



# GCRC Newsletter

*Strengthening Partnerships  
Between Government  
and Higher Education*

October 1, 1999

Government College Relations Council

## A message from the new President

*By Ed Arroyo*

Perhaps there is no higher honor given a human being than to be elected by one's peers to serve in a leadership role. Certainly, I want to thank you for giving me the honor of serving you as president of our great organization. This year will be the most important in my career—and for that high honor; I thank you very much.

Some of you will remember when I first presented myself to the members of the Steering Committee. I said that if you ever asked me to participate in anything, I would do my best to provide strong leadership. I said then, and believe fully today, that the work we do as recruiters and placement officers requires that we be fully aware of the importance of people, that we develop a clear vision for the future, that we do our level best to build cooperation in our communities and among one another, and that we be certain we know the stakes involved in the decision-making process. In the year ahead, I pledge to do my level best to deliver on that promise of strong leadership and promise that the initiatives we pursue will reflect the beliefs I put before you when we first met.

Time does not permit me to recite the abilities and accomplishments of our last two presidents, but I think you know them as well as I do. Judy Arcy is a woman of tested ability, sound judgment, and keen perception. **(We miss you.)** John Petrik exemplifies the highest ideals and standards of public service. Modest, painstaking, thorough and devoted to his assigned tasks, his reputation for ability and fairness extends far beyond the borders of this community. **(We thank you for a job well done.)**

The image of GCRC is that of a professional service organization. The main focus of our group is on matching the young professional who has an eye toward public service with the proper government

organization. Many of our government agencies continue to look for dedicated professionals through our network.

This will be a year of innovation, drive and production. We will, of course, follow the dictates of the operating plan. We will put additional emphasis on those provisions that call for professional development and that focus on important and emerging challenges to recruitment and placement. Plans for the 1999-2000 GCRC year are being developed and promise to be innovative. The ever-changing job climate provides a forum for these innovations.

We need to continue working hard to strengthen and enhance our vision. I want to develop a course of action that would help make the dream a reality for those who aspire to work in the federal government. Plan now to stay active with us as we meet these challenges and innovations.

The past year brought GCRC into the information age with our very own web page. Thanks to the efforts of Dan Walther at Concordia University, you can now access our organization on the Internet to find out what we are all about. Check out [gcrinfo.org](http://gcrinfo.org) today!

Finally, I want to encourage you, if you have not done so, to renew your GCRC membership for the 1999-2000 year. In addition to the great meetings, programs and lunches, our members set the example for our young clients to follow. The fine example we set is one of being honest, ethical and having quality standards. I am proud to be a member of GCRC.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at today's Fall Meeting. Also, mark your calendar now and plan to bring a colleague to share the GCRC story at the Winter Conference, Friday Dec. 3, tentatively scheduled at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

# Panel members answer question: What's new with EEO?

By Charles M. Olson

The May 7, 1999, general meeting of GCRC was held at the Metcalfe Federal Building, hosted by John Shaw of the General Services Administration. The topic was "What's New with EEO?" and featured a panel of representatives from the Cook County Department of Human Resources, the Cook County Commission on Human Rights, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

A panel presentation began the program, and Luis Martinez, Assistant to the Director of Human Resources (Cook County), moderated it. Members of the panel were:

- .. Claudette Giles, Equal Employment Officer (CC)
- .. Ellen McGury-Stone, Employee Assistance Coordinator (CC)
- .. Joanne Trapani, Investigator II (CC Commission on Human Rights)

A brief summary of each presentation follows.

*Claudette Giles'* department oversees all EEO functions, as well as discrimination cases. They investigate all charges brought to outside agencies. Among the issues are Civil Rights, ADA and the Age Employment Act; they also cover infractions dealing with Race, National Origin, Creed, etc.

Fifty percent of the claims brought to the department relate to National Origin, and many of these have to do with the cultural differences of employees coming from other countries where males have not had to deal with females in supervisory roles. "We do things differently here" is a simplification of the response often used to address these problems.

*Ellen McGury-Stone* and her department of eight staff members deals with counseling and referrals. They also provide training on the detection of problems and stress management seminars.

Because the work force within Cook County is extremely diverse—and large—her hard-working

staff must be extremely sensitive to the confidentiality issues surrounding the problems brought before them.

*Joanne Trapani* works with public and private sectors in issues dealing with human rights. They conduct training programs on issues such as sexual harassment, diversity training, and the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and the employee.

One of the specific areas with which her department deals is the entrance of females into traditionally male-dominated organizations (trades, protection industries, etc.). They lead awareness and training seminars, as well as investigating claims of impropriety, and after-care and follow-up.

The second half of the program was a PowerPoint presentation by *Joyce Peppers*, EEO Specialist with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Her presentation focused on the Model Work Environment (MWE) that is now in place within the FAA. The key points of the MWE are:

- .. to create and maintain a positive work environment;
- .. to encourage employees to develop to their full potential;
- .. to create a productive and hospitable work environment;
- .. to eliminate discrimination; and
- .. to mirror the nation's diversity.

The FAA states that no employee may be discriminated against on any issue that does not affect his/her ability to do the job. This covers race, creed, color, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, and political affiliation.

Managers, employees, FAA Headquarters, unions, and employee associations must all work together on the key points and non-discrimination statement to achieve the Model Work Environment.

