

# SHRM Student FOCUS

FALL 2013

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Fall 2013

**M**ore than 400 students attended the Annual Student Conference in Chicago this June, and I watched as many went to work building their networks, connecting with HR professionals and fellow students, and setting a foundation from which to springboard to success upon graduation.

As fall begins and a new academic year gets under way, SHRM student chapters will be busy increasing their membership and setting the programming and activities for the year that will create their foundation for success.

SHRM has also been focused on building a membership team to serve and advance the profession, and I'm pleased to announce several key additions to that team: Elissa C. O'Brien,



SPHR, vice president of membership; Rachel Rosen, member engagement specialist, specializing in student programs and young professional initiatives; and Meredith Berman, member engagement intern.

In this issue find out what other outstanding student chapters have done to build their foundations for success, read about how companies are using social media to increase their applicant pools, and start to plan for your HR career using the tools and resources that your SHRM membership offers.

Happy fall!



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# Elissa O'Brien, SPHR, Joins SHRM as Vice President, Membership

**S**HRM is pleased to announce the addition of Elissa O'Brien, SPHR, as vice president of membership.

O'Brien has over 20 years of proven human resource successes with significant strategic human resource leadership experience within diverse industries ranging from financial services to health care. Her specialized areas of strength include development and execution of workforce

and HR strategies and programs, information systems, and service delivery mechanisms that align with customer and business needs as well as development of workforce scorecards and

HR performance metrics that assess effectiveness of results. O'Brien has proven success as a strategic contributor in building organizational capability, a high-performance culture, and executing initiatives to build employee engagement, change leadership, and organizational effectiveness through process improvement and team development. Her specialties also include labor relations and union negotiations, strategic planning, and organizational design.

O'Brien recently served

as senior vice president of Human Resources and Training with WinnCompanies, where she led the creation of strategic initiatives to ensure the efficient use of human resources by fostering a shared business vision among diverse groups with varied interests. As a member of WinnCompanies' senior leadership team, O'Brien's responsibilities included the design, development and administration of human resources strategy, service delivery, policy and programs, including talent management, total rewards, employee/labor relations, organizational and employee development, payroll and HRIS management, and strategic planning facilitation.

Prior to joining the WinnCompanies, O'Brien served as director of corporate HR for Steward Health Care System LLC, where she reported directly to the CHRO. Steward Health Care is a for-profit hospital system headquartered in Boston with over 17,000 employees serving more than 1 million patients annually in 85 communities. Prior to joining Steward, she was vice president of HR for Wingate Healthcare. In this role she served as the chief HR officer for Wingate, which employed 4,000 employees in over 20 different locations throughout Massachusetts and New York.

She also served in various HR roles that developed and created human capital strategies. In addition to her work experience, O'Brien was an adjunct professor teaching human resources management at Bryant University, a leading business school located in Rhode Island.

O'Brien has served in a number of volunteer roles for SHRM, including as a member of the Special Expertise Panel on Labor Relations, as state director for the Rhode Island State Council and as president of the Human Resources Management Association of Rhode Island. She has been an active member of SHRM since 1993. She has testified before the U.S. Senate committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, and the U.S. Department of Labor and was an invited speaker at Georgetown University on government mandates of leaves of absences and workplace flexibility.

O'Brien earned her certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources from the HR Certification Institute. She holds a master of science degree in managerial technology from Johnson and Wales University, Providence, R.I., and a bachelor of science degree in human resources management from Salve Regina University, Newport, R.I. **SE**



Elissa O'Brien



## Student Chapter Operations

2013-14 Student Chapter Information Forms are due on or before September 30, 2013. All student chapters are required to submit this to SHRM. Complete your form here: <http://sapphire.shrm.org/SHRMCommunities/StudentChapterInfoForm.aspx>

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## 2013-14 Student Chapter Merit Award Program

Want to earn an award for your chapter's efforts? Begin your planning today!

The 2013-14 Student Chapter Merit Award Planning Workbook is now available. [Start here.](#)

Award period is April 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014. Activities must be completed by March 31, 2014.



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## Student Chapter Advisor Webinar: August 29 at 4 p.m. ET

During this 1-hour webinar, we will offer highlights of the upcoming 2013-14 year, including important updates about scholarships, conferences, and chapter operations; recruiting and fundraising ideas for chapters; and time for open discussion and best practice sharing. Join us!

To join webinar:

<http://shrm.adobeconnect.com/advisor082913/>

Audio Dial-In: 800-745-6370

Passcode: 811236

***This live webinar will also be recorded, and a link to the recording will be posted after the webcast.***



# SHRM Foundation Student Scholarship Program

More than \$50,000 will be awarded in scholarships for graduate and undergraduate education, as well as the Assurance of Learning exam. 40 scholarships are available.

Applications are open through November 1, 2013. Apply today at <http://www.shrm.org/Communities/StudentPrograms/Pages/awards.aspx>.



## Assurance of Learning® Assessment for Graduating HR Students:

SHRM's Assurance of Learning® Assessment for graduating HR students is the new universal benchmark for students who are completing an HR degree and who have little to no work experience in HR. It benefits students by showing employers the student has acquired the minimum knowledge required to be a successful HR professional, and it gives recent graduates an important advantage over other entry-level candidates by showing the student has achieved the Certificate of Learning upon passing an exit exam.

For more information, please visit [shrm.org/assessment](http://shrm.org/assessment).



## 2013-14 EXAM WINDOWS

APPLICATION PERIOD
August 16 - October 5, 2013
November 16, 2013 - March 5, 2014
April 16 - July 5, 2014

EXAM WINDOW
October 15 - November 15, 2013
March 15 - April 15, 2014
July 15 - August 15, 2014

ELIGIBILITY GRADUATION DATE*
January 1, 2013 - April 15, 2015
August 16, 2012 - December 31, 2014
April 16, 2013 - August 15, 2015

\* If your graduation date falls within this range of dates, you are eligible to take the exam during the associated exam window. If it does not, select an exam window that corresponds with your graduation date, and register for that exam window during the associated application period.



2012-13  
Outstanding

STUDENT  
CHAPTER  
AWARDS

The Outstanding Student Chapter Award recognizes programs and activities conducted by SHRM student chapters that distinguish them from other chapters. Significant achievement in one of the following categories is recognized:

- Promotion of the Assurance of Learning Exam
- Campus/Community Service
- Innovation/Technology
- Programming/Education
- Recruitment

The Selection Committee looks for innovative projects that chapters both create and implement. In 2012-13, SHRM has recognized 10 outstanding student chapters and five runners-up.


