



AFFILIATE OF



## Dates and Events To Remember



**March 8th**  
Luncheon  
“Making Wellness  
Programs Pay Off”  
12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

**April 12th**  
Luncheon  
“Obesity in the  
Workplace”  
12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

## The President's Corner

This year has been an exciting year for TAHRA. We have been enjoying excellent programming every month with outstanding speakers. Our newsletters have been timely and informative as well as interesting. We've started new outreach programs with our e-Mentoring and Breaking Ice projects. We are responsibly kept current on legislative updates and news. And still there is so much more.

I'd like to thank everyone for your support of the Breaking Ice project. Whether you voted for funding, worked at the programs, or asked your employer to sponsor the programs, as a team it all came together successfully. I would also like to acknowledge Marilyn Hoogstraten for her vision and dedication to the importance of diversity and community relations.

We have two services of TAHRA that are gaining momentum which I would like to bring to your attention. Firstly, how about our membership drive! Karyn Oncu as VP of Membership presented the Membership Drive Program in the fall. As a result our membership has increased, and we continue to invite guests to our luncheon programs under our membership drive guidelines. In this issue we would like to salute our new members and thank you for joining. New members have worked with Karyn to write a short bio about themselves. I hope you take time to read these articles. Secondly, have you visited our website lately! Carol Kasper has been quietly and diligently at work reinventing our web page. Very soon there will be a “members only” page. Due to her professional approach to our web page, TAHRA now has improved member services and a new marketing edge. We have much more planned for the website as it becomes a communication service center. Carol welcomes your ideas and comments; just email her at [ckasper@nmc.edu](mailto:ckasper@nmc.edu).

As associate members of TAHRA, we continue to be united with our common goals. SHRM states their goal to be advancing the human resource profession and servicing the human resource professional. I believe that through our local membership we turn that goal into reality.

Patti Williams  
President

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** The following TAHRA committees are looking for volunteers:

**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE** – Secretary and Treasurer positions up for ballot this spring. Contact Patti Williams if interested: [pwilliams@brownlumber.net](mailto:pwilliams@brownlumber.net) or 231-995-5711

**WAGE SURVEY COMMITTEE** – If you are interested in helping plan the next wage survey to be sent out this spring, please contact Bob Newland: [bnewland@centinc.com](mailto:bnewland@centinc.com) or 231-946-7500

## Breaking Ice Performance a Big Hit!

Survey results indicate that our Breaking Ice performances were a huge success. We figure about 1500 individuals attended the three public presentations at the Great Lakes Campus, and another 1100 students (SRO)! at Central High School. We raised \$22,750 in funding, and had in-kind contributions of another \$6000. Final bills are still coming in, but it looks like we should be right on target.

This has been a huge effort, and many people contributed to its success. I can't thank TAHRA enough for their support and sponsorship, and all the help that Patti gave us in the final stages. And to all the sponsors, many from organizations with TAHRA membership, that made it possible to present five performances.

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to the committee that has been with me from the beginning – our own TAHRA members Jennifer Hull, Kim Gribi, Paula Sagala, and Chris Davis, as well as Lisa Blackford, Diversity Coordinator from NMC, and Corey Sanderson and Robin Long, pastors from Pottershouse UCC. There were times in the first year when I was ready to give it up, but they kept me going. They trusted my instincts on this group without seeing them, and I am honored by that trust.

But I was greatly relieved when I found out that Bill Myers, Social Worker at Central High School, had also seen them and had tried to get them to TC! Bill sent me a letter in which he felt he spoke for many powerless and voiceless students who were touched and empowered by the presentation. I think we can say the same for employees who are reluctant to speak up for themselves. These students are our future employees, so maybe as employers we are planting the seed that will reduce the time we spend in the future on resolving problems in the workplace that should be “no brainers”.

