

President's Message



Happy New Year to everyone!! **First** I would like to thank all of our departing board members for their service on the board:

Nicole Ralph, PHR is leaving after serving for three years as the Treasurer and four years in the President roles. She has dedicated countless hours of her own time to ensure that the chapter ran smoothly. Nicole has coordinated events, kept us on track financially, promoted the chapter to members and sponsors, volunteered at job fairs and speaking events, represented the Chapter on the State Council, and numerous other acts. She is also a pretty good historian of

the chapter - she can recall details and names like nobody's business!

Bob Hotes, Ph.D., SPHR has been our Diversity Chair for the past four years. He was instrumental in planning our diversity event each year. Bob is not going far; he is currently serving as the Diversity Director on the State Board and will continue to promote diversity throughout the state.

Angie Tippey, PHR served as our Public Relations Chair for three years. She put together these wonderful newsletters and kept us informed of chapter events with email blasts. She also did a fantastic job with obtaining sponsors for our events.

Janine Griffith, PHR has been our Membership Chair for the past two-year term. She welcomed all our new members and held membership drives for both our chapter and SHRM. Through her hard work, we were able to maintain a medium chapter status by retaining more than 100 members in our chapter.

Please help me by thanking them at our next chapter meeting.

Second, I would like to welcome the new members to our board:

April Cook, SPHR – Secretary

Kim Elder – Diversity Chair

Chris Marecki – Membership Chair

Doug McDonald – Public Relations

Welcome aboard, I'm sure we'll be keeping you busy in the years to come!

Third, we have two board members that are changing positions. Mary Curl will be moving from Secretary to the Vice President position. Vicky Fowler will be starting her Presidency term as President-Elect for 2010. They both have done a fantastic job in their current capacities and I look forward to working with them in their new positions as well!

Please make sure to attend the inauguration ceremony at our January Chapter Meeting on January 20th at UIS. This year will be another "event-packed 12-months" of Advancing the Profession and Supporting the Professional. I look forward to working with the new board and bringing the best speakers and events to the chapter members.

Happy New Year!!

Pattie Curry, SPHR

CIC-SHRM President

CIC-SHRM Calendar

Luncheon Meetings

Third Wednesday of every other month. Registration begins at 11:15 a.m., luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at the University of IL at Springfield. Meetings will be held on the following dates:

- January 20
- March 17
- May 19
- July 21
- September 15
- November 17

Board Meetings

Second Wednesday of every month at 11:30 a.m. Meeting location to be determined.

- January 13
- February 17
- March 10
- April 7
- May 12
- June 9
- July 14
- August 11
- September 8
- October 13
- November 10
- December 8

All members welcome.

Special Events

New Member Orientation

- February 17
- October 13

Annual HR Conference

- April 21

An Inspirational Trip to SHRM HQ in DC

by Donna Rogers, SPHR

It's been almost eight consecutive years that I have had the honor and privilege of representing CIC-SHRM and ISC-SHRM at the Annual SHRM Leadership Conference. However, this year was by far the best experience ever! Not only did I have the pleasure of visiting the White House for the very first time as the coordinator of a group of IL HR professionals but I had a much more meaningful trip to Capitol Hill this year. A few years back, I visited the Capital with CIC-SHRM past president Deneen Rives as a "tourist" but this year I was among 200 other HR professionals from around the country lobbying for employers. Specifically, I met with staffers from Dick Durbin, Aaron Shrock, and Melanie Bean's office. We ran into a time crunch trying to meet with Roland Burris so several of us who were going to meet with both senators split up each taking only one senator. All three of my experiences went very well as I supported employers opinions related to some of the employment management related issues in Health Care Reform Act and the Healthy Families Act. I learned that congressional representatives take more from personal visits than any other resources. However, they still do listen to the letters that are sent and especially when they come in volumes.

My advice to peers is to take every opportunity to get to know your political leaders, tell them how you feel about specific issues they are currently preparing to vote and don't stop writing your letters. If you want to have a rewarding experience volunteer for your local chapter or state chapter and take every opportunity to make a difference! You are one person but you can make a difference especially when you are in the company of 200 or more who share the same views you do! I did run into Inez Harris, CIC-SHRM College Relations Director, who was having a great time at her first Leadership Conference.

Member Spotlight



Philip Talley has been a fully licensed insurance agent for 20 years. In his current position with Lee/O-Keefe Insurance Agency, Inc., he focuses on employee benefits of all types. He works with a wide variety of employers and he helps HR Managers shopping for employee benefits, comparing plan options and rates, and enrolling employees. They also work

together to manage the cost of employee benefits. Philip says that many smaller groups often depend upon him to assist them with every aspect of employee benefits, business succession and continuation plans such as buy/sell agreements and key person life insurance.