Awards for the Outstanding Student Chapter include an inscribed plaque, an Outstanding Student Chapter graphic to use in chapter electronic and print communications, and recognition in SHRM's digital student magazine, *SHRMStudent Focus*, on the SHRM student website and at the SHRM Annual Conference.



**Congratulations to the following 2012-13 Outstanding Student Chapters!**

 **Eastern Michigan University,  
Chapter No. 5041  
Ypsilanti, Mich.**

Eastern Michigan University had a goal of increasing student chapter membership through recruitment efforts. Through a strategic recruitment campaign that included creating a chapter logo and developing a QR code that linked to the chapter's social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, the chapter increased its membership from 106 to 156 members. It successfully doubled its social media footprint, adding new prospective members and recruiting more chapter officers. The additional exposure gained through these efforts will continue to help the chapter grow and thrive.


 **Meredith College,  
Chapter No. 5177  
Raleigh, N.C.**

Meredith College created and implemented an HR Audit program, through which students and small local companies are paired together, with students reviewing the companies' HR function, determining the organizations' deficiencies and helping solve those problems. The project gave students real-world experience while they provided community service to small companies that may be unable to afford their own human resource professional.

The program gained tremendous exposure for the Meredith College chapter, and based on its design, any student chapter could adopt its plan and gain more exposure.

 **North Carolina A & T State  
University, Chapter No. 5260  
Greensboro, N.C.**


The North Carolina A & T State University chapter created a SHRM Case Competition training program for graduate students to train undergraduates to compete in a SHRM case competition. The training program featured a video, skills discussion, overview of the rules and rubrics, and a mock case competition. The program's objectives were for participants to understand the rules and procedures of a SHRM Case Competition, work in small groups to assess a case, improve teamwork abilities, practice presenting a case to an audience and gain feedback for improving the oral and written components of a case competition. The graduate team from North Carolina A & T University was also the winner of the 2013 Southeast Regional Case Competition.

 **Rutgers University,  
Chapter No. 5154  
Piscataway, N.J.**

By adding an undergraduate chapter, Rutgers University has increased

its membership base from 200 to 350 students. It's offering more events and workshops to HR students, including a 23-team campus case competition sponsored by Morgan Stanley and a 275-attendee Annual Business Conference, with presenters from *Fortune* 100 companies such as Johnson & Johnson, IBM, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Bank of America.

After earning the 2011-12 Outstanding Student Chapter award, the Rutgers chapter received a letter of recognition from New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who congratulated the members on their dedication and achievements.

 **Southeastern Louisiana  
University, Chapter No. 5479  
Hammond, La.**

Southeastern Louisiana University began a recruiting campaign in the 2012-13 award year. With only 15 percent of members returning, the chapter created a strategic communication plan and collaborated with key stakeholders within the university to promote the benefits of SHRM and to engage and recruit new members. Using the resources available, the chapter was able to recruit 40 new members, both HR and non-HR majors, and succeeded in creating buzz about their chapter, which will help with future recruitment efforts.



**St. Norbert College, Chapter No. 5516  
De Pere, Wis.**

St. Norbert College recognized the need that chapters have to identify good, relatable and reasonably priced speakers, and it created an outlet to fulfill that need. The chapter established a list.ly site/blog for each of SHRM's five regions, where chapters can post information about speakers they've had, topics, price, dependability and more. The chapter promoted the site via Twitter, on monthly SHRM Chats, on the Wisconsin SHRM blog and other HR blogs. By March 31, 2013, St. Norbert College's speaker blog site had more than 4,000 views.



**University of Puerto Rico,  
Rio Piedras,  
Chapter No. 5129  
Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico**

The University of Puerto Rico—Rio Piedras chapter created an initiative called SHRM Day, a program that focuses on social responsibility through volunteerism. Through its volunteer efforts, the chapter gathered 171,000 drink tabs for the Children Foundation of Ronald McDonald—Puerto Rico, helped register 161 organ donors through chapter participation in AMA Saves Lives, raised funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Puerto Rico, organized coastal cleanups and school-supplies drives, and participated and volunteered in American Red Cross blood drives, the Roselyn Sanchez Triathlon for Life and the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. More than 72 percent of the chapter's members participated, as along with other students, faculty and local HR professionals. The chapter believes that by promoting the value of volunteerism, members learned that incorporating social responsibility into human resources is important and could help an organization improve employee retention, increase productivity and loyalty, and boost its overall success.



**University of Tennessee,  
Knoxville, Chapter No. 5254  
Knoxville, Tenn.**

In addition to earning the highest number of Merit Award points in the country for the 2012-13 award year, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville developed an official chapter philanthropy. The chapter formed a partnership with Junior Achievement, and chapter members visited local elementary and middle schools, taught the basic aspects of business to students and promoted the idea that attending college increases youths' chances of obtaining a quality job in the future.

Members were able to give back to the community in a significant way. Students learned applicable business concepts, and members were able to practice public-speaking skills and share their knowledge. The chapter's philanthropic partnership helped attract new UT SHRM members and increased the engagement of existing chapter members.



**Villanova University,  
Chapter No. 5323,  
Villanova, Pa.**

During the 2012-13 year Villanova University's SHRM chapter set a goal to establish a strong relationship among the chapter, its members and the local professional HR community. It achieved this goal through a series of professional development workshops, panel events and networking events carried out in conjunction with local HR professionals. By building and establishing a more prominent relationship with the local HR community, and providing greater exposure to real-life HR, students have had the opportunity to expand their network and gain skills that will help them get established in their careers.



**Wayland Baptist  
University—Anchorage,  
Chapter No. 5583  
Anchorage, Alaska**

During 2012-2013 members of the student chapter focused on raising community awareness to assist Bean's Café, a center that provides services to Anchorage's homeless and working-poor population. As Alaska winters are harsh and provisions limited, chapter members organized several drives to support the center's 500 people in need. Chapter members went into the community to collect winter caps, coats, boots and gloves; donated food and provisions during the holidays; and, during the chapter's most effective community-awareness campaign, raised awareness about a basic human necessity needed at Bean's: toilet paper. Chapter leaders devised a plan to assist Bean's Café and gained access to both local TV news networks and radio talk shows. Their ability to effectively employ mass media raised the awareness within the community and energized residents to act. Additionally, the student chapter president met with the mayor, who invited the chapter president to speak at his monthly conference. Their efforts were greatly rewarded. The chapter collected 13,524 rolls of toilet paper for Bean's Café. Most important, the student chapter professionally elevated the Society for Human Resource Management's involvement with the community of Anchorage.