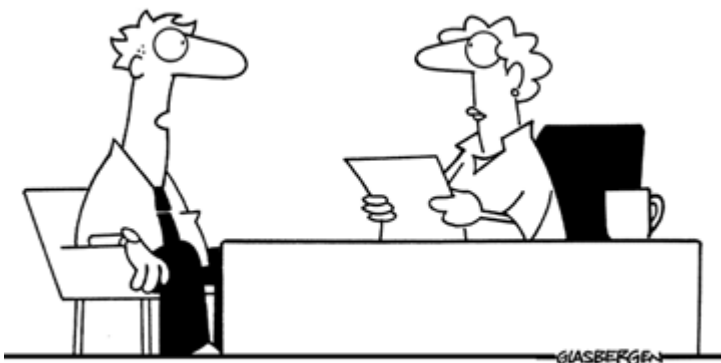
My greatest pleasure came from hearing my boss, County Administrator Dennis Aloia, tell our commissioners that he felt the County should take a leadership role in diversity issues in our community.

THANK YOU ALL! May this be just the beginning of a “kinder and more sensitive” community.

By: Marilyn (Brown) Hoogstraten

*Note: If anyone is interested in the results of the Breaking Ice Survey, please email Patti Williams at [pwilliams@brownlumber.com](mailto:pwilliams@brownlumber.com)*

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“Of course I could be more independent and self-motivated — but nobody told me to!”

*The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra.*

## PROGRAMMING

### March's Program - MAKING WELLNESS PAY OFF

There is probably not an organization out there that isn't dealing with hefty hikes in their medical and prescription drug costs. Everyone is out looking for solutions and ways to hold the increasing expenses in check. One way we've heard about is to begin a healthy living or wellness initiative within our workplace. But, the questions remain, "Why institute this type of program? What are the benefits to our organization? How do I go about designing such a program? How do I tie this into our medical benefits? What if I plumb don't have any time???"

If any of these questions have crossed your mind, we have the TAHRA program for you! At our March 8<sup>th</sup> program, we have put together a panel of experts that will answer those questions and more.

First, we have Ed Pienkosz, Director of Community Education & Wellness for Munson Medical Center, who will be covering the "whys" of a healthy living program. Ed will explore the statistics of how a program will impact your employees and your organization.

Next, Wendy Wiggers, Director of Healthy Living for Priority Health, will talk about how to incorporate a wellness program into your schedule of benefits. She will look at plan design and how you can save costs by introducing healthy living initiatives.

Finally, Dru Szczerba, Director of Prevention Healthcare for the American Cancer Society, will introduce to you a ready made program that the American Cancer Society has available for free to employers. Dru will also give instruction on how to best roll out such a program.

As you can tell, this program promises to be extremely informative and more importantly, practical!! So, be sure to put this one on your "don't miss" list!!

Jennifer Hull, Programming Co-Chair

### April's Program - OBESITY IN THE WORKPLACE

As many of you know, our April TAHRA meeting historically focuses on diversity issues in the work place. This year we are offering a unique program which might just lead to a change in your life long assumptions about a tremendously discriminated against class of people – those who are overweight.

This program is designed to impact not only HR professionals, but all individuals within your organization. It might just be "that" program you decide to bring a co-worker or two along with you.

"Obesity in the Workplace" will be a two part presentation. First, we have Genie Bankable Aldrich. Genie is a slender, energetic, fashion plate who use to weight 260 pounds. Genie will explore with us the types of discrimination that she had to endure as a heavy person and how radically different she is now treated as a thin person. Genie will give us the unique perspective on this issue from an "insiders" point of view.

In addition to Genie, Shelly Jesters from the Department of Civil rights will then give us an overview of the legalities of obesity in the workplace and how weight issues are considered "protected" under the Michigan Elliot Larson Act. Shelly will give us great information that can be taken back to the work place and applied immediately.

Please plan on joining us on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

By Jennifer Hull, Programming Co-Chair

## TAHRA Recruitment and Membership Drive

By: Karyn Oncu PHR, Vice President of Membership

As an organization, TAHRA is committed to advancing both the human resource profession and the capabilities of HR professionals in our community. The goal of our membership drive is to increase the number of qualified HR professionals and national SHRM members within our local SHRM chapter and to increase our membership with 14 new members, eight of whom are members of SHRM. To date, we have accepted 11 new members; four of these are SHRM members. In this newsletter, you will find information about our newest members. If you have not had the opportunity to meet them, please seek them out at the next meeting and introduce yourself.

