

**NASPE Innovative State Human Resource Management Program**

**2019 “OneHR: The Future Starts With Us” Conference**

**Reid Walsh, Deputy Secretary for Human Resources and Management**

**Pennsylvania Office of Administration | 110 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**Ph: 717-787-8191 | Fax: N/A | [vwalsh@pa.gov](mailto:vwalsh@pa.gov)**

The “OneHR: The Future Starts With Us” conference brought together nearly 1,000 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania human resources employees for the first time to hear from industry leaders discussing the latest trends, topics, resources and tools in the profession.

Since the commonwealth adopted a shared services delivery model in July 2017, employees across the state have needed to adapt to a new consolidated organizational structure and, in some cases, changes to job duties, work teams and supervisory relationships.

The one-day conference was organized in partnership with Harrisburg University and featured industry leaders including Deloitte, NEOGOV, LinkedIn, SAS, Microsoft, Kronos, Accenture, SAP, KPMG and internal commonwealth experts that presented on a broad range of topics relevant to our workforce. These included hiring trends, making the most of technology, coping with a rapidly changing workplace and emerging issues in HR.

Attendance at the conference, with more than 600 in-person attendees and nearly 400 more streaming the sessions live, drastically exceeded expectations and post-event metrics show the event was exceedingly well-received by attendees.

**1. Please provide a brief description of this program.**

The “OneHR: The Future Starts With Us” conference brought together nearly 1,000 commonwealth human resources employees, both in person and virtually, to share ideas, network and learn about current and emerging issues in the field of HR, including hiring trends, making the most of technology, coping with a rapidly changing workplace, LGBTQ best practices and social media.

Whether attendees were new to the field or seasoned professionals, there was something for everyone at the conference. Commonwealth staff worked with Harrisburg University to identify topics of value to our employees, based on the type of work they perform and current workplace issues. Requests for proposals were then sent to vendor partners and other industry leaders.

**2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?**

Planning for this inaugural conference began in September of 2018. The conference took place on March 5, 2019.

**3. Why was this program created (what problem(s) or issues does it address)?**

Prior to June 2017, most state agencies staffed and funded their own human resources offices to support their operations. With the adoption of a shared services delivery model, employees have been adjusting to working in a consolidated structure to support multiple agencies. While effective, this model can leave little opportunity for employees to come together in one place to hear from leadership and to connect with colleagues from other parts of the state. Many HR

employees also identified strongly with the missions of the single agency that they had supported previously. In addition to the professional development objectives of the conference, it was also an opportunity to begin to create a new feeling of cohesion amongst previously siloed employees.

#### **4. Why is this program a new and creative method?**

This event allowed the commonwealth, for the first time, to bring together our HR professionals from across the state. For those who could not attend in person, a livestreaming option allowed 389 additional employees to participate virtually in the conference. Many of the sessions were recorded and can be viewed [online](#). The conference also featured an employee recognition ceremony to recognize employees for providing outstanding service in HR. The event was also open to private sector HR professionals, 67 of which attended, creating additional opportunities for networking and cross-pollination of ideas and practices. Finally, training course credit was also offered through the HR Certification Institute and Society for Human Resource Management.

#### **5. What was the program's start up costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)**

The only quantifiable startup cost for the conference was associated with transportation. In order to accommodate parking for employees traveling from out of town, remote parking and bussing to the downtown event was provided and cost \$988. Conference planning services were provided by existing staff at Harrisburg University and communications staff at the

commonwealth. Additionally, the conference took advantage of Harrisburg University's existing registration, livestreaming, and in-room technologies.

**6. What are the program's operational costs?**

The total cost for commonwealth employees to attend the conference was approximately \$17,000.

**7. How is this program funded?**

Costs were funded by operational funds earmarked for training. The conference was also sponsored by LinkedIn and the Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union.

**8. Did this program originate in your state?**

Please see question 9.

**9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If yes, how does this program differ?**

While there appear to be conferences organized by non-governmental HR organizations in other states, our research was unable to identify a similar state-sponsored and state-planned conference elsewhere.

**10. How do you measure the success of this program?**

Success was measured in a variety of ways, including attendance and a post-event survey. A total of 602 commonwealth employees attended the event, exceeding the goal of 500 in-person attendees. An additional 389 commonwealth employees participated via livestream and 67 private sector HR professionals attended in-person. Respondents to the post-event survey

gave an average session rating of 4.05 (out of 5). Comments included that the best part of the event was “...the opportunity to come together as the HR community,” “continued learning from the sessions and networking with other HR professionals,” “receiving updates on the current climate in human resources and getting advice on how to deal with constant change,” “receiving information on new technologies and how they can play a role in improving work processes and communication in the workplace,” and “recognition of change factors within the current HR workplace and providing tools to manage these factors.”

**11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?**

While this was the inaugural year of the conference, planning has already begun with Harrisburg University for the 2020 event. We are considering adding additional tracks to accommodate employee interests and are taking into consideration employee session suggestions from the event survey for next year.