

March 2007

Welcome to the W.T. Beebe Newsletter, written by the students of the W.T. Beebe Institute of Personnel and Employment Relations in the Department of Managerial Sciences at Georgia State University. Along with providing information on Beebe events, it provides interesting reading for HR professionals and students alike.

Spotlight: HR Field Research

Georgia State University continuously strives to give its students a competitive edge by offering distinctive programs and challenging classes. One of these is the HR Field Research course, which is offered through the Beebe Institute.

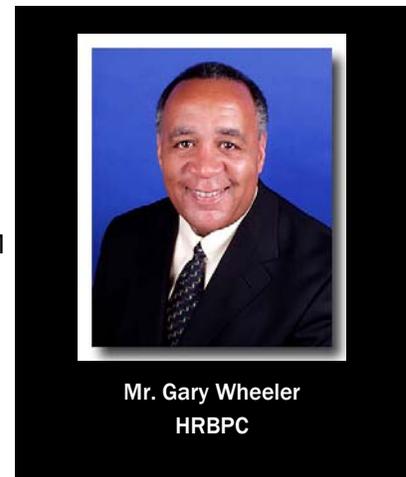
The Field Research class, a partnership between the Beebe Institute and SHRM Atlanta, strives to bridge the classroom with the world of practice by bringing together HR students, HR practitioners and SHRM members acting as advisors. Since its inception in 1999, 18 projects have been completed by students for project sponsors.

The students' projects may involve gathering data, analyzing findings and developing recommendations relating to a wide range of topics. At the end of the semester, students make a presentation to their project sponsor, their advisor and the professor regarding their semester-long project. Most of the students' recommendations in the past projects were implemented and are still being used today. Past sponsors have found the program very flexible: their level of involvement can be as much or as little as they choose or as their schedules permit.

Sponsors may use the opportunity to get a fresh perspective on an issue or a project. Sometimes, they use the groups to do projects that no one has had the time to complete. Mr. Gary Wheeler of Human Resource Business Partner Consultant, LLC states:

"I have utilized the GA State University Field Support Program several times. At UPS, students in the program conducted research and submitted a competitive analysis on areas the company was not able to commit resources to at that time. The completion of the work was used to help cost justify programs utilized by the company."

In one of the projects completed for the class, students designed and developed an internal brochure regarding the company's benefits. One of the challenges that the students had to overcome was to create a document that will address the concerns of a diverse workforce. In another project, students faced a job design-specific issue. Students performed a job analysis, wrote job descriptions, and spoke with labor lawyers and specialists to determine whether or not employees on 24-hour duty shifts should be treated as exempt employees. (Continued on Page 2)



Mr. Gary Wheeler
HRBPC

HR FIELD RESEARCH continued

Nancy Vepraskas, Vice President of Human Resources for Atlantic Envelope at the time she participated, adds that the class has proven to be a very positive experience for her and that she has experienced repeated success.

The class has also provided networking benefits for all the parties involved. Sponsors and advisors get the benefit of meeting students who are interested in HR. Students, on the other hand, are able to interact with professionals in the field who can speak to real-world HR issues. Valerie McNeil, one of the students who participated in the class shares:

"I really enjoyed taking the Field Research class. [The] class offers students a unique opportunity that everyone should try to experience. The course not only allowed me to get real-world HR experience, but it also make it possible for me to conduct an in-depth exploration of an HR topic and examine multiple research avenues that are not available in most HR classes."



Field Research will once again be offered during the fall semester and will meet Mondays from 4:30 – 7:00 PM. Students will begin class on August 20, 2007, while sponsors and advisors will attend their first session on August 27, 2007. Anyone who is interested in sponsoring a project, serving as an advisor or taking the class may contact Dr. Lucy McClurg at (404) 651-2863 or mgtlnm@langate.gsu.edu.

Recent Beebe Graduates!



Congratulations to the following Beebe students who graduated in December 2006:

John Carson Deidra Maloyed Monica Pearson David Snead



2007 Exam Dates



Exam	Exam Period	Regular Deadline Date	Late Deadline Date
PHR/SPHR	12/01/07 - 01/31/08	10/12/07	11/16/07
GPHR	05/01/07 - 05/31/07	03/16/07	04/20/07
GPHR	12/01/07 - 12/31/07	10/12/07	11/16/07

If anyone is interested in joining a study group to prepare to take the PHR exam in May 2007 or December 2007, contact Dr. Kay Bunch at kbunch@gsu.edu.

