

HR LEADER



The Akron Area Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management

February 2007

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AASHRM February Meeting Highlights

Eliminate Bullying in the Workplace & Create a *Respect-Based Culture*

Presented by Patti Meglich-Sespico, Ph.D., SPHR

In conjunction with the University of Akron and KSU Student Chapters

Wednesday, February 14th, 2007 (Happy Valentine's Day)

**Registration Details on p. 2*

Bullies in the workplace detract from everyone's performance and ability to produce consistently superior results. In order to bring their best ideas and performance to work, employees must believe that their specific talents and efforts are valued and rewarded.

We will learn about the tenets of respect in the workplace, discussing cultural dimensions such as responsibility, ethics, support, policies, equality, culture, and tolerance. We also will discover how to assist organizational leaders in creating a culture that embraces the unique contribution of each employee and provides the basis for good organizational citizenship.

This session will expand our knowledge base of strategic management by incorporating topics regarding ethical behavior and managing change. The demand for an ethical approach to business is a key element in strategically positioning today's organization.

Come join us for lunch and take home ideas on: How to assess the current culture of the organization; a framework for understanding how to create a respectful culture; and how to strategically partner with organization management to create and sustain a high-performance, respectful work culture.

Patti Meglich-Sespico has served as a part-time instructor at Lakeland Community College and Kent State University and facilitated the SHRM Learning System course at John Carroll University, the University of Akron, and Kent State University. She earned her Ph.D. at Kent State University and holds a MBA from Cleveland State University and a BSBA from Bowling Green State University.

Don't miss out! Register today!

\$20 Members, \$25 Non-Members, \$10 Students

Register online at www.akronshrm.org or

Contact Patti Auber by email: pauber@comdocinc.com



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Our sponsor this month:



**Please join us for this exciting event on February 14!
See Page 2 for Details & Meeting Registration Information**

AASHRM February Meeting Registration Information

When: Wednesday, February 14, 2007
 Location: Sheraton Suites
 Cuyahoga Falls
 1989 Front Street
 OH, 44221
 Time: 11:00am-1:00pm
 Cost: \$20 members / \$25 non-members / \$10 Students



Reservations may be made online at:

www.akronshrm.org or pauber@comdocinc.com

Questions? Call Patti Auber at 330.899.8087

Registration Deadline is Monday, February 12, 2007

Meeting/event cancellations may be made by contacting Patti Auber at 330.899.8087 or pauber@comdocinc.com.

If you are unable to attend a meeting or event, reservations must be cancelled 24 hours prior to the meeting time in order to avoid being billed for the event.

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Looking Ahead...

AASHRM March Meeting Wednesday, March 14, 2007



Meeting:	Wednesday, March 14 th , 2007
Time:	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Location:	Sheraton Suites, Cuyahoga Room 1989 Front Street Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221 (330) 929-3000 http://www.sheratonakron.com/
Topic:	Workforce Planning: Insights from FirstEnergy “How we plan to hire 1,000 employees each year in the next 5 years!”
Speaker:	Peggy Breetz is the Manager, Resourcing & Compliance with FirstEnergy. She is an integral part of FirstEnergy’s Workforce Planning team and an Akron SHRM Chapter Member.
Cost:	\$20 AASHRM Members, \$25 Guests, \$10 Students

Welcome New Members to AASHRM!

Diane Robinson
HR Generalist
Liberty Mutual Insurance Group
330-666-2199

Jennifer Hay
HR Specialist
Ben Venue Laboratories
440-201-3487
Committees: Hospitality, Wage
Survey, Certification

Rachel Morton
HR Assistant
McCann Plastics
330-499-1515

AASHRM Members get sage advice from Susan Rodgers of Buckingham Doolittle

Akron Committee Vice President: Bob Rakoci

Susan Rodgers, Shareholder with Buckingham, Doolittle and Burroughs, spoke to 83 in attendance at our AASHRM Chapter meeting on Wednesday, January 10th, at the Sheraton Suites. Susan put together very timely legal updates on recently-enacted Ohio law including the smoking ban and minimum wage legislation, taking time to review the background information, details of the legislation, any changes pending, and also allowing time to answer questions from the audience. Those attending were also provided a paper copy of her PowerPoint presentation.

