



West Sound Human Resource Management Association

# West Sound Happenings

August 2007



**Mark these dates on your Calendar!**

September 12, 2007  
Job Evaluation & Compensation

October—No Meeting

November 16, 2007  
**Fall Conference**  
Tools for the HR Strategist

Please continue to check our website at [www.wshrma.org](http://www.wshrma.org) for updated information on the above events.



## THE ROLE OF WORK-BASED LEARNING DR. SUSAN LONGSTRETH

August 8, 2007

**\*\*Breakfast Meeting\*\***

Dr. Susan Longstreth, The Role of Work-Based Learning in Kitsap County High Schools at the Olympic College Bremer Student Center, Dining Library, 7:45 a.m.—9:30 a.m.

Topics will include the types of activities, benefits to businesses, benefits to students and current regulations.

Dr. Susan Longstreth has worked in career & technical education for over thirty years. She is currently the Director of Career & Technical Education for the Bremerton School District, working with the district's CTE programs at Bremerton High School and Renaissance High School. Previous work experience includes serving as the Executive Director of the WA State Council on Vocational Education and the Associate Dean of Continuing Education and Contracted Services for Front Range Community College in Ft. Collins, Colorado. She has a Master's Degree in Education and a Ph.D. in Vocational Education Administration from Colorado State University.

**Date:** August 8, 2007

**RSVP August 3, 2007**

**Time:** 7:45 a.m.—9:30 a.m.

**Place:** Olympic College  
Bremer Student Center  
Dining Library

Olympic College  
1600 Chester Ave  
Bremerton, 98337

**Price:** \$20.00 Member\*  
\$30.00 Non-Members\*

**RSVP:** [wshrma@artanderson.com](mailto:wshrma@artanderson.com)  
360-479-5600 x2265



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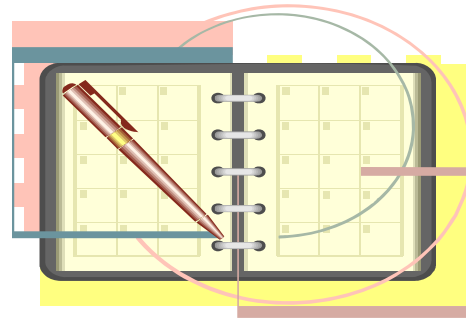
Are you interested in a SHRM Membership or transferring your membership to our chapter? Please contact Rachael Taylor, VP of Membership with any questions: 360-792-3336 or [rtaylor@kitsapsun.com](mailto:rtaylor@kitsapsun.com)



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## Job Bank

Please check out our website at [www.wshrma.org](http://www.wshrma.org) for current job openings. If you would like to advertise an open HR position in the WSHRMA job bank, please contact Mandy Clute at 360-478-2608 or e-mail to [mclute@kpshealthplans.com](mailto:mclute@kpshealthplans.com).



### SAVE THE DATES!

#### 10TH Annual Employment Law & Legislative Conference

**Thursday, March 20, 2008**  
**Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue, Washington**

Please join the SHRM Washington State Council for the 10th Annual Employment Law & Legislative Conference on Thursday, March 20, 2008 at the Meydenbauer Center. Employment and HR topics will include annual updates on employment law and State and Federal legislative activity, as well as many high quality breakout sessions and the Executive Track program. This event is co-sponsored by the global law firm of Dorsey & Whitney LLP.

#### HR Day on the Hill

**Thursday, February 7, 2008**  
**Olympia, Washington**

The Washington State Council (SHRM) is pleased to co-sponsor HR Day on the Hill with the Association for Washington Business (AWB). This day promises to give you a better understanding of how the political process works and knowledge of the key issues that will be addressed in the 2008 legislative session. This day also provides the opportunity to meet key legislators in a panel discussion on how they view critical HR issues.

Please visit the Washington State Council website for more information! <http://wastatecouncil.shrm.org>



## Diversity Corner

### What makes a good Diversity Executive?

Most organizations have discovered that business is impacted by diversity. In recognition of this larger role it is important to know what makes a good diversity executive beyond the typical job functions.

The diversity executive needs to be a good business executive; that characteristic is needed to make the connection from diversity initiative to business strategy to higher profit.

