

**Special points of interest:**

- Learn who won what awards at Asheville.
- Find out about next year's conference
- What is a Mudrak and why is he smiling?
- This was a hot ticket



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## A New Beginning at Asheville

As the 2004 Regional Conference at the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, North Carolina, wound down on May 26, the new Regional Board assembled on the podium to reflect briefly on one of the most successful conferences in recent years and look forward to next year's conference in Mobile, Alabama.

Whether it was the mountain air, the professionally delivered concurrent sessions, the hospitality and environment of the Grove Park Inn, the excellent keynote speakers, the sights of Asheville-- including the night out at the Biltmore Estates, or the central location, this year's conference was one for the record books. Just a few numbers to demonstrate: 217 members attended; there were 22 exhibitors and 10 sponsors; and a total of 340 people participated in the conference. All the states of member institutions were represented as well as CUPA-HR members from Delaware, Maryland, Nebraska, Utah, and Washington. Overall conference evaluations approached the nearly perfect mark of 5.

For more details on award winners and other events see the inside pages. A big thanks for this year's success goes to Host Committee Chair Mark Barber, Director of Human Resources, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute, Hudson, North Carolina.



Left to right: Yohna Cone, Chris McClendon, Donna Popovich, Maria Martinez, Jeff Mudrak, Ron Klepeyk, and Diane Baca; missing Alan Chesney

## Thanks to the Host Committeee

There are many factors that go into a successful conference, but among the most critical is a well organized and friendly host committee. We were fortunate to have exactly that this past May in Asheville. Many thanks go to the folks pictured to the right, this year's Host Committee with the Most Commitment: Mark Barber, Chuck Reece, Kelly Hilliard, Bertie Sanders, Larry Farmer, Gail Baylor, and Maria Guevara. These are the folks who stuffed the back packs, set up the registration packets, manned the registration desk, took messages, located participants, and kept the business of the Conference moving at a fast yet friendly pace.



# Spotlighting Excellence, Quality, & Service

The bright light of recognition shone on two universities and two individuals at this year's conference in Asheville, North Carolina, as the Region recognized the Human Resources department at Auburn University with the Excellence in Human Resource Management Award; the Human Resources and Payroll Awards program at George Mason University with the Quality in Human Resource Practice Award; Susan Reichbart, Director of Conferences and Meetings in the National CUPA-HR Office, with the Distinguished Service Award; and Mike Jacaruso with a Special Recognition Award for his dedicated support of our Region's conferences.

For more information on the awards and recipients, see the story below. To read more about the Region's awards and recognition program, go to the Region's Web site. Plan now to submit an award recommendation.



Quality in Human Resource Practice:  
George Mason University



Special Recognition Award: Mike Jacaruso



Distinguished Service Award:  
Susan Reichbart



Excellence in Human Resource Management:  
Auburn University

## Awards to Two Universities, Two Individuals

During the Conference luncheon on Monday, Diane Baca, Chair of the Region's Awards Committee, presented the Region's awards for the past year. First to be recognized was **Auburn University: Lynne Hammond**, the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, received the Excellence in Human Resources Award on behalf of the university. This award is presented to an institution that has demonstrated a desire for excellence through CUPA-HR participation, innovative approaches to HR activities, and a strong HR leader. Under Lynne's leadership, the Auburn HR team implemented an online employment process, installed an imaging system to reduce paper use, began a distance-learning supervisor's orientation, and brought training management online.

The Region's **Quality in Human Resource Practice Award** was then presented to **George Mason University**; accepting the award was **Linda Harber**, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources. This award is presented to the CUPA-HR member institutions for significant contributions in specific functional areas. "Significant contributions" are judged by three criteria:

*"Most of the time you don't even know he's there because he works so hard in advance...."*

innovative approaches; creative management practices; and program operation during the last three years. George Mason's Human Resources and Payroll Awards program received the Quality award for its 11 component recognition and reward program which, in 2002-2003, honored over 350 people.

Two individuals were singled out for recognition: In a departure from its traditional award process, the Region's **Distinguished Service Award** was presented to **Susan Reichbart**, CUPA-HR National's Director of Conferences and Meetings. Because of the detailed and professional support she has provided the Region since 1993 in setting up conferences, Susan was honored by the Region. Then the Region presented **Mike Jacaruso** a **Special Recognition Award** for his dedicated service at regional conferences since 2000. Mike is that quiet guy who is everywhere setting up laptops, projectors, and microphones; yes, even crawling along the floor to plug in an electric cord. Most of the time you do not know he's there because he works so hard in advance to make sure that the audiovisual aspects of the conference are just right.

## Mobile in 2005: Planning Moves Ahead

From "HR at the Summit" to "HR Jubilee"; from the opportunity to "Elevate Your Spirit" to the chance to "Discover the Power of Collaboration."; from mountain laurels and rhododendrons to azaleas and magnolias; from green mountain vistas to blue-green water views; from Asheville, North Carolina, to Mobile, Alabama, our venue for next year's conference shifts.

