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*President's Letter*

Greetings from the President!

Another great meeting in March! We met at the Holiday Inn in Blacksburg (this is the first time we have met there). We heard an excellent talk by Susanna Rinehart, the Director of Education for Diversity and Inclusion at Virginia Tech. Dr. Rinehart touched on several diversity issues, but I think the way she categorized organizational diversity efforts as falling into one of four categories (mono-cultural, compliant, multi-cultural, inclusive) was the most thought provoking. I think many of our organizations fall into the compliant category, talk about the desire to be multi-cultural, but seldom make the efforts to be truly inclusive. I would like to extend the Chapter's appreciation to Dr. Rinehart as well as to our diversity coordinator, April Lucas, and president-elect Robin Ball for arranging this event.

Also at the March meeting, Lorraine Wachsman, our SHRM Foundation Representative, continued our series of short presentations on the benefits of being a national SHRM member. Lorraine focused on the scholarships available through the SHRM Foundation. These scholarships include assistance for HR professionals taking courses as well as for the children of HR professionals going to college. One of our members was excited to learn that her daughter was eligible to apply for a Foundation Scholarship. If you want more information, Lorraine would be happy to assist you.

The annual NRV-SHRM Salary Survey was sent to members in February, and the Radford University student chapter has already begun to analyze the data. I would like to thank those of you who participated. We should be able to send out the results in the second week of April – right on schedule. If you did not participate but would like a copy of the results, please contact our treasurer, Karen Edmonds. The cost for a non-participating chapter member is \$75.

The Radford students have also been working on writing job descriptions for our Chapter board members. Our plan is to review the job descriptions in April and then make some structural changes that should help will make our Board, and thus the Chapter, function more efficiently.

This month, our chapter meeting will be a lunch meeting beginning at 11:45 a.m. on April 16 at the Farmhouse Restaurant in Christiansburg. The cost for the lunch is \$15 for members and \$20 for guests. The topic for the meeting is *Coping with the Stress of Workplace Change*. Darren Wagon, an EAP counselor at Carilion EAP, will be our speaker. The program has been approved for HRCI credit. Please RSVP to Brooke Perry ([brooke@brightservices.net](mailto:brooke@brightservices.net)) by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 13.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Farmhouse.

Best Regards,  
Mike Aamodt

## *Meeting Notices*

### **CHAPTER INDUSTRIAL MEETING**

Be sure to mark your calendars to attend the next meeting that will be held on Tuesday, April 7th at IHOP in Christiansburg. IHOP is located between Ryan's and Red Lobster in Christiansburg. This meeting is held on the second Tuesday of every month and meets at 7:00 a.m. Contact Jeff Hamley at (540) 639-8971 or [jeffrey.hamley@atk.com](mailto:jeffrey.hamley@atk.com) for more information on the Industrial Meeting.

## *Chapter Financial Report*

Beginning Balance as of February 28, 2009	\$ 3,805.89
Ending Balance as of March 31, 2009	\$ 932.56
Scholarship Balance	\$ 2,482.01
Certificate of Deposit	\$ 2,500.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 5,914.57</b>

## *SHRM Foundation*

### **SHRM Foundation Scholarships for National SHRM Members**

*Application Deadline: July 15, 2009*    [2009 Applications now available!](#)

This program is generously underwritten by the [J. J. Keller Foundation](#).

The SHRM Foundation has committed a total of \$100,000 annually for scholarships to be awarded to national SHRM members pursuing a degree in human resources or SPHR, GPHR, PHR or California certification. Members working in the media industry and pursuing a college degree are eligible to apply for a Barbara Sanchez Scholarship.

