

HHRAM Herald

Healthcare Human
Resources
Association of
Minnesota

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Healthcare Human Resources Association of Minnesota - An Affiliated Chapter of ASHHRA -
American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration & American Hospital Association

Letter from the President

By Sarah Fredrickson

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HHRAM Colleagues,

As I reflect on the activities of HHRAM in 2010, I am proud of our many successes and look forward to the upcoming year. All of our achievements showcase the focus on strengthening our chapter, as well as the support to our members. Below are a few highlights that are important to our continued chapter success:

- HHRAM membership has remained strong in 2010, with growth of members
- Business partner support has been strengthened and grown in 2010
- Two successful conferences were provided to HHRAM members
- HHRAM members continue to be active / recognized at ASHHRA
- Chapter leadership succession plan created
- Leadership transition / strategic planning session was completed to plan for 2011

Along with the highlights above, I also wanted to take a moment to revisit the goals that were identified for HHRAM in 2010, as well as the progress:

1. Strengthen Regional Director Partnerships. Help regions set goals; make available tools and training at the regional level, in addition to our annual conferences.
 - Status: Ongoing / In Progress. The HHRAM Education Program is being developed, which will provide Regional Directors with additional tools and resources for members at region meetings. We will continue to work closely with the directors in each region to provide them with additional tools needed.
2. Create a Resource Library for members on HHRAM website. Resources available to our members at all times, to include sample policies, job descriptions and forms.
 - Status: Complete. Karmen Reid and Katie Slette have worked very hard to make the resource library possible and will continue to seek materials from members to place on the website. Please contact Katie if you have a specific need so we can accommodate.

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ASHHRA Update

By Karmen Reid

ASHHRA's Director of Regional Consultants

Lots of exciting things are happening at ASHHRA. For 2011, HHRAM will have two representatives who will represent Minnesota on the ASHHRA Board. Marit Brock will be starting her term in 2011 as the Non-Hospital Representative. She will represent the needs of HR practitioners in specialty clinics, long-term care facilities, nursing homes, and other non-hospital environments. I will start my second two-year term as Director of Regional Consultants. The Regional Consultants serve as liaisons between the chapters and ASHHRA.

ASHHRA is HHRAM's "parent" organization. We are a formal affiliate of ASHHRA. ASHHRA provides HHRAM many benefits and support such as leadership training at the annual Chapter Leadership Conference, individual awards spotlighting HR professionals, and chapter achievement awards. They also provide guidance in running chapters.

As I look at our HHRAM membership, it appears that our overall numbers include about 40 ASHHRA members per year. As a large organization, I would encourage us to try to increase this number. This information, from ASHHRA's website, reflects some of the benefits of ASHHRA membership:

- **Educational Resources** - The focus is on all resources, products, services and programs that help you enhance your professional skills and development, and assist you with becoming a well-trained leader in health care HR
- **Tools & Resources** - The products and services in this product line give you immediate access to all that ASHHRA has to offer via the interactive Web site. You can access industry based information, surveys, processes, and best practices to effectively manage the ROI of your organization

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HHRAM Partners with MMGMA

In our ongoing effort to provide quality member benefits to all facets of our community, HHRAM has partnered with the Minnesota Medical Group Management Association (MMGMA) to provide additional educational opportunities to the members of both groups.

HHRAM members are eligible for the Members-Only rate at MMGMA's two conferences in 2011 and HHRAM will provide the same benefit to MMGMA members for our conferences. Go to the [HHRAM website](#) to access the registration materials for the 2011 Winter conference.

We hope that this partnership will provide additional education and networking for the members of both organizations, and look forward to hearing your feedback.

HHRAM Member Makes a Difference

*By Sarah Carlson
HHRAM President-Elect*

HHRAM would like to recognize Katie Slette for her contributions this year. When the HHRAM board set a goal of building a policy library, Katie stepped up to the plate and offered to help collect sample policies and prepare documents for sharing as part of our library. Katie has also volunteered to help coordinate the Spring Conference in 2011.

We would like to extend our sincere “Thanks” to Katie for her efforts in helping HHRAM be the vibrant organization that it is!

Now, a little bit about Katie.....

Katie Slette came to Windom Area Hospital in 2004, after several years in the publishing industry. After a year as Communications Coordinator for the hospital, she was promoted to the position of Director of Human Resources and Marketing. She is responsible for the supervision of the Human Resources and Marketing departments, serves as the hospital's grant writer, and is involved with the hospital's Foundation.