Special recognition goes to Kate Greene and Jennifer Hull who are leading the way in the recruitment contest. We will be awarding the member with the most recruits with a \$50 SHRM bookstore gift certificate. The contest continues through June and yes, we do pro-rate the membership dues from now until the end of the year. It's not too late to recruit someone you know who would benefit from becoming a member!

In closing, I'd like to share an excerpt from a note received from one of our newest members, Rachel Roe, on why she joined TAHRA:

*"TAHRA is an organization about which I've heard amazing things since moving to Grand Traverse County in 1996. It has a reputation as a high-caliber organization with interesting meetings on highly germane topics. I became interested in joining after I spoke to the TAHRA group several times -- those opportunities confirmed for me that TAHRA was a group that is too valuable professionally not to join."*

### New member biographies:

**Ashleigh E. Snyder** – Administrative Assistant for Crystal Downs Country Club since 2004, Ashleigh has been with the company in various positions since 2001. Her position at Crystal Downs incorporates Human Resources, payroll and many other aspects of administrative work. In the near future she plans to pursue an Accounting degree through online college.

**Terrie Kopkau** – Assistant Director of Human Resources at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa. Terrie joined the resort in February of 1986 as a server in the Banquet Department and has worked in Convention Services and Human Resources. In 1997, she accepted a promotion to Benefits Coordinator. Her recent promotion, November 2004, was to the position of Assistant Director of Human Resources. Terrie graduated from Spring Arbor University in 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts in Management and Organizational Behavior.

**Paul M. Hresko** - Materials Manager / Human Resource Manager with Alken-Ziegler. Employed with Alken-Ziegler since 2002 with additional responsibilities including Machining Plant Manager and Operations Manager. Paul received his Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Michigan in 1985 while employed at General Motors. He has 15 years of Materials Management experience from the following Divisions of General Motors: AC Spark Plug, Delco Electronics and Powertrain. He is a member of the Northwest Michigan Workforce Development Board, Grand Traverse Botanical Gardens Advisory Board, Vice President of the Chalfonte Foundation, Member of the Elk Rapids Merchant Association and Elk Rapids Chamber of Commerce.

**Colleen Yuncker** - CFO/HR Manager with Natural Gas Compression Systems, Inc. (NGCS) since November 2001. Prior to joining NGCS, Ms. Yuncker served as Vice President of Finance of Gas Compression Services, Inc. (GCSI) in Traverse City, Michigan from 1996 to 2000 and then as President and Chief Executive Officer thereafter until the company was sold in September of 2000. Colleen was critically involved in all aspects of the \$113 million sale of GCSI to Universal Compression, Inc. including the initial price negotiation, all phases of due diligence and coordinating information flow between parties. She started her professional career with Coopers & Lybrand (currently known as PriceWaterhouse Coopers, the world's largest professional service organization). Ms. Yuncker was a Halton scholar at Portland State University, where she earned a B.S. in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting. In addition, she is a Certified Public Accountant in the state of Michigan.

**Kimberly Arbour** - Firm Administrator for Dennis, Gartland & Niergarth, since 2000 after having worked for 13 years with a financial services firm located in East Lansing. In addition to Human Resources Kim also spends much time coordinating Marketing efforts for DG & N. A graduate of MSU with a Bachelor of Science degree, Kim enjoys the outdoors and being involved in the community.

**Susan Porzondek** - Human Resource Manager and Finance Assistant for Northern Michigan Substance Abuse Services since October of 2000. Susan received her Bachelor's degree from Lake Superior State University in Business Administration in 1992. For eight years after college, she was a general manager for hotels in both Gaylord and Petoskey.

