



Southeastern Pennsylvania Society for Human Resource Management

The Premier Organization Serving the Professional - Advancing the Profession



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Editor: Kristine Piazza-Belser, SPHR, Human Resources Director, STAT Resources, Inc.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD
BY GREG HARTLEY, PHR, PRESIDENT

With the end of my first year as your President I am proud to report that 2005 was an important year for the future of SEPA SHRM. Over the past twelve months your Board has worked to strengthen the infrastructure of our chapter. These actions include:

- Incorporation of the chapter
- Enhancements to our website
- The addition of two new board positions (Workforce Readiness and Foundation/Certification)
- Introduction of an "In Transition" workshop

In addition, the Board continued to provide relevant and useful topics for the monthly meetings, obtained recertification credits for the monthly programs, kept us abreast of important state and federal legislative issues, and

maintained our affiliation with Temple Ambler Student Chapter.

I would also like to take this opportunity to officially thank the Board members and chapter members who served on the PA State Leadership Conference committee. Their hard work and dedication not only made the conference a success, but it also demonstrated to the rest of the State, the professionalism, creativity and integrity of our chapter.

With such a strong foundation in place, a few of our goals for 2006 include improving communications through enhancements to our website and newsletter, pursuing additional student chapter affiliations, developing an on-line survey for member feedback, and expanding our diversity and workforce

readiness initiatives. We will also continue to provide topical issues in our monthly programs, and maintain our tradition of opening each meeting allowing members to voice any "Hot Topics" you may need assistance with.

So as I begin the final year of my Presidency, I am excited and optimistic

for a very successful 2006. Most of all I am honored to be part of such an inspiring organization. Thank you for your membership, support, and input.



Sitback, relax, grab a cup of coffee and catch up on the latest news from the SEPA SHRM Chapter



SEPA SHRM PROGRAM UPATE



Feb 21 SPECIAL 1/2-day program! "I Never Thought It Could Happen to My Company!" Straight Talk About Union Organizing From the Front Lines." Speakers: Michael Pepperman, Esq., Obermayer, Rebmann, Maxwell & Hippel, LLP., Peter List, President & COO, North American Employers Group, LLC., James Hulsizer, Executive V.P., North American Employers Group, LLC.

Mar 21 TBA

E-mail your topic ideas to Debbi Kaye at dkaye@stonemor.com

Meetings are held the 3rd Tues of each month at Best Western Northeast on RT 1, 3 miles south of PA Turnpike exit 28 or 4 miles west of I-95. Meetings begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 10:30 a.m. and include breakfast, networking and a professional development program. Cost is \$12.00 for chapter members and \$17.00 for non-chapter members. Students receive special rates. Reserve your spot by calling the Chapter Hotline at (215) 698-7116 or pre-register on line at www.sepashrm.org.

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DIVERSITY

By Vicki Ferguson, SPHR, V.P./Director Diversity

*We become not
a melting pot
but a beautiful*

*mosaic.
Different
people, different
beliefs, different
yearnings,
different hopes,
different dreams.*

*Jimmy
Carter—US
President*

February is Black History Month

Black History Month is an opportunity to remember, recognize and celebrate the history, legacy and contributions of black Americans.

Origin of Black History Month

The origin of this national observance, designated by Congress, began in 1926 when Harvard University-educated historian Carter G. Woodson created “Negro History Week.” Woodson’s goal was to “popularize the truth about the contributions of Black Americans to the growth and success of the United States and the World.” Prior to this time, information could not be found regarding the history of African Americans. Achievements were left out of history texts, thus fueling the misconception that blacks had made little contribution to U.S. society or to history.

The month of February was initially chosen because news of the Emancipation did not reach slaves until a month after the 13th amendment to the Constitution was ratified in January of 1865. In addition, the month marks several American historical events including the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the 15th Amendment ratification (giving blacks the right to vote).

During February we also celebrate the birthdays of two individuals who dramatically affected the lives of African Americans—Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

March is Women’s History Month

During the month of March we recognize the accomplishments women have made throughout history. We salute the contributions and achievements women continue to make to our organizations and to our society.