GSU SHRM News

The January and February GSU SHRM meetings have been very well-attended. Ms. Zandra Hall, Director of Organizational Development and Ethics at AT&T, formerly Cingular, spoke to students in January about the role that her team plays in a large organization like AT&T and how much more important they become during the transition period after a merger. Also, as HR functions are more closely associated with supporting roles, Ms. Hall talked about the ways in which her team contributes towards improving the company's revenue-generating units.



Ms. Zandra Hall, Director of Organizational Development.

In February, Dr. Kay Bunch and Dr. Lucy McClurg spoke about different career paths and options for HRM students. In addition, they shared important points to keep in mind when looking at graduate programs and gave information regarding the programs that Georgia State University offers.

Thanks to all the students who attended the meetings!



Our January attendees!



Tracy Hall, Dr. Kay Bunch, Kevyn Fitzgerald and Dr. Lucy McClurg after the February meeting.



Ms. Hall speaking to students after the January meeting.

Superior Merit Award Point

Watch: **2,210**

Goal: **1,901 points**

By exceeding our goal, we achieved superior chapter status for the 2006-2007 school year!

Thank you for everyone's participation!

Visit the GSU SHRM web site:
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwshr>

Spotlight: Drug Testing



Drug testing: A Wise Corporate Policy?

By: Katie Wilson

Each year illegal substance abuse costs companies tens of millions of dollars. Work-related accidents, health care expenses, and theft are among the many things that cost a company money. It is safe to say most people are not aware of the drug problem around them. The U.S. Department of Labor states that 70 percent of illegal drug users are employed¹. According to the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, government agencies are required to take action towards the elimination of drugs in the workplace. Although drug testing is mandated for many public employers, it leads us to an interesting question. Is drug testing in the workplace a wise corporate policy?

Ying-Tzu Lu and Brian H. Kleiner say yes². They believe it is essential to test employees if it is done legally. Lu and Kleiner utilize six considerations to deciding when to test an employee. They are as follows:

- Public versus Private Employees

According to the 4th amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which refers to illegal search and seizure, public employers have more hurdles to get through to test an employee. Public employers can only perform drug testing when they have reasonable suspect. Private employers, however, can usually test at will unless they are under a collective bargaining agreement that does not allow them to.

- Union versus Non Union Employees

Generally is it more difficult for a Union employer to drug test due to the company's obligation to first communicate with the union.

- Employees' Job Responsibilities: Safety and Public Image

It is important to test those who are involved in safety sensitive positions. Consider the case Webster V. Motorola Inc. (Bryan, 1998). Two men filed a lawsuit after being drug tested. One drove a truck for the company while the other worked as a writer. The courts ruled that it was unreasonable for Motorola to test the writer; however, because the driver was in a safety sensitive position it was reasonable for him to be tested.

- Employee Morale

Asking an employee to take a drug test could have a negative impact on the employee's morale. The employee may be humiliated if asked to urinate in a cup or could start to believe their employer does not trust them. It is also likely a company could lose a loyal and dedicated employee due to these matters.

- Evaluating the Evidence of the Workplace Drug Problem

A company must have reasonable basis for drug testing along with the need for supervisors to be trained in understanding the signs of drug use.

- State or Local Legislation Regulating Drug Testing

It is imperative for the employer to consider all state and local laws when attempting a drug test. (Continued on page 5)

¹Mathis & Jackson, Human Resource Management, Thompson South-Western, 2003, p. 527

²Ying-Tzu Lu and Brian H. Kleiner. "Drug Testing in the Workplace," *Management Research News* (vol. 27, no. 4/5, 2004)

DRUG TESTING continued

There are many options to types of testing a company can perform. Among these options are pre-employment testing, reasonable cause testing, random testing, periodic testing, and post accident testing. Periodic testing is perhaps the most backed by the courts due to the fact that it is less of an invasion of privacy because employees are generally tested at the time of their annual physical examination or the tests are preannounced.