In December, she received certification as Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). In addition to her work with HHRAM, she also serves as Vice-Chair on the City of Windom's Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities task-force.



*Thank you to Katie Slette, SPHR
Director of Human Resources and Marketing
at Windom Area Hospital.*

Katie attended St. Cloud State University and Minnesota State University, Mankato. She has a BA in English and International Relations, with a minor in Human Relations.

When not pursuing her professional passions, Katie enjoys spending time with her husband and two children, reading, spending time outdoors, and traveling. She was thrilled to be able to travel to Italy, her dream destination, with her husband this fall.

HHRAM is a volunteer organization - all member benefits are created by HHRAM members volunteering their time and talents to our organization!

Interested in getting involved? [Contact Sarah Fredrickson, HHRAM President](#)

ASHHRA Advocacy Committee Update

By Steve Hodges, SPHR

ASHHRA's Advocacy Committee Region 6 Representative

Greetings to Region 6 ASHHRA Members!

As your representative on the ASHHRA Advocacy Committee, it's been my honor to serve you this past year with regards to lobbying and information sharing. This newsletter update is a synopsis of what the Advocacy Committee has been involved with, and how we've worked to make our presence known in congressional and legislative venues around the country. As you are well aware, these are critical times for system changes in health care delivery and payment practices, and staying involved and informed is important for all of us to consider as HR professionals.

How will State and Federal Legislation impact Healthcare Human Resources Professionals?

Looking back... Advocacy Update at ASHHRA Annual Conference-Tampa
The Advocacy Committee presented to our colleagues at the ASHHRA Conference held in Tampa in September, which included the following:

- A review of the current legislative and regulatory issues on national and state levels, litigation trends and ASHHRA's Labor Report
- The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) wage and hour and OSHA initiatives
- OFCCP initiatives to expand federal contractor jurisdiction.
- U.S. DOL and IRS initiatives regarding misclassification of independent contractors
- President Obama's new NLRB and its agenda
- Discussion on the latest in union organizing strategies and tactics

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HHRAM Member Advocacy

In 2010 HHRAM members took action to make sure our elected officials heard the concerns of healthcare human resources professionals.

Dale Benson, VP Planning, Marketing, Human Resources and Community Relations with Brainerd Lakes Integrated Health System met with Senator Al Franken and local Healthcare Executives to discuss the impact of legislation and the economy on Brainerd area hospitals.

Marit Brock, CHRO, Minnesota Gastroenterology participated in a "Day at the Hill" event through the Minnesota Medical Group Management Association (MMGMA). There she met with State Senator Sandra Pappas and Representative Carlos Mariani and discussed issues important to medical groups.

In addition to the high quality care we provide, healthcare organizations are respected employers in our communities. Legislation often impacts healthcare employers in ways that are different from other employers. Make 2011 the year that you step forward to advocate for the healthcare HR community!

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3. Review HHRAM Salary Survey and Processes. Reviewing the current salary survey tool, including processes from survey design to report distribution, in order to maintain a high quality salary survey for participants.
 - o Status: Complete. The Request for Proposal process was completed, and we are happy to welcome Denarius Human Resources, Inc. as the HHRAM Salary Survey administrator. We look forward to providing members with the same trusted, high quality salary survey, along with some exciting enhancements!

I would like to personally thank everyone who is involved with HHRAM. I appreciate your contributions, dedication and support of our exceptional chapter. Thank you for everything you do every day!

I would also like to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve as the 2010 HHRAM President. I feel privileged and proud to represent our organization and look forward to continuing my commitment on the board as Past President. This experience has been very rewarding for me - both personally and professionally.

As you look to your future goals (personal or professional) I would encourage each of you to think about getting more involved with HHRAM. If you are interested, please contact any board member with your questions. We would love to have you share your time and talents!

Best wishes to each of you in 2011. We have another great year ahead of us as Human Resources professionals! I look forward to seeing many of you soon.

Warm Regards,
Sarah Fredrickson

Advocacy from page 4

- Discussion of the implications for action for HR professionals
- Description of how the ASHHRA Advocacy Committee Advocates on behalf of membership.

What can I do RIGHT NOW?

