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Topeka SHRM

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF HR PROFESSIONALS AND FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHRM'S VISION.

Leadership Quote of the Quarter: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." —Maya Angelou



From the President

The holidays are always a time when people reflect and appreciate those they have around them both personally and professionally. While everyone is busy with year end processes, maybe open enrollment or even year end reviews, I encourage you to take time and thank those around you who have had an impact on your life this year.

I would like to personally thank our chapter members, our board of directors, sponsors, speakers and guests for making 2015 such a successful year. I want to extend a special thank you to those who volunteer for our board, commit-

tee support, job shadow experiences and who take an active role in making our chapter what it is today. I look forward to working with a great team of professionals for another year. You all make this volunteer opportunity extremely rewarding and I greatly appreciate your dedication to juggle work demands while putting in the time to make our chapter what it is today and what it will continue to become. As a member of the chapter, please understand that we rely heavily upon your participation, candid feedback and continued dedication to moving HR profession forward. Thank you for being a member of our chapter and

don't stop providing us your feedback, great ideas and get involved when and where you can.

Thank you for a great 2015 and I look forward to another challenging and rewarding 2016.

Please have a blessed and joyful holiday season.

Brenna Mannell,

SPHR, SHRM-SCP
2015 SHRM—Topeka Chapter President



2015 Board of Directors

President: Brenna Mannell, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
President-Elect: (vacant)
Past President: Pam Pierce, PHR, SHRM-CP
Programs & Training Director: Holly Perkins, JD
Programs & Training Director-Elect: (vacant)
Membership Director: Ashley Esquibel, PHR, SHRM-CP

Membership Director-Elect: Debra Payne
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Finance Director-Elect: Erin Brown
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Workforce Readiness – Annual Clothing Drive

When is the last time you took inventory of what's in your closet? Do you have gently used professional clothing that you could donate? A great excuse to get in some shopping! *At our next meeting, we are asking members and guests to please bring your gently used professional clothing for donation to those in need.*

Let's Help will be the recipient of our chapter's this year's clothing drive. This is a part of Topeka SHRM's Workforce Readiness commitment to the community.



Donation Drive

Think back to when you were just a kid and it was that time of year when it was cold, snowy, school was out and you couldn't wait to open your presents! Unfortunately, not every child has that experience. We would like to ask members and guests to please bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to Toys for Tots to the December Chapter Meeting. ***All members and guests that donate will not be required to pay the monthly meeting fee.***

This is a part of Topeka SHRM's commitment to the community.

UPCOMING MEETING DATE:

Thurs., Dec. 17

Meeting Topic: Member Appreciation & Change of Board of Directors

Time: 11:30am—1:00pm

Location: Capitol Plaza Hotel

Cost: Free if you bring a new, unwrapped toy (at least \$10 in value) to donate to Toys for Tots

Register today!

www.topeka.shrm.org

DID YOU KNOW?

- For 2016, annual limits and maximums for 401(k) and similar defined contribution retirement plans and for defined benefit pension plans will stay largely unchanged. That's because in most cases the slight increase in the cost-of-living index did not meet the statutory thresholds that trigger rate adjustments, the IRS announced on October 21, 2015.
- You can weaken the employment-at-will status if the employer uses "probationary period" instead of "introductory period" for newly hired employees. Courts have determined that the use of probationary period may provide employees who have successfully completed this period with additional employment rights. For definitive guidance on the use of the term "probationary period" please consult with legal counsel.
- Remember, for I-9 verification you must see the original document; not a photocopy. Therefore, if you hire employees remotely (i.e. they work from home) you may designate an authorized representative to fill out Forms I-9 on behalf of your company. For example, you may hire a notary public or staffing agency located where your new hire lives to act as an authorized representative of you. Please note, you are still liable for any violations in connection with the form or the verification process so it is good practice to ensure your authorized representative has been trained on how to complete the Form I-9.

If you use a notary public, they must perform the same required actions as you therefore when acting as an authorized representative, the notary public should not provide a notary seal on the Form I-9.

SHRM Resources for New Overtime Rule*

- Article: ["To-Do List in Response to Proposed Overtime Rule"](#)
- Webcast: [Changes to the Department of Labor's Overtime Rule](#) (On Demand, watch anytime)
After much delay, the Department of Labor (DOL) has issued proposed changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime regulations. This program provides up-to-the-minute insight into the proposed changes.
- Article: ["SHRM—Proposed Changes to Overtime Regulations Will Do More Harm than Good"](#)
- [Fair Labor Standards Act Overtime Regulations](#)

* *The resources above are available to only SHRM National members.*





Board of Directors

Thank You Volunteers!

We asked for volunteers and our SHRM-Topeka members responded. As a result, we've been able to fill all of our outstanding 2016 open board positions.

Thank you to all members who have volunteered. We look forward to introducing our 2016 board soon!

Already certified?

The SHRM Certification Pathway is Closing



If you are a current holder of an HR generalist certification* in good standing and you obtained your certification by January 31, 2015, you are eligible for SHRM's new certification – at no cost – by completing the online tutorial pathway described in the steps below by December 31, 2015.

1. Visit shrmcertification.org/pathway.
2. Create an account and select "Online Tutorial Pathway."
3. Affirm that you hold a valid HR credential.
4. Enter current certification details: certification name, issue date and expiration date.
5. Agree to abide by the SHRM Code of Ethics.
6. Access and complete the Online Tutorial via the link sent to your e-mail.

Receive your SHRM credential once you complete the pathway process, and begin a three-year recertification cycle. For up-to-date details on recertification, visit shrmcertification.org/recertification.



