becomes a mad dash to find that coveted present for your boss's child, or to get a last-minute ingredient for turkey dinner it's important to look at the bigger picture.

When working for a celebrity or high-profile individual your boss's needs nearly always come before yours. Whether you've just started your career or you're a veteran, your holidays will never be like everyone else's. Celebrating with your family and friends before or after the actual holiday is something you need to think about the moment you accept a job. At first it may seem impossible, but if you think of the positives, you can get used to this arrangement very easily. One of the big advantages is post-holiday sales. No need to rush out the day after Thanksgiving to buy gifts, wait until after Christmas instead for even better deals.

Post-Christmas shopping and celebrating is exactly what Mark, a celebrity chef, and his family do. Having been a celebrity chef for over 25 years, Mark and his family had to find a new date to celebrate Christmas. "As a chef the holidays are one of the busiest times of the year, so we decided that December 27 was a good day for us to celebrate Christmas,"

said Mark. This not only allows them to shop during post-Christmas sales, it also allows them to celebrate together. Mark's children know Christmas is two days earlier, but having been brought up on celebrating later doesn't bother them.

In addition to celebrating with his immediate family, Mark's good friend and fellow celebrity chef, David, and his family join in on the festivities. The two families enjoy a gourmet Christmas dinner thanks to Mark and David, and their wives get to relax.

At first it wasn't so easy for Mark and his wife but he says adjusting your mindset on what the holidays mean will help ease the fact of working. Ask yourself: Is it the date on the calendar that is so important, or is it the spirit of the holidays and spending time with ones you love? Another positive is you'll be celebrating two (or more) holidays, one with your family and one with your work family.

Just like doctors, nurses and pilots who work the holidays,



doesn't have family nearby. Every year he and his friends who are also PAs and chefs who must work Christmas come together for a big potluck. The party is always in the evening on a weekend to enable everyone to attend.

If a party or potluck is hard to fit in to your schedule spend a couple hours at a restaurant, the movies, or ice skating. Get in the holiday spirit by doing something you enjoy.

As a nanny or another staff member who interacts with the children, you will need to keep the holi-

days fun for them. Their parents are likely to be extra busy (and stressed) during this time, but keeping the kids entertained and immersed in holiday activities will take their mind off mom and dad not being around as often. Keep them entertained with games, crafts and winter-based outings like ice skating and sledding. If you're a chef you could make them special cookies, or as a nanny you might help them make their own holiday cards or ornaments.

you are building your career and making an investment in your future. Working for the rich and famous is not an easy task, but when the day gets tough remember the perks and frequent flyer miles you rack up that your office cubicle friends aren't experiencing. As a celebrity staff member you likely often find yourself in the presence of other celebrities, traveling the globe, and receiving gifts or bonuses—things that usually only the rich get to experience.

If traveling to see your family is not an option, try getting together with others who are in your industry. They'll be in a similar situation and have an understanding of how it feels to have to work while most people are celebrating. Jacob, a celebrity personal assistant, is single and

The most important thing to remember this year is to enjoy yourself, whether you're working during Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas or New Year's Eve. Get in the holiday spirit by spending time in the brisk air, hanging decorations and sipping hot cocoa.



## HOW TO AVOID DOING ILLEGAL THINGS FOR YOUR BOSS



**A**s a personal assistant to a celebrity or high-powered individual you're used to working long hours, being on call all the time and strange requests, but you must know when to draw the line.

Creating boundaries lets your boss know what your limits are and how far you're willing to go to make their life comfortable. Keep in mind it shouldn't be in your job description to cover for them in the event of a run-in with the law, and if it is, you might want to walk away now. It's easy to get caught up in wanting to please a celebrity boss, but it's important to think of the possible repercussions.

In a recent highly publicized case, rapper Flo Rida's assistant, Dakari Dalawn Phillips, was arrested in Australia for possession of drugs. The incident left many wondering whether the PA simply took the fall for the artist. With Flo Rida on probation

it was in the PA's best interest to ensure his job stability by making sure his boss had no run-ins with the law, but was covering for him the right thing to do?

The answer is no; your boss should never ask you to do illegal things, even if it means keeping them out of jail and keeping your job. With the possibility of getting fined or a criminal record it's not worth the risk. And it runs deeper than that; if you are ever let go or decide to change jobs, you may have a hard time finding a new one with a criminal record.

In Phillips' case the Northern Region Drug Squad raided Flo Rida's hotel suite after being tipped off that it smelled like marijuana. The assistant was charged with possession of illegal drugs and a weapon (a taser found in the suite). Phillips, with no previous criminal record, spent the night in jail and was fined \$1,865.

Meanwhile at Jupiters Casino, his boss went on to perform that night.