To align diversity initiatives in support of the overall business the Diversity Executive will need to be knowledgeable of all aspects of the business to gain respect and credibility.

A need to be skilled in multiple areas of professional effectiveness; such as possessing strong influencing skills because they often push diversity initiatives across a large organization and need to persuade others to support their efforts. Without support of partners within a business a diversity program is bound to fail.

Listening with an open mind is critical for diversity executives because they are exposed to a variety of viewpoints on key issues which may take them outside their comfort zone and into unfamiliar experiences or ideas they would not be naturally drawn to.

Now that the right person is in place; below are listed three diversity challenges that may present themselves currently or in the future that will need to be over come:

- The slowness of change. We live in such a fast paced environment we want and strive for instant or immediate results.
- Obstacles in the implementation of diversity programs across large organizations.
- Diversity fatigue, which occurs when employees become desensitized to the many diversity messages they receive through diversity training, recruitment programs and outreach projects.

Here is your challenge; taking each challenge at a time starting with the first send your possible solutions to [susan@pchsweb.org](mailto:susan@pchsweb.org) for further discussion and review in the next upcoming three diversity articles. What has worked and what hasn't; theory is great but what is practical application.

## Legislative Update

August 2007

### Washington's average annual wage, unemployment benefits rise

**OLYMPIA** – The average annual wage in Washington state increased by 5.4 percent, to \$42,584, from 2005 to 2006, according to the Employment Security Department.

Broken down by week, the average weekly wage went from \$776 in 2005 to \$818 in 2006. It is the largest spike since 1999, when the average wage rose by 8.4 percent.

“The wage growth is yet another sign of how strong our economy is, and the increase in unemployment benefits further reflects that strength,” said Karen Lee, commissioner of the Employment Security Department.

Among other things, the average wage is used to compute unemployment-insurance benefits for jobless workers. Because of the increased average wage last year, the minimum and maximum unemployment benefits will go up next month.

The minimum weekly unemployment benefit, calculated at 15 percent of the average weekly wage of \$818, will increase from \$116 to \$122 starting July 1. The maximum weekly benefit, calculated at 63 percent of the average weekly wage of \$818, will increase from \$496 to \$515.

The benefit amount had been capped at \$496 for most claimants since 2004. Since workers' actual benefits are based on their past earnings, only claimants receiving the lowest or highest benefit amounts will see an increase due to the new calculation. Currently, about 22 percent of claimants receive the maximum benefit amount and 5 percent receive the minimum.

In addition to unemployment benefits, the average annual wage is used in computing employers' unemployment taxes. Beginning Jan. 1, 2008, employers will pay unemployment taxes on the first \$34,000 paid to each employee, up from \$31,400 in 2007. In 2006, about 39 percent of employers in Washington had employees who were making more than \$31,400 per year.

The state average wage also is used by the Department of Labor & Industries to calculate workers' compensation benefits.



## **NHRMA CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**

Get ready to set sail in 2007 and register for the Northwest's next big Human Resource learning and networking event! The Northwest Human Resource Management Association invites you to connect with HR professionals from across the Northwest at its 2007 Conference at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue Washington from October 3rd to the 5th. This will be a conference you won't want to miss.

Sponsored by the Lake Washington Human Resources Association, this year's theme is **A Compass for Business: Navigational Tools for Delivering Results.**

They have scheduled world-class, top-rated speakers who will be addressing some of the current trends and emerging topics in Human Resources today. These include keynote speakers Bruce Tulgan, Mike Losey and Scott Pitasky. In addition to the keynote speakers, there are pre-conference workshops and breakout sessions. These sessions allow you to customize the agenda to your interests and are based on SHRM's HR Competency Toolkit. You'll gain tools that can build your personal skills and advance your professionalism, enabling you to deliver results and improve performance within your organization. Learn about the latest products and services by visiting our exhibitors and sponsors. Included will be companies whose products and services that may align with your organization's current or future needs. They are a wealth of information on the latest trends and solutions in the HR field.

**Don't miss the boat - register today at [www.nhrmaconference.org](http://www.nhrmaconference.org) Additional details and registration information available online at [www.nhrmaconference.org](http://www.nhrmaconference.org)**



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