



THE POWER OF HR AND LEADERSHIP

Gala event recognizes outstanding HR practice

"What a slick event, this is like the Academy Awards," was one of the comments overheard as people headed out of the Met on Wednesday, April 9th, following the 12th Annual HRMAM Excellence in Leadership Awards.

Leadership was a key theme for the evening, beginning as Chair Elect Roma Thorlakson recognized the role that HRMAM members play in ensuring that HR professionals are viewed as strategic leaders in public policy and private sector innovation and make a significant impact across diverse communities throughout Manitoba.



Health, Wellness and Safe Workplace Award:
Kim Palmer, Maple Leaf Consumer Foods with
Judy Murphy, Safety Services Manitoba (Sponsor)

Everything about this year's event was a clear reflection of the professionalism, focus and attention to detail that the nominees and award recipients demonstrated in the projects they advanced in their organizations throughout 2013, in order to be considered for an award.

Take Maple Leaf Consumer Foods, award recipients in the Health, Wellness and Safe Workplace category, who reduced the number of workplace injuries, despite hiring almost 400 new people into a workplace that requires repetitive tasks, with large, sharp equipment and an environment that is 40°C.

Or the HR Department at St. Amant, in the Labour and Employee Relations Category, who brought leadership together with union leaders to work toward their shared goal. "We all want our employees to have a great place to work," said Rose Schwartz, Director, HR Services, adding, "the process has been a great success, but we wouldn't have been able to do any of it without the willingness and desire of our President and CEO, and our Vice-President and CFO."



Labour & Employee Relations Award:
Rose Schwartz, St. Amant with Shannon Leppky,
Manitoba Public Insurance (Sponsor)



Learning & Development Award: Jamie Gerlach,
Steinbach Credit Union with Dr. Kathleen Matheos,
University of Manitoba Extended Education (Sponsor)

The support of leadership is a theme that carried throughout the evening. Jamie Gerlach, Manager HR from Steinbach Credit Union, in accepting their Learning and Development Award, said, "It is an honour to be nominated with other great organizations. Our successful program was the result of the direct involvement of HR and Leadership."

In handing out the Organizational Engagement Award, Debra Jonasson-Young of People First HR Services, said it all: "This is a tremendous lineup of exceptional stories." But it was National Leasing who took the award home for their process in amalgamating the Lease Administration and Sales Administration to form the Business Coordination Department. Their results, simply put, are that employees are happy, therefore the client experience is smoother, both of which positively impact the bottom line.



Organizational Engagement Award:
Elaine Sivilay, National Leasing with Debra Jonasson-
Young, People First HR Services (Sponsor)



The City of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Youth Strategy took the Workforce Planning and Talent Management Award for engaging over 50,000 Aboriginal Youth, using what Rhonda Forgues, Manager, Aboriginal Relations Division, describes as a 'wraparound approach'.

The video introduction of the HRMAM Scholarship nominees made it very clear that the selection committee had their work cut out for them, with three outstanding individuals in consideration.

Workforce Planning and Talent Management Award:
Perri Jorek, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries (Sponsor)
with Rhonda Forgues, City of Winnipeg (Recipient)

Shola Aladegbaiye spoke passionately about her love of the profession and working to help people advance their careers. Brittany Koop talked about her pride in being a part of HR and her desire to represent a high standard of excellence, and the scholarship recipient, Dale Camuyong in accepting said, "I'm truly honoured and inspired to be among you here tonight."



HRMAM Scholarship Award: Dale Camuyong,
Asper School of Business Student with Roma
Thorlakson, Chair Elect of HRMAM



There were two nominees for the Rising Star Award, Melissa Holder from Enns Brothers and Rebecca Sisler from CanadInns, both of whom have created outstanding momentum in their careers through focussed planning and engagement, smart program development and active volunteer portfolios. Rebecca Sisler took the award home, though, saying, "for me, this has been a process of building trust, so it's really important to believe in what you're doing."

Rising Star Award: Rebecca Sisler, Canad Inns (Recipient)
with Sylvie Albert and Kim Loeb of University of Winnipeg
Professional, Applied and Continuing Education (Sponsor)

Finally, it was time for recognition of the Senior HR Leader of the Year.

In her role as Executive Director in the Civil Service Commissions, Erin Polcyn Sailer has led change in the Provincial Civil Service for years; most recently, she has seen them through the successful amalgamation of all HR functions for Manitoba Government Departments into a central service.

Nicole Stewart created an HR Department at Payworks Inc, where there was none. Nicole worked through the creation of job evaluations and descriptions, recruitment, compensation and goal-planning, workforce planning, organizational development and more, bringing a high level of integrity and expertise to the role.

But it was Bev Sterling of CanadInns who received the award, for going from a one-person shop serving 1600 employees, to developing and overseeing a vibrant HR service that supports more than 3500 employees across multiple unionized and non-unionized sites, and increasing employee engagement to reduce staff turnover by 14%. "As much as I am adverse to accepting anything with the title 'senior'," she said, "I am thrilled to accept this award and want to thank everyone at CanadInns for their support."



Senior HR Leader of the Year Award – Jane Emslie, Manitoba Blue Cross (Sponsor) with Bev Sterling, CanadInns (Recipient)

The Excellence in Leadership Gala Event is the direct result of the volunteer work of the Gala Planning Committee, chaired by Nicole Stewart and the Awards Evaluation Committee, Chaired by Sandra Conrad.

"We also need to recognize our sponsors, as this event wouldn't be possible without them," added Roma Thorlakson. "Finally, we want to thank all the volunteers and the staff of HRMAM for the time and expertise they put forward to create this beautiful evening for us, every year."

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