



## Newsletter

### Letter from the President

*Jackie Ramage, SHRM-CP*

It's hard to believe we're already five months into 2023. Time flies, especially when you're working hard and having fun! Speaking of fun, I hope you had the chance to attend the 2023 OKHR conference, FUNHR, last month in Oklahoma City. It was a great opportunity to network and make new connections with HR professionals from across the state. I had the chance to hear Heidi Hartman, one of my favorite HR leaders, present "7 Secrets to a Successful and FUNHR Career Trajectory," and it got me thinking about all the amazing HR leaders who have made an impact on my career— Heidi included!



One of my main takeaways from Heidi's session was the importance of finding career mentors and advocates. Heidi explained that an advocate is someone who will say your name in a room you are not in. They will speak up and champion you, even when you're not there. Can you identify someone in your life who is your advocate? What about a mentor?

Reflecting on my own professional journey, I appreciate the leaders who have supported and guided me as advocates and mentors. I was lucky to see two of those people while I was in Oklahoma City— my first professional mentor, Ryan Bates, and my first HR supervisor, Tommi Ledoux (photo above). I truly believe if I didn't have Ryan and Tommi as HR mentors and advocates early in my career, I wouldn't be the HR Professional I am today.

My professional career began as an HR Intern at the Department of Human Services (DHS). When I interviewed for the position, I was completing my undergraduate degree in Human Relations from OU. I was a bundle of nervous excitement meeting the Director of HR Operations and the team lead, who happened to be Ryan. After the interview, I wrote a handwritten thank you note to the director, and I found out later that's why I was offered the job— they

actually made a second internship role for me!

Shortly after joining the team, I began closely working with Ryan. Although he was my “assigned” mentor, he quickly became a trusted advisor in both work and life. I shadowed him for several months at the start of my internship, and acquired invaluable HR experience. Ryan taught me the importance of leveraging self-awareness— I could still be my friendly, outgoing, bubbly self, but I needed to learn how to interact with others in every type of setting. Ryan, the Deputy Director of HR for Recruiting and Retention at DHS, is still one of the most influential HR mentors in my life. I will be forever grateful he took me under his wing over 12 years ago.

My first supervisor, Tommi, was a genuine advocate in my career. She was my role model and I aspired to follow in her leadership footsteps. She is an expert in managing even the most complex HR scenarios with ease. Tommi emphasized the importance of seeking multiple solutions while tackling any problem, and instilled in me a sense of curiosity. She was always advocating for me and supported my career growth from a novice intern to one of the HR Program Managers on her team. Today, Tommi holds the highest position in Human Resources at DHS, as the Director of Human Resources.

The reason for sharing my experience is that having a mentor and advocate early in my career played a crucial role in my growth and development. As HR leaders, we often face challenging workplace situations, and without someone to confide in, it can be overwhelming (to say the least). I've always been fascinated by mentorship and view myself as a perpetual mentee who can always learn something new from a more seasoned professional. Only recently have I started to see myself as a mentor when I interact with recent college graduates who are interested in HR and seek my advice and guidance.

As your current president, I have the privilege of leading an outstanding initiative that has proven to be highly effective within the Oklahoma City HR Society (OCHRS). The initiative is called EMERGE, and I am thrilled to have the exceptional Raksha Rao as its leader, someone who is even more devoted to mentorship than I am! In case you are not yet acquainted with EMERGE, here are the particulars:

EMERGE is a mentoring platform that brings experienced and emerging HR professionals together in a structured setting. Through EMERGE, you will meet people you can lean on for the rest of your career.

- It is designed for emerging HR professionals who will learn from and build quality relationships with seasoned HR experts.
- It is designed for HR experts who want to guide and share knowledge with the next generation of HR professionals.

### **How does EMERGE facilitate mentorship?**

Through group mentoring cohort-style monthly sessions, of course! As a mentee, get ready to experience:

- Company Tours
- Speed Mentoring Sessions
- Career Growth Sessions
- Continuous Knowledge Sharing

### **How do I get involved?**

Since this is a cohort-style session, mentee and mentor intake happens seasonally. We are thrilled to introduce that Season #1 EMERGE @ TAHRA (June 2023 - Oct 2023) has reached capacity (article below). If you are interested in learning more about the program and chat about your involvement next season, email us at [raksharao17@gmail.com](mailto:raksharao17@gmail.com).

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### **May Program Meeting**

Wednesday, May 17 |11:15am - 1pm|  
Tulsa Country Club



### **Active Shooter: The ThreatShield 5 Approach of Prevention, Mitigation, and Defense**

*Presented by Chief Tim D. Keck, ret.*

As violence continues to rise, HR professionals find themselves reluctantly on the front line of this crisis. Yet, training and education in how to manage such a difficult problem has been ineffective at best. Until now. Developed by experts, this seminar teaches you what every person in human resources needs to know to keep themselves and their people safe.

At this program you will:

- Discover the critical missing element in most training of this type.
- Identify the two things that make you more vulnerable to an attack and how to fix them.
- Learn the unexpected element that HR and all leaders must employ to insure early warning.

Even if you have had training on this topic in the past, you will learn a radically different approach, taught by an expert, and illustrated with true stories from his own experience. You see, Chief Keck's agency was once the victim of an active shooter when a murderer shot the desk officer and took over the police station.