### Runners-Up for the Outstanding Student Chapter Award:



**Briar Cliff University,  
Chapter No. 5478  
Sioux City, Iowa**

The student chapter created, designed and implemented the resume booklet drive, followed by a Speed Networking program for all university students and the general public to attend, including 15 area employers. The chapter successfully achieved its goals of attracting new members, making the public aware of SHRM, and attaining internships for students and jobs for students and other members of the public.



**McNeese State University,  
Chapter No. 5393  
Lake Charles, La.**

McNeese State University set out to achieve a 25 percent increase in chapter membership, and through a recruiting program focused on freshmen, it was able to double its membership, making the 2012-13 year the most successful in chapter history and allowing the chapter to raise enough funds to make its annual \$1,000 donation to the endowment of an HR scholarship through the university's school of business.



**University of Alabama,  
Huntsville, Chapter No. 5038  
Huntsville, Ala.**

University of Alabama at Huntsville is being recognized for its Recruitment Program, which was created to provide interested students with a hands-on learning experience through the full cycle of recruiting. Throughout the 2012-13 year, the chapter offered hourlong sessions in various areas of recruitment, including sourcing, job descriptions, interviewing, using Applicant Tracking Systems and making an offer. Students in this program were able to secure internships, making the initiative a success.



**University of North Texas,  
Chapter No. 5017  
Denton, Texas**

University of North Texas is recognized in the area of programming/education. In collaboration with its sponsoring professional chapter, local businesses and mentors, the chapter designed a program to build students into professional leaders. Students could gain experience "through the eyes of a manager" by participating in the many programs, workshops, leadership courses and networking opportunities.



**University of Puerto Rico,  
Mayagüez, Chapter No. 5333  
Mayagüez, Puerto Rico**

The University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez is being recognized for its efforts in community service. The chapter sought to raise awareness among business students about the challenges in the labor market faced by people suffering from traumatic brain injuries in Puerto Rico. The chapter raised funds and planned and executed several events to promote "better outcomes" for people with these injuries, in conjunction with the LSG Foundation, an organization that offers services to people with traumatic brain injuries.

## SHRM Student FOCUS

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries, the Society serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession. Founded in 1948, SHRM has more than 575 affiliated chapters within the United States and subsidiary offices in China and India. Visit SHRM Online at [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org).

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# Tweeting for Hire:

How Companies  
Use Social Media  
to Recruit



You have most likely been warned to be careful about what information you put on your social media profiles or it will come back to haunt you. For college students, it is tempting to put up pictures from last weekend's party or to tweet about crazy escapades.

By Meredith Berman

No doubt, your parents have given you the spiel that future employers will look at your social media profiles and that what you



employers can see them, too.

It is not just raunchy pictures and tweets you need to be careful about posting. Deborah Berman, principal/consultant at Keller Benefit Services, “would not hire someone who posted inappropriate pictures, used off-color language, or posted hard-line opinions or rants.” Wanda Barrett, SHRM’s employment manager, advises against “posting negative information about the company you work for, your colleagues or your boss.” No company will want to hire you if you bad-mouth your previous employer—or really anyone, for that matter.

You need to watch how you present yourself as well as be aware of how your friends make you look. Offensive posts made by your friends can still reflect poorly on you. It is important to be cognizant of pictures and posts you are tagged in online. My privacy level on Facebook is set so that I have to first approve any posts or pictures I am tagged in. It is impossible to control what your friends say; changing your privacy settings now could prevent a lot of damage control later.

Although the SHRM research found that 68 percent of companies do not screen candidates through social media, it is best to be cautious about your social media presence. Barrett notes that while SHRM does not use social media to spy on candidates, “many, many companies do.”

Some organizations believe that how people present themselves online does not reflect their ability to do a job.

Alan Chilson, associate director of employment management at MedImmune, discourages hiring managers from looking at candidates’ social media profiles and advises them to instead “remain focused on the requirements of the job and the candidate’s fit to those requirements.” Although many companies do not let social media influence their hiring decisions, hiring managers are only human. It’s possible for a quick glimpse of a bawdy picture or tweet to unconsciously influence an HR professional’s opinion of you. If there are two equally qualified candidates, and one has curse words and inappropriate pictures on his or her social media pages and the other one does not, it is likely the latter will receive the offer.

Despite the possibility of ruining your hiring potential, social media can be a great way to help you land a job. If you have exhausted your hunt on job-posting boards, it may be time to turn to social media. When you send a resume, it will probably be put at the bottom of a pile of papers. But if you employ your social media contacts, you could get your foot in the door a whole lot faster. SHRM found that 77 percent of organizations use social media in the recruiting process. It is not surprising that 94 percent of organizations that recruit from social media use LinkedIn. If you are still unsure about turning to Facebook or Twitter to find your next dream job, consider SHRM data revealing that 54 percent of companies recruit-

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According to a recent survey conducted by TweetMyJobs.com:

**72% of companies use social media to advertise their jobs.**

**59% of companies find they get more referrals and 50% get more applications by using social recruiting.**

**Two out of three companies will expand social recruiting initiatives in 2014.**

# AFFIRMATIVE ACTION in Higher Education

## REFRAMED

**I**n a 7-1 ruling on affirmative action in higher education that should perk up federal contractors' ears, the Supreme Court showed that it remains skeptical about this practice but will permit it if it is narrowly tailored to survive strict-scrutiny analysis. (Justice Elena Kagan took no part in deciding the case. Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas concurred. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg dissented.)

The court could have used the case to make broad pronouncements well beyond state universities and state

actors but instead chose to allow affirmative action when race is considered under the auspices of affirmative action and diversity, Joshua Roffman, an attorney at Littler Mendelson in Washington, D.C., said in a June 24, 2013, interview.