On August 20, 2004, the Southern Region Board met at the Riverview Plaza Hotel, formerly the Adam's Mark Hotel, in Mobile, Alabama, to plan next year's confer-

ence set for April 10-13, 2005. The conference theme is "HR Jubilee: Discover the Power of Collaboration." Among the many tourist opportunities in the city and located next door to the hotel is the Gulf Coast Exploreum and Science Center, a hands-on science experience for all ages with an IMAX theater. The Center plans a special exhibit while we are in the city; and we plan to have our night out there. You should plan to bring the whole family for a truly "collaborative conference"; more details soon on the Region's Web site.

# Member SPOTLIGHT

## Jeff Mudrak

Director of Human Resources, Transylvania University

For the last seven years, Transylvania University's



Human Resources Director Jeff Mudrak has been forming the HR operation there. "Transy," a small liberal arts institution in Lexington, Kentucky, was the sixteenth college established in the U.S. and the first west of the Allegheny Mountains. Jeff, the newly elected Chair-Elect of the

Southern Region, is the first person ever appointed as the institution's Human Resources Director. While he had previous HR experience at Lexington Community College and the University of Kentucky, like many other HR directors at small institutions, Jeff quickly became an expert at many things, but he particularly enjoys his work with benefits, employment, and compensation.

During his time as director, Jeff has been actively involved in the state CUPA chapter: Beginning participation in 1991, he assumed a state board position in 1999 but was quickly thrust into the chair's job when the then-chair moved out of state. Jeff went on to serve for two years as chair and four years on the board. He began his Regional leadership in 2001, serving as a Director at Large for Membership and then Secretary-Treasurer, before being selected for the Chair-Elect position this year.

Jeff has a Bachelor of Business Administration from Eastern Kentucky University, is working on an MBA, and holds an SPHR certification. He is married, and he and his wife Carol have two sons, Erik and Brian. The family spends a great deal of time outdoors working on their two acre farm with its large vegetable garden and numerous fruit trees. Jeff is an avid runner and hiker, and dabbles in landscape photography. He finds this significance in his involvement in CUPA-HR: "Individually we cannot possibly have experience in every facet of our profession; our colleagues play an important role in filling in the blanks. Through collaboration with our peers, we can accomplish more and make better decision than we can individually." This idea of collaboration will be a central theme at next year's conference in Mobile.

## Around the Region

### Chapter News

The **Alabama Chapter** held a conference in Birmingham at the Hanna Center in the Botanical Gardens on March 4 and 5, and a general meeting on July 29 at Samford University, also in Birmingham. The conference's theme was "Doing it Smarter: HR in Tough Times"; members from around the

state attended presentations by leadership expert Dr. John Kline, labor and employment law attorney William Gardner, and representatives from Ceridan; Challenger, Gray, and Christmas; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Hewitt Associates, Hershey Business Systems; People Admin, and SkillSoft. AIG/VALIC sponsored the conference. At the July meeting, new Chair **Jim Farris**, HR Director at Troy State University Montgomery, was installed, replacing **Chris McClendon**.

The **Florida Chapter** held its spring conference on June 14 and 15 at the Grosvenor Resort at Walt Disney World in Orlando. More than 70 people attended, and eight corporate sponsors--the Gabor Agency, Inc.; Graystone Group Advertising; Holland and Knight, LLP; Kronos, Inc.; Marsh, Inc.; PeopleAdmin; the Segal Company; and TIAA-CREF--funded the event.

The **Mississippi Chapter** has a new chair with **Paul Trussell**, Director of Human Resources at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, replacing **Callie Johnson** of Alcorn State University.

According to event coordinator **Jim Stockdale**, sixteen retirees and spouses swapped stories, laughs and lies at the fifth annual **Southern Region Retirees Reunion** in Nashville, Tennessee, April 15-17. Among those attending were Horace & Lynn Adams, Buddy & Barbara Chain, Howard Fretwell, Toby & Rita Kahr, Norm & Hazel Klase, Darwin & Nina Liverance, Lionel & Barbara Skaggs, Dorothy & Jim Stockdale, and Ray Fortunato.

## Member News

**Yohna Chambers Cone** left the Medical University of South Carolina, in Charleston, to accept the **Director of Human Resources** position with **James Madison University** in Harrisonburg, Virginia. In other news from South Carolina, **Ron Herrin**, Director, Payroll and Employee Benefits, **Clemson University**, has retired; and **Zantrell "Zan" Clyburn** left USC Lancaster to join the HR team at **Winthrop University**.

Several people from Alabama have received their **SPHR certification**: **Jim Farris**, Troy State University Montgomery; and **Angela Erlandson**, **Lynne Hammond**, and **Chuck Gerards** of Auburn University.

Sadly, two retired University of Georgia Human Resources managers recently passed away: **William Eugene (Gene) Antley**, Employment Manager at UGA from 1969 to 1983, died late last year after an extended illness; and **Paul Alan Ertel** died in January after an eight year struggle with cancer. Paul held several positions at UGA from 1969 to 1999, including Training Coordinator, Retirement Counselor, and Benefits Manager.



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