

AFFILIATE OF



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Albemarle / Charlottesville HR Association

ACHRA

June 2006

From the Desk of the President

"We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us."

~ Marcel Proust

Greetings ACHRA Members and Guests!

The second quarter of the year has brought many interesting speakers to ACHRA and continued to challenge our members to grow professionally. I have been pleased to hear from individual members telling me that our strategic direction this year is a welcome change.

In April, we had a great panel discussion which involved a range of diversity and legal issues. Panelists discussed integration of people from different cultures into the workforce. We also talked about immigration and work visas. Based on your feedback, David Izakowitz, the visa attorney, will be returning in January 2007 as a solo speaker on the topic of visas. The evaluations work - the Board and Programs asks for your feedback and we respond as quickly as we can! In May, we touched on diversity again - this time in regards to age and intergenerational communications and work styles. Dr. Barbara Brown provided us with valuable insight into the younger members of our workforce and how we as HR professionals and business people need to respond to them. If you missed this event, I encourage you to talk with someone who attended and look over the handout.

Our June CEO Roundtable was a rousing success; we had a strong turnout of 65+ attendees at the lovely UVA Zehmer Hall conference facility. This included a number of guests from outside of HR departments. Prior to the event, I had the pleasure of being a guest on WINA morning radio program with Jane Foy in which I discussed strategic HR and promoted our event heavily. For those who heard me, thanks for the kind words. Despite having spoken to many audiences live and in person, I confess I was rather nervous at first. It must be something about radio reaching much larger numbers! I

also did a follow up program on the morning of June 18th which was a blast.

At the CEO event, the panelists emphasized the need for HR people to become familiar with all areas of the business in order to be strategic. We discussed the *Fast Company* article "Why We Hate HR." Our panelists - Wintergreen CEO Bob Ashton, Stanton Steam Laundry CEO Lee Beam, and Premier Pet Products CEO Evan Wooton - all encouraged HR to learn to read the financials and to focus on outcomes, not just activities. For example, while it is important to measure turnover, the measurement alone doesn't mean anything unless it can be tied to a strategic goal of the company. The panelists reminded us of our very important role as both a communicator and a facilitator of communications between them and the entire company. I hope that you who attended took away something useful.

The second quarter also brought many good changes for me personally. For a variety of reasons, I have relocated to Annapolis, Maryland and am enjoying life by the water. During the past couple of months, I have been traveling back and forth to fulfill my duties as your President. However, due to new and exciting commitments here in Maryland, I will step down from my position as President of ACHRA effective June 30, 2006. Your President-Elect, Barbara Kessler, will be moving into her President role a bit early! As happens around this time of year anyway, the ACHRA Board starts thinking about succession planning. I encourage you to get involved on the Board or a committee. If you like numbers, become the Treasurer. If logistics float your boat, please get involved with Programs. Like the spotlight, consider becoming President-Elect. Now or in 2007. It is fun. It is challenging. And, sometimes, you get your 15 - or 40 - minutes of fame on the radio!

In closing, thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your President for the first half of 2006. In particular, I'd like to thank the Board of Directors for their support and willingness to follow my lead as I steered ACHRA in a new direction. If you need me, I can still be reached as the same cell phone and email in the directory. It has been a great privilege and pleasure which I have enjoyed immensely. Thanks again and all the best to each of you in your endeavors - HR and otherwise.

~ Mary

HR Tip from SHRM

No Right to Free Speech?

Employees may argue that firing them for blogging or bad-mouthing the company violates their First Amendment right to freedom of speech. However, the First Amendment to the federal Constitution limits only governmental action; it does not restrict private employers' behavior. Private employers can prohibit or punish blogging or bad-mouthing without violating their employees' First Amendment right to freedom of speech. In contrast, public employers must take First Amendment restrictions into account.

Virginia 2006 State Conference News

The Virginia 2006 State Conference Committee is pleased to announce that registration is now open. The 2006 Virginia State SHRM Conference will be held in the "Star City" Roanoke Virginia on **October 11th -13th** at the legendary Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. For more information and to register, please go the website: <http://www.rvshrm.org/2006conference>

Chapter What?

Did you know that ACHRA is designated as **Chapter 24** in Virginia? When renewing or initiating your SHRM membership, please indicate your affiliation with our ACHRA Chapter and provide this number - ACHRA receives funds from national SHRM for all affiliated members and we use these funds to make this Chapter - **YOUR CHAPTER** - the best it can be.

Kiplinger Reports . . .

More visas for highly skilled foreigners are likely next year., regardless of the fate of the pending immigration legislation. Technology and other firms are giving Congress an earful about the need for skilled help, and lawmakers will find a way to accommodate them.

The cap on H-1B visas will go to 115,000 a year from 65,000 now. Of course, with demand so great, even the higher quota will fill up fast.