Items covered that were of particular interest:

The original language in the minimum wage Constitutional amendment was modified by HB 609 which will go into effect on April 2nd. Among other things, the requirement that employees exempt from overtime record daily hours worked was removed, but we were advised to be aware and cautious since it is not yet in effect and may be challenged. We were provided with pointers on how to best comply with the regulation going forward. Another

little-known fact was that company-owned vehicles used to conduct company business, such as sales calls, were included in the smoking ban legislation as an “enclosed area” and as such are technically required to have “no smoking” signage displayed and ashtrays removed. The rules due in June will hopefully clarify employer obligations under the smoking ban. Susan not only covered where smoking was not allowed, but also the penalties involved and that reporting of violations and enforcement issues are still being developed by the State.

As the one-hour presentation drew to a close, those needing to leave did so. Attorney Rodgers then stayed for another 20 minutes to give those remaining additional updates on other timely issues, in particular tips on how to conduct internal checks and how to avoid retaliation claims in the future.

Again, our heartfelt thanks to Susan Rodgers for providing us with very valuable information!

Diversity Update

Akron Diversity Committee Chair, Janet Morrison-Workforce Diversity Conference

This is the final installment from the 2006 Workforce Diversity Conference, *New Challenges, New Opportunities*. I am sure that you have waited eagerly for the newsletter to come out each month! If you have missed the previous installments on the conference, just reference the newsletter archive for December and January editions.

My absolute favorite speaker was keynote Dr. Steve Robbins, focusing on Unintentional Intolerance. Steve's presentation started with the Star Trek theme playing and Steve taking the stage dressed in a Star Trek uniform. In our encounters with differences, we need to give others and ourselves a chance. Culture is learned. It serves as the lenses and filters for our experiences and it definitely impacts behavior. He pointed out that while Star Trek's crew was very diverse for the 60's (African American, Asian, Irish, Russian), all of the positions of power were still held by white males. In general, we don't examine why we are the way we are and where we came from. If we don't know ourselves, we can't understand others.

The equation for Unintentional Intolerance is $M1 + M2 = UI$. M1 is mindlessness. We live our life mindlessly everyday. We can only really focus on one task at a time. The brain is more efficient than that. If you do a task often enough, it becomes mindless work. M2 is multiple redundant messages. If you get a message over and over, you believe it to be true. Just like branding in advertising, we can also brand people! We need to be less mindless and more mindful. If we don't go out and get knowledge about other people, we will never know them.

Let's look at the differences between boys and girls. Sex versus Gender – sex is biological (male/female) while gender is what we make it (masculinity/femininity). For example, we tend to raise boys and girls differently and have different expectations. Here are some qualities and traits we like to see in the two:

Boys:

Strong physically
Strong emotionally
Risk taking
Competitive
Independent

Girls:

Nurturing
Caring
Submissive
Interdependent
Be nice



We end up thinking that the boy's list are leadership attributes when in reality, a good leader has both lists and knows when to employ them. Steve concluded that we all need to have more M&Ms in our lives – Mindful Moments when we entertain new ideas. At this point, Steve had the audience stand and hold their arms out straight. After a few seconds, he mentioned that our arms might be getting tired and starting to hurt but if we as HR professionals could change the world by enduring a little pain, wouldn't we want to do it? Then, as the song *Lean on Me* started to play, he reminded us that we don't have to do it all alone. An amazing thing happened: we all started moving closer to each other and put our arms around each other, singing along with the music. It still gives me chills recalling this experience, 600 people singing *Lean on Me*. What a lasting memory!

Engaging and Managing All Four Generations in the Workplace was presented by Adwoa Buahene of n-gen People Performance, Inc. While we have all heard of the continuing concern of this potential problem, the presentation did bring to light the why's of the different generational behaviors. The new employee mindset includes the ideas that employees are investors of their own human capital (time, effort, skills, and abilities) and that employees seek win-win relationships. Because of the shrinking labor pool, it is even more important that our employees are engaged. Engaged employees are more accountable. Disengaged employees are the quit & stayers – they quit doing the work and still stay with the company.

Gen Xrs saw their parents and grandparents downsized from careers and long-term jobs. Their response is, that will never happen to me! They have become job hoppers when they are no longer learning, growing or getting results.

GenYs were raised by Baby Boomers who asked for their opinions while growing up. So in the workplace they expect their opinions to be heard and acted upon. When they were in school, they were used to getting a second chance, a "do-over" on their homework or tests. When they played sports, every one got a medal.

