

hr SPECTRUM

Cornell Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies

Research Highlight

Discrimination in Organizations: An Organizational-Level Systems Perspective

Companies wanting to avoid discrimination lawsuits and other, more subtle manifestations of employee dissatisfaction (absenteeism, poor customer service) need to go beyond minority recruiting and diversity training to make the corporate culture a truly inclusive one for non-traditional workers. Cornell researcher Professor Lisa Nishii and colleagues emphasize the importance of the interconnectedness of systems in addressing discrimination at the organizational level, and how single interventions, when not reinforced by a structural climate for inclusiveness, often fail. Lack of structural integration and other inclusive practices may lead minority workers to interpret everyday ambiguous events as discriminatory.

Organizational culture—those “shared expectations” and values, not necessarily shared by minority employees—and how it accommodates diverse workers is one of the key determinants of whether targeted

recruitment efforts and affirmative action programs will work. Affirmative action programs may alleviate initial access discrimination but, improperly implemented, can be counter-productive, resulting in more

discrimination against the worker stigmatized for being hired preferentially. Affirmative action programs that provide clear and compelling evidence of the minority worker’s competency can prevent discriminatory perceptions.

Organizational culture, as a reflection of the majority culture, can also lead to discriminatory outcomes if managers fail to distinguish between performance characteristics that may be merely culturally driven—such as articulate verbal expression, adherence to a standard work schedule and dress code—and those that are central to the job. To guard against cultural bias, outcome-based performance appraisal should be emphasized over process-based behavioral conformity. A work

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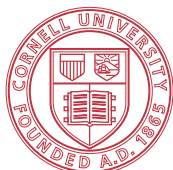
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process that allows for flexibility in behavioral style not only removes discriminatory cultural bias, but is the very thing that reaps new and creative ideas and approaches to tasks. It is what gives truly multicultural organizations competitive advantage.

Another error managers sometimes make is giving women and other diverse employees less challenging assignments, or holding back on criticism in the belief that the employee can’t “take it.” This is a subtle discrimination that holds the employee back, since lowered expectations have been shown to be a self-fulfilling prophecy that leads to more discrimination. Along with challenging assignments that allow for individual approaches, all



Cornell University

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Up Close with ...

Beth Reeves of Lincoln Financial Group

Valuing Talent Key to Managing Change at Lincoln Financial

“It’s all about talent—who you’ve hired and who you’ve retained. Talent drives earnings, it drives shares and sales, and—especially in financial services—talent drives having the best solutions for clients.”

Beth Reeves, Senior Vice President, Human Resources, Lincoln Financial Group would know. From her early training in GE’s HR Management Program, through her positions of increasing responsibility at GE, to her recent experiences with the merger of Jefferson Pilot Financial and Lincoln Financial, Beth knows the importance of valuing and developing talent.

When she was senior vice president of human resources at GE Capital Aviation Services, a global aircraft leasing business, Reeves led the integration effort for three companies: Polaris Aircraft Leasing, Guinness Peat Aviation, and GE Capital’s Transportation and Industrial Group. “I discovered then that, when an organization goes through a bumpy time, you need to make sure your top performers will stay,” she recalls.

Then, at GE Capital Auto Financial Services, Reeves integrated and helped restructure a large French bank: “The experience taught me that you need to work with individual staff to help them identify the next step in their career.”

In 1998, Reeves moved to CNA Commercial Insurance. She spearheaded the process to define CNA’s critical success factors, and was one of the first in her profession to link HR strategy to business success factors. She introduced a 360-degree feedback process for company executives, and the first all-employee profit-oriented incentive plan.

While at CNA, Reeves learned that she truly loved working in the finance industry, which made her current position at Lincoln Financial Group ideal. She says, “I was drawn to Lincoln because the leadership seeks to live its values.”

Those values became crucial in 2006 in shaping how Lincoln and Jefferson Pilot merged. Reeves explains, “We tried to maintain an optimism grounded in reality. We asked, Who will we be? What is important to us? How will we make our decisions?” Lincoln had always been a strategic company, while one of Jefferson Pilot’s strengths was execution. The two sets of strengths, if managed well, could be very complementary.

The executive staff agreed upon a set of leadership expectations: strategic skills, optimism, enterprise thinking,



Beth Reeves

talent management, innovation, change management, relationships, and execution. Reeves notes, “It is easier to go through a change process when you can develop a common language and communicate a vision of the future.”

