

December 2013

Issue 30



Chapter 0175

Letter From the President

by Brandon Brazeel, SPHR

Happy Holidays to our TAHRA family and a Happy New Year! As we close the books on 2013, I want to take this opportunity to thank the 2013 TAHRA Board for everything they did and all of the work they put in to making this year so successful.



There were many objectives set in place this past January, and the Board ensured they were completed successfully. I am truly honored to have worked with such a great group of professionals who are so focused and dedicated to making TAHRA better every day. I also want to give a special thank you to all of the TAHRA members. Without you and your support, dedication and feedback there would be no TAHRA.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve you as President. I am very excited about transitioning into the Past President role to further support the Chapter, Billie Callahan is already focused on making 2014 even better than 2013.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we initiated Phase I of reaching out to the not-for-profit sector to bring them into the TAHRA family and provide them with HR training and support. In 2014, Phase II will expand the participants to include small businesses.

Finally, the HR State Conference will be back in Tulsa in 2014, the golf tournament will be in the spring and the Return on Inclusion (ROI) Summit returns in the fall. Those are just a few of the highlights that we can look forward to in 2014. Thanks again for all of the help and support.

Best wishes!
Brandon

January Program Meeting

Wednesday, January 15
Program |11:15am - 1:00pm|
Tulsa Country Club



Accelerating Peak Performance

by Don MacPherson
President & Co-Founder, Modern Survey

To reach peak performance, organizations need engaged employees who are capable in their jobs and have the direction necessary to apply their energy and skills. The flaw is that capabilities and direction are becoming more of a commodity with technology advances while leaving engagement as the great difference maker. Engage employees and your organization succeeds.

Accelerating Peak Performance will cover why Human Resources is in an extraordinary position today to influence what organizations need to enable engagement, what

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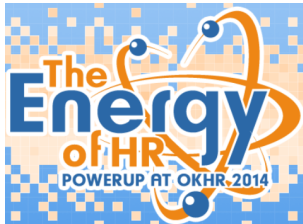
leaders need to do to drive engagement, and what employees themselves need to own their level of engagement in order to position their companies to achieve peak business performance.

REGISTER NOW!

Don MacPherson is an employee performance expert with over 17 years of industry experience. As President of the human capital measurement company, Modern Survey, Don oversees the organization's consulting and employee measurement practices. Don's areas of expertise include understanding employee and customer motivations, developing effective leadership, and creating processes for gathering employee feedback.

A candid and energizing speaker grounded in real-world experience, Don has presented to a range of audiences including state-wide HR conferences, academic institutions, business leadership networks, as well as on-site training groups and executive-level gatherings with leaders from some of the largest companies in the United States. As a presenter, Don promotes interactive discussion and uses hard data and personal stories to stimulate audiences to think critically about important issues.

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How? Sponsor and/or Exhibit* at the 2014 State Human Resource Conference:

www.okhrconference.com

*Some levels of Sponsorship include Exhibitor space

Where? The Convention Center in Downtown Tulsa

When? May 6-9th, 2014

Interested? Good Choice!

ACT NOW...Please contact me at (918)359-2783 or
email me at cpinok08@aol.com.

If you know of another organization, corporation or individual who has a strategic vision and would welcome the opportunity to be a part of our Annual Conference - please pass on my contact information to them.

Respectfully,
Christy Ptak, SPHR
Sponsor Chair -OK HR Conference 2014

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TAHRA Partners

TAHRA Partners are regular supporters of TAHRA and helps our organization continue to develop and present quality continuing education programs, create opportunities for peer networking and enhance our overall contribution to the human resources profession.

For information on becoming a TAHRA Partner [click here.](#)

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TAHRA 2013
Board & Committee Chairs



Annual HR Award Recipients Announced

by Sarah Phelps, VP Leadership Development

At the November Program Meeting several award recipients were recognized. Justice Waidner Smith was selected as the **Outstanding New Professional** and Bryan Wempen as the **Richard J. Messer Excellence in Human Resources** recipient.