When someone is paying your salary you might find it hard to say "no"; after all you don't want to unexpectedly lose your source of income. If your boss orders you to do something that you know is illegal, tell them you are uncomfortable completing the task. If that doesn't faze them, type up their instructions and ask them to sign it. Chances are they won't sign a document asking you to do something illegal. Physical or digital copies allow you to provide proof for your case if you ever do end up in trouble. One personal assistant says, "Most employers know what they're doing is wrong. They try to not bring other people into it for liability [reasons]."

One anonymous celebrity PA says he knows this topic all too well. His advice is, "Always if you can, avoid it across the board. Try to see the red flag before it presents itself." Though he has done such tasks as procuring drugs, hiring prostitutes and paying off neighbors, he doesn't readily offer up such services when he begins

working for a new client. He says during the interview process you can generally get a good idea if a problem situation is going to come up. He urges you to do research before even accepting an interview with a potential client—then you can avoid it all together.

"It's your duty as a PA to 'go to them and stop (the illegal behavior)," says our personal assistant, adding that there is no need to threaten them but you make your position clear that unless this behavior ceases you will no longer be able to continue your job.

If they're asking for prescription drugs, encourage your boss to visit a doctor so they can be properly treated by a professional.

"I know what I can't put a price tag on," said the PA. "I don't want to be that guy who's known as 'the great assistant who can score you drugs.'" Know your limits and avoid anything that makes you uncomfortable. It is important to be in a working environment that you can thrive in—"If your boss threatens to fire you, this person is not someone you want to be working for."

# DID YOU KNOW...

## A HOUSEKEEPING ROBOT



**M**enlo Park, California, start-up Willow Garage is working on a robot that could eventually have you competing against it for your job. The robot, which is modeled after Rosie from *The Jetsons* cartoon, is called PR2. It can fold laundry, fetch a drink and even bake cookies. But don't get too worried just yet, PR2's developers say it's too slow and expensive to be of use to consumers right now.

## APPLE'S PERSONAL ASSISTANT



**A**pple's iPhone 4s ships with a personal assistant named Siri. Sorry, she's not a real one, but she gets pretty close. The addition to Apple's latest iPhone model will give you directions, call your mom, remind you of events or tasks, and even tell you whether or not you need an umbrella. The voice-activated software even senses when you're leaving home and will remind you to lock the door, or feed the cat before you go. Siri can find a great restaurant or look up a fact for you. While she can't fully replace a living assistant she will help you keep track of your day a little better. She's the perfect assistant for a personal assistant.

## CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY



**N**ot all colossal mansions belong to movie stars—case in point, entrepreneur Steven Huff. His home in Missouri's Ozarks, scheduled to be completed by 2013, will be the fourth largest home in America. The 13-bedroom, 14-bathroom structure named Pensmore is probably the most unique though. Huff's home will be built using insulated concrete technology that will be able to withstand F-5 tornados and bomb blasts. Thankfully, Huff won't have to worry about heating costs on this 72,000-square-foot home as it will be fitted with plastic tubing containing antifreeze that will heat and cool the house without electricity.

## WEST END MANSION, 20 STORIES UP



**M**ost people in New York City are lucky if they can call home to several hundred square feet of space. Enter the unique penthouse market, which features properties that are usually much larger but likely not as grandiose as the 13,800-square-foot penthouse on West End Avenue. It encompasses three floors and has nine bedrooms, 11 full baths and two half baths. On top of all that it also has separate living space for staff. It may be 20 stories up, but there is no lack of outdoor space; in fact it has a patio the size of most people's homes. The 2,000 square foot outdoor area contains a fireplace, grill and wet bar. This luxury doesn't come without a hefty price tag—a cool \$37.5 million.



# THE HOLIDAY BONUS



**W**hen November rolls into December it's likely your mind will start to flirt with the thought of your holiday bonus and all that can be done with your expected windfall. But before you get too ahead of yourself, remember it's up to your boss to decide what you will receive every year.

It is pretty standard in the service industry to receive a bonus equivalent to one to two weeks pay, maybe more depending on the wealth of your employer and how long you've been employed. However this holiday season with the economy hovering on the disastrous, should you receive less, or a non-cash bonus, remember to maintain your composure. Some employers may give out a gift card for a spa service or restaurant in addition to a small cash bonus in an effort to save money. According to Lizzie Post, a holiday gift-giving expert at the Emily Post Institute, holiday bonuses are about saying thank-you.

So for nannies or personal assistants, who have only been working a couple months, don't be surprised if your bonus is equivalent to a couple days' pay. Lindsay Heller of the Nanny Doctor recom-

mends that employers give one day's bonus pay for each month they've worked if only a few months.