"We are pleased that the court chose to affirm that there is a place for race in university admissions," said NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "There is a need and a benefit for our nation to ensure all students get a close look and a fair shot. We remain optimistic that colleges

By Allen Smith

and universities will continue to act to keep doors open to students of all backgrounds."

The Supreme Court's ruling sends the case, *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, No. 11-345 (U.S. 2013), back to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to examine the university's admissions process under a strict-scrutiny analysis, which the lower court had failed to do. "The court of appeals must assess whether the university has offered sufficient evidence that would prove that its admissions program is narrowly tailored to obtain the educational benefits of diversity," the Supreme Court said.

Kim Keenan, general counsel at the NAACP, added: "Given that the University of Texas' policy can be used to admit white students for purposes of diversity, we are confident that the 5th Circuit will uphold the policy. Diversity is an opportunity for all students to obtain an education that will prepare them for how to interact and compete with anyone, anywhere in the world."

### Prospective Student's Claims

Abigail Noel Fisher, who is white, challenged the University of Texas at Austin's method for selecting undergrads, claiming that its use of race in the admissions process violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment.

The court noted that in 2004 the university began considering race as a "plus

factor" in an admissions program that considered the overall individual contribution of each candidate. The university was not satisfied with the diversity of its students after the Top 10 Percent Law was enacted. This law grants to all students in the top 10 percent of their class at Texas high schools that meet certain standards automatic admission to any public state college. But even after the law was implemented, the university found that there was not a "critical mass" of minority students and that, to remedy the deficiency, it needed to give explicit consideration to race in the undergraduate admissions program. Before the law was enacted, 4.5 percent of entering students were black and 16.9 percent Hispanic. After the law, only 4.1 percent of students were black and just 14.5 percent Hispanic.

A district court granted summary judgment to the university, and the 5th Circuit affirmed the decision, ruling that courts had to give substantial deference to the university in the definition of the compelling interest in diversity's benefits and in deciding whether its specific plan was narrowly tailored to achieve its stated goal.

### Supreme Court Reversal

The Supreme Court reversed the lower court's ruling, in an opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy. "The government bears the burden to prove that the reasons for



## Tweeting for Hire

Continued from page 11

any racial classification are clearly identified and unquestionably legitimate,” the court stated.

So, the university must show that “the means chosen by the university to attain diversity are narrowly tailored to that goal.”

Narrow tailoring does not mean the university must exhaust every conceivable race-neutral alternative, the court noted. But it does require courts to “examine with care, and not defer to, a university’s serious, good-faith consideration of workable race-neutral alternatives.”

Ultimately, the reviewing court must be satisfied that “no workable race-neutral alternatives would produce the educational benefits of diversity.”

Good intentions alone are not enough, the court emphasized. “Whether this record—and not simple assurances of good intention—is sufficient is a question for the court of appeals in the first instance.”

### Affirmative Action Survives

The Supreme Court “punted” the case back to the 5th Circuit, Darrell Gay, an attorney at Arent Fox in New York, told *SHRM Online*. Even so, the Supreme Court put private-sector employers that receive federal funds, as well as public universities and employers, on notice that it “still values affirmative action.” **SE**

*Allen Smith, J.D., is the manager of workplace law content for SHRM. Follow him @SHRMlegaleditor.*

ing through social media use Facebook and 39 percent use Twitter—proof that these sites are no longer purely “social.”

Even if companies just use social media for recruiting, this process could still harm your chances of getting hired. Let’s say there is a company with a Twitter presence that you really want to work for. You follow it to stay up-to-date on company news and policies. Even if the company does not follow you back, things like inappropriate twitter handles, pictures or bios can deter potential employers from hiring you. If any of those things makes you think “Uh-oh,” it may be time to create a separate Twitter account for professional use.

If you feel comfortable enough to tweet at a hiring manager, make sure you sell yourself like you would during an interview. Posting inappropriate photos or tweets is essentially like walking into an interview and

handing over pictures of you partying, or confessing that you make derogatory comments. Go through your tweets and check to make

sure there is nothing that portrays you in a bad light. You want to be seen as a responsible adult who is capable of doing the job, not an immature college student.

Mark Zuckerberg may not have intended for Facebook to become another tool in the hiring process, but more and more companies are turning to this outlet as a means of recruiting candidates. Not only is using Facebook less expensive than print advertising, but companies know that most college students and recent graduates are on it. Check out company Facebook pages for the inside scoop on open positions, contact information and how to apply for jobs. These pages are also a great way to learn more about recent company events and news; if you do get called for an interview, you will already be well-informed.

Although somewhat daunting at first, LinkedIn is an indispensable job-search tool. To search, just check the job board at the top of your page and enter in search criteria. If there is a company that interests you, search for it under the Companies page. Follow the organization and check its page for job listings. If you have any contacts at the



company, send them a message asking if they can help connect you with a hiring manager.

For some jobs, you can apply directly

through LinkedIn. Word of advice: It’s a good idea to have a professional-looking photo; your online profile is part of your brand. How you represent yourself online matters if you are going to be representing a company. Barrett recommends using strict privacy settings on Facebook and Twitter to protect your brand. It is impossible to know which companies will look at your social media profiles. There is a fine line between social media helping you and harming you. Untag inappropriate pictures, unfriend that person who posts offensive comments on your wall, and refrain from tweeting curse words or references to parties. Just as you would not want employers to catch spelling or grammar mistakes on your resume, your social media sites should not have these, either.