According to Philip the biggest challenge that most employers face is coping with the increasing cost of group health insurance. With each premium increase, employers are faced with the decision of whether or not to cut benefits, pass along more of the cost, or just absorb the increase. Dealing with change is another big challenge faced by HR Managers. He says with the current debate over healthcare and health insurance reform, we are likely to see even more changes coming soon. He says whatever the outcome, keeping up with all of these changes and adapting to the new laws and regulations will be a challenge.

Philip says the biggest trend in employee benefits has been the increase in voluntary employee benefits. He says with the rising cost of group health insurance, offering voluntary benefits is a good way to enhance benefits with little or no added expense to the employer. Philip adds that the fact that many voluntary benefits are deducted on a pre-tax basis also helps decrease payroll taxes. Many employers are turning to Health Savings Accounts and Health Reimbursement Arrangements. He says it is also becoming more common for employers to offer employees a choice of multiple plan and/or network options. Philip says that offering more than one plan options is a good way to manage cost while still offering employees access to enhanced benefits.

Philip's future plans include working closely with his clients to help them adjust to whatever changes may be coming. He says he truly enjoys working with business owners and HR Managers and that helping clients find good solutions to challenging problems is something he finds very rewarding. Philip says he intends to utilize the various resources available through CIC-SHRM to become more knowledgeable about all aspects of HR Management, not just employee benefits. He feels this will help him become an even greater resource for his clients.

Upcoming HR Events

For more information about these and other events, visit the *Calendar of Events* page on our website: www.cic-shrm.org

The following Lorman Teleconferences are available at a discount to CIC-SHRM members at:

<http://www.lorman.com/training/SHRMCIC/>

[Telecommuting: The Next Wave of Wage and Hour Litigation](#)

January 7, 2010

[Claims Management Techniques in Workers' Compensation Cases](#)

January 8, 2010

[Implementing a Health Risk Assessment for Your Health Plan: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Legal](#)

January 11, 2010

[Do's and Don'ts for Internal Investigations of Employment Issues](#)

January 12, 2010

[Unique Workers' Compensation Aspects of Independent Contractors and Traveling Employees](#)

January 13, 2010

[Current Issues in H-1B Visas](#)

January 15, 2010

[Do's and Don'ts for Internal Investigations of Employment Issues](#)

January 19, 2010

[Telecommuting: The Next Wave of Wage and Hour Litigation](#)

January 20, 2010

[Qualified Retirement Plans Eligibility and Vesting Tips and Traps for the Unwary](#)

January 21, 2010

[The New World of EEO: What Is Coming](#)

January 22, 2010

[Developing a Sound HR Metrics System](#)

January 26, 2010

[End of Employment Payroll Issues](#)

January 27, 2010

[Techniques to Prepare for Difficult Employee Discussions](#)

January 29, 2010

Chapter Chatter

- Steve Burton is now the Recruitment Coordinator for Springfield Clinic
- Tom Faivre received his PHR and is now the Safety & Health Specialist at ADM in Decatur

SAVE THE DATE April 20 & 21, 2010

CIC-SHRM and the Illinois State Council are joining forces to bring you a special 2-day legislative event to be held in Springfield, IL.

April 20th will have sessions covering current legislative topics similar to past years.

April 21st will have additional speakers (including a representative from SHRM) and will wrap up with a trip to the Capitol.

Other activities for the evening of April 20th are being planned as well. Mark your calendars now!!

More information to come soon.

2010 CHAPTER MEMBER MEETING LOCATION

Please note that all chapter member meetings in 2010 will continue to be held at:

**University of Illinois at Springfield
PAC Restaurant.
Please park in lot C.**

We hope to see you all there!



PRESIDENT SIGNS LAW TO EXTEND COBRA SUBSIDY, JOBLESS BENEFITS

President Barack Obama signed legislation into law on Dec. 19, 2009, extending for six months a federal subsidy to help unemployed workers acquire health insurance through their former employers' health care plans. The law takes effect immediately.

Earlier that day, the U.S. Senate approved the measure. The House of Representatives had voted for it on Dec. 16, 2009. The new law provides an extra six months of federal subsidy payments that allows unemployed workers to purchase health care coverage guaranteed by the Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act, better known as COBRA. The new law extends eligibility for the subsidy program for two months. The extension was added to the Department of Defense spending package ([H.R. 3326](#)), which passed the House and Senate by overwhelming margins.

In addition, the spending bill included an amendment that will provide an additional 13 to 20 weeks of unemployment benefits to American workers. Unemployment insurance benefits will increase by \$25 a week as a result of the change.

The COBRA subsidy is a high-profile issue given the heated debate continuing on health care reform.

