

CONNECTIONS

The newsletter of Alabama-LERA
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FRIENDS AND FACES

An Interview with Eric Duchinsky, MS, CAE
Executive Director, LERA
Labor and Employment Relations Association



Mr. Duchinsky recently hosted hundreds of individuals from across the United States at the National LERA Conference in Portland Oregon. I caught up with Eric for an interview to give our members a broader view of Eric, LERA National and how he keeps it running smoothly. In addition to keeping the National organization on an even keel, Eric is an accomplished musician and singer, and an avid St. Louis Cardinals fan.

1. What is your background?

I started in sales/marketing with a Fortune 100 publishing company serving post-secondary schools, and moved into developing education products. I have a long work history serving Non-Profit Organizations on staff, as a consultant, and also as a volunteer.

2. How did you come to be in this position?

My predecessor, Paula Wells, and I worked briefly at the same publishing company, and that connection led to supporting projects for LERA over the years.

3. What are your responsibilities?

What AREN'T my responsibilities? Joking aside, small staffed non-profits face many if not more challenges as start-up companies. Mostly, being an informed (can't say expert) in many, many fields from accounting to hotel negotiations to marketing to website programming makes for interesting days. Emily Smith [LERA Assistant Director] and I act as a team with the goal of providing value to our members, volunteers, and the various professions serving LER.

7. Who do you serve?

LERA members, volunteers, Chapters, Interest Sections, Industry Councils, Organizational Partners (Universities, Sponsors, Contractors, etc.,) and people in the professions serving LER that don't fall into these categories.

8. What is the most challenging part of your job?

For me? Well, current technology makes an unimaginable number of opportunities a reality for small staff organizations. Not too long ago, an association needed to contract with a company, between \$1,000 to \$2,000 a minute, for producing a quality training video. Now a \$300 video camera, a decent laptop, and good editing software make web training videos a reality. So to answer the question, the one big challenge is not over-reaching, because the opportunities for LERA are out there.

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IN THE HEADLINES:

Chapter wins National 'Star' Award! See page 2 for details.

New Commissioner named for Alabama Department of Labor



Mr. Fitzgerald Washington has been named as the Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Labor by Governor Robert Bentley. Mr. Washington brings a diverse background to the position, including experience in management, human resource management, marketing strategies, operations management and strategic development.

Learn more! Our interview with Eric Duchinsky continues on page 2...



"The most exciting change for LERA is the website upgrades...[a] treasure chest of resources [in] one easy to use space."

Eric Duchinsky, Executive Director, LERA

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Our interview with Eric Duchinsky continues:

9. The most rewarding part of your job?

Bringing the opportunities to life and improving the day-to-day jobs and workplaces with the information LERA challenges and encourages.

10. What changes have you seen in the labor arena during your career?

- a. Technology changes, and the speed in which they happen, dumped workplaces into a blender and hit puree. Businesses, communications, skillsets, education, etc., etc. can't operate the same way from year to year. The idea of a globally shared work force never happens without technology growth. Robotics lessened the need for hands-on skilled manufacturing. Financial market demands pressure companies into short-term growth strategies. All this change comes together and radically pushes many workplace environments into being less employee-friendly. The dream of a stable job for people wanting to stay at one employer for any length of time, is just that, a dream.
- b. Starting a business today is as easy as writing a blog. Not that long ago, starting a business meant going to the bank, taking on debt, buying equipment, and renting building space. All these are big challenges, so many stuck with their jobs. Now, low start-up cost encourages job movement and job dissatisfaction because it might be easier to bolt than to invest in your current job.
- c. In the end, after 30+ years into the work force, everything moves faster and patience runs shorter.
- d. My father-in-law was a high-end cabinet maker and a long-time member of his local carpenters' union. My father started as sheet metal worker on a production line and ended his career as President of the company. His company was privately owned. Though union organizing votes occurred, the workers never approved of a union. I was laid off twice through mergers and acquisitions all which color my outlook. These varied experiences give me a chance to see labor issues from the variety of perspectives of our members.

11. What important issues/changes do you see on the horizon for LERA or Labor Relations?

- a. *THE* most exciting change for LERA is the website upgrades. Not just because the technology reduces operating expenses; the members-only resource section will become the central location for the research, papers, presentations, articles, videos, podcasts, and other tools for labor relations. Many jobs demand expertise in labor and employment relations, maybe as a small part or the full job focuses on LER concerns. This treasure chest of resources pulls the respected materials into one, easy-to-use space.
- b. For Labor Relations? Alternative bargaining units seem the most interesting. This year's 'Perspectives On Work' magazine addresses how this trend impacts the workplace.

12. What else should readers know about you?

I love to learn.



Greetings!

First off I hope everyone has had a fantastic Summer. The LERA-Alabama Chapter recently hosted the annual joint ALMRC/LERA luncheon in Huntsville, with guest speaker Belinda Bennett, NLRB Region 10. The Chapter is busily putting the final touches on the 2014 Fall Conference to be held in September.