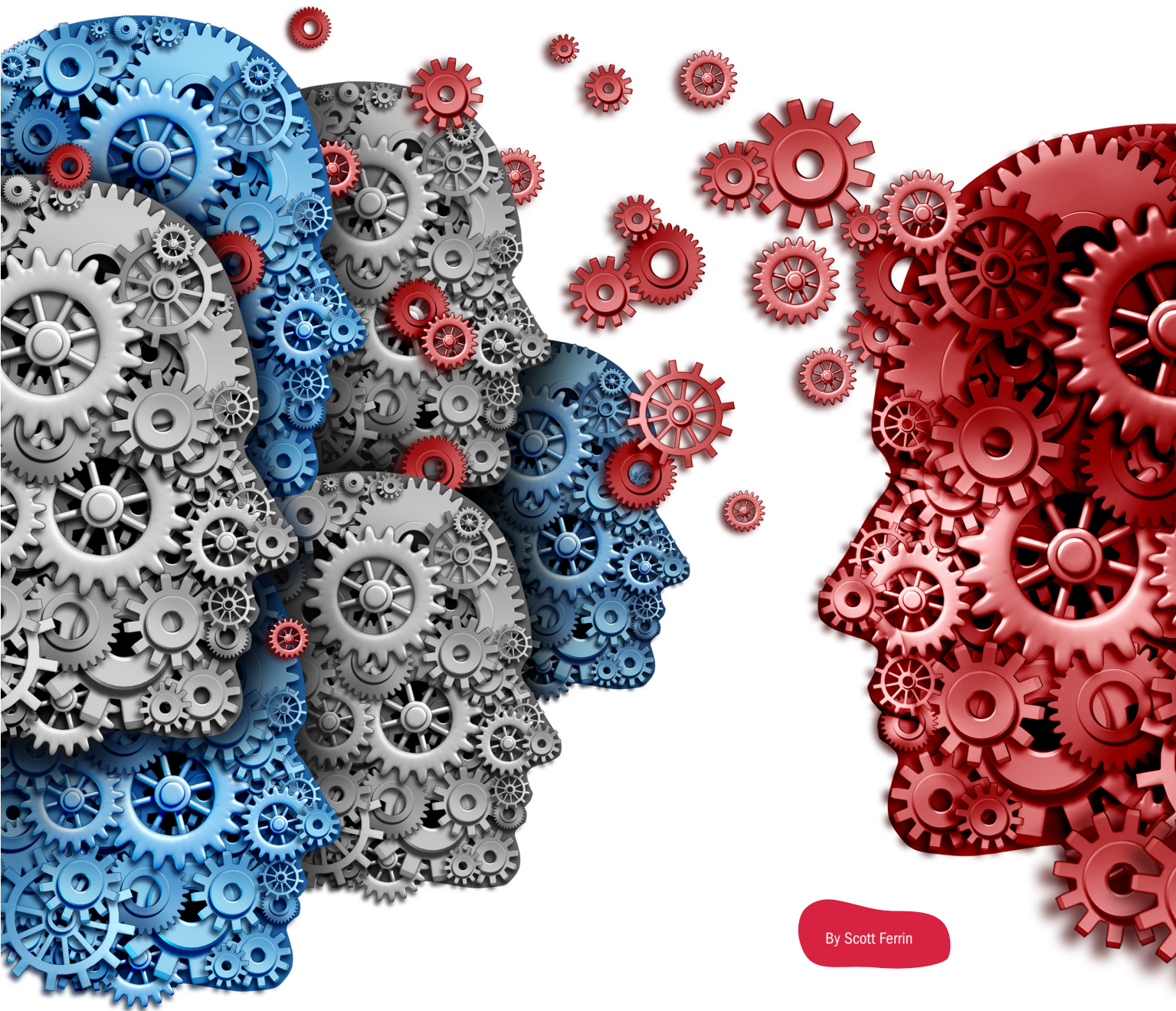
Once you have made yourself presentable, use your new and improved social media profiles to connect with employers and apply for jobs.

If you would like to weigh in on the conversation, join us for our Twitter chat on Aug. 22 at 3:30 p.m. EST. Follow #shrmstudent **SE**

*Meredith Berman is an intern in the Member Programs Department at SHRM.*

**It’s a good idea to have a professional-looking photo; your online profile is part of your brand.**

# MENTORING:



By Scott Ferrin

# A KEY TO DEVELOPING A CAREER IN HR

The foundations of an HR career have changed in the past 50 years. This year, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) celebrates its 65th anniversary. We started out in 1948 as the American Society for Personnel Administration (ASPA), with 28 members. It took us 41 years, until 1989, to change our name and become the Society for Human Resource Management. The new name was a reflection of the changes that had occurred in the HR profession during the 1950s, '60s and '70s. HR was no longer seen as solely a department to handle payroll and other minor issues after people were hired but as a strategic partner to help determine whom we should hire, where employees should be placed and how they should shape their future in the organization.

Among the differences in the profession is how people found their way into an HR career. If you talk to those who started in HR more than 40 years ago, many of them will tell you they did not study HR but took over their company's HR responsibilities after performing some other managerial role. Part of the reason is that when ASPA was founded, there were few HR programs at universities and colleges in

the U.S. or elsewhere in the world. By contrast, today there are hundreds of HR programs in the U.S., and SHRM recognizes 260 bachelor's degree and 120 master's degree programs. This wealth of education has made you—the future of the HR profession—better prepared to be in the field than any previous generation. However, I do not want you to overlook one of the greatest resources you have: the experienced HR professionals at SHRM.

One of the keys to being successful in HR is learning how and when to apply the

“Use the power of a strong mentoring relationship to give you a foundation in good decision-making.”

rules of your organization in HR. As I have spoken to chapters and state conferences across the country, I have heard over and over that it is not enough to have knowledge about HR. The key that is often missing and that differentiates great HR prac-

tioners from average ones is the wisdom of when and how to apply the rules. Unfortunately, you cannot get this knowledge from a book—either you have to learn it from the hard road of experience or you need a seasoned HR professional to mentor you.

Mentoring is a powerful career- and personal-development tool for new professionals in HR. Think of it as a tool to help you progress in your career and gain the wisdom of other HR professionals' experience. The mentoring relationship you develop can be formal or informal. It is a relationship based on mutual trust and respect. Your mentor can help you find the right direction in your career, help you come up with solutions to pressing HR issues and help you gain wisdom without stumbling a time or two. Mentors can share insights from their similar experiences and empathize with you, since they been through many of the same things.

As you come back to school this fall, I challenge you to take the opportunity to find a mentor. The challenges of getting started in HR or any career are tough. The relationship you develop with

a mentor will help to smooth the road and open doors that will lead to your success. The

local professional SHRM chapter in your area is a great place to start looking for a mentor. These chapters are filled with HR professionals who have the experience you can benefit from.

You can find a local chapter at [www.shrm.org/Communities/SHRMChapters](http://www.shrm.org/Communities/SHRMChapters). And, as always, look to SHRM to be your partner for information and more education throughout your HR career.

