



SHRM Student Chapter News

First Annual Alabama State Student SHRM Fall Conference

“Finding Professional Pathways through HR Education”

By Alicia Lux

On November 8, 2014, students from across the state of Alabama gathered in Montgomery to attend the first Annual Statewide SHRM Student Chapter Conference. Consultant Cindy Beresh-Bryant, was the first speaker at the conference, and effortlessly spoke upon the importance of marketing myself in Human Resources. There are expectations when going from student to career. Pointing out that personal choices can impact the choices of future employers, Cindy also touched on the importance of maintaining professionalism in and out of the workplace. While sharing valuable information in regards to resumes, networking, and accountability when moving from college to career, her energetic presentation commanded the floor.

Dr. Kim LaFevor, Dean of the College of Business at Athens State University, shared details on the new SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP Certifications available in 2015. These certifications are the latest tools that show evidence of competency and knowledge that is relevant to the business needs of today. To add, Dr. LaFevor shared materials with attendees which contained the details on eligibility requirements and what we need to know in order to prepare for the certification. The next section presented was a review on the 2014-2015 SHRM Student Merit Award Program. Dr. Gary Valcana, a Professor at Athens State University and Human Resource Department Chair, commanded the floor while presenting this topic. As Co-Vice President of Merit Award, I found this information instrumental to

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“Finding Professional Pathways through HR Education”

By Alicia Lux
(Continued)

our student chapter. I want to contribute to, and maintain the achievement of Outstanding Student Chapter. By carefully reading through the Student Chapter Planning Book, Dr. Valcana pointed out the importance of paying attention to details. His presentation reminded me how important it is to stay engaged in SHRM by not only attending functions, but to be present at the chapter meetings to make sure that we are making and maintaining our goals.

The second half of the conference began with Sergio Delgado, a Director at Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service. He presented on generational differences in the workplace. He entertained the room with musical slide shows that represented Traditional, Generation X, and Millennial generations and what they represented in the workforce. Karen Burton, Manager for Human Resources Service Office at NASA, Marshall Space Flight Center, gave insight to the professional path in public services. He shared information regarding the internship opportunities available in the Federal Sector to current students and the benefits that could follow. Our valued veterans are especially recognized for internships and positions.

At the end of the day, we participated in a question and answer panel, which included Marjorie Icenogle Ph.D., gleaning valuable information from all of the speakers at the conference. Afterward, SHRM students gathered into groups and collaborated on ideas for the Student SHRM website and fundraising ideas. Following students gathered in a competitive game of HR Jeopardy. Indeed, this fun activity was a great opportunity that allowed Athens State SHRM members to get together with other SHRM students from other Alabama colleges.

16th Annual Tennessee Employment Relations Research Association Conference



VW, UAW & Tennessee Panel Discussion at TERRA Conference
Lydia DePillis (Wash. Post), Mitchell Smith (UAW), Tom Janoski (U. of KY), Martin Mulloy (Ford, ret.)

“Current Tennessee Labor Relations”

By Tiffany Gayman

The 16th Annual Tennessee Employment Relations Association (TERRA) Conference took place November 12th, 13th, and 14th inside the Lakeside Club on the Arnold Air Force Base in Tullahoma, Tennessee. Many Athens State University SHRM student members attended this year and were very pleased with the outcome and the knowledge that they learned. Undeniably, the TERRA conference led to a much broader insight and understanding of today’s labor relations including current labor management issues that are evolving in the world today.

Dr. Kim LaFavor, Dean of the College of Business at Athens State University, was the 2014 TERRA President. There were many intellectual speakers at the conference. Indeed, one way or another, each presentation provided the SHRM students valuable information that will be very useful as they begin their career in HR. For example, there was a mock arbitration workshop during the last day of the conference, which was by far my most favorite, along many of the other SHRM students. The mock arbitration, led by Phil LaPorte, Director Emeritus of the Labor Studies Program in the College of Law at Georgia State University in Atlanta, provided a phenomenal demonstration upon the arbitration labor relation process. Indeed, many SHRM students showed a lot of interest in the workshop as they participated in asking many intellectual questions.