Reeves and the integration team made sure that top management was lined up by the time the merger was announced in April 2006, “because then people know who their boss will be.” After helping exiting employees transition out, Reeves turned her attention to integrating the two companies’ policies, benefits, and compensation programs. Reeves also


implemented a rigorous selection process to ensure that each new hire would fit with Lincoln Financial’s culture, and developed talent management and 360-degree processes to grow that talent.

For those already in them, the defined benefit retirement plans will be frozen (end of 2007); beginning in 2008, employees will be moved to defined contribution plans. “This is a huge change and educational effort,” Reeves explains.

Just as Lincoln’s strategic outlook had been merged with Jefferson Pilot’s ability to execute, so Reeves reorganized the HR function to bring together the tactical and the strategic. Centers of excellence were formed for compensation and benefits/HR operations; talent management and strategic staffing; and employee relations. HR generalist roles, also reporting directly to Reeves, are located in each of the business units.

As of September 30, 2007, Lincoln Financial Group had approximately 10,000 employees and \$250 billion in assets under management. Lincoln is #1 in life sales and is also a leader in variable annuities and in providing organizations with defined contribution plans.

What’s ahead? Reeves looks forward to a new information technology system to enhance human resource management—especially in the area she believes in so strongly— attracting, developing, and managing talent. “We also need to look into ways to transfer knowledge through a phased retirement program,” she notes.

In her own life, Reeves finds fulfillment in the development of others. She has two daughters, one at Duke University and one who works in New York City—and she serves on the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation Board and the Support Center for Child Advocates Board. Reeves and her husband own three Labrador retrievers, and they are about to adopt a fourth puppy. 

Lincoln Financial Group joined CAHRS in 2000, the ‘Up Close with’ profiles feature interviews with leaders of CAHRS sponsors.

ILR School Receives Major Endowment Gift from General Electric

GE's William J. Conaty Honored with ILR's First HR Studies Faculty Chair

Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies (CAHRS) announced the endowment of the William J. Conaty General Electric (GE) Faculty Chair in Strategic Human Resources on September 5, 2007.

This professorship was made possible through a generous donation by the GE Foundation, and recognizes leadership in teaching, research, and service to the human resources field. It is named for Conaty, who recently retired as GE's senior vice president, human resources and is widely regarded as one of the world's leading HR practitioners. Patrick Wright, Ph.D., ILR Professor of Human Resources and Director of CAHRS, has been named the first William J. Conaty GE Professor of Strategic Human Resources. A ceremony establishing the chair, including a keynote speech by Conaty, took place at 2p.m., November 14, 2007, in conjunction with the CAHRS Board meeting at Cornell's Ithaca campus.

"William (Bill) Conaty has been a strong supporter of CAHRS and the Cornell ILR School for many years," Wright said. "For generations to come, the best and brightest HR students will see and hear Bill Conaty's name as we study the many worldwide contributions made by GE to the stature of the HR function. I can't think of a better way to celebrate Bill's many accomplishments, and to acknowledge his role in



Harry Katz, Dean ILR; Bob Corcoran, VP Corporate Leadership Development GE; William Conaty, SVP Corporate HR GE; and Patrick Wright, ILR Professor and Director CAHRS

the creation of the contemporary human resource function."

Conaty has a distinguished 40-year career in the HR field and remains an active board member of Cornell CAHRS. In 1993, Conaty took over GE's top HR job and immediately began work on overseeing the function's transformation. In particular, Conaty's willingness to share best practices—through his dedication to open benchmarking and participation on numerous public and private boards—helped build a modern HR community focused on driving business results through people.

"This generous gift will help the ILR School retain our current world-class tenured faculty in HR Studies, as well as attract new scholars in the years to come," said ILR School Dean Harry Katz, the Jack Sheinkman Professor of Collective Bargaining. "Perhaps more importantly, it will also help us attract talented undergraduate and graduate students who wish to follow in Bill Conaty's footsteps. Bill's accomplishments in strategic human resources and collective bargaining have been extraordinary. We are honored to put his name on a faculty chair in ILR." 



