

February 2015

Issue 42



## Letter from the President

by Michelle Lehman

The annual OKHR Leadership Conference was a great success! Kudos to Michelle Pollock, our OKHR State Council Director Elect for organizing this wonderful event, which served all Oklahoma HR Chapters and the OKHR State Council. The knowledge shared by speakers and volunteers is invaluable to the success of local chapters. On February 11, I will be attending the OKHR Legislative Conference & Day at the Capitol and will share an update with our members soon.



A huge **THANK YOU** to Kristi Spaethe and the Membership Committee, Diane Hewitt, Jackie Evins, Michelle Johnson and Alyse Galarza, who graced all of our volunteers with the most wonderful Volunteer Awards Reception last week at the Hard Rock Hotel. The night was filled with laughter, appreciation to all and visiting with friends! Special recognition was also given to Kirk Turner for 20 years of TAHRA Board service. "KIRK"

We are thrilled to welcome three new members to our TAHRA Board! Jackie Evins has accepted the position of the SHRM Foundation Chair, Matthew Pockrus the at large board member - Website/Technology and Alyse Galarza will head up our Hospitality Committee.

We are passionate about getting our members certified (SHRM and HRCI) and helping you maintain your certification through chapter sponsored events and volunteer opportunities. Study groups will start this month, so if you are even thinking about getting your PHR or SPHR certification, join a group and start studying! 2015 also brings the introduction of SHRM HR Certifications, and SHRM is committed to helping our members navigate the questions and concerns surrounding this change. If you are currently PHR or SPHR certified, don't forget that you can obtain your SHRM-CP or SHRM-SCP at no charge by completing the Online Tutorial Pathway, which takes about 60 minutes.

Finally...the wait is over...

The 2015 Oklahoma Human Resources State Conference and Expo will be held at the Oklahoma City Cox Convention Center on April 14-17, 2015. The theme for the 2015 State Conference is: **Leverage - The Power to Accomplish More.** On Wednesday, Pat Beck, SPHR, SHRM-SCP will offer a HR Prep Class. Whether you plan to test for the PHR/SPHR or for the new SHRM-CP exam, this 1.5 day pre-conference workshop will provide the opportunity to get into the exam mindset. Attendees should prepare by reading/completing either the SHRM Learning System or any other exam prep materials available in the market-place in advance of the workshop. <http://www.okhrconference.com/>

Stay connected to OKHR SRHM news for current and practical information on the HR Disciplines. Areas of focus include: Benefits, Employee Relations, Staffing Management, Global HR, Business Leadership, Compensation, Diversity, Employee & Labor Relations, Ethics & Sustainability, Organizational & Employee Development, and Safety & Security. [http://www.okhr.org/shrm-news\\_id60.php](http://www.okhr.org/shrm-news_id60.php)

Chapter 0175

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Follow TAHRA!

Lastly, don't forget that there are plenty of ways to get involved with TAHRA to expand and enhance your professional network. Spring is just around the corner!

Sincerely,  
Michelle Lehman  
2015 TAHRA President



## February Program Meeting

Wednesday, February 18 | 11:15am - 1:00pm |

Location: Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Tulsa - Warren Place



### **Creative Teams: The Key to Unleashing the Artistic Brilliance of Your Employees**

*Presented by Jonathan Michael Bowman, Esq.  
Clear Picture Leadership*

More than ever before organizations need to tap into the creative genius of their employees in order to stay competitive. The question is, "How can leaders accomplish this?" The answer is by using a Creative

Team. A Creative Team is a group of employees assembled to accomplish a project through the use of the team members' creativity and ingenuity. Jonathan has used these teams on many occasions to bring about innovation, increase productivity and start new initiatives. In this powerful presentation, he will detail what Creative Teams are and reveal how they work. More importantly, he will show you how you can start Creative Teams in your organization and use their brilliance to bring about innovative success.

Jonathan is also a fine art photographer. He uses his art during his presentation as a metaphor to graphically illustrate key points. This turns Jonathan's presentation into more than an educational leadership training. It is also an inspirational, artistic experience.

A visionary and award-winning leader, Jonathan Michael Bowman, Esq. inspires leaders, aspiring leaders, and those seeking personal growth to set a bold, clear-picture vision for themselves, their team, or their entire organization. This program is quickly approaching. Don't miss out!

