

## Workforce Readiness in Arkansas

### SHRM Emerging Leadership

More than 180 Innovative initiatives from SHRM's State Councils and Chapters are enclosed in SHRM's new "Emerging Leadership" book. I am pleased to announce that 6 of that 180 came from Arkansas. If you would like to download a copy of the book you can find it at...

[http://www.shrm.org/chapters/resources/Enterprising\\_Leadership\\_Book\\_2008.pdf](http://www.shrm.org/chapters/resources/Enterprising_Leadership_Book_2008.pdf)

### Text of H.R. 5965: Employers Financial Literacy Act

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-5965>

This piece of legislation is to try to encourage small businesses to provide continuing financial education to their employees by providing a credit against income tax to cover a portion of the costs of providing that education and by giving such businesses and corporations providing such financial education preferential status when applying for Federal contracts, loans, and other assistance.

### Workforce Training in the Budget Cross Hairs

Most U.S. job training takes place in the nation's 4,100 colleges, technical training schools, universities and community colleges. But bad times loom for these schools, which are mostly public institutions. A softening economy means lower tax revenue, less public spending and, consequently, reduced higher-education budgets.

By Lisa Petrillo

<http://www.workforce.com/section/11/feature/25/45/90/index.html>

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### Employment Plunges in November

Job losses likely to continue as recession enters its second year.

#### Key Facts

- November's loss of 533,000 jobs marks the largest monthly decline in more than three decades.
- Unemployment moves up to a 15-year high of 6.7%
- Average hourly wages increased 7 cents to \$18.30, 3.7% ahead of last November.

For more information go to...

<http://view.exacttarget.com/?j=fe6115767067027a7714&m=feee1778736c0c&ls=fe0417727166047f73157476&l=fe9f177075670c7c74&s=fe3316737164007f731073&jb=ffcf14&ju=fe3115737263017f771572>

There is a great article Written by Kathy Gurchiek (12/11/08) on the SHRM website entitled...

### More Employers Consider Financial Literacy Programs

[www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)

# Workforce Readiness Activities across the State

*Central Arkansas Job  
Fair was  
"phenomenal"*



## CAHRA NEWS...

In 2001, Kay Brewer, a member of CAHRA and Human Resource Director of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette proposed the idea of hosting an annual Job Fair to CAHRA Board members whom, after a bit of initial reluctance, accepted the proposal. Within the first hour, over a 1000 tickets were handed out to attendees. Due to the popularity and demand for the Job Fair, there are now two events, one in spring and one in the fall. The revenue has increased for each and CAHRA has expanded its outreach to the Dorcas House and the Union Rescue Mission shelters to provide regular classes on preparing to enter or re-enter the workforce. The classes topics such as goal setting, resume writing and cover letter preparation, preparing for job interviews, proper interviewing attire, and emergency preparedness. These valuable skills provide the participants with the tools necessary for a successful job search and hopefully some ideas and strategies that will assist them in other areas of their lives. The Job Fair offers a range of job opportunities for people of all experiences and educational backgrounds. It has also created a greater applicant pool for the vendors. The CAHRA Workforce Readiness Committee members assist the residents of the Dorcas House and The Union Rescue Mission shelters in determining their career interests. CAHRA members man a special booth to assist participants with resume preparation and interviewing tips. This is a popular offering at each fair and it is common to find dozens of candidates seeking this help at any given time during the day of the event.

Through the Job Fair, CAHRA has been given the ability to give back to the community by offering complimentary booths to organizations such as Workforce Services, Veteran's Affairs, and organizations that specialize in mainstream living. CAHRA has specifically recognized groups who have been victims of domestic violence and unfortunate life circumstances.

Read more about CAHRA's Emerging Leadership entry at...

[http://www.shrm.org/chapters/resources/Enterprising\\_Leadership\\_Book\\_2008.pdf](http://www.shrm.org/chapters/resources/Enterprising_Leadership_Book_2008.pdf)

## Workforce Issues Get Task Force Rather Than White House Czar

**December 22, 2008**

President-elect Barack Obama has run circles around his predecessors when it comes to appointing his Cabinet with dispatch. All of his nominees are in place before Christmas.

One of his last announcements was that [Rep. Hilda Solis, D-California, would be the secretary of labor](#).

Solis hit political observers like a bolt out of the blue. Her name may have been on some speculation lists, but it wasn't anywhere near the top.

Now we'll have to see whether she will wield any true power in her role at the labor agency. The labor incumbent, Elaine Chao, served for all eight years of the George W. Bush administration but didn't have much discernable influence, as [Workforce Management editor John Hollon pointed out last week in his blog](#).