Patrick Wright, William Conaty and GE Alumni

NAHR Celebration 2007



Chris Collins, Patrick Wright, Elease Wright, Jo Hagin, Pamela Stepp, and Ian Ziskin

On November 1, 2007, the National Academy of Human Resources (NAHR) inducted Elease Wright (CAHRS Board and Sponsor) and Ian Ziskin (CAHRS Sponsor) as honored NAHR Fellows. Elease is Senior Vice President, Human Resources at Aetna Inc. Ian is Corporate Vice President, Chief Human Resources and Administrative Officer at Northrup Grumman

Corporation. William J. Conaty, NAHR Fellow Class of 1996, was also inducted as a Distinguished Fellow as well.

It is the NAHR tradition to hold their annual dinner and installation of new fellows ceremony in November at New York City's Yale Club. These new Fellows were recognized by their peers for their distinguished leadership in the broad field of

NAHR FELLOWS (Present CAHRS Sponsors & Cornell Faculty)

2007

ELEASE E. WRIGHT
SVP, HR, Aetna Inc.

IAN V. ZISKIN
CVP, Chief HR and AO, Northrup Grumman Corp.

2006

JOHN M. MURABITO
EVP, HR and Services, CIGNA, Corporation

EVA SAGE-GAVIN
EVP, and Corporate Communications, Gap Inc.

2005

PATRICK M. WRIGHT
Director CAHRS, School of ILR, Cornell University

DAVID W. PACE
EVP, Partner Resources, Starbucks Coffee Company

WORLDAT WORK

2004

KENNETH J. CARRIG
EVP, CAO, SYSCO Corporation

2003

JOHN D. HOFMEISTER
President, Shell Oil Company

2002

MICHAEL A. PEEL
SVP of HR & Corporate Services, General Mills, Inc.

2001

JAMES B. DAGNON
SVP of People, The Boeing Company

J. T. CHILDS, JR.
VP, Global Workforce Diversity, IBM

1998

J. RANDALL MACDONALD
SVP, HR, IBM Corporation

CHARLES G. THARP
Former SVP, HR, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company

1997

J. THOMAS BOUCHARD
SVP, HR, IBM

WILLIAM L. BUCKNALL, JR.
SVP, HR and Organization, United Technologies Corporation

STEVEN M. DARIEN
VP, HR, Merck & Company

1996

WILLIAM J. CONATY
Distinguished Fellow, SVP, Corporate HR, General Electric Co.

GEORGE T. MILKOVICH
Catherwood Professor, Emeritus, ILR, Cornell University
**SCHOOL OF INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR
RELATIONS, CORNELL UNIVERSITY**

1995

WALTON E. BURDICK
SVP, Personnel, IBM Corporation

CHARLES F. NIELSON
Corporate VP and Manager of HR, Texas Instruments, Inc.

1994

LEE DYER
Professor, School of ILR, Cornell University

DOUGLAS M. REID
SVP, Xerox Corporation, SVP Colgate-Palmolive Company

1993

URSULA F. FAIRBAIRN
EVP, HR and Quality, American Express Company

1992


BRUCE CARSWELL
Distinguished Fellow & CAHRS AB, Cornell University

FRANK P. DOYLE
EVP, General Electric Company

DAVID P. LIPSKY
Director, PERC Institute of Conflict Resolution, ILR,
Cornell University

human resources and have meritorious national reputations for shaping human resource thinking and policy. The NAHR Fellowship is considered the most prestigious honor in the field of human resources. Fellowship in the Academy is accorded to executives, policy-makers, and academics who have excelled in leadership, and who are recognized for their sustained achievement in and their contributions to their organizations, the Human Resource profession and society at large. Elease and Ian join ILR colleagues Patrick Wright, George Milkovich, David Lipsky, and Lee Dyer as Fellows in the Academy, giving CAHRS and the Cornell ILR School a representation unsurpassed by any other academic institution. Many current CAHRS sponsor companies have had their top HR executives inducted as Fellows over the years (see table).

Elease in her career with Aetna has helped to shape what is one of the nation's most heralded business transformations. When she assumed her current role in 1997, Aetna was in turmoil. The company was struggling to integrate several recently acquired health companies, including US Healthcare, while positioning to divest of significant life insurance, financial services and international businesses. She was instrumental in preserving key talent during the difficult multi-year transition from broad-based insurer to health care leader. This complex work included overseeing integration of HR programs, policies and talent while ensuring that the thousands of Aetna employees making their way to new companies were treated fairly and with dignity. This transformation required new senior leadership, and Elease was instrumental in recruiting a top-tier team—including highly accomplished industry talent for the roles of Chairman, CEO and President, who could restore the company to industry primacy. Her focus on assessing both leaders' demonstrated business success and attention to values and employee engagement yielded a highly effective senior team that took the company to significant, continuing success. Elease was a pioneer in embracing the model of HR as a strategic business partner.


