



**April 2006**

Welcome to the twelfth edition of 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

The second executive in our series is **Mr. Bob Collins**, Vice President, Corporate Human Resources, Serologicals Corporation since August, 2001. He was formerly a partner at a large executive search firm, the President and COO of Vision 21 Inc., a self-employed consultant and has held many other roles. Bob is a member of the GSU Human Resource Roundtable and on the board of directors for SHRM Atlanta. This interview was conducted by Matt Hall, a Beebe graduate student.



Q: Today a great emphasis is being placed on HR as a strategic partner. Do you feel HR is a strategic partner?

A: The three pivotal positions in a company are the CEO, the CFO, and the Chief HR officer. The CEO is responsible for making the big decisions, the CFO makes sure the finances are in order, and the Chief HR Officer makes sure the people and talent are in place to execute the strategy. As the COO of Vision 21, Inc. I realized that a company's greatest opportunity to create strategic advantage is through its people.

Q: What are the greatest challenges for HR in the near future?

A: The greatest challenge is putting the right people in the right jobs. HR has to select the best employees, engage them, and then retain those with the highest potential. Another challenge is developing a Human Capital Strategy Plan, which involves leadership development and succession planning. HR has to ask itself, "Do we have the right talent?" Not just for the present but also for the future. If the CEO tells you a strategy, HR needs to know if the talent is in place to execute the strategy, and if not, what steps it will take to get the talent. Always think about the future and plan ahead.

Q: Do you have any advice for HR students and young HR professionals?

A: Work for a company that appreciates the contribution of HR and that is known for investing in its employees. Apply all that book learning in the business world and grow yourself professionally. Get involved with a cross-functional team, and better yet work in a different aspect of the business (e.g., sales, marketing, finance, operations, line management) for a short time. Don't ask yourself if you should take a risk, but when should I take that risk of stepping out of my professional comfort zone. This experience will build your business acumen, which is imperative to earning your right to be a strategic partner.

Q: HR is becoming increasingly more technical. Can you comment on that trend?

A: The infusion of technology is terrific because it liberates HR from the mundane. Employees and managers can now perform many of the transactional duties that HR professionals once performed. HR needs to get away from the transactional duties through technology or outsourcing, and focus on its strategic responsibilities.

## FOCUS ON FACULTY AND STUDENTS

In this section of the newsletter we recognize accomplishments made by both faculty, students and alumni.

Periodically the Beebe newsletter will highlight a faculty member of the Beebe Institute. In this issue, we feature Dr. Lucy McClurg. It is impossible to review her numerous accomplishments in a few paragraphs so we decided to focus on her remarkable teaching. There is no shortage of students praising her ability to connect and inspire as well as educate. The following are a few examples.



### Dr. Lucy McClurg

Dr. McClurg received her Ph.D in Industrial Relations from Georgia State University. She serves as Academic Advisor for the Beebe Institute MS/MBA program and teaches graduate and undergraduate HR courses.

When asked why she joined the program, [Mary Morton Bell](#) responded

*"I remember meeting Dr. McClurg at one of the open houses in Buckhead over a year ago. She spoke with me for such a long time about Georgia State's HR programs. She was so enthusiastic about Georgia State and the HR Master's; it confirmed my decision to apply. I went home and studied for the GRE that very night."*

[Joshua Hartley](#) recounted

*"My special memory of Lucy McClurg is her entire class. It isn't some fuzzy moment, but it is the way in which she teaches that has made her so memorable to me. She took the time to explain to us, 'This is what you need to know so this is what I'll teach you.' She has been my best teacher in my entire life for that reason. You take learning a lot more seriously and the teacher as well when she lets teaches things you will use in real life. I appreciate everything she has done for me."*

[Angela Miller](#) spoke about Dr. McClurg's guidance through the rough times.

*"What first comes to mind is Lucy's calm approach to everything. I remember the frantic phone calls and meetings that I had with Lucy where I was just overwhelmed and it felt like the earth was shattering around me. Lucy would always just smile and tell me I was doing a good job and not to worry about anything. These little meetings helped to calm me and helped to carry me through to graduation."*

John Carson commented on Dr. McClurg's unique teaching style.

*"With Dr. Lucy, learning and support does not end at the conclusion of the semester. She continues to take an interest in her students' degree program and career. That is one of the things that makes her so special."*

Alicia Zellweger remarked

*"Dr. McClurg is an amazing professor. I am where I am today because of her professionalism and charismatic personality. She helped me determine my career goals, which led me to getting a masters degree. Dr. McClurg has taught me many practical job skills and is always quick to answer any questions I pose. I appreciate her ongoing help and interest in her students."*

Matt Hall pointed to Dr. McClurg's sense of humor as a highlight of taking one of her classes.

