



GREATER VALLEY FORGE HUMAN RESOURCE ASSOCIATION, INC.



2119 County Line Road, Villanova, PA 19085 ☎ Phone: (610) 551-4736 ☎ Fax: (610) 525-2187 ☎ www.GVFHRA.org

November 2008

November 18th Dinner Meeting: HR Technology Panel Discussion -Solving the Technology Puzzle

Someone once said, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got." Whether in an HR department of one, or a large global corporation, this is always true. Trying to apply past practices to new problems gives us a limited range of potential solutions.

Most companies look to technology to provide them with an advantage, sometimes to limit the amount of manual, administrative work and sometimes to become a data repository for reporting. Whatever the reason, the benefits of purchasing technology to help run the business of Human Resources are limited to what we put into them. Read that again...the benefits are limited to *what we put into them*. Technology is only *part* of the answer.

Your technology purchase is a capital investment that needs to be evaluated, implemented and managed in a well thought out manner. This means looking at all existing technology and processes to bring them together in your new system.

How do you do this? How do you solve the technology puzzle?

Join GVFHRA on Tuesday, November 18th for an interactive panel discussion with local HR Technology practitioners, managers and leaders. If you are looking for a place to start or what to do with your purchase once you have made it, then this session is for you!

November 6th Breakfast Meeting: Disaster Recovery and Planning

**Speaker: Tom Cloud,
Chairman and CEO,
United Electric Supply Company**

In September of 2004, a rare Delaware tornado struck United Electric's 74,000 sq. ft. Corporate Headquarters and largest location, housing 100 employees. The building was partially destroyed and immediately condemned. United Electric was prepared with a Disaster Recovery Plan. The company was able to service its customers from its branch locations within 24 hours and was fully operational in a temporary facility within 8 working days. After \$3 million dollars of repairs, United Electric employees returned to its Corporate Headquarters seven months later.

In this dynamic presentation, Tom Cloud, will show newscasts covering the tornado, and personally describe the trauma of this experience. In addition, he will explain how their efforts to develop and implement a Disaster Recovery Plan helped safeguard United Electric's employees and restore operations within a very impressive short period of time.

United Electric is a \$170 million company with 15 locations and 320 employees in five states. It services the industrial, commercial, and institutional markets for electrical supplies and apparatus.

In 1995, Tom led an employee purchase of the company through a tax qualified ESOP and now serves as Chairman and CEO. Tom Cloud holds a B.S. in Economics from the University of Bridgeport and an MBA in Finance from Drexel University and has served as Chairman of the National Association of Electrical Distributors and many other boards.

President's Article: "Certification – A 'Must Have' For The HR Professional"

By Sharon Crandall, President



Hi everyone! I must preface this article by thanking the countless volunteers who made such huge contributions to the success of this year's Delaware Valley HR Partnership 2008 Annual Summit, a joint effort between GVFHRA and Philadelphia SHRM. This year's summit was the best ever – we had over 500 attendees, more sponsors than ever before, and an exceptional array of speakers. It was a monumental undertaking, but the energy, excitement, and knowledge we took away was HUGE! And last, but certainly not least, those of us who are PHR, SPHR, or GPHR certified gained 5.0 more additional credits toward our recertification – which brings me to the heart of this article.

One of my goals this year as your Chapter President is to educate our membership about National SHRM, our relationship to the organization, and the chapter responsibilities we have to "Serve the Professional and Advance the Profession". National SHRM has identified seven Core Leadership Areas (CLA's) in which we should be educating our members and enlightening one another. Throughout my Presidency this year I will be addressing each of the seven CLA's, and this month's article focuses on HRCI Certification. The HRCI Certification exam requires us to study, learn, and ultimately practice a wide array of issues and topics in our field. It can be a grueling process while preparing for the exam, but once passed, it is a huge sense of accomplishment. As Human Resource Professionals, we need to stay up-to-date on the latest initiatives, directives, and changes within our field, and by becoming certified we will do just that.

For the past twenty years, I have been employed in various operations and human resources roles within several public accounting firms. In the public accounting profession, it is a significant achievement when the accountant receives his/her designation as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). The CPA is recognized as an expert in the field of accounting, and it is well-known in the public accounting profession that if you do not achieve the CPA designation, then your career is seriously limited. I have seen a definite trend within the past decade where more and more firms and companies are requesting and, in some cases, requiring that their human resource professionals achieve the designation of PHR and SPHR.