Origin of Women’s History Month

On March 8th, 1857, New York City female textile workers protested unfair working conditions and unequal rights for women. These working women called for a shorter work day and decent wages. On March 8th 1908, female workers in the needle trade marched through New York City’s lower East side to protest child labor, sweatshop working conditions and to demand women’s suffrage.

Beginning in 1910, March 8th became annually observed as International Women’s Day. In 1978, what had begun as a single day broadened when Sonoma County, California, sponsored a women’s history week to promote the teaching of women’s history (at the time, a neglected subject in the elementary and high school curriculums). Then, in 1981, Congress passed a resolution making the week of March 8th a national celebration and, in 1987, expanded it to the full month to celebrate the economic, political and social contribution of women.

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LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE UPDATE by
Roslyn Schaeffer, SPHR VP Legislative

In Dec 05, the House passed H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005. The bill has been sent to the Senate to be acted upon in Feb and is supported by the White House. SHRM actively opposes this bill due to the administrative burdens placed on employers. Specific provisions that are of concern to HR professionals/employers include:

Inadequate System Capacity – H.R. 4437 mandates the creation of an electronic system to verify a new hire's eligibility for employment within two years of the bill becoming law. This new system will be based on the "Basic Pilot" system.

The Government Accounting Office (GAO) found that about 15% of all queries require additional verification because the "Basic Pilot" automated system is unable to provide accurate responses.

Additional Administrative Burdens – H.R. 4437, in addition to mandating the use of an electronic verification system, would require an employer to continue to attest on the Form I-9 that he or she had examined the new hire's employment and identification documents to ensure authenticity.

Reverification of Existing Employees – H.R.

4437 requires all employers to re-verify the identity and employment eligibility of all previously hired employees. Taking into consideration the 15% inaccuracy ratio identified by the GAO, more than 22 million Americans could find their eligibility to work in the U.S. needlessly and inaccurately challenged.

Increased Penalties – H.R.4437 will significantly increase civil penalties for hiring, recruiting, and referral violations. Employers who have even inadvertent paperwork violations could face penalties up to \$25,000.

Other actions taken by Congress include:

- Both the House and Senate passed [H.R. 4579](#), a bill

to extend the 1996 Mental Health Parity Act, (P.L. 104-204), which prohibits health plans from setting annual or lifetime limits on the amount of coverage for mental health care unless similar caps are also imposed on medical and surgical benefits.

- On Dec 13, 2005, Rep Eric Cantor (R-VA) introduced [H.R. 4511](#), the Flex Health Savings Accounts Act of 2005. Sponsors of the bill suggest that this legislation will address two important issues that have hindered adoption of Health Savings Accounts (HAS's). First, H.R. 4511 would provide for greater contributions

See "Update" Page 4

"HR professionals should voice their views about legislative actions through HRVoice on www.shrm.org. Click on "Governmental Affairs," then go to "HRVoice" on the left side of your screen. Choose "Write your elected officials."

VILLANOVA & SEPA SHRM

Chapter Members & SEPA SHRM-sponsored Villanova Participants Earn SHRM Certification
The SHRM certification awarded by the Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI) signifies that HR professionals possess the theoretical knowledge and practical experience in HR management necessary to pass a rigorous examination, demonstrating a mastery of the body of knowledge in the field. The following SEPA SHRM members and SEPA SHRM-sponsored Villanova participants deserve our congratulations for earning their PHR or SPHR certification:

Connie Barnes, PHR
Cindy Kersey, PHR
Deb Conly, SPHR

Denise O'Donnell, PHR
Cathy Knasiak, PHR
Alexander J. Versfeld, SPHR
Mary Theresa Schwartzter, SPHR

Danielle D. Hey, PHR
Hilary Profrock, PHR
David E. Morrow, M.S., SPHR

Update (from page 3)

to HSAs by allowing individuals to contribute to an amount equal to the statutory contribution limit regardless of the deductible. Second, H.R. 4511 would permit coordination of HSAs with other consumer-driven options, such as Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) and Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs).