Furthermore, the 16th Annual TERRA Conference was not only very intellectual, but also a lot of fun. Thus, the conference was greatly appreciated by all of the Athens State University SHRM student members as it provided us a strong insight on today’s current issues in labor management. We look forward in attending the next TERRA conference in the year of 2015.

LERA Alabama Chapter Conference

By Austin Ramsey

This past August, I had the privilege to attend the 2014 Labor and Employment Research Association (LERA) Alabama Chapter Conference. This chapter meeting was held in Orange Beach, Alabama; the venue was beautiful and relaxing. The speakers there were all fantastic, as we had speakers from many different places within the business world. The speakers at the conference were from organizations such as IBEW, FMCS, United Mine Workers, a retired Vice President of Labor Affairs for Ford, and even the Dean of the College of Business, Dr. Kim LaFevor, (who is from my very own university here at Athens State). The variety was very interesting, as this was my first business conference. My favorite presenter had to be Martin Mulloy and his presentation about how Ford avoided bankruptcy while the other car companies were being bailed out by the government. The CEO of Ford at that time managed to pull off some incredible things to be successful with this endeavor, and hearing the strategies that had been tested and proven successful are invaluable to me, as this could possibly help me sometime within my career. Daryl Dewberry from United Mineworkers was another presenter I enjoyed thoroughly. His knowledge upon regulations was interesting, and hearing from a union within a business that constantly debates the relevance of unions was a fresh perspective for me. There are always two sides to every story, and to be well rounded and thinking objectively is key in the world of business.

The final presenter of the day was Dr. Kim LaFevor, and she definitely had some interesting stories from her days working as a HR. This presentation was also one of my favorites because hearing

the situations she was put in helps me prepare myself for the eventful life I have in store for me as a human resource management major. Her past experiences with HR put her in many difficult situations; however, she always handled them in a very professional manner. All of the speakers that were invited to speak were all incredibly helpful, and the networking I was able to establish at this conference was absolutely incredible. I was able to talk to many different business men and women throughout my stay, even getting the chance to have a one on one talk with the Commissioner of Labor for Alabama, Fitzgerald Washington. Being able to have a normal conversation with someone as high up the ladder as him really helped me gain some confidence in myself. This conference was a success to me, as I was able to get some information about what was currently going on in the business world at that given time. Altogether, this conference taught me a lot about my future career. Thus, it helped me establish contact with people throughout the business world. Definitely, the most important thing this conference did was help boost my confidence and mentally prepare myself for my future career. I am grateful for all the sponsors that made this conference possible, and for making this conference free for students, as well as paying for our rooms at the luxurious hotel we had the privilege to reside in throughout the time of this conference. This conference has made such a tremendous impact on my life. I look forward to the next LERA Alabama State Conference.



Fiddler's Convention

By Austin Ramsey

When I think about good barbeque and great music, I am reminded of the Fiddler's Convention that is held on the campus of Athens State each October. There are plenty of different kinds of food, plenty of different booths to enjoy, but what is this AMBUCS that is tied to the event? AMBUCS is the American Business Clubs, and melded together with Fiddler's Convention, it becomes a fantastic opportunity to raise money for a good cause. For the last two years, the cause has been sponsored by the Athens State University SHRM Student Chapter.

The Athens State University SHRM Student Chapter has teamed up with the Robin Irwin Physical Therapy Services Barbecue team, also dubbed "Porkalicious," and has helped raise money for AMBUCS for the past two years at the Fiddler's Convention. This unique organization provides amtrykes for children as well as wounded veterans who need an unique bicycle, as they cannot ride a normal one. They are adapted to help overcome mobility constraints, and are very useful within these people's lives.

