

A warm hello to all the holders of the Rutgers Ph.D. in IRHR!

I hope your new years are starting well. As some of you know, I became Ph.D. Director this year. David Finegold, our new SMLR Dean as of last year, suggested that it would be good to establish contact with all of our Ph.D. alums, and I heartily agreed. I had fun searching the web for some of you, seeing many of your pictures and how well you've aged (my own hair keeps getting grayer and, I hope, more distinguished). We have three specific reasons for emailing you:

1. We want to add you to the distribution list for the Dean's SMLR weekly updates. Each week David summarizes news in the school, including faculty and student accomplishments along with significant meetings, seminars, programmatic initiatives, etc. There's a lot going on. This update goes to a wide variety of people outside SMLR, including a number of company, union, and government officials. If you don't want to receive it, contact Joanne Mangels jmangels@smlr.rutgers.edu.
2. We would like you to send any news about your own accomplishments, transitions, etc., both now and as they happen in the future. I want to keep a database of all the things our Ph.D. alums are doing, and David can include your news in his updates to show the world how great our grads are.
3. It could be useful and fun to have a meeting of Rutgers Ph.D. alums at the professional conferences, particularly Academy of Management, LERA, and SIOP. Please let me know when you plan to attend a conference and I'll see if we can arrange a Rutgers dinner/party/movie night/whatever, including any Rutgers faculty who are attending. It would be fun to socialize, and could be useful to network. I'll send out queries before these conferences to see who may be going and what might be arranged.

Let me give you a brief update on the Ph.D. program. It's going well: there are 21 of you who have graduated so far, and we expect 3-4 more this year. We have 5 new students this year, which is the largest new class since the very first class admitted back in 1990. We're stepping up our recruitment efforts, led by Stan Gully, and are exploring new funding sources so we can hopefully continue to admit 3-5 per year and create larger cohorts than in the past. One exciting development is that we're part of a new consortium of the leading IR/HR programs that includes M.I.T., Cornell, Illinois, Michigan State, and Minnesota. We're taking advantage of new technologies to develop joint classes taught by videoconference. This next semester, students from all of the programs will take a seminar led by Tom Kochan at M.I.T. This effort, led by Charles Heckscher at Rutgers, may evolve into a joint curriculum where students can be exposed to top scholars at all the schools, and help redefine the field of IR/HR education. Along with Stan and Charles, our Ph.D. committee now includes David Bensman, Hui Liao, and student representative Bill Castellano.

SMLR more generally is doing well, with increasing exposure under David's energetic leadership. Our recent faculty hires include Janice Fine in LSER, who is a highly-regarded authority on immigration; Patrick McKay in HRM, who is a key figure in the field of workplace diversity and performance; and Sue Schurman who founded and led the National Labor College at the AFL-CIO. We have a number of new programs in place or being developed, including a Workforce Diversity Institute, an Executive Master's in Human Resource Leadership taught around the globe, and a major multi-year contract to improve the workforce development system in New Jersey biosciences. The Center for Human Resource Strategy, led by Paula Caligiuri, has been highly successful in attracting participation from senior HR executives in

major companies, and is supporting and involving Ph.D. students (www.chrs.rutgers.edu). The Center for Women and Work, led by Eileen Appelbaum, has been getting substantial public and policy attention for a wide variety of projects on women's leadership, paid family leave, work-life balance, and other topics (www.cww.rutgers.edu). Eileen, who was the Research Director at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. before coming to Rutgers, testified this past year before a U.S. Senate committee on increasing economic opportunity for working families. See the general SMLR website at www.smlr.rutgers.edu for other projects and news.

On a personal note, apart from the professional news, I would love to hear any other news from you. Any marriages? Children? Seen any good movies lately? Any and all news welcome. As for myself, I'm keeping hectically busy as usual. Richard Freeman, Joseph Blasi, and I have spent the last 6 years coordinating a project that has collected 41,000+ employee surveys in companies with employee ownership, profit sharing, gainsharing, and/or broad-based stock options—which we refer to collectively as “shared capitalism.” The first round of analyses are appearing in a book later this year. Joseph and I have testified in Congress a couple of times in the past several years about employee ownership and stock options. In the disability field, I'm working with my colleague and spouse Lisa Schur on a study of disability and corporate culture funded by the U.S. Dept. of Labor, in which we're doing case studies of large companies to examine barriers and facilitators to employment for people with disabilities. As I've said before, if you put an economist in a wheelchair, you've got to expect studies of the economic effects of being in a wheelchair!

I look forward to keeping in touch, and finding out what's going on with each of you. Have a great 2008!

Doug

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