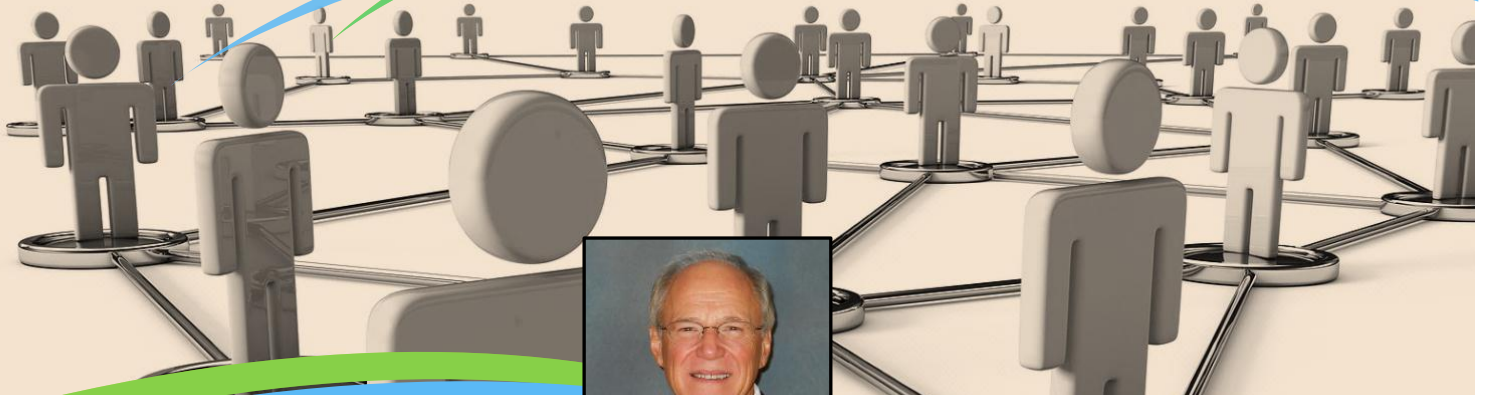


CONNECTIONS

The newsletter of LERA-ALABAMA
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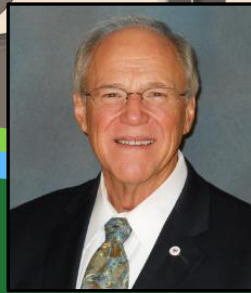
Celebrating 29 Years!
LERA
ALABAMA CHAPTER
www.alabama-lera.com



FRIENDS AND FACES

“The Secret is Out!”

Talmage Reynolds, President, TR Consulting



I transferred from the multi-billion dollar Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway project to Huntsville in 1983 and quickly learned that “relations” in labor-management relations did not exist on Redstone Arsenal, in north Alabama. I found it to be better known as labor-management distrust and in some cases, unfortunately, it was all out war. That’s right, it was down and dirty and basically anything went. A firm specializing in union busting was brought into north Alabama to target and break an organized unit that had been in existence for twenty-five years. As the Director, Contractor Industrial Labor Relations at the U.S. Army Missile Command and later the NASA, Marshall Space Flight Center I was caught in the middle of the turmoil and I knew something had to be done or I would not be around for very long.

Thankfully my friend and colleague Steve Rohr introduced me to the Alabama Chapter, LERA and that was the first day of the rest of my career. I quickly learned that LERA (formerly the Industrial Relations Research Association) was established in 1947 and was founded to put relationship into labor-management relations. In fact, one of the original founders stated: “...We started out as rebels... we first met almost like conspirators.” according to Clark Kerr, a founder and President Emeritus, University of California.

I quickly found LERA, both in Alabama and nationally, to be a wellspring of knowledge in collective bargaining and labor-management relations. This knowledge and exhaustive research was collected and formulated by some of the most brilliant minds in America made up of leaders in academics, management, unions, practitioners, neutrals, and government.

For me, our LERA Chapter facilitated an open forum and an opportunity to network and learn from the collective knowledge and wisdom of members from around the state and nation. From these lessons I initiated a new approach to labor-management relations at Redstone Arsenal which later spilled over to the labor-management movement in north Alabama. With the backing and support of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the Alabama Labor Commissioner, and the National Labor Relations Board we initiated a local council to create a dialogue between labor, management, advocates, neutrals, and Government contractors; and something amazing happened. Hosting local bimonthly meetings over the next 20-years I was blessed to witness something as simple as “personal commonalities” transform labor-management relations at the Marshall Space Flight Center, Redstone Arsenal, and north Alabama.