Justice Waidner Smith is the Director of Human Resources at the YWCA Tulsa and serves as the co-director of the Inclusion Institute, YWCA Tulsa's diversity and community education arm. Justice has served TAHRA since 2009 when she co-facilitated the Diversity Committee's year-long initiative, "Beyond Diversity 101: A Journey Into Hard Conversations." Justice currently serves on the TAHRA Board as the Community Relations Chair.

In 2013, Justice completed her M.A. degree in Intercultural Leadership and Management from the School for International Training Graduate Institute in Vermont while playing an instrumental role in growing the volunteer base for the Goodwill mock interview partnership with TAHRA and partnering with area nonprofits in the creation of TAHRA learning labs designed for nonprofits interested in implementing HR practices. Justice has fittingly chosen YWCA as the recipient of a \$300 donation.

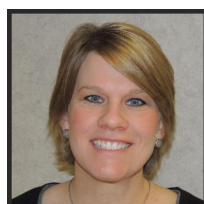


TAHRA President Brandon Brazeel with 2013 Award Winners, Justice Waidner Smith and Bryan Wempen

Bryan Wempen, a 20-year Entrepreneur and Human Capital Management Professional, is the 2013 Richard J. Messer Excellence in Human Resources award recipient. Bryan is currently the co-founder and Chief Executive Producer of ceVoke, a speaker agency, consultant, speaker and founder and co-host of the #1 daily HR radio show, DriveThruHR. Bryan has served TAHRA as President, Past President and most recently as Technology Director as well as a board member for Oklahoma State Council for Human Resource Management and Co-Chair for the 2010 OK HR State Conference. Bryan has chosen Tulsa DVIS as the recipient of a \$500 donation.

Also recognized were the 2013 TAHRA Scholarship recipients Amber Vanderburg, a student at Oral Roberts University and Lauren Gorney, a student at University of Central Oklahoma.

Join TAHRA in congratulating the 2013 Award Recipients for outstanding contributions to HR!



Thank you for Completing the 2013 Membership Survey!

by Billie Fisher Callahan, SPHR
President Elect

Brandon Brazeel, SPHR
President

Billie Fisher Callahan
President Elect

Chris Wright, Ph.D.
Past President

Michelle Lehman
VP Programs

Diane Hewitt
VP Membership

Sarah Phelps, PHR, J.D.
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Website/Technology Chair

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Dixie Agostino, SPHR
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Donna Fletcher, PHR, CCP
SHRM Foundation Chair

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Denise Reid
Chamber Liaison

Happy December! The 2013 year has been great for TAHRA and, in the spirit of true continuous improvement, the plan is to carry on the trend in 2014. The improvement process is driven by members and their feedback. On behalf of the survey review team I would like thank each of you who completed the 2013 membership survey.

Julie Odom
Chapter Management
Professional

TAHRA's 2014 activities will be shaped by members' feedback. Members' comments had the following themes and next steps were identified by the survey team.

- Repeat comments surrounding time of events will be provided to the education and programs committees for further review.
- Over 50 unique topics were suggested for future program meetings and/or learning labs. The survey team is working to best categorize all suggestions and then the collective information will be provided to education and programs committees for further review.
- As TAHRA is preparing to update the website in 2014, all suggestions captured in the survey related to the website will be reviewed.
- Almost 30 suggestions were provided in relation to the monthly TAHRA newsletter. These great suggestions are in consideration for 2014 improvements.

Once again, thank you for taking time to complete the 2013 membership survey. Your feedback is what makes TAHRA great and allows continuous improvement. The winner of the Target Gift Card for completing the survey is Deborah Chambers of the Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma.

Here's to a safe and happy holiday season and a prosperous 2014! Thank you TAHRA members!



Seeking Sponsors! Monday, April 7, 2014

The TAHRA Golf Committee is actively seeking sponsors for our 2014 Golf Tournament. Sponsorship packages are available from as little as \$250 all the way to \$1000 and some packages include player registration fees! The tournament will be held at the beautiful and prestigious MeadowBrook Country Club. Mark your calendars and get registered to sponsor today! Your logo will be displayed at select TAHRA events leading up to the tournament and on the Golf Page of our website, as well as at the tournament.