Ian's primary focus has been to integrate the cultures, processes, and people associated with over 20 major acquisitions by building a "One Northrop Grumman" set of HR and administration practices. Central to this mission has been the development and implementation of a comprehensive Human Capital Strategy for the company, requiring a transformation of the function and its priorities. He is a member of the company's Corporate Policy Council, the senior leadership team responsible for company governance, and he provides management support to several committees of the company's Board of Directors. He leads Northrop Grumman's core human resources functions as well as additional service functions including: security; environmental, health, and safety; real estate and facilities; travel services; command media; flight operations; ethics and diversity; community relations; and the Northrop Grumman Foundation—and is currently engaged in a process to examine which of these functions will move to an enterprise shared services organizations. 

Research Opportunity for Sponsors

E-HR Online Course Spring 2008: We're Ready for Your Questions

We would like our Sponsors to begin submitting their HR questions to be researched and answered by our students. Questions submitted should not be something that requires an immediate answer. It is best to pose questions that can be answered in a few months. Students pick questions from a list of choices. If there is a need to expedite your questions, the Catherwood Library's Access Services is available to our Sponsors.

If you are a member of CAHRS Sponsoring company, and have obtained your sponsor password, you can access past examples of student questions and reports at the CAHRS web site, through our Sponsorship Exclusives option, located on our home page.

To submit a question to our upcoming Spring 2008 class, email your questions to vb25@cornell.edu or phone 607-255-5347. 

CAHRS Fall Sponsor Meeting 2007

Beyond Intuition: Using HR Analytics to Improve Workforce Decisions


Ten years ago HR metrics became a watchword within the HR community. Early efforts in this arena emphasized identifying and measuring the laundry list of measures of just about every HR activity or process. However, the rapid expansion of HR information technology has provided the function with access to amounts and kinds of data never before seen. How companies are attempting to leverage this data was the focus of the most recent CAHRS sponsor meeting titled “Beyond Intuition: Using HR Analytics to Improve Workforce Decision Making” held in Ithaca November 14, 2007.

The meeting began with Patrick Wright, William J. Conaty GE Professor of Strategic Human Resources and Director of CAHRS providing the overarching framework for the meeting. He described the story behind *Moneyball*, a book by Michael Lewis which describes how the Oakland Athletics were able to identify and use information on players and in-game strategies to enable them to become a perennially winning team while having one of the lowest salary structures in baseball. He suggested that this is the next generation of HR Metrics thinking; finding and using data that competitors have not been able to identify, and then leveraging that data to build a more effective and/or efficient workforce.

Ken Carrig, Chief Administrative Officer at SYSCO Corporation then provided the keynote address on “Can You Predict The Quality of Wine?” Using the lessons of econometrician Ian Ayres in his book *SuperCrunchers*, he described how SYSCO has continued to evolve its use of HR information to better engage the SYSCO workforce and to be able to assess companies on their human capital performance. In addition, he described how SYSCO was able to present data to business presidents who claimed their turnover was due to a tight labor market, that low unemployment only resulted in increased turnover among low performing companies, and that it was unrelated among high performing companies. His lesson was that, “There are no ‘absolute’ causal factors in human capital determinants. The best we can do is to improve the odds. But improving the odds provides competitive advantage and is worth doing.”

The morning concluded with presentations by Mario Gagliano, Director of Human Resources, Worldwide Pharmaceutical Operations at Pfizer and Susan Patton, Vice President, HR Strategy and Operations at Merck & Co., describing the use of human capital analytics at their respective pharmaceutical companies. Gagliano described how Pfizer revamped its exit interview process to provide more standardized and useful data. Patton described how Merck’s ‘Decision Support’ group is able to manage a comprehensive metrics portfolio and provide data analysis to drive effective decisions and actions.