The following news items were excerpted from recent issues of *FEDmanager*, a free weekly email newsletter for federal executives, managers and supervisors. To subscribe, visit [www.fedmanager.com](http://www.fedmanager.com).

### **Organ donors may soon get more paid leave**

Congress appears close to passing a bill that would allow federal employees who are organ donors to get up to 30 days of paid leave. Currently, federal employees who donate organs may get only seven days of leave. Bone marrow donors, however, would not be included in this increase. They would continue to receive a maximum of seven days' leave. (Aug. 17 issue)

### **EEOC's website includes new federal sector regs**

The EEOC has amended its website to include expanded federal information. To view this new website, including the new federal sector EEOC regulations, which are effective Nov. 9, visit [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov). (July 27 issue)

### **New hire statistics from Merit Board**

Preliminary results from a new survey by the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) on job search experiences of recent federal hires reveal some interesting facts:

- Only 17% first learned about their jobs from the Internet – mainly due to lack of knowledge that jobs were posted, or lack of access
- Relatives and friends remain the primary source of information about jobs

## **Interview questions can focus resumes**

from *Tip of The Week* email  
June 2, 1999

When working with students on their resumes, ask them interview questions to get them in the mind set of what employers are looking for. For example, when looking at their work experience, ask them to tell you about a time when they were in a difficult situation and ask how they handled it. Or, have them talk about where they see themselves 5 years from now.

-Submitted by Ellen Brzeski, Elmhurst College  
To subscribe or submit your *Tip of the Week*, email [rangle@mail.millikin.edu](mailto:rangle@mail.millikin.edu).

- Most new hires thought the decision to hire was made in a reasonable time
- Many new hires reported difficulties in the hiring process, including lack of feedback from the hiring office, a too paper-intensive process, and overly specific KSAs for the job.

In 1997 (the last year figures were available), clerical positions made up 39 percent of all new hires, administrative comprised 11 percent, professions were 19 percent and the remaining 31 percent were technical and other positions. The complete MSPB report is due later this year. (July 20 issue)

### **OPM finds job openings weren't properly posted**

According to an OPM study, during 1997 approximately one-third of all job vacancies that should have been posted on the OPM's USAJOBS website were not. The survey, "Opportunity Lost: Openness in the Employment Process," indicated that many agencies did not fully understand their obligations with

regard to job postings. OPM stated that the lack of notice, in addition to being contrary to merit principles, denied both the general public and former government employees an opportunity to compete for many jobs. (July 20 issue)

### **Results of SES survey on leadership**

The results of a leadership survey of SES members by PricewaterhouseCoopers are in.

In responding to the issue of what qualities successful leaders in the future must have, the following topped the list:

- Adaptability and Flexibility - 72 percent
- Accountability - 69 percent
- Vision and Strategic Thinking - 64 percent
- Customer Orientation - 58 percent
- Commitment to Public Service - 55 percent

Surprisingly, technical expertise rated low, with only 23% considering it an essential attribute.

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## News briefs

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One problem area revealed by the survey is that the SES members surveyed doubted the government would be able to recruit and retain highly qualified managers under the present compensation system. Only 5 percent of those surveyed thought the government would offer compensation competitive with the private sector.

The most frequently mentioned recruitment difficulties were:

- .. Salary Constraints - 46 percent
- .. Inflexibility in the selection/hiring process - 31 percent
- .. Negative perceptions about working for the government - 31 percent
- .. Ineffective recruitment techniques - 21 percent
- .. Retention concerns were similar:
- .. Salary -49 percent
- .. Poor management - 21 percent
- .. Negative perception of being a government employee - 17 percent

(June 29 and July 20 issues)

## Calendar of Events

### 1999

Dec. 3: GCRC Winter Conference (with Midwest ACE), Topic: Hiring Trends, University of Illinois at Chicago (tentative location).

### 2000

Feb. 18: GCRC Winter Meeting, topic to be announced, DeVry Institute of Technology-DuPage Campus, Addison.

May 5: GCRC Spring Meeting, topic and location to be announced.

*To include an item in the calendar, call or write:*

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### Subjective employment interviews still OK

Federal managers will want to be aware of a recent U. S. Circuit Court case (Scott v. Parkview Memorial Hosp., 7th Cir., No. 98-3681, 4/23/99), which held that hiring new employees using subjective interviews, and a subjective interviewing process, does not contradict EEO laws. While the court recognized that subjective interviews could be "smokescreens for bias," it acknowledged that in many professions such as law, medicine, social work and the like they were necessary.

The court said that to be condemned, evidence would have to be presented that the subjective, or open-ended, process was used "to evade statutory anti-discrimination rules." (May 11 issue)

### Fed retirees outnumber resignees

The total of those retiring from federal service since fiscal 1993 have outnumbered the total of those resigning by a total of 48,300 to 45,700. These numbers reflect that a large numbers of employees are becoming eligible to retire, and they pose a significant recruitment challenge for federal agencies. They also help explain the contracting-out push of some agencies. (April 13 issue)

## Thank you

*By Bruce Bloom*

GCRC would like to thank John Shaw for hosting our May 1999 meeting in the Metcalf Building. Also a special thanks to Luz Haro, Personnel Management Specialist, for reserving the room and breakfast, and to James O. Johnson Jr., Audio/Visual Specialist, for taking care of the microphones and sound system.

A special thanks to Chuck Olson and Luis Martinez for their assistance with locating speakers for the meeting.