One huge problem with President Bush's guest-worker plan:

It hinges on a national verification system that barely exists and works only inconsistently. About 600 firms use a pilot program based on a database that is supposed to contain the names of everyone eligible for work. But the system has been plagued by serious errors. For example, an immigrant worked here 30 years and became a citizen in 1989, but was fired when his right to work couldn't be verified.

Companies would face big penalties if they hired illegal aliens or failed to keep records . . . Up to \$20,000 per worker and three years in jail for repeat offenders . . . Under the bill passed by the Senate. Uncle Sam and firms would have only 18 months to implement the system.

Employers fear a wave of litigation over verification mistakes. A year and a half isn't a lot of time to expand the checking system to the roughly 8 million businesses that would have to use it.

Funding is also an issue. The Congressional Budget Office says it would take \$1 billion over five years to set up the system and to keep it running. Congress, though, won't guarantee the money.

Welcome New ACHRA Members!

Please join us in welcoming our newest members who joined in the Second Quarter!

<i>Pam Hoover, SPHR</i>	<i>Al Napier, SPHR</i>
<i>Jennifer Farris</i>	<i>Judy Mendoza</i>
<i>Kelley Tobler</i>	<i>Meredith Manson</i>
<i>Shurtone Lee</i>	<i>Sasha Cannon</i>
<i>Andrea Copeland</i>	<i>Xiong Hui</i>
<i>Jim Campbell</i>	<i>Nicole Trice</i>
<i>Cindy Anderson</i>	<i>Lory Raines</i>

Code of Ethics

ACHRA has recently revised and adopted a new Code of Ethic to the SHRM standard and encourage our members to think more about ethical issues and the role of HR in corporate behavior. Please take some time to read through the new Code which is available on ACHRA.org website.

ACHRA Employment Connection + New Website Look & Links

ACHRA's mission includes the goal of providing resources and information to ACHRA members and human resource professional on human resource employment opportunities in the local area. With over 200 visitors to the site last month, ACHRA's Employment Connection is a great place to post your open positions. If you are interested in posting a position, please email the posting to Sasha Cannon at scannon@venturipartners.com

Take some time to check out our "new look & links" at ACHRA.org ! Our website has been significantly updated by our new web mistress, Sasha Cannon! Please visit it! It is beautiful and packed with information. ACHRA members are always encouraged to join national SHRM and become certified. A link to the certification website, HRCL.org, is located on the site. We also have a link to the SHRM Foundation which promotes research in HR best practices, plus a link to the Virginia site.

Thank you, Sasha!

You Are Invited . . .

Mark your Calendar

Thursday, September 14, 2006 from 8:00 AM–4PM

Farmington Country Club, Charlottesville, VA

Back by popular demand, Margaret Morford, one of the most dynamic speakers in Human Resources today. In keeping with our emphasis on strategic HR, she will be presenting,

Running with the Big Dogs: How to Make HR a Strategic Player

Our afternoon session will feature a mock trial with attorneys from McGuireWoods, LLP and others.

The mock trial topic will be ADA.

We hope you will find time to attend this great event, pick up some strategic and legal tips and support ACHRA!

Upcoming ACHRA Membership Meetings

July 11, 2006 – Breakfast Meeting at the Albemarle County Office Building on 5th Street Extd.

Topic: “What I Learned at the National SHRM Conference”. This will be an educational and networking event. ACHRA members share some of the important tips they picked up at the National SHRM Conference. Come learn and mingle!

August 8, 2006 – Time and Location TBA

Topic: “Hey, Lighten Up Already” This will be a fun program focused on relaxation, wellness and work/life balance.

September 14, 2006 – 9th ANNUAL HR DAY at Farmington Country Club from 8AM–4PM

- Morning Speaker – Margaret Morford
- Afternoon Session – Mock Trial

October 10, 2006

Topic: Legal Roundup – What’s New & Upcoming in HR

November 14, 2006

Topic: Business Continuation – Be a Part of the Plan

December 12, 2006

Topic: Social and Induction of New Officers

Save the Date!

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2006

November 9–11

Crystal Gateway Marriott
1700 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202

Would you like to hear great speakers, share stories of success, enjoy some “workplace humor” and network with volunteer leaders from around the world? Save the dates on your calendar! You will mix and mingle with other volunteer leaders during three days of action-packed activities at the 2006 SHRM Leadership Conference to be held on November 9-11, 2006 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Enjoy discussions on how to work with multi-generational groups, hear strategies for growing chapter membership and explore ways to leave a lasting legacy in your volunteer position.

**Block the dates.
Plan to attend.**

Conference and housing information will be available in September 2006.



HR: Leading People, Leading Organizations

www.shrm.org/conferences/leadership