Finally, the afternoon saw three HRS professors, Professor Kevin Hallock, Assistant Professor Brad Bell, and Assistant Professor John Hausknecht present research that might provide data counter to conventional wisdom. Hallock’s presentation aimed at the widespread belief that CEO’s decide to lay off workers because it boosts their pay, but he showed comprehensive data suggesting that this is simply not true; CEO’s do not monetarily benefit from layoff decisions. Bell described work he and Associate Professor Quinetta Roberson did examining the effectiveness of a diversity training program. Their rigorous evaluation suggested that few participants changed their views or behaviors over the long term as a result of these programs when compared to a control group within the organization, and that it was the diversity climate in the participant’s department that might ultimately determine the effectiveness of the program. Finally, Hausknecht showed that while most people might think that involuntary turnover (firings) would not negatively impact customer service, in fact any type of turnover has a negative affect on customer perceptions.

Attendance and evaluations for the meeting were among the highest in CAHRS history. “This was the best meeting I’ve been to,” said Eva Sage-Gavin, Executive Vice President, HR and Communications at Gap. “Ken Carrig’s presentation was absolutely a breakthrough.” 



Ken Carrig, SYSCO



Mario Gagliano, Pfizer



Susan Patton, Merck



**Kevin Hallock, CAHRS
Professor ILR**



**John Hausknecht, Assistant
Professor ILR**



Brad Bell, Assistant Professor ILR



Breakout discussion



William Conaty, GE and Eva Sage-Gavin, Gap Inc.

Executive Education

Miami Impact Course Heats Up As HR Executives Zero In on Alignment & Metrics


The blue skies and warm temperatures of Miami, Florida in early November attracted 23 HR executives to the Managing for Impact: HR Metrics & Firm Performance executive education course. The course, held November 7–8, gave executives concrete tools for linking business outcomes to HR strategy and activities. Attendees came from across the country and around the globe, including participants from CAHRS partner JP Morgan Chase, Cargill, FedEx Express, Medco Health Solutions and Chevron.

Instructors Scott Snell, professor of business administration at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business, and Pat Wright, director of CAHRS, packed their expertise into two days focused on value creation, competitive advantage and HR alignment. Executives used case studies, worksheets and discussions to work through their firms' value chains and how to best align HR activities. They then chose appropriate metrics to evaluate strategic success. Wright warned executives not to take a "one size fits all" approach toward HR metrics, as it doesn't take into account each firm's unique value chain and strategy. Measuring what's important to the firm—not just to HR—is the only way to assess whether the function is properly aligned to drive business results.

This course also clearly delivered value to participants. One found Impact to be "a compact program which went

straight to the point, simplified the issues related to the alignment of HR and Business Strategy, and showed how metrics could be made more strategic and impactful." Another was impressed with all aspects of the course, saying that "I think it is a great idea to focus on case studies. It really makes the connection between

business objectives and HR. Presenters were knowledgeable and kept my interest the entire time. Presentations were clear and exercises were valuable." Miami is a new market for Impact, which is held twice each year (in the spring and fall). The next Managing for Impact course is scheduled


April 9–10, 2008 in New York City. 



Course registration is available online at www.ilr.cornell.edu/execed. CAHRS partners receive 10% off each registration or can send a team of three people and get the fourth for free. Space in all courses is limited and early registration is encouraged. For more information or to register your group, contact ILR Executive Education at 607-255-5882 or via email at ilrexec@cornell.edu.

New Finance for HR Course Links Financial Tools to Critical HR Decisions

Ask Kevin Hallock, Ph.D. why he's explaining perpetuities to a room of HR executives and you'll likely get an exasperated sigh. It seems clear to him. "Since many HR issues are hard to quantify, some dismiss HR as not being important in major firm investment decisions. This is crazy," says Hallock. Because often, those major firm investment decisions are *also* HR decisions. Finance for Human Resources, the newest ILR Executive Education course, provides HR executives with a better understanding of financial measures, metrics, and standards, as well as how to use those financial evaluation tools to make crucial decisions about alternative HR investments, practices, and strategies.

Finance for HR is more than a typical "finance for non-finance professionals" course. It hits at the heart of decisions HR leaders make every day: How do we weigh the short and long terms costs of a new executive compensation plan against gains/losses in productivity and tenure? Which financial metrics should we use to evaluate the success or failure of implementing a global HRIS? How do we evaluate the human capital costs associated with a merger or acquisition? Join Kevin Hallock in New York City, **June 3-4, 2008**, to help answer similar questions for your firm while becoming more fluent in the language of business—finance. 