Solis is better known for her work on environmental issues than on workplace policy. Although unions showered her with encomiums for her support of organizing drives in Los Angeles and for co-sponsoring the Employee Free Choice Act, her most substantive efforts on employment law came during her tenure in the California Senate. There, she spearheaded a bill to raise the minimum wage.

The fact that Obama plucked Solis out of relative obscurity may be a sign that labor groups couldn't agree on a candidate. Solis was the compromise. Read more of the article at...

<http://workforce.com/wpnu/washington/2008/12/2/2/workforce-issues-get-task-force-rather-than-white-house-czar/>

*Mark your calendar for the 2009  
Workforce Readiness Core  
Leadership Webcast on January 22<sup>nd</sup>*

## NAHRA NEWS...



NAHRA partnered with the Boone County Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership Academy to provide an annual 1/2 day workshop on workforce readiness presented to junior high school students that participate in the Academy.

As representatives of the HR profession, we see the direct result of applicants/candidates who are not prepared for a job let alone an interview.

We want to prepare students for their future work life, which will in turn help local businesses gain and retain better employees.

Implementation: The Youth Leadership Academy has a preset date in which students will come to the designated location for the presentation. Members of NAHRA volunteer to provide presentations on such information as interview skills, dress code, effective speaking habits, paperwork i.e. I9, W4, pre-employment testing, job expectations, etc.. NAHRA members are engaged to participate because this is their chance to change the skill set of applicants they see at their businesses.

The presentation date is set for January 21, 2009. The Youth Leadership Academy will provide a feedback sheet to the students who will rate the presentations, and then the Academy will provide the results to NAHRA.

Outcome: To date we have three volunteers to conduct the presentation of their choice, and we are actively seeking more volunteers. We anticipate having enough volunteers to have a presentation schedule set by the end of November. Our measure of success would be to have at least five presenters by the end of November.

## NEASHRM NEWS...

Chapter Internship... This program was created to provide an internship that provides multiple work experiences on more than one project and in more than one area of human resources.

Our student chapter members had expressed concern that many HR positions require two years of experience and that internships often include a single project, restricting the scope of the experience. Many of our members were interested in providing an internship but could not provide an entire semester of activity. This program was created to provide an internship that provides multiple work experiences on more than on project and in more than one area of human resources.

The NEASHRM board of directors developed the guidelines for this program with the assistance of our student chapter liaison. Arkansas State University's College of Business Internship program director approved our plans because it included working at multiple locations. Interested chapter members developed two-to three-week internship experiences designed to expose the intern to a wide range of HR-related tasks, procedures and processes.

The intern selection committee awarded our first internship for the spring semester of 2008. Participating organizations were selected from the NEASHRM member employers with the intent to include different types or organizations and different areas of human resources. We selected organizations representing three leading industries in the northeast Arkansas region: healthcare, retail, and employee staffing. Our intern worked on formatting the NEASHRM survey for next year. The survey is designed to capture information on current wage and benefit-related practices by area organizations. The intern then worked at or observed at other organizations. Her internship included recruiting professionals in a healthcare-hospital environment; processing benefit data and evaluation IT processes for a retail organization with multiple locations over several states; and observing the processes for filling a variety of staffing orders at a national staffing organization.



## Global Dependence on Immigrant Labor Will Grow

By J.J. Smith, *September 2008*

By 2018, the labor pools in major economies around the world will decrease significantly, creating regional workforce shortages that immigrant workers will answer despite government limits on migration, says a labor market researcher...

[http://www.shrm.org/global/news\\_published/CM\\_S\\_026716.asp](http://www.shrm.org/global/news_published/CM_S_026716.asp)

### From the Editor...

I have had so much fun compiling your newsletter for you. I hope that it has been beneficial for you. If you have any suggestions please let me know. If you run across an article that you would like to share or a service and/or website that has beneficial information to the Human Resource Professional please send it to me so that we can share that information with others. Thank you for all that you do for your companies and your communities.

Thank you...

Cathleen

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## Sara Lee Program Opens Door for Parents Returning to Workforce

The Illinois company is launching 'returnships,' four- to six-month internships at the food maker for mid-career professionals who have been out of the workforce for a few years. For more information go to:

<http://www.workforce.com/section/00/article/25/87/65.php>

### Workforce Management

<http://www.workforce.com/index.html>

Sign up for 5 different newsletters...

- "Workforce Week"
- "Dear Workforce"...see below
- "Workforce Benefits"
- "Workforce Recruiting"
- "Workforce Training"

### Workforce Management 2009 Vendor Directory

<http://bg3.mediabrain.com/client/workforcema/bg1/search.asp>



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