I’ve seen multimillion dollar corporations as well as small locally owned companies who struggled with labor relations grow and thrive using the techniques and simple initiatives advocated and exemplified by LERA at our regular meetings. The Labor and Employment Relations Association enable’s the impossible by advocating a simple approach of building relationships on commonalities.

in this issue

Friends and Faces p.1
In the Headlines p.1
President’s Corner p.2
Growing Alabama LERA p.2
In the Spotlight p.2
Calendar p.3

IN THE HEADLINES:

Who’s on First...?

Surely you have seen the classic Abbot and Costello comedy sketch, “Who’s on First....?” We found we were having the same issue with our yearly membership dues! We paid them in January. And they ran through September. Then people could pay again in September, but were they paying for the current year, or the next calendar year? And if they pay at the conference, was that for this year or last year.....or next year.....? And of course, you can also pay dues any month of the year, but if you pay ahead, is that..... wait, Who’s on first?!

At a recent Executive Board meeting, we charted out the options and after some head scratching and diagramming, the board decided to recommend simplifying the process! At the January 16th board meeting a new method of membership dues will be voted on, moving the current fiscal year membership to a much simpler calendar year method.

**Membership dues will soon
coincide with the calendar
year!**

PG. 1

Growing Alabama-LERA:

Forget the bowl games...the clear winner this year was the Alabama-LERA Fall Conference!

The 2013 Fall Conference was indeed a clear winner! With a new location, the conference was able to provide expanded space for conference sessions with the added bonus of a crisp, new facility. Acoustics and sight lines were improved, allowing the participants to enjoy and learn from the outstanding national level speakers who headlined the sessions. Topics covered were packed with essential information for members of the labor and management communities. Sessions included "Current Developments in Healthcare Reform", "Trends and Directions by the NLRB", "Alabama Update: The Alabama Department of Labor", "Economic Outlook for Alabama, the Southeast Region, and the U.S.", "Social Media Policies and Trends", and an excellent "Ask the Arbitrator" panel discussion. The conference concluded with the installation of the 2014 Chapter President, Stephen McCormick, Director of Governmental Affairs, Alabama Department of Labor.



ABOVE: Attendees participate in the 2013 Alabama-LERA Fall Conference. The program lineup included top caliber speakers from Maynard, Cooper & Gale; the National Labor Relations Board; Alabama Department of Labor; Auburn University Montgomery; The Gardner Firm; and a panel of arbitration experts.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Hello!

First and foremost I want to wish everyone Happy Holidays. I would like to introduce myself to the membership; my name is Stephen McCormick, and I am the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Alabama Department of Labor. It is my pleasure to serve as the President of the LERA-Alabama Chapter for 2013-2014.

It is an exciting time for the Chapter as we continue to provide benefits for unions, management, academics and neutrals all while we grow in membership. The annual state conference in Orange Beach was a great success. The new location was a big hit. The view from the conference room was amazing; you must truly see it to believe it. The presentations and panel discussions were thorough and full of vital information. I hope everyone plans to attend again next year.

As the New Year is upon us, I would like to ask everyone to be thinking of new members that can join the LERA-Alabama Chapter. This effort will benefit the chapter and all existing members by providing new faces that have new ideas and perspectives.

I hope to see everyone at the Birmingham dinner meeting on January 16, 2014.

Stephen

IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

The 2014 Birmingham Dinner Meeting

When:

January 16, 2014

Registration at 5:30pm

Dinner & Program at 6:00pm

Where:

Alabama Power Company Headquarters
600 NTH 18th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203

How: Cost is \$35.

Make your reservation on-line at
www.alabama-lera.com





UPCOMING EVENTS

REGISTER NOW for the Birmingham Dinner Meeting!
To register, log on to <http://www.alabama-lera.com>

BIRMINGHAM DINNER MEETING

January 16, 2014 6:00pm (Registration at 5:30)
Alabama Power Company Headquarters
600 North 18th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203

MONTGOMERY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 13, 2014
Alabama Department of Labor
649 Monroe Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36131

HUNTSVILLE ALMRC/LERA LUNCHEON

August 7, 2014
Officer's Club
Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville Al

MOBILE LUNCHEON MEETING

Date: TBD

ALABAMA-LERA FALL CONFERENCE

September 7-9, 2014
Hampton Inn, Orange Beach Alabama

FIND IT FAST: CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR 2014 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:
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