Then they expect it when they have just entered the workplace.

Gen Xers and Gen Ys are respectful of skills and competencies but not authority based strictly on title.

Cont. on p. 7

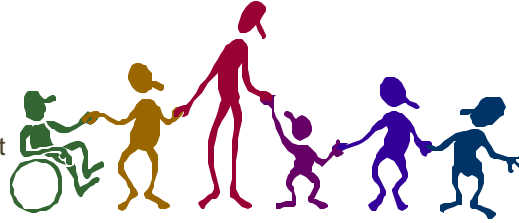
New HSA Legislation

Akron Committee Chair: Terri Bednar - January United Healthcare e-update.

This past December 20, 2006, President Bush signed the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006. The Act includes several significant Health Savings Account (HSA) provisions, such as increases to the HSA contribution limits and administrative simplifications. The law will make HSAs more flexible and easy to use for employers and consumers. Congress has clearly recognized the value of putting health care decisions and financing in the hands of consumers.

Key changes to HSAs include:

- Increased HSA contribution limits
- No contribution reduction for persons who join the high deductible health plan mid-year
- Consolidation of existing Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) and Flexible Spending Account (FSA) funds into HSAs
- Elimination of the FSA 2 ½ month



grace period problem

- Earlier cost-of-living adjustments for HSA limits
- Rollovers of existing IRS funds into HSAs
- Higher contribution limits for lower paid employees

For more information, please visit the following links for employer FAQ's and consumer FAQ's.

http://image.unitedhealthcareupdate.com/members/20349/1_16_HSA_EmployerFAQ.pdf

http://image.unitedhealthcareupdate.com/members/20349/1_16_HSA_ConsumerFAQ.pdf

On the Horizon for 2007

The Governmental affairs committee had its first meeting of 2007 this past week. It was a great meeting with a ton of good feedback on how we can assist the chapter members with staying compliant on the latest trends in Governmental Affairs and Legislation. We discussed some of the topics that will be crossing our desks over the next year. This year is going to be very busy!

Some of the hot topics for 2007 are:

- Mandatory Paid Leave
- Federal Minimum Wage-(The House passed a bill recently to increase the federal minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour over the next 26 months.
- FMLA (the DOL is currently requesting comments on this)
- Investment Advice exemption for 401(k) plans (the DOL is currently requesting comments on this)
- Immigration reform
- Mandated Health Care benefits

Cont. on p. 7

Announcing the Pamela Bichum Jennings Award-2006

Awarded to: Theresa Cummins, Summit Academy

Organizations like Akron SHRM are held together by the dedicated work of our volunteers. It takes many hands (and hearts and minds) to create a SHRM Chapter experience that brings value to our members. Akron SHRM is blessed with many such dedicated volunteers. That's why selecting the winner of the Pamela Bichum Jennings Award as member of the year is such a daunting task.

This year's winner made that task a little easier. Theresa Cummins

has served with great dedication on the Hospitality Committee for the past 3 years. Committee chair, Patti Auber, says, "I don't know what I would do without Theresa.

She's always dependable, and can be counted on to do whatever needs to be done. Besides selling the raffle tickets and greeting members, she puts forth extra effort to make sure that guests are welcomed and made to feel comfortable." This past year Theresa also "stepped up to the plate" by

organizing our summer outing at an Akron Aeros ballgame. It was a huge commitment that she took very seriously to ensure that everyone had a great time.



Theresa, congratulations and thanks for your service to Akron SHRM!

Human Resource Career Opportunities

NATIONAL INTERSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY—RICHFIELD, OH Compensation & Benefits Analyst

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- Compensation experience a plus.
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For a full description, visit www.natl.com/careers

Date Posted: 01/09/07

Greetings from the University of Akron's student SHRM chapter!

By: *Jessica Warstler, Chapter President*

The new officers for this year are:

President: Jessica Warstler

Vice President: Julia Bernstein

Treasurer: Chris Joyner

Secretary: Bill Polsinelli



So far this year, our chapter has been busy through educational seminars and various informational sessions. Our group hopes to visit a variety of industries to learn more about the Human Resources function in an organization. We are excited with the potential of meeting with Sterling Jewelers in the near future!