On the agenda for 2006 are reconciliation of the various versions of Pension reform that were passed in 2005. Both H.R. 2830 and S. 1783 increase pension funding levels and increase the insurance premiums paid to the PBGC. They also include measures designed to encourage employers to offer workers automatic enrollment into corporate-sponsored retirement savings plans. But there are differences in the time frame in which employers have to average their contributions and in the way companies may use or carry over any extra funds contributed to pension plans during prior years when calculating their pension liabilities.

Health care reform could be on the agenda as well. The Senate passed the Wired for Health Care Quality Act, [S. 1418](#), mid-Nov, and the bill was then referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. S. 1418 is designed to improve patient care, reduce medical errors and contribute to cost savings for health care providers through information technology. Look for the House committee to begin hearings on the bill in February or early March.

On the regulatory front, federal agencies issue and executive departments issue regulations and rules to enforce the laws passed by Congress.

In Oct 05, The DOL's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) issued a final rule clarifying who is considered an applicant in the context of the Internet and other related electronic technologies. The rule applies to federal contractors subject to recordkeeping requirements under affirmative action and other equal employment laws enforced by OFCCP. This goes into effect 120 days from the publication of the rule. The final rule can be accessed at:

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/reg/fedreg/final/2005020176.htm>.

In Dec 05, the DOL issued Final regulations on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). They can be found using this link:

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/reg/fedreg/final/2005023961.pdf>.

The regulations clarify the requirements for employers and employees under USERRA. DOL also issued a final rule requiring employers

to provide a notice of the rights, benefits, and obligations of employees and employers under USERRA. The required poster has also been updated:

http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/USERRA_Private.pdf#Non-Federal. Both the regulations and notice requirement take effect Jan 18, 2006.

The final revisions to the changes to the EEO-1 report should be released by the EEOC shortly. These changes include inserting a category for "two or more races," making changes to the reporting of racial data of Hispanic and Latino employees, and amending the job categories. They would take effect in the 2007 reporting year.

TREASURER'S REPORT—

by Dick Handschumacher, SPHR, V.P./Treasurer

Note: As of Aug 31, 2005. 2005 year-end report complete and in reconciliation.

	Aug 31, '05
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
First Trust Checking	30,519.31
zOld First Trust	1,000.00
Total Checking/Savings	31,519.31
Total Current Assets	31,519.31
TOTAL ASSETS	31,519.31
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Monies on receipt to Be Paid Ou	68.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	68.00
Total Current Liabilities	68.00
Total Liabilities	68.00
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	26,074.57
Retained Earnings	16,419.03
Net Income	-11,042.29
Total Equity	31,451.31
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	31,519.31

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VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
OFFERS HR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM AND
PHR/SPHR EXAM PREPARATION
FEBRUARY 2006

Villanova University is once again partnering with SEPA SHRM in offering the 13-week Villanova/SHRM Learning System Course at two convenient locations. Classes will take place at Prudential Financial, 2101 Welsh Road, Dresher, PA on Wed evenings, starting Feb 1, 2006. Sesame Place, 100 Sesame Road, Langhorne, PA will host classes on Thurs evenings, starting Feb 2, 2006. Classes will meet the same evening each week from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. through the week of Apr 24, 2006.

This program will not only help prepare you for the HRCI national PHR or SPHR certification examination, it is also designed to give Human Resource specialists new tools for successful job performance. Upon successful completion of the course, you will receive the Certificate in Professional Human Resource Management from Villanova University as well as 3.9 Continuing Education Units. The instructor for both the Prudential Financial and Sesame Place sites is Susan Warner (JD, SPHR). Susan is President, HR Troubleshooters and Founding President/Chapter Administrator of SEPA SHRM. There will also be some terrific SPHR-level/SEPA SHRM Board member guest instructors for some of her classes. Students will also have access to the on-line HRM Learning Resource Center for one year. You may want to complete the course and take the exam in 2006, as the HR Body of Knowledge and exam will change in 2007.

Register today by contacting the Department of Continuing Studies at 610-519-4310. You can also visit www.constudies.villanova.edu for more information and complete your registration process on-line.

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