



Press Release
For Immediate Release
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ACHRA HONORS FOUR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR HR EXCELLENCE

Four recipients of the 2010 Human Resource Excellence Awards were named on September 13th.

The Albemarle / Charlottesville Human Resource Association (ACHRA) proudly recognized four regional organizations for Human Resource Excellence. The recipients of the 2010 awards are:

- Albemarle County Human Resources – Organizational Development
- City of Charlottesville Leadership Development Academy
- Farmington Country Club Lend a Hand Foundation
- University of Virginia Human Resources Service Center

ACHRA President, Rachel Brozenske, presented the awards. The following are excerpts of her remarks.

“ACHRA has a long history of service to the human resource profession and to our community. In fact, we are one of the oldest affiliates of the Society of Human Resource Management in the country, and are known throughout the Commonwealth and the region as an exceptional chapter. Tonight, I am particularly proud to be a member of ACHRA as we gather to present our first Human Resource Excellence Awards.

“It should come as no surprise that the Albemarle / Charlottesville community has some good things going, and many other local organizations gather to recognize excellence in their own disciplines. The Chamber of Commerce celebrates civic, business and entrepreneurial leadership; the Charlottesville Business Innovation Council recognizes outstanding accomplishments in technology and innovation; and the Central Virginia AMA awards acknowledge excellence in Marketing and Communications. It is high time that ACHRA step forward to celebrate the many contributions that human resource professionals make to our organizations.

“Tonight, I am pleased to announce that we will be presenting four Human Resource Excellence Awards for 2010. This year’s recipients reflect the scope of organizations in our community -- public and private and large and small --

and together remind us that regardless of the economic conditions or challenges we face, great things are happening in workplaces in our community. Workforces are being developed, employees are being served, business is being conducted more efficiently and effectively, and human resource professionals are shaping the future of their organizations in real and tangible ways.

“Nominations for the awards were evaluated by ACHRA’s judging panel based on five criteria:

- the impact of the project or initiative on the organization’s strategy and goals;
- the relevance of the project to the Human Resource body of knowledge;
- the potential applicability of initiative to other organizations as a best practice model;
- the measurable impact of the project or initiative; and
- the creativity and innovation demonstrated by the initiative.

“Our recipients will be recognized in alphabetical order.

“Our first recipient is celebrating its five-year mark on a successful organization-wide organizational development program. Since 2005, Albemarle County Human Resources -- OD has implemented a comprehensive training and succession planning effort that is consistent with the County’s core value for learning. Albemarle County HR -- OD has continued and expanded its investment in learning in the midst of a challenging budget environment by thinking creatively about how to deliver and fund its programs. By leveraging Employee Assistance resources, creating a train-the-trainer program to develop internal trainers, and generating revenue by opening some programs to attendees from other local organizations, Albemarle County HR -- OD has maintained its commitment to be a learning organization. This past spring, more than 60% of county employees participated in at least one training class. Please join me in congratulating Albemarle County HR -- OD as Louise Wyatt, Albemarle County Organizational Development Manager, accepts the award.

“Our second award this evening is presented to another organization that touches nearly every local resident. The City of Charlottesville’s Leadership Development Academy was launched a year ago to ensure that city employees had the skills necessary to operate and govern in the midst of significant change in our community. The first cohort of Leadership Development Academy students represented the diversity of the City’s offices and community, and through the program they had an opportunity to foster interdepartmental relationships, explore the topics of leadership and management, and complete a variety of special projects. As the second cohort gets underway, two Leadership Development Academy graduates have already stepped into new leadership roles. Please join me in congratulating the City of Charlottesville’s Leadership Development Academy as Maurice Jones, Acting City Manager accepts the award.

“Our third recipient of a 2010 HREA faced a challenge common to many organizations and developed an innovative response that met both organizational and employee needs. The Farmington Lend a Hand Foundation was established in 2007 to provide an organizational mechanism that supports employees who want to provide financial assistance to their colleagues in need. By establishing a foundation, Farmington made it possible for employees to choose to make voluntary tax-deductible payroll deductions to a fund, and any employee in need is eligible to submit a request for assistance to the Foundation. Since its formation, the Foundation has provided more than \$8,000 in assistance to 20 employees. Please join me in congratulating Farmington Country Club as Phil Kiester, General Manager and Callie Stone, Chief Financial Officer accept the award.

“Our final award tonight recognizes an organization that has made significant advancements in the delivery of its core human resource function. The University of Virginia Human Resources Service Center is a team within University HR that responds first-line support for University employees’ questions about benefits, compensation, leave, development, compliance, immigration services, employee relations and recruiting. By adopting a “call center” model, UHR was able to increase its responsiveness while maintaining its efficiency, responding to more than 40,000 calls in the past year. Five Service Center employees were able to answer more than 96% of these calls, reducing the number of calls to other members of the UHR team and increasing efficiency across the whole university by reducing the amount of time employees spend looking for answers to their HR questions. Please join me in congratulating the University of Virginia’s Human Resources Service Center as Darrel Kozuch accepts the award.

That concludes our awards presentation this evening. I think everyone deserves a big ‘Hurray!’ – we have exceptional Human Resource work being done in our community, making Charlottesville and Albemarle a better place to work and live each day.”

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ACHRA is the Albemarle / Charlottesville Human Resource Association, Inc and is a 501(c)6 Professional Association serving Human Resource Professionals in the Albemarle / Charlottesville regional area. A proud affiliate of the Society for Human Resources, ACHRA supports members and the community with monthly educational meetings, networking opportunities, a comprehensive website with a jobs board, workforce development efforts and an annual conference. To learn more about ACHRA, please visit www.achra.org.