

March 2009

In This Issue

- A Word from the President
- Calendar of Events
- Employers give Facebook a Poke
- COBRA Changes in Stimulus Bill
- Legislative Outlook
- Welcome New Members

In the Margin

- Scheduled Meeting Dates
- SHRM Links
- Contact Us
- State and National SHRM Events
- Headlines
- HR Humor

Scheduled Meeting Dates

- SHRA Conference-March 26, 2009

SHRM Links

National SHRM website

www.shrm.org

MN State SHRM website

www.mn-shrm.org

SHRA website

www.shra-mn.org

**Southwest Human
Resource Association
P.O. Box 776
Marshall, MN 56258**

A Word from the President

The Board of Directors of the Southwest Human Resource Association (SHRA) has been working very hard at planning our annual seminar. The seminar for 2009 will be held on Thursday, March 26th at the Marshall Golf Club from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

There will be two sessions held on this day. The morning session will discuss FMLA - ADA Overview, Employee Free Choice Act, Wage and Hour "Hot Topics" & Discrimination "Hot Buttons". Those attending the morning session will gain knowledge of the new FMLA and ADA regulations along with what employers should be aware of regarding upcoming legislation on the Employee Free Choice Act. Plus, we will hear what the "Hot Topics" are with Wage and Hour and what the Discrimination "Hot Buttons" are. Dale Bock, VP and the Assistant General Council for The Schwan Food Company has also promised that he will save some time to answer questions from the group.

In the afternoon session attendees will learn what constitutes employee misconduct and how to manage it. The presentation will cover situation comparisons of specific employee misconduct in regards to anti-authority demonstrations and insubordination. The material will provide attendees with a snapshot of reference information on employee misconduct. Jerry Mattern, SPHR, is Corp HR Manager for Dayton Rogers and has assured us a great learning opportunity.

As you can see from reading above we have two excellent speakers this year and it will make for a great learning experience for all of us!

If you would like to register for the conference and have not received a registration brochure please contact me at Sonya.kayser@wcainc.org or via phone at 507-537-1416 x 112. I will make sure that a brochure is sent to you.

I look forward to seeing you on March 26th.

Sonya Kayser
SHRA President

Contact Us

President

Sonya Kayser
Western Community Action
Phone: (507) 537-1416
Fax: (507) 537-1849
sonya.kayser@wcainc.org

Past President

Kevin Honetschlager
Dept. of Employment and Economic
Development
Phone: (507) 537-6236
Fax: (507) 537-6362
kevin.honetschlager@state.mn.us

President Elect

Ken Wilson
Turkey Valley Farms
Phone: (507) 337-3109
Fax: (507) 337-3009
Ken.wilson@turkeyvalleyfarms.com

Treasurer

Bernice Oerter
The Schwan Food Company
Phone: (507) 537-8175
bernice.oerter@schwans.com

Secretary

Rachel Wolff
Edgebrook Care Center
Phone: (507) 442-7121
Fax: (507) 442-3952
rwolff@good-sam.com

Membership Chair

Monica Derby
Good Samaritan Society of Pipestone
Phone: (507) 825-6919
Fax: (507) 825-5117
mderby1@good-sam.com

Professional Development Chair

Kay Lupkes
Runnings Farm & Fleet
Phone: (507) 532-9566 ext. 147
Fax: (507) 337-0987
kayl@runningsff.com

Calendar of Events

- Thursday, March 26, 2009
SHRA Annual Conference -- FMLA - ADA Overview, Employee Free Choice Act, Wage & Hour "Hot Topics" & Discrimination "Hot Buttons" And Employee Misconduct (What constitutes it & How to manage it)
8:30 am - 4:00 pm ~ Marshall Country Club
Registration Fee: \$79.00 Full Day Conference, \$59.00 Morning or Afternoon Session
- Friday, April 17, 2009
Steve Gilliland—Adventures in Leadership—Management 2009, Managing Generations and Leading Change
9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Jackpot Junction Convention Center, Morton, MN
Registration Fee: \$89.00

**If you know of an upcoming event you would like the membership to be made aware of please forward it on to Rachel Wolff at rwolff@good-sam.com and it will be put in the upcoming newsletter.



Employers Give Facebook a Poke

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. That's the thinking behind some employers who are tapping social networking sites to spread recruitment messages.