“This bill ensures that workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own will not lose the unemployment and health benefits they rely upon to provide for their families,” said Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., chair of the House Ways and Means Committee. “The immediate benefits and assistance provided in this bill help provide some measure of economic security for millions of our fellow Americans struggling during this holiday season, helping ease their pain as they search for their next job opportunity.”

The new law extends the duration of the COBRA premium subsidy payments from nine to 15 months. The law changes the eligibility of date for the program from Dec. 31, 2009 to the end of February 2010.

According to the law, workers who are laid off from their jobs on or before Feb. 28 can qualify to receive the subsidy payments. The eligibility deadline and duration of the subsidy payments have created some confusion for employers who must notify laid-off employees about the program and then track and verify that workers are eligible to receive the subsidy. The subsidy was part of the federal stimulus package that was enacted in February 2009 and pays 65 percent of the monthly health insurance premiums for COBRA-provided coverage. Subsidy payments began running out for unemployed workers on Dec. 1, 2009, which compounded confusion over the program as media reports stated that the COBRA subsidy was expiring on that date.

Jobs Bill Approved Narrowly

A similar extension to the COBRA subsidy was included in a jobs creation bill ([H.R. 2847](#)), which was also approved by the House on Dec. 16, 2009. The jobs legislation passed by the narrow margin of 217-212 and now moves on to the Senate. Senate leaders have stated that they will not begin debate on the proposal until January 2010.

The measure combined \$50 billion in spending for public works and infrastructure projects with another \$50 billion in aid to states and local governments, which are facing major budget deficits.

Republican leaders in the House denounced the proposal, calling it “the son of stimulus” and stated that the federal government could no longer afford to support its deficit spending habits.

“More spending, more debt, and the same lousy policies that haven’t produced jobs all year,” House Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, told reporters after the bill passed.

No Republicans voted for the measure and 38 Democrats joined with the GOP members to cast dissenting votes.

Educational Discount for CIC-SHRM Members!

The Central Illinois Chapter of SHRM is partnered with Lorman Education Services!

In order to stay up to date in today's ever changing regulatory environment, you are eligible to receive a **15% discount** on all continuing education programs. We invite you to take advantage of this discount in order to stay up to date on all aspects of our industry.

[Http://www.lorman.com/training/SHRMCIC/](http://www.lorman.com/training/SHRMCIC/)

HR Compliance Manuals and Posters

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce publishes an assortment of compliance manuals and posters for employers.

The latest two are:

Illinois Employment Law Handbook, 2nd Ed., (2 volumes with CD-ROM)

Illinois Employment Forms Book (with CD-ROM)

You can get a complete list of the Chamber's publications by contacting Ken Mitchell at 217-522-5512 x 227 or at kmitchell@ilchamber.org.

January Meeting Presentation

Please join us at the January membership meeting for "*Performance Management & Creating Retention Value*" presented by Randy Council, Owner/President of Human Nature.

This session will use unique, science-based expertise that can help your organization with performance management techniques that will enhance productivity and retain employees with motivation ("Job Well Done") and discipline ("Job Worth Doing").

The majority of motivation problems are actually a result of the supervisor and subordinate holding different views of what constitutes a "Job Worth Doing".

This session will discuss components of a JWD discussion, types of JWD discussions, examples of when to conduct a JWD and tips on how to conduct a JWD discussion.

SHRM Foundation News: Connecting Research to HR Practice

The SHRM Foundation awards grants to fund rigorous, original research with practical implications for management practice.

The "Connecting Research to HR Practice" brochure presents the results of four recent SHRM Foundation-funded projects in an actionable way, so HR professionals like you can apply this knowledge in your organization. Topics in this 12-page brochure are: *Making Virtual Teams More Effective*; *Increasing the Success Rate of New Executives*; and *Enhancing the Effectiveness of HR Practices and Stock Options*.

To learn more, visit the SHRM Foundation website:

www.shrm.org/about/foundation

CIC-SHRM Leadership Team

Please contact us with your questions or suggestions. We want to hear from you!

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LUNCHEON MEETING NOTICE

January 20, 2010

**University of IL at Springfield
PAC Restaurant – Private Dining Room**

Program: “**Performance Management & Creating Retention Value**”, presented by Randy Council, Owner/President, Human Nature

***RSVP for the January 20th luncheon
by Wednesday, January 13th**

Reservation Reminders

- ◆ Registrations can be made via Cvent (a link is provided in the e-mail invitation).
- ◆ Cost for the luncheon is \$18/person. All reservations must be paid at the door unless prepaid Advantage Member.
- ◆ Guests of members are welcome to attend; guests will receive a complimentary meal only for the first meeting they attend.
- ◆ An RSVP is required in order to secure a meal for each member or guest attending.
- ◆ Please remember to state a menu selection in your RSVP for each person you register.
- ◆ Cancellations after deadline and no shows will be invoiced.