The Chapter has a host of fresh new topics, seminars, and national caliber speakers for this, the 29th Annual Alabama-LERA Fall Conference. Again, I would like to invite everyone down the Gulf for an amazing retreat that will provide information that will please everyone in attendance.

I would like to thank everyone in their efforts to attract new membership; it seems to be working very well. The addition of new membership will keep the Chapter thriving for years to come. I truly believe that the more diverse the chapter the more each member will gain from the relationships.

Finally, take a moment and register for the conference. We have a great line up of speakers and panelists. You won't want to miss it.

Stephen

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Alabama-LERA wins National 'STAR Chapter' Award

When:
June 1st, 2014

Where:
Announced at the 2014 National LERA Conference in Portland, Oregon.

What: This exclusive honor is the highest award presented to State Chapters, and recognizes sustained excellence across multiple categories for multiple years.





UPCOMING EVENTS

ALABAMA-LERA FALL CONFERENCE
September 7-9, 2014
Hampton Inn, Orange Beach Alabama

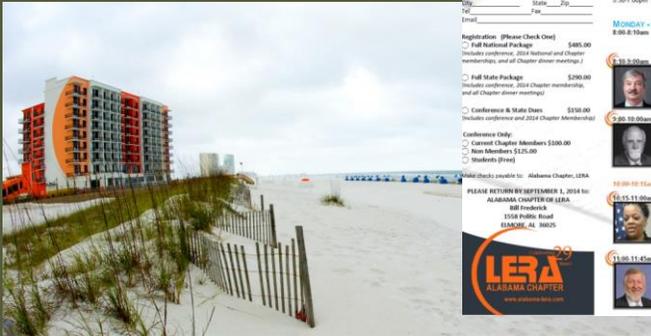


**REGISTER NOW for the
FALL ALABAMA-LERA
CONFERENCE!**

To register, log on to

<http://www.alabama-lera.com>

National caliber speakers!



Registration (Please Check One)

Full National Package \$495.00
Includes conference, 2014 National and Chapter membership, and all Chapter dinner meetings.

Full State Package \$290.00
Includes conference, 2014 Chapter membership, and all Chapter dinner meetings.

Conference & State Dinner \$150.00
Includes conference and 2014 Chapter membership.

Conference Only

Current Chapter Members \$100.00

Non-Members \$225.00

Students (Free)

Hotel (Block available for Alabama Chapter, LERA)

PLEASE RETURN BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2014 to:
ALABAMA CHAPTER OF LERA
Bill Frederick
1516 Public Road
ESMORH, AL 36605

ALABAMA CHAPTER
www.alabama-lera.com

Agenda

SUNDAY - SEPTEMBER 7, 2014
4:00-5:00pm Registration
5:30-7:00pm Reception hosted by Bath and Douglas

MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 8, 2014
8:00-8:15am Welcome and Introductions
Stephen McCormick
Chapter President

8:15-9:00am "Don't Pull the Plug on America"
Jim Hunter, IBEW Lifetime Director
President: Bill Frederick

9:00-9:15am "EMSC: Saving Collective Bargaining Worldwide for over 60 years"
Richard R. Uscione, Commissioner, FMCS
President: Gregg Tipton

10:00-10:15am Break

10:15-11:00am Trends and Directions by the NLRB
President: Patricia Bennett, NLRB Regional Office
President: Katherine Chahroui

11:00-11:45am "Coal and EPA Regulations"
President: Darl Dewberry, International District Vice President United Mine Workers, District 20
President: Bill Frederick

12:30-1:30pm "Labor Alliance Strife in Rebuilding Ford Motor Co."
President: Brian Malley, Vice Pres. Dist. Ford Labor Affairs, President Malley Consulting, President, LERA
President: Stephen McCormick

1:30-2:30pm "Safety Engagement"
President: Jonathan Huberman, HealthSouth, Chair of Health Care Management, The University of Alabama
President: Patrick Rasco

5:30 - 7:00pm Reception hosted by The Garden Firm

TUESDAY - SEPTEMBER 9, 2014
8:00-8:30am Continental Breakfast

8:30-9:30am "Stories from the Front"
Ken Latham, Dean, College of Business, Auburn State University
President: Tony Quillen

9:30-9:45am Break

9:45-10:45am Panel Discussion: Ask the "Askers"
Treasurer: Brian, Richard Brooks, Jack Clark, Ed Harrison, Talmage Reynolds

10:45-11:00am Break

11:00am General Membership Meeting & Election of Officers

Great location!

FIND IT FAST: CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR CHAPTER DETAILS AND EVENTS!

www.alabama-lera.com

We'd love to hear from you!

Please e-mail your feedback/suggestions to: patrick.rasco@nasa.gov

For information on becoming a member of LERA-Alabama contact:
Bill Frederick, 205.257.3174 wefreder@southernco.com

Alabama-LERA 2013-2014 Executive Board

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