I look forward to having you join the ranks of HR professionals. I know that your training and education will lead you to great successes in your career. Use the power of a strong mentoring relationship to give you a foundation in good decision-making. It will help you through many difficult decisions and guide you to new opportunities you might have missed. **SF**



Scott Ferrin

*Scott D. Ferrin, PHR, is SHRM's field services director for the Southwest Central Region, encompassing the states of Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and Utah. Ferrin serves, also, as SHRM's national college relations liaison, working with state college relations directors and college relations liaisons from professional SHRM chapters across the U.S. and its territories.*

● SOCIAL MEDIA,  
 ● STUDENT FOCUS  
 ● &  
 ● SMOOTHIES:

*My Summer at SHRM*

**A**ny college student who has not yet found that summer internship or job dreads the question “What are you doing this summer?” Every aunt, uncle, family friend and stranger you strike up a conversation with inevitably asks it. Until I got my internship at SHRM, I would quickly answer with a “still looking” and steer the conversation in a different direction.

For those who are lucky enough to score an internship, the question is met with one of two answers. There are those who, despise the menial tasks they do daily,

try to put an optimistic spin on the dreadful duties of cold calling and coffee runs. No one acknowledges that their half-hearted response of “At least the experience will give me connections and look good on my resume” is code for “This internship is sucking the life out of me and feels like a gigantic waste of summer.” Then there are those like me, the lucky ones who cannot stop talking about their summer internship.

I happily answer anyone who

makes the mistake of asking me this question. I gush on and on about how my summer at SHRM is definitely worth the treacherous two and a half hour round-trip commute. I will admit that I considered whether to accept the position because of the onerous commute. Little did I know, my internship would turn out to be a gratifying, meaningful and rewarding experience.

My first-day jitters were immediately washed away by the kindness of the employees—that and the fact

By Meredith Berman





that the subway was actually running on time for once. From sending me e-mails to taking me out for lunch and coffee, SHRM employees went out of their way to make me feel welcome. As a lowly intern, I did not expect that the staff would waste time getting to know me. Within my first hour, it was evident how completely wrong I was. Employees chat with me in the elevator and greet me by name every morning. There is just something about the HR profession that attracts warm, genuine people.

The other 24 interns have played a huge part in my amazing internship experience. We immediately bonded over daily lunches

and improve our teamwork and leadership skills." It is gratifying applying the skills I have learned in college to real-life situations.

A welcome surprise of working at SHRM is the seemingly never-ending supply of food and celebrations. Almost every day there is cake or cupcakes. During the Annual Conference we were treated to smoothies, pizza, a free yoga class and a chance to challenge one another at Wii. As the largest association for human resource management, SHRM sure knows how to keep employees happy.

After hearing all about the free food and fun activities, my friends always ask, "So what do you actually

opinions. I had the pleasure of attending a meeting with Rashmi Bhargava, the director of Academic Alliances for SHRM India, where I learned about India's strategies for engaging students in HR.

Among other things, I researched ideas and brainstormed concepts for this edition of the *SHRM Student Focus* publication. As someone who never took a journalism class, I am amazed to say not only that I've been published but that I have edited a publication.

One of the things I love most about my position is the variety of tasks. There

nately paid off, since Gabrielle Pidal, the public affairs intern, believes she "gained a lot of hands-on experience under great guidance and role models." Along with gaining skills, we are making valuable connections. By

"learning cutting-edge HR technologies in the Chief Human Resources Executive Engagement department," intern

Taja Winston has "virtually [connected] to dozens of executives across the globe." One executive even invited Winston to connect on LinkedIn. It seems the general consensus of the interns is that SHRM tops any previous internship. That is saying a lot, considering the intern pool ranges from undergraduates to master's degree students, encompassing varied backgrounds and experience levels.

As I write this, I am thinking to myself that these

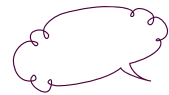
Continued on page 19

**"It is gratifying applying the skills I have learned in college to real-life situations."**

and planned outings to D.C. Instead of vying to be the best, the interns are always willing to help one another. SHRM made sure to foster a compatible environment for us by taking us out to see a movie and to happy hour. Along with organizing intern breakfasts, SHRM assigned intern teams to work on a summer-long business case. Intern Lindsey Allen thinks that "working on the internship project together helped [the interns] evolve



do?" This question is always difficult for me to answer. There is no one response that adequately describes the skills I'm learning and the experiences I'm having. As the Member Programs intern, I handle the social media for SHRM students and SHRM young professionals. I participate in planning meetings for next year's student conferences and distribute materials to chapters. Instead of just observing the meetings, I am encouraged to make suggestions and share my



Taja Winston, Kia Steele, Nikita Arun, Antonio Franquiz, Adriana Scott and Benjamin Grazda at a SHRM outing in D.C.

## Annual Student Conference

# Inspires Future Leaders

More than 400 HR students from across the country and around the world gathered to engage, grow and connect with fellow students, HR professionals and HR thought leaders at the SHRM 2013 Student Conference, held at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers in June in conjunction with SHRM's Annual Conference & Exposition.

President of JB Training Solutions Brad Karsh, the opening keynote presenter on June 15, urged attendees to rewrite the rules of management. "Millennials mean business, and they are shaking up the workplace as they enter management roles for the very first time," he wrote in his book *Manager 3.0*. "They will change the face of leadership—if they can bridge the gap between the hierarchical management style of senior executives and

the casual, more collaborative approach of their peers."

Other highlights included the keynote session "Don't Manage Me, #understandme," led by Lance Richards, GPHR, SPHR, vice president of Kelly Services' office of innovation, and a session in which speaker and "talent evangelist" Ryan Estis encouraged attendees to "release your inner superhero." A Saturday networking reception with SHRM members and volunteer leaders offered students another opportunity to learn directly from HR professionals. The conference closed with a keynote on "the new art of getting ahead," delivered by Dan Schawbel, managing partner at Millennial Branding.

Concurrent sessions on Saturday and Sunday focused on topics relevant to preparing students for a rapidly

changing work environment, including insights from John Hudson, SPHR, the HR business partner at Harpo Studios and Discovery Communications.

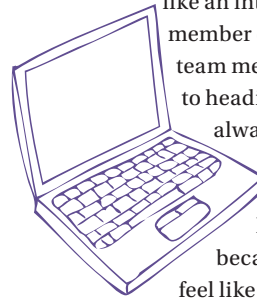


Kristy M. Dixon, SPHR, from Meredith College wins Advisor of the Year award.