For those of you who provide a constant daily service and have been with the family for over a year, it's likely you will get a more standard cash bonus. But it's best to always be prepared. If you work as a personal assistant, butler or driver to a CEO or corporate executive, it's likely your holiday bonus will be rolled in with the company's other employees—meaning it should be what you've come to expect during harder economic times.

But if it's not what you expected here are a few things to remember when accepting your holiday bonus.

Always be thankful; in the end it's the thought that counts and your employer's

appreciation of your services. It's up to your employer to decide how you are best rewarded—not you. While you both may agree on your level of performance, your employer may just want to change it up, or give you something more personal than cash.

Be appreciative. Becoming angry, expressing disappointment or showing anything other than appreciation can lead you to come off as being ungrateful. No one wants to employ, or be around someone who is greedy and unappreciative. After all, a bonus is just that—something extra that shouldn't be expected.

Remember if you work for a non-celebrity or corporate family, they may not have as much to give you for a bonus. In this case it's better to expect your bonus will be smaller, or a combination of a gift and a small cash bonus.

Be appreciative, and realize that even a small gift is their way of saying thank-you for a job well done.

Unless your contract states what your holiday or end-of-the year bonus will be, it is up to the discretion of your employer, which means it can fluctuate from year to year. As one nanny says, "Unless written into the contract, a bonus should not be expected and any bonus given should be appreciated. It is simply unprofessional and bad form to complain about the amount." Don't ask about a bonus in fear of appearing greedy, especially around the holidays. If your contract is vague ask for clarification.

It's best to not set yourself up for disappointment and believe it will increase from previous years. Some employers look at the overall picture—what benefits and compensation you get throughout the year or whether you recently received a raise. It's also possible they might surprise you with a week or two of paid time off during the holidays in lieu of an additional bonus.

This holiday season be gracious and thankful for whatever you do receive, as it could always be less.



# Style Tips for the Holidays

**J. Crew Toggle Coat, \$325, jcrew.com**



**Versace. Suede boots, \$149, available at select H&M stores in U.S.**



**Versace short, sleeveless silk dress, \$199, available at select H&M stores in U.S.**



**French Connection Lucinda Dress, \$228, usa.frenchconnection.com**

**Jimmy Choo Glitter Platform Pump, \$745, neimanmarcus.com**



**Matt & Nat Velvet Santogold Shoulder Bag, \$195, bloomingdales.com**



**Kate Spade Crystal Kaleidoscope Bib Necklace, \$398, katespade.com**



**Tasha Tweedy Lady Fascinator Headband, \$38, nordstroms.com**



This holiday season forget wearing the reindeer sweater your grandma knitted you last year. Glam up! After all, the holidays are the perfect excuse to pump up your wardrobe and show off your style.

## Versace Collection at H&M

If you have always fancied yourself in Versace clothing, then your dream can now become a reality. Versace is launching an affordable collection at H&M stores starting from Saturday, November 19. The line will be available in more than 300 select H&M stores throughout the United States. For the holidays, you can stand out from the crowd and make a fashion statement with this cerise-colored

Versace sleeveless silk dress with bold metal stud patterns. Why not also try their sexy suede boots with front laces? This will look equally eye-catching whether you wear it with jeans, a dress or a skirt.

## Bundle Up

If you live in an area where cold weather is unavoidable, you'll want a statement piece coat. After all, it will be the first thing everyone sees as you walk into the party. Try a fun color or unique silhouette. For something with a pop of color try J. Crew's Toggle Coat. The wool coat is available in four colors, and has a hood to keep the wind and snow off your perfectly styled hair.

## Bring out the Sparkle

If you haven't found the right moment to wear that shimmering sequined top or dress, take the holidays and New Years as the perfect opportunity. The holidays are about being festive and nothing does that more than a little glitter. The trick is to keep it minimal. Pair a gold or silver dress, like this one from French Connection, with black tights and minimal accessories for a cocktail party. If full on sequins are a little daring for you try a metallic fabric, or a smaller piece like a skirt or embellished pair of shoes.

## Embrace the Velvet

Velvet was a hot trend on the runway for this winter, so it's a must to embrace this '90s revival trend. Add a lush feeling to your

outfit with a velvet evening bag. Matt & Nat's Velvet Santogold Shoulder Bag is made of velvet and lined with recycled materials so you can be fashionable while supporting the environment. Other options for including velvet in your holiday plans are pumps, or a pair of dress shorts. You can easily incorporate this trend into your wardrobe without being decked out in full velvet.

## Stand Out

If glitter and velvet aren't your taste be eye-catching with your accessories. Statement jewelry pieces are in like bib necklaces, large cocktail rings, and embellished headbands. Pair a fantastic piece with a simple dress and let your accessories speak for themselves. Go elegant or funky, whatever suits you best.