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## May Learning Lab

Thursday, May 25 |2pm - 4pm|

***This lab will be IN PERSON! Location will be announced soon!***

## **Beyond EAP: The Why and How of Improving Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing**

*Presented by Sue Mosher*

Never has the value proposition been greater for effective employee wellbeing programs. It is not news that the Big P has transformed the way we live and work. For most, the pandemic was no friend to our mental health and wellbeing and, while we are slowly recovering, rates of mental health disorders continue to be significantly higher than the 20% pre-pandemic levels.

The good news is that it has brought our struggles out of the shadows and has reduced its stigma. Employees are now more willing to reach out for help for their chronic stress, anxiety, depression and loneliness. In this learning lab, we will explore ways to update and expand company strategies for improving employee wellbeing.

By investing in effective wellbeing programs, we create a workplace culture that fosters resilience, creativity, and innovation while demonstrating our commitment to the health and happiness of our employees.

Sign up!

# EMERGE

We are just weeks away from the EMERGE Season #1 kick off in Tulsa! Over

40 wonderful humans applied to be part of the program to make a difference in HR community and we are SUPER excited to welcome the below mentors and mentees for our FIRST ever EMERGE Tulsa Session!

Wanna learn more about the program and chat about your involvement next season? Email us at raksharao17@gmail.com!

**Mentors:**

Carolyn Dickerson  
Melissa Lockhart  
Christine Beldner  
Scott Buffington  
Angela Kraft  
Shelly Spriggs  
Kristen Mansfield  
Angela Bellville  
Cynthia Simmons Taylor  
Jackie Ramage  
Heidi Hartman  
Barbara Abercrombie  
Kristi Spaethe  
Jackie Hicks

**Mentees:**

Melissa Scott  
Rebecka Jimenez  
Rhonda Madewell  
Shannon Parsons  
Tracy Scott  
Ashlyn Garrison  
Megan Chapin  
Allison Sellers  
Lyn Stewart  
Mark Burkholder  
Ryan Dunlap

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## **Enforceability of Non-Competition Agreements Between Employers Less Than Certain Under Oklahoma Law**

*By Courtney Bru, Esq., McAfee & Taft*

Most Oklahoma employers are familiar with the fact that the state has one of the strictest laws in the nation as it pertains to non-compete agreements between employers and employees. But what about non-competition or non-solicitation agreements between two employers?

### ***We won't if you don't***

While not routinely used in the course of ongoing company operations, there is a time and place for them. For example, these agreements are commonly executed before negotiations regarding potential mergers or acquisitions. They are also often included in contracts between employers and staffing agencies. Often, they contain non-solicitation or no-poaching provisions that prohibit either employer from hiring the employees of the other.

While the general enforceability of traditional non-compete agreements between a company and an employee is relatively straightforward in Oklahoma, the enforceability of non-solicitation or no-poaching agreements between two employers is less than certain and subject to debate.

### ***Defining the terms***

As an initial matter, it is important to recognize that these are not non-solicitation agreements between an employer and employee. As such, these

provisions are not enforceable under OKLA. STAT. tit. 15, § 219(B), which states:

A contract or contractual provision which prohibits an employee or independent contractor of a person or business from soliciting, directly or indirectly, actively or inactively, the employees or independent contractors of that person or business to become employees or independent contractors of another person or business shall not be construed as a restraint from exercising a lawful profession, trade or business of any kind.

These agreements, however, *may* be enforceable under Okla. Stat. tit. 15, § 217 or Okla. Stat. tit. 79, § 203. Both of these statutes generally prohibit contracts that impose restraints on the exercise of a lawful profession, trade or business. It's important to note, though, that both have been interpreted by Oklahoma courts as prohibiting only *unreasonable* restraints.

### ***Just the facts***

The question of whether a provision imposes an unreasonable restraint is highly fact-intensive. As such, Oklahoma courts apply the “rule of reason” test, which involves consideration of the relevant market, the effect of the restraint on competition within the market, whether the effect is anti-competitive, and whether there are benefits that outweigh that effect. The analysis often involves evidence of the nature of the competing businesses, the relevant labor pool, the experience of the particular individuals involved, etc. Because these questions are resolved only by consideration of specific facts at issue in a particular dispute, these claims are typically not resolved by motions to dismiss. Motions for summary judgment regarding these types of disputes are also routinely denied.

### ***Takeaway***

As of yet, we have no definitive pronouncement of applicable law that would preclude the inclusion or attempted enforcement of these types of provisions. Including provisions like this in agreements could certainly deter a contracting party from engaging in the purportedly prohibited behavior. Employers are advised to obtain advice of counsel regarding the likelihood of enforcement prior to taking steps to address breach of these provisions.

### **Stay on Top of the Latest HR Trends at SHRM23**

As an HR Professional, you know firsthand how important it is to stay on top of the latest insights, practices, and compliance requirements in your field. At



#SHRM23, hear from hundreds of experts on the most urgent issues in HR, connect with thousands of your peers, and leave prepared for the future.

<https://shrm.co/7zao1>



## Welcome new members!

Angie Hess - Youth Services of Tulsa  
Sarai Fugett - JCL Service Company LLC  
Ryan Dunlap - Greenleaf Power LLC  
Julie Meyer - PeopleStrategy  
Olivia Williams - NORDAM  
Matthew Dodson - NORDAM  
Angela Bellville - Cox Communications

## Mark your calendar!

**May 17** - Program Meeting  
**May 25** - Learning Lab  
  
**June 11-14** - SHRM Annual Conference  
**June 29** - Learning Lab  
  
**July 19** - Program Meeting

July 27 - Learning Lab

There will not be a newsletter in June or July. Watch your email for TAHRA events and updates!

Calendar

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