The Athens State University SHRM Student Chapter, along with the Tennessee Valley Chapters of SHRM and therapy group, would like for you to visit the AMBUCS website. To add, we all would love for you to become involved as possible in this group that is for such an amazing cause and continue to support the AMBUCS booth at all of the future Fiddler's Conventions. It is amazing what can happen when groups work together for a good cause. The few hours you volunteer can make a large impact on someone's life, especially the wounded veterans and children who desperately need the apparatus to be more outgoing in life.

The support of the 2014 Fiddler's Convention was fantastic, as we had so many propel going through for barbeque that we barely had time to breathe. Undeniably, it was so great to know that it was all for a good cause, and that the product and service that these people were purchasing from our joint venture was fantastic. Porkalicious was a great group of people to work with, not to mention their food was to die for. They had pulled pork sandwiches with cole slaw, baked beans, and potato salads. Unfortunately, the convention took place on a rather cool day; however, offered Starbucks' Coffee on tap, which sold phenomenally well. Both AMBUCS and SHRM hope that you will consider stopping by the booth we have set up with Porkalicious at next year's Fiddler's Convention. As always, the convention will be held on campus at Athens State University. Indeed, we are hopeful that we will raise even more money for this great cause next year. If you are interested in this fundraiser, and do not want to wait until next year to help this cause out, you can visit the Huntsville area AMBUCS website at <http://tanstrat.com/hsvambucs/> and get a glimpse at all the club does to help out our community. We thank you for all of the continued support of our group, and hope we can help serve our community next year as well.

About Athens State SHRM

The Society for Human Resource Management is the leading voice of the HR profession. The Athens State Student Chapter allows students to gain access to an immense information resource at the local, regional, state, and national level, and to have opportunities to meet HR practitioners so as to develop personal contacts and networks. The organization also offers professional development workshops, access to HR conferences, and creates visibility for recruitment for HR internships and permanent HR opportunities.



Tennessee Valley Chapter of SHRM

By Pam Parker

On Wednesday, September 10, 2014, Tennessee Valley Chapter of SHRM held their Fall conference. The conference was named HR Out of the Box. It was held at the Garden Plaza Inn. HR Out of the Box was a one day conference held from 8am to 4pm.

The conference began with a continental breakfast and time to network with professionals in the HR field. The first speaker was Matthew Stiles with Maynard, Cooper and Gale, PC. His presentation covered the Affordable Care Act. It concentrated on employee benefits and legal updates that are going to be vital to know for the HR world.

The next speaker was Jenny Logan with Health Med. She gave a presentation on different wellness programs. "Obesity and Workers Compensation: How an Effective Wellness Program Can Lower Your Cost" was information on how a wellness program can positively affect the workplace. It also covered different

ideas on how to implement an effective wellness program. Dr. Bruce Pieper from TVTC spoke about "HR leaders are Readers". Scott Smith, with S.S. Nesbitt Company out of Birmingham, AL, gave a presentation covering, "Supporting the C-Suite with a strategic long range approach to healthcare planning".

At the end of the Conference, Mary Ila Ward with Horizon Point Consulting, Inc., gave an update on the certification changes that are currently taking place for HR professionals. She covered some of the common questions concerning the new SHRM certification testing and what possibly will happen to old certifications. A lot of the questions are still unknown because the program is still new; however, she answered many questions to the best of her knowledge. She also covered the expectations for the PHR/SPHR.

There were vendors at the back of the conference room. The breaks during the conference allowed time to visit the booths. Also during the breaks, the sponsors were acknowledged and shown appreciation. Many Athens State SHRM Student Chapter members attended the conference. This conference was a great experience for Athens State University SHRM Student Chapter members because we were able to network and interact with professionals in the HR field. As an Athens State University SHRM Student Chapter member, I would personally like to thank the Tennessee Valley Chapter-SHRM for allow us students to attend the conference and all they do for us to become more knowledgeable about the field of study we are going into.