Advertising & Classifieds

Take advantage of Akron SHRM's monthly newsletter to advertise your job openings or business! Members in transition can spread the word that they are job seeking by placing a FREE classified ad for positions sought. Akron SHRM's newsletter is posted on our website, giving even more individuals the chance to see your ads.

HR Leader advertisement rates:

1/8 page—\$50

1/2 page—\$125

1/4 page—\$75

Full page—\$200

Classified ads (help wanted or positions sought) are \$50 for 250 words. Chapter member companies can list one free classified ad for help wanted or positions sought per organization/per month. Additional ads can be listed for \$50 for 50 words.

For more information, please visit our website at www.akronshrm.org.

HSA-Cont from p. 5

-Card Check or the “employee free choice act”. This involves how a company may become unionized. It would eliminate the silent vote by employees thus using only the cards that employees sign in order to become

unionized. -Universal Health Care plans:
Recently, Massachusetts adopted Universal Health Care Plans while the Gover
nor of California has proposed using a Universal Health Care Plan. Other

states including Ohio could follow suit.
If you would like more information or if you would like to become involved in the Governmental Affairs Committee, contact Terri Bednar at 330-724-6995 X114 or tbednar@goodwillakron.org.

Diversity Update-Cont. from p. 4

Gen Ys like a fluid work style – no interruptions. They are used to being able to get information on demand and want flexible hours.

There is no easy method to managing the different generations that we encounter in the workplace. The most effective method starts and ends with communication: find out what the career goals are of each individual and come to a consensus on the ways to achieve success for both the employee and the company.

HR Practices to Meet the Hispanic/Latino Challenge really attracted my interest. We hear so much about the changing demographics but in Northeastern Ohio, we haven’t experienced the change. Yet. I have had interesting conversations with my managers and employees on this subject as my company, being national, has focused on being able to sell to this segment of the population. Most of those conversations start with, why do we have to do this; there aren’t any Hispanics in this area? We all know that changes are coming and we can’t afford to be caught off guard, whether it is our customers or our employees.

Dr. Glenn Rodriguez from McKendree College in Louisville KY gave some interesting statistics:

- There are more Hispanics in the US than Canadians in Canada
- Hispanics spend over \$700 billion 1/3 of jobs created in 2005 were filled by Hispanics
- Caucasian population is reproducing at 1.7, African American at 2.1 and

Hispanic at 3.3
-Median age of US population is 36, median age of Hispanic population is 27
-In Kentucky, the total population growth from 1990 – 2000 was 9.7%. The Hispanic growth was 173.6%!

That last statistic supports the idea that here in Ohio, we need to be prepared.

Some recruitment challenges include the lack of verifiable work history, difficulty in performing background checks (names have been shortened in



US), and standardized tests like Myers Briggs do not reflect culturally affected behaviors. There are also retention challenges. Companies who have bilingual employees experience 17% higher profits, making these employees targets for competitor recruiting. Training procedures should include more pictures, more verbal explanations, repetition of practice and try to be language specific. Discipline policies are not understood – they think counseling means they are getting fired.

Other challenges for the HR world include benefit explanations, not just medical plans but legal obligations like FMLA. Companies should have Spanish translations of EEO policies, harassment policies, at-will employment and disability leave including

FMLA. Because Hispanics are very brand loyal, these employees are proud of both the product and of the employer. That recommendation goes a long way in their community, which only increases your company’s reputation and profitability.

Willie Jollie was the closing keynote speaker. Willie is a wonderful motivational speaker and singer who talked about Creating a 5 Star Success.

1. Wake up and dream. You have to have a vision. If you can’t see it, you can’t be it.
2. You gotta show up to go up!
3. You gotta stand up. Strive for constant never-ending improvement. If you want better employees, you need to be a better manager. If you keep doing what you’ve been doing, you’ll keep getting what you’ve been getting. Remember, change is good when your attitude is great.
4. You gotta step up. Keep fighting for your dreams; give it your best shot. You don’t always hit a home run every time you step up to the plate but you keep swinging.
5. You gotta think up. Think like a team or the next level. Develop relationships – networking increases your success. Excellence is the best job security.

I want to close with two of my favorite comments from the wide variety of speakers I heard over those three days. Willie Jollie said “Diversity is about relationships. We all came over on different boats but now we are all in the same boat.” Steve Robbins said it best with “Diversity is sometimes about counting people. Inclusion is always about making people count.”

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