In addition, chapters and state councils are eligible to compete for the scholarship monies to fund programs that promote SPHR, GPHR, PHR or California certification. (*Note: National SHRM members includes professional, general or associate members. Student members and local-only members of chapters are not eligible for this scholarship program.*)

#### **Awards:**

- 60 Certification Scholarships (\$750 each)
- 40 Academic Scholarships (\$1,375 each)
- 5 Barbara Sanchez Scholarships (\$1,500 each)

For 2009, all applications must be submitted online. You may begin the online application process, save your work and then complete the process at a later date. Your application must be completed and submitted by July 15 to be considered for an award.

*Announcement*

*Please Save the Date*

*You are invited to attend*

## EAP Responses to the Evolution of the Workforce

Wednesday, April 22 – Friday, April 24, 2009

*At*

### Virginia Crossing Hotel & Conference Center

1000 Virginia Center Parkway  
Glen Allen, VA 23059  
(804) 727-1400

*Sponsored by three Virginia chapters of the Employee Assistance Professional Association, this year's program is designed to educate and equip EAP and HR professionals on responses due to the changing workforce as a result of the situation with the economy. Given the stress levels on the workplace today, it is also imperative that the EAP and HR professional create plans for responding to these changes in the workforce. Come join us in a relaxed resort setting to learn and grow in your profession!*

#### Wednesday, April 22:

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Ken Redick, CEAP – “Integrating Coaching Principals into EAP Practice”

The workshop gives the participants the opportunity to learn the origins and principles of coaching and apply them to EAP practice. We will answer these important questions: What is coaching and who can coach? How is coaching different than counseling and consulting? What tools and techniques are available to coach the leaders and teams in our client companies?

2:45 – 3:45 p.m. EAP Panel Discussion – “Paperless EAP-Technology Challenges”

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Elizabeth Holt, LPC, ATR-BC– “Art Therapy for Self Care”

(Continued on page 4)

#### Thursday, April 23: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

##### “Workplace Bullying: A “Serious Problem With a Far Reaching Impact ”

Mary Dallman, LMFT, CEAP – Health Services Consultant, WA State Department of Health, (W.H.P.S)

Workplace bullying (mobbing, emotional violence) is referred to by some as "the silent epidemic." What exactly is it, who is affected and how does it impact an organization's bottom line? In 2007, Zogby International conducted a U.S. Workplace Bullying survey which revealed that 37% of American workers have been bullied yet it is a problem often ignored by employers. The impact

on the target, the team, and the business results in lowered productivity, poor morale and serious costs to the organization. This absorbing and important presentation will address the difficult challenges inherent in confronting this serious workplace problem.

## *Legal Update*

### **Sexual Harassment Training: What You Should Know and Why You Should Care**

*by Margaret P. "Penny" Mason, Esq. of LeClairRyan*

**Scenario 1:** You are a business with 50 or more employees in Connecticut or California, states with statutes and regulations that require you to train your supervisors about sexual harassment. Your very professional human resources department has developed, or you have outsourced the development of, a high-tech, online training program. All your supervisors were trained within a reasonable time after the effective date of the legislation. When your company is sued by an employee from Connecticut and another in Georgia, where there is no training requirement, you can be confident that your training practices are appropriate and will protect you from liability, right?

*Wrong.*

**Scenario 2:** Your business has employees only in Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, or other states where there are no laws or regulations requiring sexual harassment training, so you don't worry about it. Why spend the money for it, especially in these tough economic times, right?

*Also wrong.*

Sexual harassment training for supervisors has been required in Connecticut since the early 1990s, and in California since 2007. It is required for all employees in Maine and the Virgin Islands. In states where training is not required by law, but rather is "encouraged" -- Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah and Vermont -- many companies have instituted such training programs as well. Conscientious employers in other states have implemented training programs for their supervisors and management employees, not only because it was the "right thing to do," but because they have been counseled that it would help if they ever need to defend themselves in a sexual harassment or hostile work environment lawsuit. These businesses have sought ways to provide training inexpensively and efficiently. Many are conducting training in-house, using human resources as trainers. (Note, however, that in-house personnel may not qualify as "trainers" under a given state's regulations.)