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Meeting Costs:

GVFHRA Members who have registered in advance:

\$25.00 with advanced payment (by the Friday before the meeting)

\$30.00 with payment at the door

GVFHRA members who are NOT pre-registered and all guests:

\$35.00

Students:

\$20.00 (enrolled in a minimum 2 courses of 6 credit hours & not in a full time exempt HR job)

To Register:

Mail payment to GVFHRA, phone (610) 551-4736 or visit www.gvfhra.org.

Cancellations:

GVFHRA will bill "no-shows" who do not cancel reservations one week prior to the meeting.

ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS!!

GVFHRA encourages you to attend a New Member Orientation session held at 5:15 pm prior to each dinner meeting. Come learn all about us and meet new people!

Inquire at the registration table or ask an Ambassador Member for assistance

(Continued from Page 2 Column 1)

The designation acknowledges a learned individual in the human resources field, and the recertification process further reinforces that person's knowledge base. Companies and firms want the brightest and the best on their teams, most especially from the human resources professionals who are responsible for their greatest asset – their people.

Our chapter has always offered a high level of encouragement and opportunity for our members to seek certification and to remain certified. Our GVFHRA Certification Study Group, under the direction of Nicole Sakowitz, helps prepare you for the exam by bringing SPHR-certified members to lead learning experiences based on the SHRM Learning System for each of the six modules over a full two-day program. Last spring 100% of the participants in the Study Group passed the exam. I urge you to consider achieving your own designation as a human resources professional, and I am certain that I don't have to encourage anyone who is currently certified to remain certified! Have a great month!

All the best,
Sharon

Save the Date

What: Recruiting and Retention Committee's biannual seminar given by Tereasa Griffin, President and CEO of Freeman Associates and expert in the area of retention.

When: January 6, 2009 1:30pm - 4:30pm

Where: Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Ave.

GVFHRA Job Bank

Find Jobs:

Free to Job Seekers

Post Jobs:

Discounted rates for GVFHRA Employers

Check the website www.gvfhra.org under Careers for more details

**Thank you to our GVFHRA
November Breakfast Meeting Sponsor**

PENNSSTATE



Great Valley

Pennsylvania State University of Graduate Professional Studies

The Pennsylvania State University School of Graduate Professional Studies is developing a graduate business course on intercultural competencies. The course is targeted to individuals that work across cultures or within multicultural environments – essentially all of us in today's business world.

We want to share this process with the business community in two key ways. First, we seek your input. What are the biggest hurdles you and/or your company's employees face in terms of working cross-culturally? Dr. Kim Merriman will ask for your thoughts at GVFHRA's November 6th breakfast meeting or would appreciate hearing from you via email (kum4@psu.edu).

Second, we invite those of you that share interest in this important topic to send Dr. Kim Merriman an email with your contact information. We will add you to our mailing list for upcoming related events: a November research presentation on cultural perspectives of compensation, professional development workshops, etc.

Penn State's School of Graduate Professional Studies at Great Valley extends the resources and reputation of one of the nation's leading research universities to suburban Philadelphia. We teach valuable practical skills, share cutting-edge knowledge, and work with corporate, government, and educational neighbors to address real-world problems and enhance employee performance. Thank you for your role in the process!

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by SHRM or GVFHRA.*

***Thank you to our GVFHRA
November Dinner Meeting Sponsors***



**Penn State University
Master of Leadership Development
Program - The School of Graduate
Professional Studies at Great Valley**

This master's degree program in Leadership Development meets the needs of HR and OD leaders who are involved in leading and facilitating strategic organizational change.

With its focus on helping participants develop leadership potential in themselves as well as others, the program considers leadership across the lifespan, from early career through retirement, and includes mentoring and community service as well as leadership in the corporate realm. The program employs a multidisciplinary approach stressing social responsibility, ethics, and the value of the individual. Instruction develops real-world skills to foster positive change in individuals, groups, organizations, and community.

Through the program, participants learn key aspects of transformational leadership which can be applied to client or corporate settings to

- Align leadership development with performance metrics and drivers;
- Foster adaptability and responsiveness to changes in markets necessary for productivity and profitability;
- Build an image of confidence, mission orientation, and commitment to people;
- Develop associates who attract new personnel of higher quality;
- Broaden collective skill sets for generating more creative solutions to problems; and
- Challenge and develop people more fully, both professionally and personally.