[Click here to register](#)

Please contact Roger Holder at rholder@samson.com for sponsorship or player information.

Sniffing as Sexual Harassment

by W. Kirk Turner, Esq. and Paige Hoster
Vice President, Legal and Legislative Affairs

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals recently held that sexually suggestive sniffing could constitute sexual harassment depending



Tonia Royal was hired as a leasing manager at an apartment complex and was fired by her supervisor four days later after she complained about the behavior of two co-workers. Royal alleged that "two maintenance workers would enter her office and would hover over her as she sat at her desk to sniff her." The incidents of sniffing were highly concentrated, occurring at least twelve times per co-worker during Royal's short-lived employment. In addition to the sniffing, at least two other objectionable incidents occurred—one, when a co-worker sat on a filing cabinet a short distance from Royal, opened his legs while wearing shorts, and had a "stare down" with Royal while he was "visibly aroused", and another, when Royal stumbled into her assistant manager in the presence of her supervisor.

Royal complained about the sniffing to her superior and was told to "let it slide." Royal also complained about the sniffing at a staff meeting, to which one of the co-workers responded he "needed to get a release." Royal was terminated from employment with no supplied reason the afternoon following the staff meeting.

After exhausting her administrative remedies with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Royal brought suit against CCC&R claiming sexual harassment and retaliation pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VII"). CCC&R obtained summary judgment on both claims at the district court level and Royal appealed only the Title VII retaliation claim.

To make out a prima facie case of Title VII retaliation, Royal must prove that: "(1) she engaged in protected activity; (2) an adverse employment action occurred; and (3) a causal link exists between the protected activity and the adverse employment action." Royal's termination was clearly an adverse employment action.

The court reasoned that Royal was engaged in protected activity because she was opposing conduct made unlawful by Title VII, namely she had complained about behavior that a reasonable jury could find created a hostile work environment based on sexual harassment. Although CCC&R argued that the harassment was not based on sex, nor did it affect a term or condition of Royal's employment, the court held that a genuine issue of material fact existed as to whether the men's behavior was sufficiently severe or pervasive to "create an abusive working environment." The court emphasized the facts that the sniffing and hovering of two men over one woman took place in Royal's "small, confined" office space, and occurred many times within a short, four-day period.

The court also reasoned that a reasonable jury could find a causal link existed between Royal's complaints and her termination. The supervisor who fired Royal had knowledge of the "hovering, sniffing, and the 'need a release' comment." Further, the temporal link between Royal's complaints and her termination was extremely short (one day).

In conclusion, the Fifth Circuit held that genuine issues of material fact existed, and vacated and remanded Royal's retaliation claim for reconsideration at the district court level.

So, what does this case mean for employers? First, don't brush off an employee's complaint(s) about potential sexual harassment, and please don't tell your employee to "let it slide." Employers have a duty to investigate and take reasonable steps to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Second, don't scoff at an employee for complaining about something as seemingly innocent as "sniffing." If the supervisor had been more diligent in Royal's case, he would have realized that it was sexually suggestive sniffing coupled with other instances of inappropriate behavior that led the Fifth Circuit to find in Royal's favor. Third, and along the lines of seemingly innocent sniffing, the harasser's behavior does not have to be explicitly sexual to constitute sexual harassment. Sniffing, by itself, is not a sexual act, nor does it involve physical contact with the harassed person; however, because the sniffing was accompanied with hovering in a confined space and other sexual comments and behaviors, it was enough to get the Fifth Circuit's attention. Last, supervisors and managers must be regularly trained on compliance with employment law and understanding the employer's commitment to providing a workplace free from harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate conduct.



Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in this article, please do not hesitate to contact Kirk Turner at (918) 587-0101, or by email at kturner@newtonoconnor.com



Preparing To Make the Most of 2014

by Dixie Agostino, SPHR
HRCI Chair

Many of us think of the New Year as a time to reflect on the past year and set goals for the future. We set strategic planning sessions for January and coast towards holiday parties and wrapping up the year. Here are four tips to maintain momentum and make the most of the last weeks of 2013:

1. **Don't Wait.** Goal setting should be part of your routine on a daily and weekly basis, not based on a calendar year or month. A goal has been called "a dream with a deadline", but goals are the marker posts that guide us in our journey. Focus on what you will do, not on what you won't. Set goals today as to what new actions you can take to get closer to your desired outcome.
2. **Address the Issue.** Many of us have an underlying problem in our departments that we know needs to be addressed, yet we have not faced. This can be personnel related, inefficient organization, lack of systems or policies, etc. Take the time to understand the problem and work out a solution to solve it.
3. **Communicate.** Set your 2014 goals now and share them with stakeholders. Whether your goals are personal, professional or managerial, telling those who can help you achieve those goals will both hold you accountable and help create a network of support. If your goals are department related, get buy in from your staff, but understand that ultimately the decision and responsibility is yours as the manager.
4. **Focus.** This next year can be the best yet, but it will only be what you make it. Like the rudder turning a ship, small changes over time can have a huge impact. Leave your doubts behind and focus instead on making each day better than the previous one.

Here's to making 2014 the best year yet!

Community Relations and Goodwill Partnership

by Justice Waidner Smith, MA
Board Member - Community Relations

I love the holiday season for many reasons. One of those reasons is that it affords me an opportunity to reflect on the past year. In thinking about 2013, I am proud to share that our community-partnership with Goodwill's Tulsa Works program has been an incredible success.



In fact, I am appreciative to have had the great fortune of coordinating the partnership for the past three years, and each year the partnership has become even stronger. During this time, dozens of you have provided much needed job-seeking assistance to hundreds of individuals throughout our community. Because of your efforts, numerous Goodwill students have been so energized and empowered after our mock interview sessions that they have secured employment, some the very same afternoon.

As I transition into a different role with TAHRA, I give great thanks to all of the incredible TAHRA members who have donated time, wisdom, and talents to the Goodwill Mock Interview partnership. It has been a true pleasure and joy to work with each of you, the amazingly dedicated staff at Goodwill, and all of those we have served. I am excited to keep supporting the program, and would love for you to join me as we continue to



for the Tulsa Regional Chamber.

Wishing everyone happiness in the new year.



Thank You!

*from Bryan Wempen
Board Member - Technology*

We have been experiencing a bit of a cold spell here in the Tulsa area, but that doesn't mean that Tulsa's HR community is cold. I've been a member of TAHRA as well the global HR community which had such a HOT year relative to all the amazing things accomplished.

The work I do has me traveling quite frequently and I get to spend time with lots of different people within the HR community. What I end up discovering is, the more people you know in your network both personally and professionally, the more these relationships become a cornerstone and fulfilling to personal and professional development.

I am humbled and thrilled to receive 2013 TAHRA Richard J. Messer Excellence in Human Resources Management Award. I feel the horizon for Human Resources has a unbelievable future, organizationally, HR practitioners are the ones who have influence and experience in all aspects business.

Thank you for the support, inspiration and friendship Tulsa HR community! Let's make even more a difference in 2014.

Tools for 2014

*by Denise Reid
Chamber Liaison*



Year end is around the corner which means most of us are ramping up for the new year. There are a ton of resources available in our community that may make your job a little easier. Here is a "**Top 10 List**" that you may be interested in keeping handy for the future.

- 1. Salary Assessor** - are you having high turnover in certain areas and would like assistance with validating your pay ranges? If yes, let me know. We have access to salary assessor information.
- 2. Cost of Living Index** - for introducing Tulsa's live, work and play quality of life to out of area candidates - check out the home page of www.ChooseTulsaJobs.com.
- 3. Relocation Guide &/or Packets** - we have online resources for showcasing our region. If you have candidates making a trip to Tulsa for interviews or house hunting, we can provide relocation packets. See link to our beautiful Choose Tulsa relocation guide https://www.tulsachamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Relocation-Guide_2013_lr.pdf.
- 4. Labor Market Information** - There are several websites that provide great information related to the labor market.