There's no longer a real "down time" at the end of the year (reference the actions during the traditionally "lame duck" session of Congress), but if you have the opportunity, please visit the newly redesigned ASHHRA website and review the Advocacy Committee position papers under the Education Link on the home page. Begin now to think of ways that legislative changes will impact you, and be proactive in the legislative arena. Also, take time to review the Healthcare Reform Toolkit, also available on the ASHHRA website.

Looking forward... Be an Advocate

Our Advocacy Committee urges us to stay in touch with our legislators. For ways to be effective, go to:

www.ashhra.org/ashhra/member/Advocacy/AHA_Legislative_Manual_Final.pdf .

Thanks for your support and involvement! Please [contact me](#) with any questions and/or feedback. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing more information about legislative and regulatory issues as 2011 unfolds...

End of Year Financial Report

By Rachael Redenius
HHRAM Treasurer

HHRAM ended the 2010 year on a strong financial note. In the 2010 HHRAM Budget we anticipated our income would be \$62,750 for conferences, membership dues, and the salary survey revenue sharing. We exceeded our budgeted income by \$10,548. We estimated our expenses for 2010 at \$55,060 and were able to come in under budget by \$5,570.

| Income | Budgeted | Actual |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Business Partners - Spring Conference | \$10,000 | \$17,569 |
| Business Partners - Fall Conference | \$10,000 | \$14,900 |
| Chapter Management | \$1,000 | \$1,000 |
| Conference Registration - Spring Conference | \$12,250 | \$11,070 |
| Conference Registration - Fall Conference | \$12,250 | \$10,764 |
| Membership Dues | \$11,250 | \$11,420 |
| Salary Survey Revenue Sharing | \$6,000 | \$6,575 |
| Total | \$62,750 | \$73,298 |

| Expenses | Budgeted | Actual |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Chapter Relations (Assistance for officers to attend ASHHRA conference) | \$8,000 | \$6,623 |
| Conference Expenses | \$35,000 | \$32,179 |
| Accounting and Management Fees | \$6,000 | \$5,400 |
| Operations Expenses | \$1,000 | \$1,488 |
| Scholarships | \$1,000 | \$1,000 |
| Website Maintenance | \$1,560 | \$818 |
| Board Meeting Expenses | \$2,500 | \$1,982 |
| Total | \$55,060 | \$ 49,490 |

Remember to Renew Your HHRAM Membership!

HHRAM membership runs from January to December each year. Go to the [HHRAM website](#) to quickly renew your membership for 2011!

Do's and Don'ts of Exchanging Salary Information

By Penny Phillips and Grant Collins
Felhaber, Fenlon, Larson & Vogt

Special thanks to Penny Phillips and Grant Collins for submitting the following article. The HHRAM board requested guidance for all of us to make certain that we are acting legally as we make salary planning decisions. HHRAM has been sponsoring the HHRAM Healthcare Wage and Salary survey for over two decades to provide accurate, relevant compensation information to our members that is also in compliance with the law.

Human resource professionals are collaborative people. They often participate in professional associations, industry groups and other organizations formed to facilitate information sharing and networking. While this behavior is beneficial in many respects, when the collaboration involves the sharing of cost-related items such as compensation and benefits, few people are aware that it could give rise to antitrust liability.

For example, in United States v. Utah Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration, (D. Utah 1994), several hospitals were accused of violating federal antitrust laws by agreeing to fix nurses' salaries. The unlawful salary freeze was allegedly evidenced by telephone calls, wage surveys and at meetings of the Utah Hospital Association and the Utah Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration.

Exchanging data regarding wages and benefits, which can include anything from formal wage surveys to casual telephone inquiries and "table talk" at industry group meetings, is not inherently violative of antitrust laws. However, because this type of conduct could be evidence of an unlawful agreement, care must be taken to minimize legal exposure.

Antitrust Law

The Sherman Act prohibits "every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several States, or with foreign nations." Prohibited conduct includes conspiracies or agreements between competitors to fix, maintain or stabilize prices. "Prices" include the costs of compensation and benefits for employees, which is an area of particular potential liability for human resources and benefits professionals.