With the development of online training resources, many employers provide sexual harassment training using this cost-effective tool. Their employees can log in, work through the training at their own pace, and the program records employee participation for the company's records.

The content of reputable online training programs appears to meet the requirement of the regulations: it includes the definitions of sexual harassment, both federal and state, specific applicable statutory provisions, the types of conduct that constitute sexual harassment, including the fact that the harasser or the victim of harassment may be either a man or a woman and the possibility of same-sex harassment, remedies available for sexual harassment, strategies to prevent harassment in the workplace, practical examples, and obligations of supervisors if they observe or receive a report of sexual harassment. This training is required of every supervisor within a reasonable time of becoming a supervisor of other employees, and employers must keep records of its supervisors who are so trained.

However, California and Connecticut employers who have implemented these kinds of online training programs may be surprised to learn that it does not comply with the training regulations of those states. This is because online training, while comprehensive, does not constitute the **two hours of "classroom-like setting"** required by Connecticut, and does not provide for **interaction with the trainer**, as required by California.

The classroom setting is the only setting that qualifies for training in Connecticut. Connecticut does not offer alternatives to in-person classroom training, where the trainee supervisor has the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers. Califor-

nia, on the other hand, does allow two alternatives. It requires “effective interactive training,” which can include in-person classroom training, but also “e-learning” and “webinar” training. These two alternatives to the classroom setting must contain, in order to be considered effective, interaction opportunities for the trainee. E-learning training must provide a link or directions on how to contact a trainer, who must be available to provide answers within two business days after a question is asked. Webinar training, taught by a trainer and transmitted over the internet or intranet in real time, must provide for and document interactive content, discussion questions, hypothetical scenarios, quizzes or tests, and activities. It must provide the supervisor trainee the opportunity to ask questions, to have questions answered, and otherwise to seek guidance and assistance contemporaneously.

Connecticut “encourages” employers to repeat training of supervisors every three years. California requires training of supervisors every two years. In short, once is not enough, as many employers mistakenly believe. In fact, training your supervisors every few years in only the states where the law requires sexual harassment training may not be considered sufficient by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Its guidelines call for employers to provide training to *all employees* periodically to ensure that they know and understand their rights and obligations with regard to workplace harassment. Note the inclusion of all employees, the omission of a threshold number of employees, and the omission of “sexual” to modify harassment. Therefore, employers are advised to follow these best practices.

Best practices:

- Train beyond California and Connecticut.
- Train all employees, not just supervisors.
- Train to include all protected categories, not just sexual harassment.
- Train even though your company employs fewer than 50 employees.

Whether or not your sexual harassment training program complies with statutes and regulations in your state is a question for a LeClairRyan employment lawyer. While there may be no private right of action or monetary penalty for not having an effective training program, having a proper training program can help in your defense of a sexual harassment or hostile work environment lawsuit. If you don’t have a proper training program, that failure will be used against you. LeClairRyan’s employment lawyers can provide guidance on training that is not only appropriate but also cost effective.

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Questions can be directed to the author, Penny Mason, in LeClairRyan’s New Haven office at [margaret.mason@leclairryan.com](mailto:margaret.mason@leclairryan.com) or (203) 672-3213.

**NEW RIVER VALLEY SHRM  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
April 16, 2009**

**Topic:** Coping with the Stress of Workplace Change

**Speaker:** Darrin Wagon, M.Ed., LPC, CEAP, SAP  
Carilion NRV EAP Counselor

**Location:** Farmhouse Restaurant, Christiansburg, VA

**Time:** 11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch will be served (\$15 for SHRM members and \$20 for non-members). We will need a count for the meal. Please contact Brooke Perry by Monday, April 13th to RSVP at [brooke@brightservices.net](mailto:brooke@brightservices.net)



**APPROVED FOR RECERTIFICATION CREDIT**

This program has been approved for 1 credit hour towards PHR, SPHR, and GPHR recertification through the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI)