



J. Mack Robinson College of Business  
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY



# W. T. BEEBE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2009

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.

## Executive Spotlight: An Interview with Richard Read

By: Tricia Laws



Richard Read, a member of Georgia State University's HR Executive Roundtable and Vice President of HR with Neenah Paper and Tricia Laws, a Beebe graduate student and Vice President of SHRM at Georgia State, sat down together to explore the viewpoints of an HR veteran. Thank you to Mr. Read for granting the interview.

The GSU Human Resources Executive Roundtable is a membership group of top Human Resource executives from major Atlanta companies. The overriding purpose of the Roundtable is to enhance the effectiveness of members in achieving their organizational goals. If you are a qualified HR executive interesting in joining please contact Dr. Deborah Butler at 404-413-7530 or [dbutler@gsu.edu](mailto:dbutler@gsu.edu)

### 1) What is your educational background and your current position with Neenah Paper?

- Bachelor's Degree from Univ. of Florida in German Studies
- Master's Degree from Duke University in Business Administration
- Currently, Vice President of Human Resources with Neenah Paper Inc, a company with approximately 2,000 employees worldwide with \$800 million in sales annually

Neenah Paper is a leading global manufacturer of premium, performance-based papers and specialty products used in a variety of applications including filtration, printing and writing, and component materials for many specialized industrial and consumer applications. Products are marketed under well-known brands such as CLASSIC(R), ENVIRONMENT(R), and STARWHITE (R). Based in Alpharetta, Georgia, the company has paper manufacturing operations in the United States and Germany and approximately 500,000 acres of timberlands in Nova Scotia, Canada.

**2) How did you become interested in HR?**

I was studying German and had a keen interest in business, so I started looking at international business schools. While reading about Marketing, Finance, Accounting, etc., I came across a section on Organizational Behavior. That was it! I learned that the breadth of HR also included employee training, leadership development, compensation practices, benefits management, employee relations, labor relations, labor laws and other legal exposure, and in the business world, understanding of business practices and systems. I loved the variety. It was the right mix for me. I decided to go to business school with a specific study emphasis on HR.

**3) What are your long term professional goals?**

I came into the field with a strong desire to lead HR for an organization. At this point in my career, it's about the success of the organization. Putting together all the right HR systems as noted above to create organizational alignment across the critical business objectives. I love working through the challenges and opportunities.

**4) What are some of the recent trends you see in HR?**

- Defining people as "talent" and "human capital" with an approach to how an organization best utilizes this most critical resource
- Increasing access to business metrics and data on the workforce
- Focus on wellness, with uncertainty around the national healthcare environment.

**5) What do you think the greatest HR challenges are today? Where do you think the profession is heading?**

- The greatest challenge of the moment is how to work through incredible uncertainty in our economic environment, with its impact on employee focus and efforts
- At the same time, we see increased complexity in the mix of opinions, attitudes and cross-generational expectations of the workplace
- Finally, how do we deal with low base salary growth, an increasing shift to variable pay, and significant economic pressures on individual employees

I do believe that most organizational leaders recognize the critical nature of the HR function and the need to have professional knowledge and HR expertise working through and giving advice on the complexities discussed above.

For example, at Neenah Paper over the past 4 years, we have sold two pulp mills in Canada, purchased a German filtration paper company, acquired a U.S. paper company, and closed 3 paper manufacturing and converting facilities in the U.S. Each of these transactions involved substantial work around employee communications, pensions and other benefit plans, compensation plans, severance plans, labor and other employee contracts, etc. HR had to be part of the transition process right from the beginning.

**6) Do you see HR as a Strategic Partner?**

Absolutely. The key though is for the other company leaders, and employees, to see HR as a strategic partner in the organization.

**7) How do you keep up with the constantly changing field of HR?**

Keeping in touch with other HR leaders is critical. I value the opportunities provided by top organizations like the Georgia State HR Executive Roundtable, the Society for Human Resource Management, and WorldatWork. Website information, monthly publications, and access to research are excellent.

**8) What do you think the impact of President Elect Obama's new administration will be for the field of HR?**

A very timely question - we will watch and be part of the debate about:

U.S. healthcare – our company alone spends well over \$10 million annually on medical care for its U.S. employees and their dependents.

Labor law – while all of Neenah Paper's current U.S. manufacturing sites in Wisconsin, Michigan, and California are unionized, I am very concerned with the recently proposed legislation known as the Employee Free Choice Act, restricting an employees' opportunity for a private union election process.

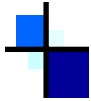
I would expect discussion around many other critical employee and employer topics during the Obama administration.

For members of the HR community who have international responsibility, the immediate response I have received from our international partners about our recent election has been positive and hopeful. Can a stronger environment of goodwill translate into new business opportunities or enhanced global mobility?

**9) What advice would you give students and young professionals interested in an HR career?**

Well, there's always the simple acknowledgment that you should key your studies on a few fundamentals like motivational theory, management and leadership practices, intermediate math and statistics (for those unavoidable and very important discussions on compensation, health care costs, and HR metrics), and the ever changing legal environment.

However, my best advice is to keep your long-term perspective. It seems that no matter what job or career we end up in, that four letter word always seems to creep in around our other day-to-day activities: w-o-r-k. People in all organizations get stressed. Budgets are tight. Staff support is thin. Economic times go up and down. Either we are worried about laying people off or we're worried about how to recruit and retain the right employees in a tight labor market. Someone in upper management is almost always dissatisfied with something, and there is HR, often standing in the middle, helping to patch things up and support business leaders and managers to keep the organization moving forward. That's where the long-term perspective comes in. As HR professionals, we are important, even critical to the organization. We help keep a proper focus on the individual. We work with them and through them. We guide them and encourage them. We listen to them and coach them. We seek metrics that add insight. We recommend and conduct training that adds value. We develop efficient policies and practices that free up business leaders to focus on the business. Yes, we in HR do indeed make a positive difference.



## Focus on Internships: Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Our organization would like to offer a paid internship to HR students at Georgia State. How do we set this up?**

All you need is a description of the internship and contact information. Contact Lucy McClurg at [lmclurg@gsu.edu](mailto:lmclurg@gsu.edu) or call 404-413-7539. Lucy will post the notice and pass the internship description along to our HR students and student chapter SHRM members.

### **2. Who selects the students for our internship?**

You may have applications sent directly to you and your organization may handle the final selection. If you prefer, applications may be sent to the Beebe Institute for forwarding to you. Some organizations ask Beebe faculty members to screen the resumes received and forward the best ones to the company. The choice is yours.

### **3. What if our internship is unpaid? Will the students get academic credit?**

Many students (especially those on international study arrangements) are quite willing and eager to obtain an unpaid internship with no academic credit. If you want students to get academic credit, however, the process is a bit more complex. At present we are not allowed by our accrediting agencies to give academic credit for work experience alone, so unpaid internships must be academically challenging and offered through other courses under supervision of a faculty member. Lucy McClurg will work with you to find the best course and instructor-supervisor to manage the academic part of the internship. You, of course, will manage the on-site work. Students will be required to submit academic work related to the content of the internship to satisfy the scholarship requirements for course credit.

You may want to sponsor a project for our Field Research class. This three-hour credit class brings together students, advisors, and sponsors and gives students the opportunity to complete unpaid consulting for local organizations. The class begins in mid-August of 2009 and continues through early December 2009 and meets on Mondays at 4:30. It is not necessary for students and sponsors to meet together each week. Lucy McClurg can assist you in offering your project for the class. We are also always looking for advisors or executives-in-residence for the class, so let Lucy know if you would like to take part.