It seems like only yesterday that scads of employers were lamenting the huge amount of time employees were wasting talking with their buddies on sites such as Facebook and MySpace. Now, a small but growing number are exploring ways they can use the sites to build brand awareness and attract new talent.

Many recruiters and recruitment job boards—including industry-specific and geography-specific niche sites—discovered Facebook

State and National Events

National Events

- **SHRM Employment Law & Legislative Conference**
March 9 - 11, 2009
Capital Hilton
Washington, D.C.
- **SHRM Global Conference & Exposition**
March 30 - April 1, 2009
The Fairmont Royal York Hotel
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- **SHRM Staffing Management Conference & Exposition**
April 28 - April 30, 2009
Las Vegas Hilton
Las Vegas, Nevada
- **SHRM Annual Conference & Exposition**
June 28 - July 1, 2009
Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

State Events

- **SHRM Minnesota State Conference**
October 12 - 13, 2009
Mayo Convention Center
Rochester, Minnesota

long ago. Now, employers including Accenture, Ernst & Young, the Georgia Army National Guard, Sodexho, and Unilever are establishing their own Facebook pages.

A typical employer's Facebook page will include a blurb about the company and a direct link to the employer's career web site.

The New York-based recruitment advertising company TMP Worldwide is marketing an application to employers that will allow employees to post job listings on their Facebook pages.

The "Work With Me" widget that TMP is marketing for about \$23,000 establishes a direct link between a worker's Facebook page and his employer's career web site. It allows companies to encourage employees to post job listings voluntarily on personal Facebook pages. In return, employees would be paid a finder's fee for hires made as a direct result of the posting.

Job seekers who click on a "Work With Me" job posting move directly to an expanded listing about the opening. Thus, online applications completed by job seekers get zapped directly into a company's applicant tracking system, not Facebook.

Job applicants remain anonymous to the Facebook page owner, although they receive a report that tells how many page visitors apply to work at their company.

Courtney Hub, vice president for TMP's Interactive Strategy Group, calls the product, "a testament to TMP's commitment to help clients harness the burgeoning arena of interactive social media."

COBRA Changes in Stimulus Bill

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("Act") not only increased government spending, but also increased the cost of doing business for many employers.

Under the Act, individuals who were involuntarily terminated by their employer on or after September 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009 who are eligible for COBRA and elect COBRA may be eligible to pay a reduced premium amount that is only 35% of the premium costs for their COBRA coverage.

For employees who are or were terminated during that period and were covered by the employer's plan on their last day of employment, the plan administrator should provide a notice of their eligibility to elect COBRA and to receive a premium reduction.

The premium reduction provisions relate only to premiums for coverage periods beginning after the new law was enacted on

Headlines

New Link Connection: To read these and other headlines, go to <http://moss07.shrm.org/Publications/HRNews/Pages/default.aspx> Some articles require a national SHRM membership. Articles created by other news sources are accessible to all.

Stimulus Law Adds HIPAA Duties

The economic stimulus law imposes significant new Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security requirements on health plans, business associates and other vendors of personal health records.

Employer Health Costs Rise 6 Percent

U.S. employers expect health care cost increases to hold steady at 6 percent this year, and more plan to adopt consumer-directed health plans to control cost increases

Employers Freeze Pay, Cut Raises

One in four U.S. companies has instituted a salary freeze, a number that might rise to one in three employers by the time 2009 budgets are finalized, according to a new survey.

Federal Subsidy for COBRA Coverage Proposed

The recently unemployed could receive a partial subsidy for COBRA continuation coverage if proposed legislation intended to stimulate the U.S. economy passes.

February 17, 2009. The law does not allow reimbursement of premiums for coverage periods beginning before February 17, 2009. Qualified individuals can, however, receive the premium subsidy going forward, for up to nine months.

The provisions of the Act are in effect now. Employers who are plan administrators need to revise their notices to make employees and former employees who are eligible aware of the premium reduction. The Department of Labor was instructed to provide model notices within 30 days of enactment so the model notices are expected in mid-March, but do not wait until then because the government may impose fines for non-compliance.

High income individuals (modified adjusted gross income of \$125,000 for the taxable year (\$250,000 in the case of a joint return) will be taxed if they benefit from the premium reduction. High income individuals have the option of waiving premium reduction assistance if they want to avoid additional taxes.