- **OESC**
-http://www.ok.gov/oesc_web/Services/Find_Labor_Market_Statistics/index.html
- **Community Service Council** - <http://www.csctulsa.org/content.php?p=6>
- **Tulsa Regional Chamber** - data center for information listed on our GrowMetroTulsa.com website
-<http://www.growmetrotulsa.com/general/701/expanded-industries>



- **Research Wizards** - Tulsa City County Library provides this excellent service and they provide market brief, annual demographic report and more - <http://www.researchwizard.org/market-research.php>

5. Layoff Assistance - Workforce Tulsa, Tulsa Regional Chamber and Oklahoma Employment Security Commission works together to provide Rapid Response services to area employers at no charge.

6. Business Expansion Assistance - Tulsa Regional Chamber, City of Tulsa, Oklahoma Department of Commerce and Oklahoma Manufacturers Alliance work together to provide resources, programs and assistance to companies looking to expand in our region. Incentives, Recruiting Resources, Site Location and more.

7. Diversity Supplier Information - there are several resources to consider when seeking out consultants and services that are diverse business owners.

- **Tulsa Regional Chamber** - membership directory, you can run a quick search for services you are seeking and our members can self-select if they are a diverse business owner.
- **City of Tulsa BRIDGE Program** - subcontractor directory of diverse business owners - <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/media/344799/october%202013%20directory.pdf>
- **Oklahoma Department of Commerce** - potential resource <http://okcommerce.gov/new-and-existing-business/tools-and-assistance-for-existing-businesses/minority-owned-business-certification/>
- **Oklahomans for Equality** - has an Equality Business Alliance that you may be interested in considering as well - <http://www.okeq.org/eba/>.

8. Skilled Worker - there are several workforce development programs that may be able to provide you will skilled workers through their programs. Below is a quick listing of a few programs you may consider engaging for finding skilled talent.

- **Workforce Tulsa/Workforce Oklahoma** - Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
- **Goodwill Industries** - forklift drivers, security guards, customer service, call centers, administrative, etc.
- **Transportation Connections WorkAdvance** - CNC, CDL, Welders, etc.
- **TCC** - has two grant programs to assist employers in advanced manufacturing, aerospace and related industries with skilled workers.
- **Tulsa Tech** - certificate training in wide range of industries
- **CAP Tulsa CareerAdvance** - health care worker training programming and is currently expanding their program to another sector.
- **Tulsa Job Corp** - facilities maintenance, food service, pharmacy tech and more.

9. Veteran Recruiting - VET Reps are available across the state to connect you to veterans - link to listing of VET reps with resource links included at the bottom of the page http://www.ok.gov/oesc_web/Resources_For/Veterans/Veterans_Directory.html.

10. Resource Listing - last but certainly not least, is TAHRA's very own Directory of Services. This too received a bit of facelift in 2013. There are now 24 categories and companies can choose up to three categories of services they provide. We also created an open platform for all organizations to share their information as a one-stop shop for HR professionals. We currently have 90+ services listed. See link for more info - http://www.tahra.org/directory-of-services_id75.php.

If you would like more information about any of the programs or services listed or would like assistance in other areas please contact me via email denisereid@tulsachamber.com or call (918)560-0255.

Enjoy the Holiday Season - Denise



TAHRA and Tulsa Oilers Family Fun Day!

On Sunday, November 17th, TAHRA hosted a family fun day at the Tulsa Oilers Game. We had over 50 people attend! Before the game we had snacks, drinks and prize give aways then we all enjoyed a Tulsa Oilers Hockey game. After the game there was skate with the players. A good time was had by all!

A special thanks to Diane Hewitt, VP of membership, and her committee of Alyse Galarza, Rod Benham and Kristi Spaethe for making this event such a success!



Diane Hewitt and helpers draw for prizes



Donna Walker, Kristi Spaethe, oh, and the Oilers Mascot



Kristi Spaethe and Rod Benham, TAHRA volunteers, having a great time



Ericka Sherod won the ceremonial puck drop - Her grandkids loved it



Autographed Oilers Goodies



Calendar of Events

January 15 - Program Meeting - [Accelerating Peak Performance](#) presented by Don MacPherson
 January 23 - Learning Lab - Information available soon

Tulsa Area Human Resources Association
admin@tahra.org
 (918) 344-4622



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