

Thank you

Good Morning

It is hard to believe it has been a year since I have stood on this platform receiving the HR Hero Award. Thank you again for selecting me in 2008. It has been a terrific experience meeting, networking, and volunteering for the profession again this year. I was disappointed that no one asked me to be the marshal in a parade doing the Miss America wave but I can tell you it was amazing how word traveled and I received a tremendous amount of calls, cards, and emails– people that I had not heard from in several years.

Each year we each sit here – we wonder – did my boss or co-workers nominate me for the HR Hero, did my HR comrades submit my name, could it be me? All of you are HR Heroes each and every day at work. You are courageous, strategic, brave, spirited, bold, gutsy, and professional. Each of you serve and advance the profession by being here today.

But each year we have the arduous task to select just one person who has exemplified the best of the best as New Hampshire's Human Resource Hero.

This year, our HR Hero is described as a person who always looks at the cup as half full – not half empty. Showing her commitment to the profession, she joined her local HR association 16 years ago. It was just eight (8) years ago that our Hero became a board member of the Human Resource of Association of Greater Concord. She has served positions such as recognition chair, vice president, president,

and past president and even now continues to serve as a board member.

Under her leadership as President and not willing to let the group sway from the goal, the association initiated an in-depth, progressive leadership development and succession planning process. The teamwork and changes made resulted in tripling the involvement in the operations of the association and created a process for developing leadership and enhanced the ability to implement more complex initiatives. One such initiative is the SHRM Pinnacle Award Winning program; New Journeys that our Hero volunteers her time to assist and prepare incarcerated women at the NH State Prison for their re-entry into society.

Our hero holds a BA in Sociology from University of Massachusetts and an MBA from Franklin Pierce and in 2005 became certified as a senior professional in Human Resources. Since then, she has become a Champion in encouraging others to get their SPHR and PHR certification and serves on the SHRM NH State Council as Co-Chair for the Human Resources Certification Institute team.

Our hero has worked in the HR profession since 1981 where she started out as an employment and employee relations representative at Boston University's Medical I Campus. From there she went to work for the State of New Hampshire in the Department of Health and Human Services as an Administrator for Human Resources. For

the past nine years, our hero has been vice president of Human Resources at Haven Wood Heritage Heights Retirement Community.

Just to highlight some of her accomplishments at Havenwood – Heritage Heights:

- **Leadership development initiative resulting in a more cohesive management**
- **Implemented an employee wellness program that positively impacted not only employees but clients of the facility – including a Smart Steps program that achieved the highest ever level of employee participation of Havenwood.**
- **Reduction in workers compensation premiums through injury prevention**
- **Professionally and positively explained management positions during union organizing efforts**
- **Enhanced the employee recognition event**

In her free time, our hero is on the Advisory Board at the NH Technical Institute that serves as the community's eyes and ears for the college president. She facilitates a community focus group at the college, eliciting feedback from area employers and organizations. In addition, she participates in the Southern New Hampshire University Service learning Program to promote education and internship experiences for students of human resources, where we are told that she is a wonderful mentor and advocate for the profession.

Our hero believes strongly in recognition and has coordinated and speaks frequently and passionately of the Concord chapter's Star Award. It is now our turn to recognize her accomplishments with an award. We are proud to be celebrating Sandy Platt O'Brien as the 2009 Granite State HR Hero.

Congratulations Sandy!!