The 11-course program is AACSB-accredited and can be completed in less than two years on a part-time basis. For more information, contact:

JoAnn Kelly, Administrator,
Master of Leadership Development Program
The School of Graduate Professional Studies
Penn State Great Valley jek2@psu.edu
610-648-3233
www.gv.psu.edu/psuleadership



Master of Science in Human Resource Management at Saint Joseph's University

The Master of Science in Human Resource Management Program at Saint Joseph's University prepares students to command the evolving field of human resource management by developing an expertise in human resources, as well as building critical business and leadership skills. This innovative program is specially designed to develop students to become strategic partners, enabling them to help their organizations compete in a competitive marketplace.

Specialized program features of the Master of Science in Human Resource Management include course work in organizational change, employment and labor law, information systems for HR, strategic human resource planning, social responsibility, and financial statement analysis. An innovative feature of the program is the ability to choose electives from other graduate programs in order to enhance the professional goals of the individual student.

This strategic program can be completed in as little as 24 months, while students work full-time. For more information and personalized assistance, please contact Tricia Rafferty, Director, at (610) 660-1318 or patricia.rafferty@sju.edu. To learn more, please visit our [web site](http://www.sju.edu/academics/hsb/hr/index.php) at www.sju.edu/academics/hsb/hr/index.php.

I Survived the SPHR Exam! (With a Little Help from GVFHRA)

by *Kathy Muscarella, SPHR*

It was a daunting personal goal: earn SPHR certification from HRCI, the Human Resource Certification Institute. I had already purchased the SHRM Learning System and was studying on my own. However, it had been many years since I earned PHR certification and I knew I needed additional assistance to increase my chances of passing. Enter the GVFHRA Professional Certification Committee, and their Study Group.

Now, we all lead busy lives and I'm no exception. I didn't have the luxury (nor the inclination) of committing to a semester-long course, but knew the classroom/training venue would increase my chances of success. I decided to give GVFHRA a try, and I'm so glad I did. The two-day "cram course" was the ideal option, providing a rapid review for experienced HR Professionals like myself and the other attendees of the Spring 2008 Study Group. The instructors are all GVFHRA members who have earned SPHR certification, so they really know their stuff. I was so impressed with the entire experience, I decided to become an instructor for the Fall 2008 Study Group.

Don't put it off another day! Earn Professional Certification, and let GVFHRA help you do it. The Fall Study Group is already forming. We'll meet on 2 Fridays, November 7 and 14, at J.P. Mascaro in Audubon. The cost is just \$210 for members and \$275 for non-members. Register online at http://www.gvfhra.org/upcoming_events.asp.

Save the Date!!

Diversity Seminar
Facilitated by Grace Odums
December 16th, 2008
Watch for details soon!
Time: 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Location: Sheraton Park Ridge

Join the Government and Legislative Committee

Are you interested in becoming more involved with GVFHRA? Have you considered serving on a committee but you're just not sure which one? Consider the Government and Legislative Committee. The Government and Legislative Committee addresses how HR can keep on top of the latest legislation on a national basis while also staying abreast of laws in the PA and NJ area.. We will look for expert speakers on relevant topics, people who know about the legislation currently being considered and topics on government programs that affect our employees. Join us in bringing to the forefront the most recent legislative and governmental information to the members of the GVFHRA. For details about how to get involved contact:

Catherine Merkle, PHR
Integrated Benefit Services, Inc.
(610) 520-4914 (office)
(215) 802-0221 (cell)

GVFHRA Job Bank

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Free to Job Seekers

Post Jobs:

Discounted rates for GVFHRA Employers
Check the website www.gvfhra.org under
Careers for more details

Save The Date: December 16 – Holiday Party and Silent Auction

If you did not make last year's GVFHRA Holiday Party and Silent Auction, you missed a great event. If you were one of the almost 100 members there, you might have left that evening with some holiday gifts

at a bargain along with some new business contacts made through networking.

This year's event is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16 at the Sheraton Park Ridge. Please mark your calendar now to attend! This would be the perfect occasion to invite a colleague or friend along . They can meet other HR professionals during one of our most social and interactive events of the year and also learn more about our programming for upcoming speakers and events.

Proceeds will benefit the SHRM Foundation and local non-profit organizations that serve the needs of those in our immediate area.

Something New !

This year we have added a Silent Auction Booklet that will be designed by GVFHRA members Bruce Zanar and Carol Tavella. The booklet will contain auction items and also advertisements that are available for business and individuals to purchase. Below are the prices for the ads. Please consider purchasing an ad to help promote your business or sell an ad.