### **Register today!**

Jonathan Michael Bowman's proven leadership principles sprang from an impoverished childhood spent in homeless shelters and public housing projects - principles that he tested in high-power legal positions.

His passion and powerful messages stem from three central themes in his life:

1. his professional leadership experience, with proven results;
2. his challenging upbringing, which pushed him to develop leadership principles; and
3. his uplifting fine-art photography, which visually supports his key points.

The common thread uniting these themes is that each area is "picture driven." In



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Past President

Nancy Gunter, SPHR  
VP Programs

Kristi Spaethe, PHR

each, Jonathan sees the picture in his mind before he achieves it: a clear-picture vision to overcome a leadership challenge, create a better way of life, capture a compelling image.

Sponsored by:



## February Learning Lab

Thursday, February 26 |2:00pm - 4:00pm|  
OSU Tulsa - North Hall

### DIY Recruiting

*Presented by Dixie Agostino, SPHR, CPC  
Switchgear Search & Recruiting*



[Click here to register!](#)

Are you looking for your next superstar employee? Need help writing a job description that conveys what you are searching for? Join us at our February Learning Lab as Dixie Agostino, CEO of Switchgear Search & Recruiting provides detailed steps to effectively recruit and hire your next great employee!

At this lab Dixie will teach you the skills of writing an incredible job description and how to find your candidate pool. She will also share some top tips to quickly screen your candidates for the best of the best. Dixie will continue the recruiting process into pre-boarding your new hire and share with you how to create an on-boarding process that will leave a lasting impression. If recruiting or hiring is in your job description, you will not want to miss this lab!

**Dixie Agostino** has a BSBA from OSU with a focus in marketing. Her background in operations, logistics and employee management transitioned into a career in recruiting, her lifelong passion. She started Switchgear in 2009, a firm specializing in recruiting top technical talent for the energy, manufacturing and engineering industries. Through her experience with hundreds of companies in Oklahoma, she is an expert in company culture, talent acquisition and continuous improvement methods. Her client list ranges from Fortune 500 companies to start-ups, but the common denominator is a passion to place people in the roles that match their strengths and goals.

VP Membership

[Brandon Brazeel, SPHR,  
SHRM-SCP](#)

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[Rachel Crawford, J.D.](#)  
VP Legislative Affairs

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*This is a paid advertisement.*

## OKHR2015 Leverage

THE POWER TO ACCOMPLISH MORE

The 2015 Oklahoma Human Resources State Conference and Expo will be held at the Oklahoma City Cox Convention Center, April 14-17, 2015. The theme for the 2015 State Conference is: Leverage - The Power to Accomplish More.

The conference will feature speakers and sessions all designed to help you take the existing resources available, be it technology, leadership or your network, and use those resources in new, exciting ways to help you accomplish more.

[Click here for more information.](#)

### Will the Supreme Court Rein in the EEOC?

by Rachel Crawford, J.D.  
VP - Legislative Affairs



In the context of Title VII, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, and national origin, an individual who thinks he/she has been discriminated against by his/her employer must first file a Charge of Discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") (or the state civil rights agency). The EEOC must investigate the Charge and determine whether there is "reasonable cause" to believe the discrimination complained of is true. Once the EEOC finds reasonable cause, it notifies the employer. The next step proscribed by Title VII is, "the [EEOC] shall endeavor to eliminate any such alleged unlawful employment practice by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion." 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-5(b) (emphasis added). Congress makes clear the EEOC must conciliate before it can file a lawsuit against the employer on behalf of the aggrieved individual; but, what do the words conference, conciliation, and persuasion actually mean? Essentially, how much effort must the EEOC make to conciliate the case before it brings a lawsuit against the employer?

This was the issue the U.S. Supreme Court confronted on January 13, 2015.

Employer, Mach Mining, LLC, argued courts should be able to review the EEOC's conciliation efforts to determine if the EEOC meets certain minimum requirements, including "conferencing" with the employer by reaching out to the employer by letter, phone, or email and open the lines of communication, "conciliating" by telling the employer what it would take to resolve the case, and "persuading" the employer to settle by providing basics about the strength of its case, i.e., we have X number of aggrieved employees and we have estimated their damages to be roughly \$100,000.