*"Lucy says lots of funny stuff. In compensation she was teaching us a compensation model and she said, 'Typically people who learn this model pay thousands of dollars and attend weeks of training... I think we can do it in about 15 minutes.' She can simplify the most complicated concepts."*

Purva Shah remembers her experience with Dr. McClurg quite fondly.

*"Last year I had the opportunity of taking Lucy's Field Research class. We were concerned that we might disappoint our client. However, Lucy provided my team and me with a lot of support and encouragement. She always had an unbiased opinion. Her kind words and understanding helped us have a wonderful learning experience. I would like to thank her for being such a great professor!"*

Carrie Briggs exclaimed

*"Dr. McClurg is a wonderful professor. She facilitates a fun learning environment and is very down to earth. She also communicates to her students the true importance of HR professionals in the work place. Dr. McClurg really encourages students to do their best. She is one of the best professors I have ever had the pleasure of learning from."*



**Lucy we appreciate all that you have done for us!!**

### Recent Graduates

The following Beebe students will graduate in May 2006 after having successfully completed their Masters or Bachelors degree program in Managerial Science with concentrations in Human Resource Management.

Purva Basu

Wendy Bojnowski

Matt Hall

Shermarke Howard

Lisa Johnson

Deidra Maloyed

Angela Miller

Andrea Myers

Heena Patel

Alicia Zellweger

Good going! We will miss you!



### Recent Promotions

Former Beebe alum from the class of 1980, **William P. Steinhaus**, an attorney at Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C., was just named to the position of Managing Shareholder of the firm's Atlanta office.

### PHR Exam

**Moon Kim** has passed the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification exam.

**Annual Honors Day Celebration 2006**

The ceremony was held on March 29<sup>th</sup> at the Rialto Performance Center. More than 300 attendees enjoyed award presentations and a speech by Robinson alumnus David Alexander, president of Soliant Health. Our own Lisa Johnson, a Masters level student in Human Resources, was invited to speak at the ceremony. Lisa was the winner of the William P. Key Scholarship established in honor of the late Atlanta human resource professional, Georgia State University graduate, and Executive in Residence at the Beebe Institute.



**Lisa Johnson - Winner of the William Key Scholarship Award.** Pictured with her husband Aaron Johnson.



**Carlton Burroughs, Winner of the AEPA \$1,000 scholarship**—Pictured with Mike Dowell, president of Atlanta Engineering Personnel Association, Sonja Winburn and Linda Tomsett with AEPA



**Jabari Clark, Winner of the Michael Jay Jedel Award**—Pictured with Todd J. Maurer, Professor and Chair, Department of Managerial Sciences.



**John Carson, Winner of the William Rutherford Award (Right)**—Pictured with Todd J. Maurer, Professor and Chair, Department of Managerial Sciences

**Congratulations to all the Beebe Institute students who were honored!**

## GSU SHRM Student Chapter

### Sweet Endings

As the school year comes to a close, GSU SHRM has many hard-working individuals to thank for this year's success.



**Angela Miller**  
**President, 2005-2006**

Thanks to Angie for all of her hard work coordinating meetings, speakers, newsletters and much more.



**Matt Hall**  
**Vice President, 2005-2006**

Thanks to Matt for all his enthusiasm and contributions to meetings and membership.



**Dr. Kay Bunch**  
**Faculty Sponsor**

Thanks to Dr. Bunch for her dedication in doing whatever it takes to make SHRM GSU a success.

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**Darlene King** - Our February speaker, Darlene King, HR Director from Duni Corporation, gave a great speech on the Human Resource aspects of Corporate Mergers.

**John Carson** - Our March speaker, John Carson, VP of HR at Herschend Family Entertainment. John has given his time to speak to SHRM GSU before, and this year he spoke on Personnel vs. HR: Changing Perceptions- How HR Professional can work effectively with Line Managers.

In addition, we would also like to extend our gratitude again to all of the individuals who gave their time to speak at a SHRM GSU meeting this year!

### New Beginnings

In May the 2006-2007 SHRM GSU President and Vice President will take office.



**Tracy Hall**  
**2006-2007 President**

Tracy is originally from Texas and attended Rice University as an undergraduate. She moved to Atlanta with an inner-city teaching program, but her latest work has been with a sales and marketing consulting firm in Midtown. Tracy is a graduate student in the M.S. Managerial Sciences-HR program with plans to graduate in May 2007.