Full Page Ad	\$100
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Please donate in November!

Please help the underprivileged this year by bringing non-perishable food items to the **November breakfast and/or dinner meetings**. All donations will help a local charity or food bank. Every contribution helps! Thank you for your support! *Sponsored by the Ambassador Committee.*

Half Page Ad	\$ 50
Business Card Ad (1/4 page)	\$ 25
Back Cover of Ad Booklet	\$200

Accepting Donations Now

If each GVFHRA member secures just one item or service for the auction tables, we can once again make this event a huge success!

A table will be set up at the November 6th breakfast meeting and November 18th dinner meeting to accept donations and place ads in this year's auction program booklet.

Be as creative as possible! No donation is too small either. We can always group items together to fit a particular theme. Here are some actual donations from our members that from last year that were big hits:

- Golf Cart and Balls
- Signed Eagles Football
- Handmade gemstone jewelry
- Treasure trove of wine
- Original signed paintings
- Personal Services: manicure, personal trainer, hair styling
- Spa Basket
- Restaurant gift certificates

Any questions regarding donations or advertisements, please contact Susan Fletcher at sfletcher@careerpotential.com or at (215) 280-8728. Thank you in advance for your support!

Career Networking Group

First Monday of the month from 5:30-7:00
(with some exceptions)
Right Management - Berwyn Office
(610) 251-9250

November 1st
December 3rd

- Networking, job sharing opportunities
- Brief introduction of each member, utilizing "commercials" guidelines
- Resources/materials provided to assist you in your search, including access info for Right's RightLinks resource database

We look forward to seeing you!

Please check the website to confirm dates, times and topics.

Great Advertising – Great Value

Newsletter Ads for as little as \$50/month!

Bus. Card size (3-1/2" w x 2" h) \$ 50

¼ page (3-1/2" w x 5" h) \$ 75

½ page (3-1/2" w x 10" h) or

(7-1/2" w x 5" h) \$ 150

Full page (7-1/2" w x 10" h) \$ 300

Discounts available for multiple monthly insertions.

Website Banner Ads as low as \$250/month!

½ price for GVFHRA meeting/seminar sponsors.

Details at gvfhra.org and click on sponsor/ad ops.

Contact Bruce Zanar (610) 792-2105 or

Lori Stokes-Powers (610) 551-4736

The GVFHRA December 2008 Silent Auction Benefits The SHRM Foundation

The SHRM Foundation was founded in 1966 as a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit affiliate of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors from the HR profession, including academics, practitioners and representatives from SHRM. The Foundation funds research, publications and education to advance the HR profession and enhance the effectiveness of HR professionals. All contributions to the Foundation are tax-deductible.

The Foundation promotes research, innovation and the use of research-based knowledge. With an annual budget of approximately \$1 million, it funds **major research projects** that have a direct and practical impact in advancing the HR profession.

Reports are created by subject matter experts with both research and practitioner experience. The author distills all relevant research findings and expert opinion into specific advice on how to conduct effective HR practice. Reports are available for free download at www.shrm.org/foundation.

SHRM Foundation Scholarships and Awards

Regional Scholarships for SHRM Members

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. 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 include professional, general or associate members. Student members and local-only members of chapters are not eligible for this scholarship program.*)

Barbara Sanchez Scholarship - for members working in the media field.

Research Awards

SHRM Foundation Dissertation Awards

In partnership with the HR Division of the Academy of Management, the Foundation presents four \$5000 awards each year to support the dissertation research of promising doctoral candidates.

Michael R. Losey Human Resource Research Award

This premier \$50,000 award from the Michael R. Losey endowment fund recognizes significant research contributions that impact the human resource management field.

SHRM Foundation Scholarships for National Student Members

New for 2008!

The SHRM Foundation will award 25 scholarships to national SHRM student members for a total of \$52,500 in awards. Application deadline: October 15, 2008.

Your support of the December 16 silent auction is appreciated, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Mark your calendar for this fun event now, and contact Susan Fletcher at sfletcher@careerpotential.com or Denise Plaugher at denise.plaugher@villanova.edu with questions about the auction or if you want to make a donation. Thanks!