The EEOC argued courts should not be able to review the EEOC's conciliation efforts because to do so would encourage mini-trials that stray from the merits of the case. In fact, the EEOC believes courts should simply trust that the EEOC makes efforts to conciliate each case, and should steer clear of placing standards on those efforts.

The justices focused on the hypothetical scenario where the EEOC could send a letter to the employer saying, "Call us," the employer calls the EEOC, the EEOC says, "We don't want to talk to you," and the EEOC informs the court the conciliation process failed. Chief Justice Roberts stated during oral argument, "I am very troubled by the idea that the government can do something and we [being the courts] can't even look at whether [the government has] complied with the law."

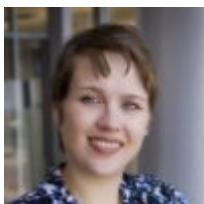
The stakes are high regarding resolution of this case. If the EEOC wins, employers will not be able to challenge the efforts (or lack thereof) the EEOC makes to settle a case before filing suit. Indeed, the EEOC has been on a recent crusade of sorts to target certain industries and bring high-profile lawsuits to expose alleged discriminatory practices. Justice Scalia stated, "I think . . . there is considerable incentive on the EEOC to fail in conciliation so that it can bring a big-deal lawsuit and get a lot of press and put a lot of pressure on this employer and on other employers." Employers should not be stripped of the opportunity to resolve matters early and efficiently.

So what should employers be doing in the meantime?

1. Retain all written documentation received from the EEOC during the Charge investigation process;
2. Keep written records of all EEOC communications, including the dates of the communications and the content of the communications;
3. Contact legal counsel to determine the potential benefits of engaging in conciliation and whether the EEOC has made a fair effort to resolve charges of discrimination prior to engaging in litigation.

A full copy of the transcript of oral argument in this case is available at [http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral\\_arguments/argument\\_transcripts/13-1019\\_4f14.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/13-1019_4f14.pdf). The Supreme Court is expected to release its decision in May or June of 2015.

Please stay tuned for future developments and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel Crawford at 918-587-0101 or [rcrawford@newtonoconnor.com](mailto:rcrawford@newtonoconnor.com) if you have questions about how to navigate the EEOC investigative process.



## **BAM! - Creating an Empowering Company Culture that People Don't Want To Leave**

*By Dixie Agostino, VP - Public Relations*

I had an opportunity last week to see Piyush Patel speak about creating a company culture that in 14 years has lost less than one person a year (with a staff of almost forty employees). That

incredible employee retention, per Piyush, was based on three things he called BAM!! (I added the exclamation marks).

**Belonging** - His staff knew they were part of a team, so much so that when asked what they did, the response was "I work as part of a team that does XYZ. I do this in that team." The individuals incorporated their team as part of their identity. These employees didn't think of themselves as admins, web designers or accountants, they thought of themselves as part of the company family.

**Affirmation** - Piyush used to give raises in the conference room and realized most people don't know how to react. They just say "Thanks!" and go back to work. Instead, Piyush invited them and their significant other to dinner. He told their spouse or partner what an amazing job the person had done, how much he personally appreciated what they had contributed to the team, then he gave them the raise. People care where they are cared about, and this was a beautiful example of a leader taking care of his people.

**Meaning** - What we think about is the "lens" through which we see the world. Piyush asked his team every day to write on a sticky note the three things that made them happy that day (two things from work and one thing that was personal). At the end of the day a clerk typed them up and at the end of the year, each employee was gifted with their own "365 Days of Happiness" book with all their happy thoughts from the previous year. While the book was a great gift, the real gift was the daily focus on the joy, blessings and gratitude in their life.

Want to See Piyush in action? Here's his OSU TEDx talk about "releasing the imagination to change the world": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2P-9WaAIA4>

For more information, great staff or to discuss TED talks (she really loves that stuff!), contact Dixie Agostino at [Dixie@switchgearrecruiting.com](mailto:Dixie@switchgearrecruiting.com) or (918) 574-8750.

## Do you **L.O.V.E.** Your Job?

by Heidi Hartman, MHR, SPHR, SHRM-SCP  
President Elect



If we are able to answer yes to the question... "do you love your job?" at least 85 - 95% of the time - we should consider ourselves lucky. For many of us, we have the days when we need to go into the closet and scream at some of the decisions that are made, or the nutty behaviors of a few of our employees that take up the majority of our time.