**Rachel Brochert Roe**, Attorney with the law firm of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, Rachel specializes in representing businesses with employment law matters; defending lawsuits claiming harassment, discrimination, and retaliation; compliance with record keeping, FMLA, wage and hour; discipline and termination matters; investigations involving the Dept. of Labor, OSHA, Dept. of Civil Rights, and EEOC. Graduating Magna Cum Laude in 1991 from Notre Dame, and Wayne State University with Honors in 1994, Rachel has practiced law for 11 years. Prior to joining Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, she clerked for the Michigan Court of Appeals and the Michigan Supreme Court. Rachel moved to Grand Traverse County in 1996 and has worked as an assistant prosecuting attorney for Grand Traverse County. She has been a guest speaker on legal matters at TAHRA monthly meetings.

**Jeannette O'Neil** – Administrative Assistant with RJG, Inc. since 1993, Jeannette has been working toward her goal of Human Resources Manager. Last fall she received a Human Resources Certification through MSU. Jeannette received her Bachelor of Science degree in Social Science 1992 from Lake Superior State University.

**Lori Hodek** – Assistant for Human Resources at NMC since 2004, Lori was employed temporarily at NMC in a human resources position for three years prior. Lori has also worked for Traverse City Area Public Schools from 1999-2001 in various positions. She received her Associate of Applied Science Degree from NMC in 2003, and is a native of Traverse City.

**Stacey Brothers** – Training Manager for the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa since 2003, Stacey graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Interdisciplinary Study of Social Sciences – Human Resources. Stacey also worked for two years as a Human Resources Manager for I&W in Traverse City. Stacey is the Student Chapter Chairperson for the TAHRA board.

## Certification and the HR Bottom Line

It wasn't too long ago when we were riding high on the technology wave. Let's face it—it was a job seeker's paradise—too many jobs and not enough workers. Today, workers are struggling to keep their jobs, job seekers are finding new jobs scarce, and employers are trying their best to keep up with the changing economy without sacrificing the quality of their products and services.

During these challenging times, an effective HR staff must be able to demonstrate more than “good people skills.” “Good people skills” won't help overhaul an organization's compensation structure, won't develop and assess an organization's training program, won't help an organization be proactive in developing a culture free of sexual harassment, and won't develop an OSHA-compliant health safety program

One way to assess the effectiveness of an HR professional is by certification. An HR department whose staff is professionally certified can—and should—make a significant contribution to the management and strategic direction of an organization. They can ensure that the organization's people strategy is correctly aligned with its business strategy.

How do you determine which professional certification to look for when staffing your HR department? The most respected certifications for HR professionals are the Professional in Human Resources (PHR), Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR) from the Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI). Earning one or more of these designations validates that a professional possesses significant knowledge and experience in all areas of HR, including strategic management; workforce planning; human resource development; compensation and benefits; employee and labor relations, and occupational health, safety and security. Today there are more than 70,000 HR professionals certified by HRCI.

Most HR professionals who take on the challenge of the PHR, SPHR, and GPHR exams demonstrate more than knowledge. They display a true dedication to the HR management profession. They show it when they agree to study in excess of 40 hours and when they arrive at the testing center to take the four-hour multiple-choice examination. Certificants continue to demonstrate their dedication to the profession when they maintain their designation by re-certifying every three years through professional development or by retaking the examination. They are leaders in the HR profession.

Recruiters should take note of the designations as well. Although there may not be an abundance of jobs available today, the lack of jobs has not eased the skills shortage. The lack of a skilled labor pool is still a serious long-term issue. Recruiters should routinely include “PHR, SPHR or GPHR preferred” in advertisements for professional-level HR jobs. Recruiters need not worry that adding this preference may decrease the applicant pool. In fact, stating this preference may likely increase the pool of *qualified* candidates for the position and help separate the wheat from the chaff.

Many certified professionals are members of local chapters of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). This organization is an excellent source for certified HR talent and resources. To learn more about how professional certification for HR professionals can benefit your organization, please visit the HRCI web site at [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org).