However, there are some people who disagree with drug testing. Jacob Sullum, author of "Urine-Or You're Out", believes that while drug testing may seem to serve a purpose there is little to no evidence to support why drug testing is vital³. He often asks how a company knows if they are really weeding away the "bad" workers as opposed to the good, productive, and safe ones. Prospective job seekers understand that a drug test is more than likely part of applying for a job and therefore will restrain from using drugs during the few weeks they are applying. Also, many companies pre-announce their drug tests allowing employees the time to flush away any drugs from their bodies. Therefore, there is a vast chance that the drug testing really serves no purpose. Moreover, Sullum compares illegal drugs to alcohol. While alcohol has the same safety hazard as illegal drugs the question has changed from "Do you consume?" to "How much do you consume?". Overall, Sullum along with many people in the world, see drug testing as a waste of time, energy, and money while also potentially affecting the employees work ethic, trust in the company, and invasion of privacy.

Street, Marc D., and Vera L. Street. *Taking Sides: Clashing View in Management*. 2nd ed. Dubuque: Iowa, 2007

³Jacob Sullum. "Urine—or You're Out: Drug Testing is Invasive, Insulting, and Generally Irrelevant to Job Performance. Why Do So Many Companies Insist on It?" *Reason* (November 2002)

What's on tap for the summer?

Here are a few of the classes we are offering during the Summer semester:

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE		DAYS AND TIMES		LOCATION/NOTES
MGS 8020	Business Intelligence	S	8:00AM - 1:25PM	Brookhaven
MGS 8140	Management Science	M/W	7:40PM - 10:25PM	Location TBD
MGS 8150	Business Modeling	T/TH	7:40PM - 10:25PM	Location TBD
MGS 8300	Human Resource Management	M-F	7:15PM - 9:45PM	May session
MGS 8430	Negotiation	M-F	4:30PM - 7:00PM	May session
MGS 8730	Project Management	M/W	7:40PM - 10:25PM	Location TBD

The Department of Managerial Sciences also offers opportunities for Study Abroad. In the May session, students may learn about the impact of culture, politics and other factors in the application of management theories in Greece and Turkey. Later in the summer, students are given the chance to explore the changes in economic and management practices in Russia.

In addition, undergraduate level classes are offered in Business Analysis, Business Intelligence, Compensation, Human Resource Selection, Negotiation and Organizational Communication.

Beebe Students and Alumni Spotlight

Pat Bowen

Congratulations to Pat Bowen, CEO Chagents, on becoming an Executive Career Coach!

Sonali Das

Congratulations to Sonali on her recent promotion to Employee Relations Manager at Euro RSCG 4D Impact, a marketing and promotions company.

Andres Salcedo

Congratulations to Andres who now works for Liberty Mutual in Orlando.

John Shepard

Congratulations to John who accepted a position with Culpepper and Associates! He is also getting ready to take his certification exams, and his wife is expecting their first child in July!

Jennifer Melissa Smith

Congratulations to Jennifer who will be getting married in August 2007!



John Carson

Congratulations to John who graduated in December 2006. He is currently employed by Herschend Family Entertainment.



Tracy Hall

Congratulations to Tracy, the previous editor of the Beebe Newsletter, who accepted a Compensation Analyst position with Cox Enterprises.



Tameika Scott

Congratulations to Tameika who was promoted to Market Human Resources Consultant for Corporate Express!

Newly Certified Beebe Graduates!

Congratulations to Courtney Masters, Matt Hall, Lauren Styron, Angie Miller, and Mary Beth Davis! Courtney, Matt and Lauren recently passed their PHR certifications. Angie and Mary Beth, on the other hand, passed their SPHR certification.

From left: Courtney Masters, Matt Hall, Lauren Styron and Angie Miller.



Beebe Faculty Spotlight



Dr. Kay Bunch

Dr. Bunch was among the few chosen to speak at the inaugural conference of the Georgia College & University Professional Association for Human Resources on February 9, 2007. She presented her paper: Debunking Employment Law Myths.



Dr. Craig Hill and Dr. Bruce Kaufman

Dr. Hill and Dr. Kaufman were invited as a visiting professors in Poznań University of Economics in Poland. Stay tuned for updates on their teaching experiences in the next newsletter!

Beebe Baby!



Ethan Scott Webber was born January 1, 2007 to Valerie Webber, who started her MBA — HRM concentration program last semester. She took time off to take care of little Ethan early in the semester. Congratulations Valerie!

We want to hear from you!

Current and previous editions of the Beebe Newsletter are available online at www.robinson.gsu.edu/beebe/newsletter. If you have any comments, suggestions, submissions, or for more information about our programs, please email the Faculty Advisor at mgtlnm@langate.gsu.edu, visit the Beebe Institute website at robinson.gsu.edu/beebe/index.html, or write to:

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