## My Summer at SHRM

Continued from page 17

descriptions do not do justice to my internship. It finally hit me that what makes this internship so special is that it does not feel like an internship. Yes, I am working here for only three months and get paid an intern's salary, but I am not treated



like an intern. I am treated as a valuable member of the team. From attending team meetings to sharing my ideas to heading my own projects, I have always felt appreciated—something very few interns can say.

Fellow intern Lindsey Allen has loved working at SHRM because “[the employees] make us feel like we really make a difference.”

I am not majoring in HR at school, and if I were not about to enter my junior year, I would contemplate switching majors. Before this summer, I was set on pursuing something in PR. Like most college students, I am yet again struggling to figure out what I want to do with the rest of my life. My time here at SHRM has made me realize that I would be happy doing a variety of jobs within the communication field. What really makes the difference are the company culture and the people.

I have probably just made it a lot harder for myself to get an internship at SHRM next year. If you are thinking that this would be a great place to apply for next summer's internship or job, you are right. As it turns out, other interns are already thinking of SHRM for future employment opportunities. After her summer at SHRM, Pidal “would be honored to get a full-time job with a company who is always looking to the future for improvement.”



Meredith Berman

Last summer I was a nanny, and my employer was also in HR. I remember thinking that no future boss would ever compare to her. Fast-forward a year and I find myself thinking the same thing again about my current boss and fellow employees. I can only hope my next internship or job involves working with HR professionals. Clearly, all of you picked the right major. **SF**

*Meredith Berman is an intern in the Member Programs department at SHRM.*



Members of the SHRM student chapter of St. Norbert College picked up their 2012-13 Outstanding Student Chapter Award during Saturday's Student Conference. From left to right: Lauren Massie, Madeleine Neuens, Kevin Hogan, Sara Van Hemelryk, Kaila Haen, chapter adviser Matthew Stollak and Carl Vanko.

Students could also attend the SHRM Annual Conference & Exposition, where there were more than 15,000 HR professionals at concurrent educational sessions and keynote sessions featuring illustrious speakers including Hillary Rodham Clinton, Fareed Zakaria, Blake Mycoskie, Dan Pink, and Mark Kelly and Gabby Giffords. And after a hard day of learning, attendees relaxed at a Kelly Clarkson concert.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us at the 2014 Annual Conference & Exposition, which will take place June 21-25 in Orlando, Fla. **SF**

# different

## Is the New Awesome

By Miguel Joey Aviles

**B**ack in 2006, I used all my saved money from my summer job to pay for my admission to the SHRM Student Convention in Puerto Rico. As a student, I never had the chance to travel to a SHRM National Conference; it had always been a big dream of mine. After seven years, I experienced my first SHRM National Student Conference, not as a student but as a speaker. I took students and advisors from around the world in a journey called “Different is the New Awesome: Being You Is All You Need.”

SHRM reunited a unique cadre of students at the conference—the room was full of young leaders with a burning desire to grow and make a difference. These outstanding young leaders were well aware that, as Millennials

and young HR professionals, they needed to improve people’s lives, enhance HR processes and advance the HR field like never before. However, what most of them weren’t aware of is that to become a successful leader, you must know who you are first. The presentation encouraged the students to become the CEO of the company called You. Each student developed a Wow Statement based on his or her success stories, talents, passions, general characteristics and feedback from friends. Once students shared the statements with their partners, they selected the best Wow Statement in the room. At the end of the presentation, each student was promoted to the position of CEO of his or her own career.

After the promotion, a reality check was done. There

is no such thing as a “secret” to get to the top—all you need to do is embrace who you are as a human being and professional. Our generation is different, and people have issues with “different,” but the cool thing is that different is the new “awesome.” Every single keynote speaker at the SHRM conference talked about the reputation challenges that Millennials are facing. Powerful entities are calling Millennials all sorts of things. *Time* magazine recently called us the me, me, me generation of narcissists, and Bloomberg BusinessWeek just launched a new marketing campaign targeting Millennials’ parents, aiming to propel a national movement to kick our generation out of our parent’s homes. Thinkers and gurus affirm that Millennials spend all the money they don’t have, and as a result,

they are broke. They are also saying that Millennials are destroying the housing market, do not know how to face challenges and do not care about their careers.

In such a competitive world, if you follow the crowd, you will probably disappear in it. Disruptive is the perfect word to describe the environment in which Millennials are growing up as professionals. The reality is that Millennials are leading a national movement to be different. As a millennial, I can affirm that our generation is more interested in making a difference than in making a penny. Our generation is among the best this great country has ever produced, and we are here to stay. Today we are a majority—80 million strong—and by 2025 we will be 75 million in the workforce. Today we may be starting our careers, but tomorrow we are going to lead the way. **SF**

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*Miguel Joey Aviles is the founder and CEO of MJA International. He has more than five years of professional speaking experience and has advised more than 20,000 college students, job seekers and executives on how to see beyond the obstacles in their lives. He incorporates a combination of comedy, storytelling and acting into his presentations; no sleeping guaranteed. He encourages his audience to transform their lives through positive behaviors, goal-driven attitudes and excellence powered by passion. Follow him on Twitter @Miguejoeyaviles.*



There is no such thing as a “secret” to get to the top.



# SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE US:

## My Experience with the Cleveland State SHRM Veterans Resume Project



Over the past school year I've had the opportunity to implement and participate in a rewarding volunteer experience with the Cleveland State SHRM Chapter. When I initially heard about the prospect of forming a resume project, I was thrilled because I'm very passionate about volunteering. I love working with people and find satisfaction in helping others.

These are a couple of the reasons why I enjoy volunteering, but also why I chose to pursue a career in human resources. Since I have been volunteering in the community for years, I thought

the resume project would be a great opportunity for our chapter to give back to the community, as well as to gain valuable skills that could be applied in the HR field.

By Michelle  
Hocevar

I contacted Volunteers of America to find out more about the scope of the project and what implementing it would entail. After a series of conversations and meetings with the organization, it was decided that the Cleveland State SHRM Chapter would work with veterans at the Cleveland VA Medical Center to help them with their job-search skills.

The goal of this project was to have students offer guidance and assistance with resume preparation, job applications and a basic employment search. Students would share resume-development techniques, formatting strategies and computer skills, and would show veterans how to match their employment skill set and work experience with potential job areas.