*Alisa Goldschmidt is the Marketing Manager for HRCI.*

## TAHRA Website Reborn!

For the past 6 months or so, our TAHRA website has been undergoing a facelift. I'm happy to announce that the new website is now online!

Here are some of the major changes:

1. The links to the different pages of the website are located along the top now rather than down the side.
2. The basic color has been changed from the dark blue background.
3. Links have been added along the left margin to:
  - SHRM
  - MISHRM
  - Traverse City Chamber of Commerce
  - Local Weather
  - Driving directions
4. A Member's Only page has been added, which is still under construction. When this page is available, I will email members with the log-in and password. This page will contain member information such as:
  - TAHRA Bylaws
  - TAHRA Addendums
  - TAHRA Member List
  - TAHRA Budget Information
  - Minutes from TAHRA Board Meetings
  - Minutes from TAHRA Membership Meetings

In case you haven't used our website lately, here are some of the regular features for you to look at:

1. Our **Home** page is an introduction to TAHRA.
2. The **Events** page outlines our regular monthly meetings, with an RSVP link, as well as a link to the list of this year's programs.
3. The **Contacts** page lists the members of our Board of Directors and Committee Chairs, with links to contact them by email.
4. Our **Join** page is a wonderful place for prospective members to find out about the benefits of being a TAHRA member. It links to information on our membership requirements and dues and an Acrobat version of our Membership Application.
5. The **Links** page gives you some helpful links to national and local HR resources.

Our sincere thanks go to Tom Kasper for his innovative design and implementation of this new website!

Please take a moment to visit our TAHRA website at <http://www.tahratc.org> . Suggestions for improvement are welcome – just contact me at [ckasper@nmc.edu](mailto:ckasper@nmc.edu) .

Carol Kasper  
Secretary

# TAHRA

## TAHRA 2004-2005 Leadership Board

President	Patti Williams, PHR
Vice President	Karen Schultz, SPHR
Treasurer	Marsha Wheaton
Secretary	Carol Kasper
Programming V.P.	Jennifer Hull, SPHR
	Kate Greene, SPHR
Membership V.P.	Karyn Oncu, PHR
Certification Representative	Bill Hendry, SPHR
Legislative Representative	Chris Davis
School-to-Work Advocate	Lori Kerlin
Diversity Advocate	Marilyn Hoogstraten
Marketing and PR Chair	Laura Mitchell
SHRM Foundation Director	Brenda Ransom
Student Chapter Liaison	Stacey Brothers

March 8, 2005  
TAHRA Program

**“Making Wellness Programs Pay Off”**  
How successful wellness programs translate to a healthier workforce and bottom line savings

Waterfront Inn Conference Center  
11:45 – 12:00 Registration  
12:00 – 12:30 Lunch  
12:30 – 2:00 Program

RSVP to Kate Greene by Wednesday, 3/2/05  
[kate@h-r-partners.com](mailto:kate@h-r-partners.com) or 231-932-9175.  
Guests welcome with a \$30 fee

## Newsletter Articles

The TAHRA Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication. Members interested in submitting articles for the newsletter or for press releases should contact Laura Mitchell at [lamitchell@waynewire.com](mailto:lamitchell@waynewire.com). Deadlines for submission are the 8th day of the month. TAHRA encourages its members to submit articles, information, or successes they've had that they feel others may find interesting. TAHRA reserves the right to alter submissions for space purposes. If you would like to be removed from the newsletter mailing list, please email a reply letting us know.



**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
[www.tahrac.org](http://www.tahrac.org)

April 12, 2005  
TAHRA Program

**“Obesity in the Workplace”**  
Understanding the social and legal liability of discrimination issues related to obesity

Waterfront Inn Conference Center  
11:45 – 12:00 Registration  
12:00 – 12:30 Lunch  
12:30 – 2:00 Program

RSVP to Kate Greene by Wednesday, 4/6/05  
[kate@h-r-partners.com](mailto:kate@h-r-partners.com) or 231-932-9175.  
Guests welcome with a \$30 fee