### **4. We don't have enough work to offer an internship and don't want to wait until August of next year for the Field Research class, but we have a couple of projects that students might be interested in doing. How do we handle that?**

Contact Lucy McClurg and she will pass along your projects to other instructors and students. Some instructors allow students the option of performing a "real world" project as part of the requirements of an HR class. This is how many students get HR experience if they cannot work in an HR job. These hands-on projects are very popular with students.

### **5. I'd like to make a donation to the W. T. Beebe Institute. How do I do that?**

Send donations to GSU Foundation, and specify your donation is for the benefit of the W. T. Beebe Institute of Personnel and Employment Relations, Box 4014, Atlanta, Georgia 30302-4014.



## SHRM - GEARING UP FOR THE SPRING



### Upcoming February Meeting

Dr. Lucy McClurg and Dr. Kay Bunch will share with SHRM career tips and information on the Master of Science in Human Resource Management program here at Georgia State University's Robinson College of Business.

### September Meeting

The SHRM at GSU was recognized as a Merit Award recipient at the September Meeting of the SHRM Georgia State Council. Audrey Tillman, Executive Vice President, Corporate Services for Aflac Incorporated, also spoke at this meeting.

Below is a photo of the SHRM at GSU chapter officers (from left to right: Jennifer Mayfield – President, Asia Jones - Chapter Communications VP, Kay Bunch, Faculty Advisor; Amanda Press – Secretary/Treasurer, Phoenix Hill – Member Development VP, Tricia Laws, Graduate/Alumni Relations VP).



### November Meeting

Monica Anderton, former President of SHRM Atlanta, and Human Resources officer at Silverton Bank, shared her personal insights on the field of Human Resources to a record number of student attendees.

For more information about SHRM at Georgia State University or how to join please visit their website at:

[www.gsu.edu/~wwwshr](http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwshr)



## IN FOCUS: STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to **Darren Harrell** who accepted the position of HR Manager for Spelman College.



Darren Harrell

**Angela Miller** was recently promoted to running the HR department at InnoWare. Congratulations!

**Tammy Woodard** is the SE Area HR Manager at KPMG. Congratulations on your continued success with the company.

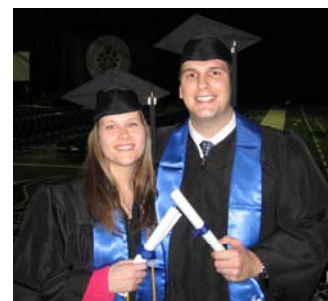
**Jennifer Husson** is currently the Compensation and Reporting Analyst at National Vision, Inc. Congratulations on your success!

**Tony Doug** recently took an internship with Euro RSCG Impact with Sonali Das. Congratulations!

**Eric Leaf** is currently working as the Global HRM for the IT function of General Electric!

**Cathy Katuala** was recently offered a Human Resource position at the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C. Congratulations!

**Ashley Dunn** and her husband **Stephen Dunn** graduated Fall 2008. Thanks to the help of Sonali Das, Graduate of GSU, Ashley took a position as Assistant Field Manager for Euro RSCG 4D Impact. Stephen graduated with a Finance degree and took a position as a budget analyst for Mid-South Roofing Systems. Congratulations!



Ashley and Stephen Dunn

Congratulations to **Jennifer Vogel**, **Jeremy Bennett**, and **Renee Proano** on passing the PHR exam!!

*We would like to hear from you! If you have recently taken a job promotion, gotten married, had a child, graduated, passed the HR exam, or just have any interesting, fun, or exciting news let us know! Please e-mail the Beebe Institute your exciting information and include a picture of the event or yourself!*

[beebenewsletter@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:beebenewsletter@langate.gsu.edu)