Personnel Files – Potential Landmines

Paula J. Gill/SPHR, Member, Employee Relations Committee
Do you wonder what to keep in Personnel Files? Do supervisors also keep files? It is a potential landmine not to have answers to these questions. Avoid future trouble by considering this. The HR Department should have the **“Master file.”** Also, HIPAA requires separate medical files including:

- Health/welfare benefits
- Resolution to claim issues
- Worker’s compensation/Disability/FMLA paperwork
- Restriction notices (except back to work notices)

Take steps to ensure that supervisors are not keeping information that is not also in your files. Supervisors’ files, even if you do not consider them the “official” file, **can be used as evidence in lawsuits.**

Here are some Do’s and Don’ts

- Don’t keep extemporaneous information in files
- Don’t drop little pieces of paper in files that track attendance, etc.
- Do keep a separate log book/calendar to use later to write a corrective action
- Do give the employee a copy of what goes into the file.

In Pennsylvania, employees have the right to view their file within certain parameters. Is there anything in there that you do not want them to see? If so, it probably should not be in there in the first place.

Documents placed in files are company property. You can refuse to give employees a copy of what is in their file and should, as a matter of policy. You may offer them the opportunity to take notes of their file. If an employee loses what you gave them, you are not required to give them another copy.

Get your arms around your personnel files. Take time to talk to supervisors to reduce exposure to potential landmines. It will be time well spent.

GVFHRA Welcomes New Members

Name	Company
Lucy Albert	Relevante, Inc
Donna M Buschmann	Adams-Bickel Associates, Inc.
Erika A Butts	Tengion
Catherine J Cadwell	The ARRO Group
Sandra K Close	
Mary E Dougherty	Shepell.fgi
Joanne L Hill	Main Line Health
Sam W Levy	XSELL Resources
Meghan McCullough	
Brian A McGowan PHR	
Luanne Ramsey	The Rosen Group
Maja Taylor	Johnson Matthey
Denise Warren SPHR	Fresenius Medical Care

*Do you have a career or educational milestone to share?
Please contact our Newsletter Coordinator and let us know at:
janetsyphan@hotmail.com*



Compensation & Benefits: Keeping Compliant in Changing Times: An Overview of Current Benefits Legislation

NEW DATE: Thursday, November 13, 2008, 8:30-11:00 a.m.

**Penn State Great Valley
This seminar is sponsored by:
Lincoln Benefits Group**

HRCI Certification Credits Pending

This seminar will discuss all of the pertinent new federal regulations passed in the last 12 months required to be met by employers and plan fiduciaries. Participants will learn what the regulations require and how employers and Human Resource personnel are implementing the changes within their organizations. Participants will leave with a working knowledge on how to implement, communicate and document these important regulatory changes to remain compliant. In addition, participants will obtain suggested legal documentation and samples to use in conjunction with their legal counsel to be consistent with the required regulations.

Speaker:

Rachel Cutler-Shim, an associate at Reed Smith, has significant experience advising small, medium and large multi-national employers on income tax, HIPAA, ERISA, ADA, FMLA, COBRA and other federal and state laws governing health and welfare plan design and administration. Rachel has also assisted a number of employers in implementing the Medicare Reform Act, including health savings account rules and the prescription drug subsidy. Rachel also has experience assisting clients with benefit design strategy and modifications and general health and welfare plan administration. Rachel has received her BA in Art History from Bates College and her J.D., cum laude, from Georgetown University. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association.

Our Sponsor: Lincoln Benefits Group



Lincoln Benefits Group

Founded in 1985, Lincoln Benefits Group has been providing health and retirement solutions for over 20 years. Our industry focus includes for-profit and non-profit organizations and our health and retirement solutions include group medical and ancillary coverages, 401(k), 403(b), defined benefit programs and executive compensation solutions.



Lincoln Benefits Group is a member of National Financial Partners Corp. (NYSE: NFP), a national corporate benefits company with more than 165 offices across the country, managing over \$20 billion in medical premium and \$11 billion in retirement assets.

In addition to providing the benefits of a local firm, we are able to leverage the advantages of size and scale that NFP Benefits Partners provide, such as:

- Greater knowledge sharing and collaboration through a broad knowledge base and specialized expertise that allows us to exchange leading-edge ideas and benefits strategies;
- Greater products and services by offering preferred access to best-in-breed benefit offerings in health, wellness and retirement services, advanced benchmarking and analysis tools, employee communications and preferred carrier relationships;
- Greater tools and resources through industry leading proprietary decision support tools and administrative services.

Lincoln Benefits Group believes that is through quality relationships, forward-thinking and innovative collaboration that inspires ideas and empowers progressive change in our customer's organizations.

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