SAVE THE DATE**CAHRS Spring International Sponsor Meeting****Growth in the Middle East and HR Capabilities****May 28-29, 2008 • Grosvenor House • West Marina Beach
Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

HR leaders will meet in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the fastest growing city in the Middle East and world, to discuss this topic presented by the Center for Advanced Human Resources. The conference will open with presentations and discussions about doing business in the Middle East and implications for global firms, investment growth (Will Dubai Be The Next Wall Street?), infrastructure, localization/nationalization, impact of free zones, and how mideast culture effects business.

The second day of the conference will turn to specific HR challenges including the skills gap, attraction, retention, development, compensation policies, motivation, and barriers for women, expatriates and locals. We expect CAHRS leaders from all over the world to attend particularly from the Middle East, Europe, India, and the United States. We encourage you to register now for this May 28-29 conference in Dubai.

View our Online Registration form:
www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/springregform.html

HOTEL INFORMATION

We have set up a block of rooms at the Grosvenor House for you to make reservations.

Please be sure to reserve your room by April 10, 2008
when the rooms will be released to the general public.

Rates for rooms are the following: 1320Dhs for Single Occupancy; 1420Dhs for Double Occupancy.

Buffet Breakfast included in room rates.

For additional information on the Grosvenor House, please visit:
www.starwoodhotels.com/lemeridien/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1898

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Faculty Profile

Lisa Dragoni, Assistant Professor, Human Resource Studies

Professor Lisa Dragoni joined the Human Resource Studies Department of the ILR School as an Assistant Professor in July of 2007. Currently, she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on leadership development and training, and employee development. She has previously taught courses on negotiations, organizational strategy, management, and organizational theory while on the faculty at the University of Iowa and as an instructor at the University of Maryland. In addition, while at the University of Maryland, she worked as an executive coach with a small cadre of executive MBA students to guide them in their leadership development.



Lisa Dragoni

Professor Dragoni's interest in leadership and employee development carries over into her research. During her tenure as a consultant and trainer prior to entering academia, she became intrigued with how different organizational practices, such as job assignment and mentoring, could have a profound effect on leadership development with minimal cost to the organization. These early career experiences shaped the basis of her current research agenda which centers on understanding the impact of primarily three types of HR practices performance management, job assignments, and mentoring programs. Her current research agenda explores these themes.

In one of her current projects, she explores how mentoring programs assist newly-appointed managers to better transition into the managerial ranks. This particular project is funded by a grant from CAHRS and she is currently searching for an organizational partner with whom to collaborate.

In another project, she examines how executives' work experiences, personality, and intellectual horsepower relate to their leadership effectiveness. Results show that a breadth of experience is positively related to leadership effectiveness after holding years of experience, personality and cognitive ability constant. She is working to expand this work by examining the


international experience of executives.

Another example of Professor Dragoni's work focuses on how leadership affects employee perceptions, motivations, learning behaviors and performance. Studied in a banking setting, she examines how leaders create specific types of work-group climates which in turn affect employee motivation and performance. Results indicate that a work-group climate for learning is related to an employee's motivation to learn only when an employee has a good relationship with his/her manager. Further, this

motivation to learn translates into an employees' engagement in learning behaviors only after they have worked with their manager for a substantial length of time.

Prior to academia, Professor Dragoni worked for eight years in both the non-profit and profit sectors, and most notably, consulted with and trained over 6,000 employees, managers, and executives on various human resource management topics, including: workplace diversity, discrimination and harassment issues, strategic planning, and human resource planning. She hopes that her involvement in CAHRS will provide similar opportunities to collaborate with organizations.

Dragoni's prior research has appeared in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and she has presented her work at numerous national conferences. She is a member of the Academy of Management, the American Psychological Association, and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. She received her Ph.D. in Business from the University of Maryland, her M.A. in Women's Studies and Public Policy from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and her B.A. in Business Management from Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Lisa lives on South Hill in Ithaca, New York, with her husband, Dan, and her daughter, Madelyn. She enjoys cooking, yoga, and spending time with friends and family. 