## BEEBE FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS & RECOGNITION



Pictured from Left to Right: Dr. H.J. Park, Dr. Kay Bunch, and Bruce Kaufman

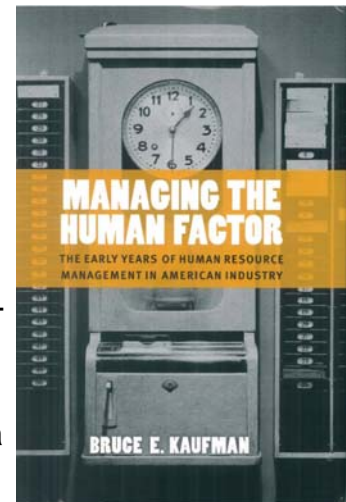
Within the past few months our faculty members have been very busy doing research, writing and publishing papers and books, and receiving awards for their excellence in Human Resources Management.

Recently *Dr. H.J. Park* won the SAGE Best Paper Award in 2007 for her work entitled "Examining the Link Between Diversity and Firm Performance: The Effects of Diversity Reputation and Leader Racial Diversity". This paper was written with Quinetta Roberson and can be found in *Group and Organization Management* Vol 32, Issue 5, 2007.

*Dr. Bruce Kaufman* recently wrote a book pictured to the

right. The book is entitled *Managing the Human Factor: The Early Years of Human Resource Management in American Industry*. Also, Kaufman had an extra good year as he was recently chosen by the Labor and Employment Relations Association as an Inaugural Fellow in the newly created Hall of Fame as well as receiving the 2008 AYS Teaching Award.

On October 16, Boss's Day, *Dr. Kay Bunch* spoke at the Atlanta chapter of Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA). Her topic was "What makes a good boss." Dr. Bunch presented her paper, "The Training Profession and Ineffective Diversity Training," at the Southern Management Association Annual Meeting on November 6. In addition, *Lucy McClurg* and Kay Bunch made presentations on compensation and "Promoting Workplace Civility" respectively at the 18th Annual SHRM-Atlanta Conference on October 7.





## IN FOCUS: FIELD RESEARCH

*What an exciting opportunity that we don't want you to miss! So go ahead, take a look.*

Every two years the Robinson College of Business offers a Field Research class. This class is unlike any other in that you, as a student, get to work with amazing companies and get real world experience before you even hit the real world! For companies the opportunity is a great way to meet eager and brilliant students who are interested in your company!

### ***Here are a few quotes from former students:***

"I loved this class - it was great to be able to use the skills I learned during the Master's program in a real life situation. Plus, employers are really impressed to hear about this project for those students who will be job hunting after graduation!" - Melissa Boggs

"Not only did we gain insight into some of the HR issues facing companies today, but we also were challenged with building working relationships with our clients and learning how to interact with them."  
- Dixon Stapleton

"My experience in Field Research was directly applicable to my work in Human Resources."  
- Erin Thomas

### ***Previous companies include:***

Home Depot

Herschend Family Entertainment

Rock-Tenn

Genuine Parts Corporation

### ***How to get involved:***

Students: Undergraduates look for MGT4395 and Graduate students look for MGS 8395 for the Fall 2009 semester.

Sponsors and/or Companies: Contact Lucy McClurg ([mgtlnm@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:mgtlnm@langate.gsu.edu)) to get further information on how you can get involved!





## PHR EXAM DATES

Window	Deadline	Late Deadline
May 1– June 30	March 13 2009	April 17 2009
December 1– January 31 2010	October 9 2009	November 13 2009

For more information on the PHR dates and fees please visit the HRCI website at:  
<http://www.hrci.org/certification/ov/> or contact the Beebe Institute!

## Congratulations to our 2008 Fall Graduates!




Sandra Page

### MS in HR

*Dixon Stapleton*  
*Sandra Page*



Dixon Stapleton

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### We want to hear from you!

Current and previous editions of the Beebe Newsletter are available online at [www.robinson.gsu.edu/beebe/newsletter](http://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](mailto:mgtlnm@langate.gsu.edu), visit the Beebe Institute website at [robinson.gsu.edu/beebe/index.html](http://robinson.gsu.edu/beebe/index.html), or write to:

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