How can we really love our jobs with so much going on we need to juggle? The list may include: pending layoffs, finding the purple squirrel of that hard to find candidate, roll-out of a new compensation plan, 2015 goal setting for the organization and departments, performance improvement plans, benefit changes, the ever-changing laws we need to keep up with, investigations, etc. It can be enough for you to exclaim "CALGON take me away!" (old commercial for bubble bath for those that may miss that reference).

There are some things we can do to stay in love or fall back into love

with what we do as HR professionals.

**L** - Love of Learning: read books and articles that expand your knowledge, get a mentor and be a mentor, find other HR professionals in your industry and go to lunch or breakfast and share ideas. Get involved with TAHRA AND SHRM. MAKE time to invest in yourself.

**O** - Open yourself new opportunities: put yourself out there...connect with someone in the business unit and find out how their area works and issues they are currently facing. Think about rotating into another position to stretch your rubber band and abilities.

**V** - Vet your staff and or the people on your team: hire for culture fit as well as capability. We spend so much time at work that it is imperative that we are rowing in the same direction.

**E** - Engagement: be all in and make the most of where you are now. We all can focus on being more mindful and present from the conversations we have, to the work we do.

Let's all fall further in **L.O.V.E.** with what we do. Happy February! - Heidi

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Want to keep receiving TAHRA newsletters and email updates? If you have not renewed your TAHRA membership, do so today! All memberships for 2014 expired on 12/31/2014 and this is the last month you will receive TAHRA correspondence if you don't renew for 2015!

Renewing is easy! Visit [www.tahra.org](http://www.tahra.org) and log into your TAHRA account. Click the membership renewal link, update your profile and choose a membership package. You can pay online or print an invoice and mail a check.

If you have any questions, please contact [admin@tahra.org](mailto:admin@tahra.org).



On February 5th, TAHRA hosted our annual Awards and Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the Hard Rock Hotel Sky Room. This event is organized to recognize our volunteers, milestone members, our board and our past presidents.

At this year's event, president, Billie Fisher Callahan, presented the annual Presidents Award to Justice Waidner Smith. This award is given to a TAHRA member by the current President for someone who is considered to be indispensable over the course of the year. Justice, along with her outstanding ROI committee, organized the most attended ROI Summit in the history of the event. Surveys from this program were fantastic and the committee far exceeded expectations for an event of this nature. We are so proud and fortunate to have such a wonderful leader on our team! Congratulations Justice!

TAHRA also recognized long time Vice President of Legislative Affairs, Kirk Turner. Kirk has served on the TAHRA board for 20 years and has handed the reins over to new VP of Legislative Affairs, Rachel Crawford. The board honored Kirk with a service award, a donation to his favorite charity and his very own cake! It is with deep gratitude that we extend a heartfelt "thank you" to Kirk for his dedication and service to our board and our organization. (We also made him promise to return from time to time to present programs for our members!)

A special thank you also goes out to all of our members. We appreciate your dedication to Oklahoma's largest and best local HR Chapter! We look forward to serving you in 2015!



Matthew Hulse  
Dana Ezell

Premier Education Partners  
Jenks Public Schools

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Andrew Engelbrecht

Tulsa Regional Chamber  
Learning Unlimited



Robin Rylander Enovation Controls, LLC  
 Amy Neff Student  
 Jennifer Bush Webco  
 Serrin Galloway Horizon Well Logging  
 Nancy Hillman Verizon Wireless  
 Harlan Ross The Williams Companies

Kathryn Montgomery OneOK  
 Amber Fonesca Renaissance Tulsa Hotel and  
 Convention Center  
 Carla High One Gas Inc  
 Rita Magnusen YWCA Tulsa  
 Jane Noble Impact Consulting  
 Misty Tucker



**February 18 - Program Meeting** -Creative Teams: The Key to Unleashing the Artistic Brilliance of Your Employees

**February 26 - Learning Lab** - DIY Recruiting

**March 18 - Program Meeting** - The Wisdom of Ongoing Training

**March 26 - Learning Lab** - TBA

[Click here to view our full calendar.](#)

We are booking Program Meeting Sponsors for 2015!

Contact Kari Dean at [kari.d.dean@ehi.com](mailto:kari.d.dean@ehi.com) to reserve your spot today!

**Tulsa Area Human Resources Association**  
[admin@tahra.org](mailto:admin@tahra.org)  
 (918) 344-4622

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