In The News



ILR & Johnson School teammates

MILR Student Leads Cornell Team to National Case Competition Victory – Anthony J. Figliolini ILR Class '08 and Johnson School teammates win \$20,000 first prize. A Cornell University team led by MILR- MBA student Anthony J. (AJ) Figliolini (third from left) took first place and a \$20,000 prize at the nation's first-ever MBA-level competition focusing on human capital challenge. The National MBA Human Capital Case Competition was held October 19-20 at the Vanderbilt Owen Graduate School of Management. The teams were judged by executives from General Electric and Deloitte, who provided the support and sponsorship for the competition, including the prizes for the winning teams. The competition pitted student groups from top graduate schools across the country, including Yale, Columbia, and UCLA, against each other in a shot-

gun-start format to address a real-world human capital issue and present solutions relevant in today's fast-paced global economy. This year's challenge focused on analyzing the competitive and labor market challenges being faced by a global legal services firm and making recommendations regarding talent management practices and their implementation. Other members of the team, sponsored by Cornell's Strategic HR, Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness (SHRLOE) club, include Puneet Bhatia, Rohit Kumar, Tania Stewart, Rhoda Yap (all MBA '08), and Javed Singha (MBA '09). "The winning teams demonstrated that there are two things all human capital solutions must have—an elegant human resources design coupled with a strong business case," said Neta Moye, Vanderbilt professor and adviser for Owen's Leadership Development Program. Figliolini said, "We believed that the client's development framework initiative was a step in the right direction toward organizational alignment with their strategy of building international client service. However, we felt that certain aspects of the initiative had to be modified to take into account regional differences and the decentralized nature of the client's organization. Also, we believed that implementing the framework in phases with a communications and measurement plan focused on addressing possible risks, and resistance was vital to ensuring the success of the change," he added. For more information on the National MBA Human Capital Case Competition, log onto www.humancapitalcasecompetition.com.

Discrimination in Organizations: An Organizational-Level Systems Perspective

Continued from Page One


employees, and in particular diverse employees (defined by Nishii as anyone not demographically part of the dominant culture, such as women, people with disabilities, racial and sexual minorities) must be given the tools by which to succeed, including competency training and frank, critical feedback.

Balanced exposure to a range of diverse workers is also essential to breaking stereotypes held by homogeneous groups. This is why integration of middle management is as important as the more visible representation of diverse members in the top management team. Companies that have demonstrated diverse representation in top management as well as a critical mass throughout the organization are most likely to achieve a diverse workforce that feels supported by and committed to the organization.

Some organizational structures are inherently more likely to erect barriers to access than others: large corporations with hierarchical job ladders in stable industries allow less mobility of traditionally marginalized groups, who tend to be segregated into job categories within the organization. Smaller companies that hire and promote frequently are in a better position to offer

opportunities. Similarly, companies that rely on informal networks for recruiting are less likely to hire minority applicants, since diverse groups operate typically outside the dominant social networks.

Finally, HR practices, particularly grievance procedures and benefits appropriate to a broad range of employees, can demonstrate the commitment of the organization to the needs of diverse workers, and prevent problems, real or perceived, from escalating to the legal system.

Nishii's literature review and discussion of the systems approach to overcoming organizational discrimination will appear as a chapter in the forthcoming book by R. L. Dipboye and A. Colella (eds.), *Psychological and Organizational Bases of Discrimination at Work* (Jossey-Bass Frontiers Series). Her coauthors are Michele J. Gelfand, Department of Psychology, University of Maryland; Jana L. Raver, Queens University; and Benjamin Schneider, Valtera and University of Maryland. 

For more information regarding this research please contact Lisa Nishii via email: ln5@cornell.edu, or Tel: (607)255-4431. This article references research from the CAHRS Working Paper #07-08, which can be found on our web site: www.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrs/paper.html.

CAHRS EVENTS CALENDAR 2008

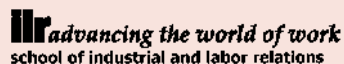
- CAHRS Executive Discussion..... January 24, 2008 Shanghai, China
Building a Sustainable HR Model for China
- CAHRS Working Group - February 29, 2008 New York, NY
Challenge of the CHRO
- CAHRS Spring International Meeting May 28 - 29, 2008 Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Growth in the Middle East and HR Capabilities
- ILR Orientation & CAHRS Executive Roundtables August 26, 2008 Ithaca, NY
- Fall Sponsor Meeting November 12 - 13, 2008 Ithaca, NY

*For more information, contact Jo Hagin at 607/255-9358 or email: jap7@cornell.edu,
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