**Kevyn Fitzgerald**  
**2006-2007 Vice President**

Kevyn attends GSU as an undergraduate majoring in Managerial Sciences and expects to graduate in May 2007. She is a member of the Alpha Xi Delta sorority and has served with many different organizations. Professionally, Kevyn has experience as a Human Resources Assistant with an apartment management company.

We are always looking for more officers and committee chairs! Please contact [Tracy Hall](#) or [Kevyn Fitzgerald](#) for more details.

## FOCUS ON RESEARCH

Each issue features research that is especially relevant to HR practitioners. In this issue we feature Professor Kay Bunch's research on gender stereotypes and leadership.

### Gender Stereotyping in Leadership

Recent reports showing women hold 51% of management and professional positions in the United States have prompted some to proclaim that the glass ceiling has been shattered. However, optimism may be premature. About 95% of senior managers are men while most women remain in lower levels concentrated in areas that rarely lead to executive positions. Moreover, the rate of advancement for women has been stagnant over the past two decades. In the private sector, numbers are especially disappointing with only 33% of management positions held by women.

It is well known that gender stereotyping influences perceptions of women and remains entrenched in the workplace. Biological sex is the most distinctive characteristic in society. Beliefs and expectations about males and females are remarkably consistent across culture, age, race, education, and social-economic levels and become the basis for gender stereotypes. Someone is labeled female when the person's attributes sufficiently match the attributes of the perceiver's female stereotype. Gender stereotypes develop early in childhood, are accessed frequently, and are ingrained by adulthood. The stereotypical differences between men and women usually are described in terms of masculinity and femininity; labels often viewed antithetical. Some traits associated with women such as nurturance, sensitivity, and compassion are valued in many contexts but linked with lower status and power in the workplace.

For many years, some researchers have asserted that discrimination against women is due to the disproportionate representation of women in management positions. When few women occupy a male occupation such as management, they face considerable resistance because the salience of their gender triggers gender-role stereotyping. However, despite a substantial increase in the percentage of women holding managerial position, management is still conceptualized in masculine terms, especially among males. Indeed, gender-role stereotyping may intensify as women climb the corporate ladder.

Studies over the last 30 years show that beliefs about the desirable characteristics of leaders have changed little. Men and women tend to associate effective leadership with men. Surveys show a widespread preference for male leadership, but the underlying causes for this preference are complex. The slow promotion rate of women perpetuates bias. Rational bias theory suggests that "preference norms" encourage discrimination against female managers. Even if individuals hold no gender-based preferences, they may reject female leadership if that bias leads to greater success and acceptance. Men may be especially concerned about the career risks female managers pose.

Another consequence of slow advancement is the phenomenon known as queen bee syndrome. With few opportunities, women may see other women as threats. This perceived fight for survival may manifest itself in several ways. When a society or an organization devalues an individual's group, there may be an effort to preserve one's positive image by rejecting the group. Eager to avert male hostility and preserve their positions, some women favor their male subordinates. There is evidence that women may devalue female traits more than men and rate women more harshly. Moreover, contrary to expectations, female hostility among women may be more prevalent among young women. Women are criticized for their unwillingness to share credit for success, but a recent study suggests that women are more likely to get credit for successful outcomes if they work alone.

Suggestions for eradicating the negative consequences of stereotyping focus on improving gender ratios to reduce the salience of gender, implementing organizational interventions, and advising women on the appropriate behavior. Still, based on the current rate of progress, some researchers predict it might take a century before women reach parity with men. Dr. Bunch is exploring how gender stereotyping contributes to the widespread preference for male leadership despite a generation raised since the launch of the modern women's movement, the passage of key equal employment opportunity legislation,

women's acquisition of the requisite education and experience, and numerous organizational practices related to affirmative action and diversity.

In this research, Dr. Bunch will employ qualitative methodology to better understand the power and nuance of gender stereotyping. Traditional research techniques such as self-report instruments can mask biased beliefs because respondents are reluctant to admit to socially unacceptable opinions. Another problem is that attitudinal measures may not assess subconscious assumptions. Discrimination often is context specific. Individuals may support female managers in theory but not in practice. It is also possible that people are not antifemale but promale.

To reduce the impact of response errors, Dr. Bunch asked people to describe their best and worst managers. Preliminary results suggest that subordinates do hold male and female managers to different standards. The "best" male managers exhibit stereotypically masculine traits and behavior; the traits and behaviors associated with stereotypical leaders. The "best" female managers exhibit stereotypically feminine traits.

The results of this research should provide new understanding of why few women advance to senior management levels and lead to more effective policies and programs.

If you would like further information regarding this research contact Professor Bunch via email at [kbunch@gsu.edu](mailto:kbunch@gsu.edu).



## **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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