We started the project with a presentation in which the students introduced themselves to the veterans, explained what our chapter





Resume workshop for veterans and Cleveland State SHRM volunteers.

was going to do in the upcoming months and informed veterans of the materials they would need to bring to each session.

After the introductory session, each student was assigned to a veteran to do a resume review. If a veteran didn't have a completed resume, the student would review the information the individual had available and assist the veteran in developing a presentable resume. I envision the expansion of the resume volunteer project to include practice interview sessions, using the Internet to broaden job opportunities and explaining the value of a professional network.

The veterans we are assisting are primarily located at the Cleveland VA Medical Center. It was explained to

the students that those who live at this facility are homeless and many of them have been unemployed for a long time.

Due to these challenges, many veterans also experience anxiety about, and frustration over, seeking employment. My experience has confirmed these realities, but despite these challenges, I feel there is a great opportunity for successful outcomes with these veterans. For instance, one veteran I worked with had been unemployed for many years because of alcohol and substance abuse. He had never written a resume before and was having difficulty completing job applications without one. The veteran's previous line of work was not an option, and he had never evaluated

his employment skill set. He became quite frustrated and overwhelmed when we started reviewing his prior work experience, and he was unsure of what skills he could market to prospective employers.

By evaluating his previous work experience and sifting through his skills and abilities that he could apply at potential employers, I was able to help him organize the information he needed to write a resume. Even though there were challenges, by investing time, effort and patience, I was able to help this veteran successfully complete a resume, which allowed him to finalize job applications.

These experiences have been extremely fulfilling, allowing project participants

to witness the veterans' progress, and I hope this process will eventually lead veterans to employment. In addition, this project has allowed me to sharpen my own communication skills and develop a greater sense of the importance of patience, which will be of vital significance in the HR field.

I see my value in this project through teaching veterans about the interview process, evaluating their employment skills and helping them develop necessary computer skills that they will use in their future job searches. I hope to continue to enhance this project, as it has been a great honor to help those who have served our country. **SE**

*Michelle Hocevar is the Cleveland State SHRM vice president.*



## Student Chapter Scholarships and Grants

**E**ach year in the spring, the student chapters of SHRM begin to put the final touches on their student-activity plans for the next academic year. Graduation comes for many of the chapter members, some of whom are in the planning stages or have already created the new student chapter leadership team to guide the chapter through the next school year. In preparing for the next school year, students are often looking for ways to offset the high cost of tuition. Student SHRM chapters located in the Southwest Central region are eligible for student scholarships offered through DallasHR and the HRSouthwest Conference. These student scholarships and grants are described below and are available to HR students who are members of a SHRM chapter on campus.

### Drew Young Student Scholarship—\$2,000

This scholarship is awarded to undergraduate and graduate students who are preparing to work in the field of human resource management. The winner receives \$2,000 toward

education as well as a complimentary registration to the HRSouthwest Conference. The decision for this scholarship is based on scholastic average and standing, participation in SHRM chapter affairs and programs as well as school programs, and a 100-word essay. A selection committee reviews the information submitted by each candidate.

**Deadline to apply:**  
**Aug. 26, 2013**

### Pursuit of Excellence Award—\$1,000

DallasHR is dedicated to developing HR professionals and providing the business community with strategic HR direction. In concert with the DallasHR mission, the Pursuit of Excellence Award recognizes those who have demonstrated their commitment to the HR field through their academic and professional achievements. This award is designed to assist the recipient with the professional development endeavors of his or her choice. A committee assesses each applicant's leadership development contribution and professional involvement

in the HR field. One applicant will be selected to receive this scholarship.

**Deadline to apply:**  
**Aug. 26, 2013**

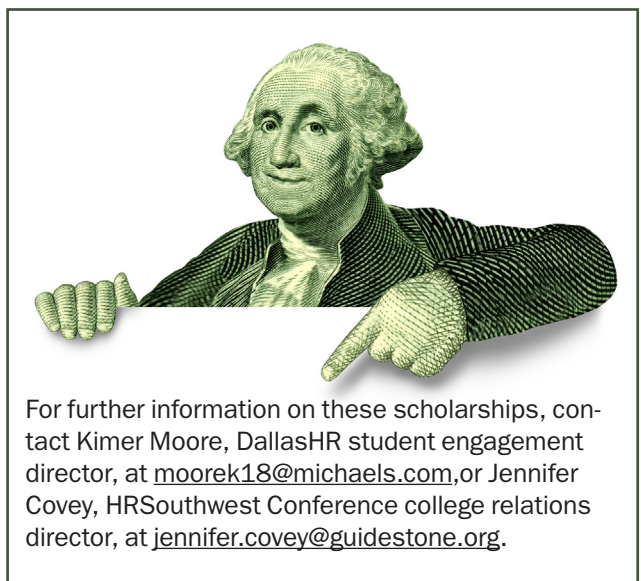
### Excellence in Education Student Scholarship—\$1,000

Full-time students in good academic standing who are involved in their community or campus are invited to apply for the scholarship. Winners receive a \$1,000 scholarship plus the net proceeds from the silent auction held at the HRSouthwest Conference. Applicants must provide recommendations from their professors, advisors or employers. Up to four applicants

may be selected to receive one of these scholarships.

**Deadline to apply:**  
**Aug. 25, 2013**

All of the scholarships have specific qualifications and requirements as well as an application form. The Drew Young Student Scholarship and Pursuit of Excellence Award application can be found on the DallasHR website at [www.dallashr.org/DallasHR/CareerResources/Scholarships\\_and\\_Grants](http://www.dallashr.org/DallasHR/CareerResources/Scholarships_and_Grants). The Excellence in Education Student Scholarship application can be found on the HRSouthwest website at [www.hrsouthwest.com/HRSW/General\\_Information/Award\\_Scholarship](http://www.hrsouthwest.com/HRSW/General_Information/Award_Scholarship). The completed forms can be faxed, e-mailed or mailed to the appropriate address provided on the scholarship application. **EF**



For further information on these scholarships, contact Kimer Moore, DallasHR student engagement director, at [moorek18@michaels.com](mailto:moorek18@michaels.com), or Jennifer Covey, HRSouthwest Conference college relations director, at [jennifer.covey@guidestone.org](mailto:jennifer.covey@guidestone.org).