

New York Metropolitan Area Chapter-ISCEBS



e-Newsletter Third Quarter 2007

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

I recently returned from the 26th Annual ISCEBS Employee Benefits Symposium in Washington, WA. I was excited to return to The Westin Seattle, which was the site of the 1998 Symposium and the first Symposium that I had the opportunity to attend.

The Symposium opened on Sunday evening with the CEBS Conferment Ceremony. Our chapter welcomed new graduate Phillip Wismar, CEBS of AON Corporation, who was recognized at this year's ceremony.

The next three days were filled with speakers and sessions on the economy, plan design and strategies, legal updates, and cost containment. Katherine Hesse, CEBS, presented her annual overview of recent legal decisions in employee benefits, labor and employment law and will be our guest speaker at NY Metro's education meeting on Thursday, October 11 at 5:30 PM. The meeting will be hosted by Buck Consultants at One Penn Plaza.

In addition to the meeting agenda,

participants were able to see the sights, attend local chapter leadership workshops, network with fellow members from across the US and Canada, and wine and dine in some of Seattle's fine restaurants. On Tuesday evening, NY Metro Chapter members met at Ponti's Seafood Grill. Among those that attended were Nedra Clark, CEBS of Affiliated Computer Services, Lee Doble, CEBS of Frank Crystal, Linda Franklin, CEBS of Skadden Arps Slate LLP, Jeannie Gratta, CEBS of Davis Polk and Wardell, Jeanine Keehan, CEBS of Bertelsmann Inc, Helen Myers, CEBS, Past NY Metro Chapter President, Shirelle Pearson of Gentiva Health Services Inc., Randi Weingarten, CEBS of USI Holdings Corp, Paul Wismar, CEBS of AON Corporation, and Pam Yip, CEBS of Eileen Fisher Inc.

The Seattle Symposium was an educational and fun experience. We hope to see you next year on September 21-24 at Disney's Yacht and Beach Club Resort, Lake Buena Vista, FL.

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IN THIS ISSUE...

President's Letter.....	1
Save the Date	1
Third Quarter Meeting Recaps	2
Upcoming.....	2
Profile of Randi Weingarten.....	3
Congratulations.....	3

CHAPTER MEMBERS SAVE THE DATE!

NOVEMBER 29, 2007
HOLIDAY PARTY - O'CASEYS
22 EAST 41ST STREET
(1 BLOCK FROM THE NY PUBLIC LIBRARY)
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
FOOD, DRINKS AND NETWORKING!

* * *

PROFILE OF RANDI WEINGARTEN

When I was asked to prepare an article on myself for this newsletter, I couldn't imagine what I was going to write, but as I sit here in my hotel room at the CEBS Symposium in Seattle, my thoughts are flowing.

Let me begin by telling you how I entered the Benefits field. It was 1989 and I was working for an employment testing company. I decided to take the battery of tests given to those seeking career counseling. The results indicated I was very analytical, proficient with numbers and would be a good fit for a Benefits position. To me that meant I could hand out a claim form to an employee. I had a lot to learn. Since then, I have never stopped learning. The Benefits field is comprised of number crunching, laws and regulations, communication challenges, people and more. I was fortunate to have a mentor in my life who pushed me to reach my potential and open up a world of opportunities, including obtaining the CEBS designation, which took place over 10 years ago.

Being successful in the Benefits field has a lot to do with the environment of the organization you work in. During my Benefits journey, I have had the opportunity to work in many different industries and from my experience, the better fits were at a bank, a law firm, and now at a benefits consulting firm, USI. Benefits professionals thrive in environments where management cares about compliance, being progressive, and profits from being employee focused.

Every experience has its challenges yet you learn something from every one. The most rewarding professional achievements for me came from moving a Benefits department from failure to success. I have had the opportunity to do that four times in my career and consider those my greatest accomplishments. It takes intense organizational skills, an emphasis on customer service, and a passion for benefits. The rewards come from employees thanking you for explaining their benefits, resolving their issues, and enhancing their understanding of the complex and often overwhelming, Benefits world. Being able to give back to society and to help others is truly wonderful.

My passion for benefits has taken me to the Symposium for the past three years, serving on the Board of the New York Chapter of ISCEBS, holding various positions in Membership, Newsletter, and Education. I have met many bright colleagues who I value and respect.

In the almost 20 years since I entered the Benefits field, I have seen the medical benefits spectrum evolve from indemnity, to HMO, to consumer driven healthcare and transparency. I can tell how the benefits have changed based on the cost of having a child. My first child cost \$1,000 and my second, under an HMO program, only \$10. I am finished having children but I would expect a third would cost at least \$2,200 with an offset from a pre-tax HSA with an employer contribution.

I hope you all continue your passion for benefits and keep learning through what the CEBS Program and the Society can offer!

* * *

Congratulations Are In Order...

NEW FELLOWS		MEMBERS ON THE MOVE
<p>Fred Farkash, CEBS Buck Consultants LLC</p>	<p>Christine L. Jastrzemski, CEBS New York Times Co.</p>	<p>Kymberely A. Dennis, GBA Senior Account Manager Nemco Brokerage</p>
<p>Louis F. LiBrandi, CEBS McDermott Will & Emery LLP</p>	<p>Keith W. Owen, CEBS NYC PBA</p>	<p>Eric C. Kane, CEBS Global Benefit Analyst Colgate-Palmolive Co.</p>
<p>Vera Rajic, CEBS United Nations</p>	<p>Ann B. Singleton, CEBS Smith Barney, Inc.</p>	<p>Pamela C. Lee, CEBS Manager Retirement Programs Astoria Federal Savings</p>
		<p>Randi A. Weingarten, CEBS Corporate Benefits Manager USI Holdings Corporation</p>