One of the best (and most visible) ways to share your company with our members is by becoming a sponsor. By sponsoring a meeting or becoming one of our website sponsors, you will help numerous local HR professionals learn about the product(s) and/or services your company provides in just minutes! Please take a moment to review our various sponsorship opportunities:

- Website Sponsor—\$350
Sponsors will be included in the rotating banner ad on the front page of our website for 12 months. Also, there will be a sub-page that will provide more detailed information about your company/product. Additionally, we can link directly to your website
- Meeting Sponsor—\$350
 - ◇ Sponsors will be five minutes during one of our monthly meetings to speak directly to our members
 - ◇ While at the meeting, sponsors will be able to network with members before and after the meeting
 - ◇ Your company logo will be displayed on the calendar of events section of our website

Following Paris Attacks: How to Balance Workplace Respect for Muslims with Vigilance

By Dana Wilkie

See more at: <http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/diversity/articles/pages/anti-muslim-sentiment.aspx>



Typically, experts say, terrorist-inspired attacks by Muslim extremists—like the recent bombings and shootings in Paris—incite some employees to question, distrust, harass and retaliate against Muslim co-workers in general. It’s an employer’s job to quash that sort of discriminatory behavior.

Yet employers can find themselves in a bind—encouraged on the one hand to never paint Muslims with a broad brush, while admonished on the other to be on the lookout for “suspicious” behavior. Reconciling those two directives can be tricky, especially since it can be human nature for people to be wary of those who “appear” like some of the terrorists implicated in the Paris attacks that killed more than 130 people and injured hundreds more, experts say.

“Whenever something like this happens in the world, we see an increase in taunting and harassment of Muslims in the workplace, or people who are perceived as Muslims,” said Arsalan Bukhari, executive director of the Washington state chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR).

But, he said, “if someone is talking about support for criminal activity, you should have a conversation with them. If they show interest in a [terrorist] group, I think a call to law enforcement is warranted. Base that call squarely on actual behavior, on things that were said, not on a person’s religious or ethnic background.”

How should a manager or HR professional respond if they hear an employee sympathize with terrorists or their attacks, or see a worker display other suspicious behavior? Is the manager obliged to comply with the recommendation to “say something” to authorities? And how does a manager do that without inviting a discrimination lawsuit? “These issues are very touchy,” said Hope Eastman, senior partner and employment lawyer at Paley Rothman LLC in Bethesda, Md.

ISIS, which claimed responsibility for the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris, is a terrorist group led mainly by extremist Sunni Muslims from Iraq and Syria. Although it has been condemned by the mainstream Muslim community, ISIS claims religious, military and political authority over Muslims across the world. ISIS follows an extremist interpretation of the Koran and promotes violence, sexual slavery for women and a return to what it calls “pure Islam.”

Eastman noted that some of the Paris terrorists were French and Belgium nationals, and “you wouldn’t have caught them” simply by being on the lookout for young, Middle-Eastern men who fit the conventional profile of an ISIS terrorist.

“What’s suspicious behavior?” she asked. “You can’t define it but you know it when you see it? That’s pretty [inadequate]. What employers need is more guidance from people who are national security experts who look for suspicious behaviors.”

The share of the U.S. public identifying as Muslim was 0.9 percent in 2014, up from 0.4 percent in 2007, according to the Pew Research Center. In fact, of Americans who identify with a non-Christian religion, “growth has been especially great among Muslims and Hindus,” the Pew Research Center reports. Of the religious discrimination charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), about 20 percent come from Muslims, said James Ryan, an EEOC spokesman. That percentage has held steady for the past decade, he said, and is the highest for any specific religious category. The next closest were charges filed by Jewish complainants at 8.8 percent.

Contd.– “...How to Balance Respect for Muslims with Vigilance”

Ryan pointed out that many of the Muslim-filed claims allege that managers or coworkers insinuated that the complainant was a terrorist or terrorist sympathizer based on their Muslim religion, their national origin, or their Middle Eastern appearance.

For instance, in March 2012, AutoZone, Inc., a distributor and retailer of automobile parts, agreed to pay \$75,000 to settle an EEOC lawsuit accusing AutoZone of subjecting an employee who'd converted to the Sikh religion to harassment that included disparaging his religion, asking if he had joined al-Qaeda and asking if he was a terrorist. AutoZone, the EEOC alleged, failed to intervene when customers referred to the employee, who wore a turban, as “Bin Laden” and made terrorist jokes.

Robin Shea is a partner with North Carolina-based Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, LLP. She said it's critical if one observes suspicious activity to report it in a manner that focuses solely on actions and words. “If an employee observes what he or she regards as suspicious behavior... I would try to get as much specific, fact-based, detail as possible,” she said. “If the suspicions appear to be more than simple prejudice against individuals with Middle Eastern or Muslim backgrounds, I would recommend contacting law enforcement, reporting the observed behavior, and following their recommendations. If this alertness consists only of noticing that a co-worker appears to be Middle Eastern or is a Muslim, that's going to be a problem.”



Our chapter participated in the 2015 Business to Business Expo that took place at the Ramada Downtown on October 27 from 1-4pm. This event was organized by Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce. More than 100 vendors were in attendance to discuss and demonstrate their services, products and programs.

Admission was free and participants that visited every booth and completed a passport were eligible to win \$100 cash during two drawings at the event.



Pictured: SHRM-Topeka Board members Debra Payne, Membership Director-elect, and Ashley Esquibel, Membership Director.

GREAT HR MAKES GREAT ORGANIZATIONS

Memberships in SHRM +
SHRM - Topeka =
A Smart Investment



Leading People.
Leading Organizations.

SHRM
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Both national and local SHRM memberships are great ways to enhance your HR career. Join today!

National SHRM membership: <http://www.shrm.org/join>
SHRM-Topeka membership: <http://topeka.shrm.org/user/register>