Federal Wage Survey Guidelines

To assist with compliance, the DOJ and the FTC released a set of guidelines addressing the exchange of wage, salary or benefit information. Specifically, Statement 6 of the Health Care Guidelines provides that, absent extraordinary circumstances, if a survey meets the following criteria, it will not be challenged under the antitrust laws:

- (1) The survey must be run through a third-party neutral (e.g., a purchaser, government agency, health care consultant, academic institution, or trade association);
- (2) The information provided by survey participants must be based on data more than three months old;
- (3) There must be at least five firms providing data to the survey;

See *Salary Information* on page 8

Salary Information from page 7

- (4) No individual firm's data may represent more than 25% (on a weighted basis); and
- (5) The information must be aggregated before distribution.

The sharing of future data is seen as extremely anticompetitive and should be avoided. The Guidelines provide that "future compensation of employees are very likely to be considered anticompetitive," while any "agreement among competitors as to the wages to be paid to . . . employees . . . will be considered unlawful per se."

Dos and Don'ts of Salary Surveys

Examples of *acceptable* exchanges of pricing and compensation matters:

- "We have treated XYZ Position as non-exempt."
- "The Third-Party Compensation Survey (that meets the Health Care Guidelines) indicates that the median compensation level for that XYZ Position is \$80,000."
- "Over the past two years, our average reimbursement has been \$25 to \$80 for a 99211."
- "In the past, have you provided professional courtesy discounts?"
- "What kinds of insurer issues have you encountered on eligibility verification and retroactive adjustments?"
- "Does XYZ Insurance Company have a history of prompt payment of claims?"

Examples of *unacceptable* exchanges of pricing and compensation matters:

- "How much are you reimbursed for a 99214 from XYZ Health Plan?"
- "We charge \$95 for a 99211."
- "How much do you pay a person in XYZ Position? After five years? After ten?"
- "Do you plan to increase the starting pay for XYZ Position?"
- "Our group pays \$42,000 to someone in XYZ Position, but we are planning to raise it to \$48,000."
- "We shouldn't have to pay more than \$40,000 for someone in XYZ Position."
- "We don't deal with payers who don't reimburse us at least \$55 for a 99214."
- "We urge all physicians not to contract with XYZ Health Plan."

Bottom Line

While the exchange of price and wage data is risky because it could be perceived as an agreement to fix prices and wages, when undertaken with great care and in accordance with strict guidelines an employer can effectively shield itself from liability.



Penny Phillips and Grant Collins are attorneys in the Labor and Employment group of Felhaber, Larson, Fenlon & Vogt. You may contact Penny directly at (612) 373-8428 or pPhillips@felhaber.com. Grant can be reached at (612) 373-8519 or gCollins@felhaber.com.

HHRAM Website Library

We continue to build the HHRAM website Template Library. This resource is available to you as a HHRAM member so that you can go to one source for ideas on how to address particular issues in your own facility. The library contains sample policies, job descriptions, forms, product recommendations and interview questions.

A request will go out to members each month with that month's policy topic. Please send any pertinent policies that you may have on that month's topic, and we will compile the policies, remove any personally identifying information, and post the templates to the HHRAM website.

January topic - Relocation Guidelines

If you are looking for ideas on a particular issue, please contact Katie.Slette@sanfordhealth.org to add your topic to our list.



Healthcare Human Resources Association of Minnesota (HHRAM)

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ASHHRA Update from page 2

- **Recognition and Awards** - ASHHRA members are eligible for industry-wide recognition of individual accomplishments through the ASHHRA Awards Program
- **Leadership Opportunities** - A 13-member board of directors, including representatives from non-hospital healthcare, a hospital CEO, and a member new to the healthcare profession, plus the president, vice president, and immediate past president
 - Several committees, subcommittees, and task forces on local and national levels.
 - Joint membership in ASHHRA and SHRM
 - Chapter Involvement: More than 45 state, regional and metropolitan professional organizations are affiliated with ASHHRA. Most ASHHRA officers and board members first gained national visibility by rising through their chapter leadership ranks.
- Access to benchmarking data, workplace best practices, research and other tools
- Educational events led by industry experts and thought leaders (*most are HRCI-approved*)
- Exclusive events for senior health care HR executives
- Online Career Center widely recognized as the source for top health care HR talent; posting of health care HR positions
- Volunteer opportunities which enhance your HR toolkit and expand your professional network while supporting ASHHRA's professional education efforts

At this time of the year, when each of us is deciding on which organizations to join/renew, I would ask you to check out ASHHRA's new website at www.ashhra.org and consider membership. You'll be happy you did!