The Act also provides employers, group health plans and insurers with COBRA premium assistance by giving employers an offset against payroll taxes (income tax withholding, withholding of the employees' portion of FICA taxes, and the employer's share of FICA taxes) if the employer and the COBRA participant pay their shares of the premium. Of course, there will be reports to file to demonstrate entitlement to the premium assistance.

The Employee Benefits Security Administration's has a dedicated Web page at www.dol.gov/COBRA. This Web page will contain helpful information and will be updated regularly to include FAQs and new information related to the process employees should follow to apply for COBRA and/or the premium reduction.

Legislative Outlook

Form I-9: Officials with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) have delayed until April 3, 2009, a requirement that employers must use a revised version of the employment eligibility verification form—known as the I-9 form.

USCIS officials stated that the 60-day delay should provide adequate time to complete a full review of the new form and employment verification requirements. A notice announcing the delay was set to appear in the Federal Register. **In addition, the USCIS will reopen the public comment period on the new rule for 30 days, until March 4, 2009.**

The interim final rule as published would have revised the types of acceptable identity and employment authorization documents employers can accept from new hires. The interim rule, if implemented, would stipulate that employees could not use expired identification documents to verify their work eligibility.

HR Speak

--"ENTRY-LEVEL POSITION:" You'll be making under \$7 an hour.

--"COMPETITIVE SALARY:" We remain competitive by paying less than our competitors.

--"JOIN OUR FAST-PACED COMPANY:" We have no time to train you; you'll have to introduce yourself to your coworkers.

--"NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED LEADER:" Inc. Magazine wrote us up a few years ago, but we haven't done anything innovative since.

--"IMMEDIATE OPENING:" The person who used to have this job gave notice a month ago. We're just now running the ad.

--"SELF-MOTIVATED:" Management won't answer questions

--"WE OFFER GREAT BENEFITS:" After 90 days, you can join our HMO, which has a \$500 deductible and a \$25 co-pay.

--"CASUAL WORK ATMOSPHERE:" We don't pay enough to expect that you'll dress up; well, a couple of the real daring guys wear earrings.

--"COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT:" We have a lot of turnover.

--"MUST BE DEADLINE ORIENTED:" You'll be six months behind schedule on your first day.

--"SOME PUBLIC RELATIONS REQUIRED:" If we're in trouble, you'll go on TV and get us out of it.

--"SOME OVERTIME REQUIRED:" Some time each night and some time each weekend.

--"SALARY RANGE \$24k-\$32k:" We'll offer you \$22k to start.

--"FLEXIBLE HOURS:" Work 40 hours; get paid for 25.

--"MUST HAVE AN EYE FOR DETAIL:" We have no quality control.

--"NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE:" We've filled the job; our call for resumes is just a legal formality.

--"SEEKING CANDIDATES WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE:" You'll need it to replace three people who just left.

--"PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS A MUST:" You're walking into a company in perpetual, systemic chaos.

--"REQUIRES TEAM LEADERSHIP SKILLS:" You'll have the responsibilities of a manager, without the pay or respect.

--"GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS:" Management communicates, you listen, figure out what they want and do.

--"ASPIRATIONS FOR GROWTH WITHIN OUR COMPANY:" We loooooove brown-nosers.

The proposed revised I-9 form is available online from the USCIS web site (www.uscis.gov).

Make sure you are using the correct version of Form I-9 - The correct form should include the Revision date (found at lower right hand corner of form) of 06/05/07.

E-Verify: The federal government has agreed to delay for an additional 90 days the effective date for a set of regulations, which would require federal contractors and subcontractors to use E-Verify, the electronic employment verification system operated by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service. Once a federal district court judge agrees to the change, the E-Verify requirement for federal contractors will take effect on May 21, 2009.

Welcome New Members

- Amy Atkins
Knology
805 A Southview Ct. W Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: 507-829-7829
aatkins@knology.net



If you know of an individual who would like to join SHRA or would like to see what it is about, please feel free to invite them to a meeting or suggest that they check out the SHRA website. We welcome new members.

Reminder

Please reminder to check the SHRA website for updates on upcoming meetings and information.
www.shra-mn.org

