OVERVIEW:

The SHRM Pinnacle Award Program, an annual recognition program honoring the highest achievements in affiliate development, celebrates contributions in three awarded categories: Serving the Professional, Advancing the HR Profession and Enhancing the SHRM Community. Each year, SHRM chapters and state councils are encouraged to apply for a Pinnacle Award, which recognizes innovative projects created and implemented by SHRM affiliates. For more information and to get involved, please visit the SHRM Pinnacle Award Program website.

SHRM affiliates strongly committed to “Better Workplaces. Better World. Better Together.” in creative ways during the unprecedented times of 2020. From pioneering various educational programs as a safe space to navigate the uncertainty of this year to helping increase the workforce readiness of underserved and underemployed populations, HR leaders across the country created partnerships to lift up their communities.
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2020 WINNERS:

SERVING THE PROFESSIONAL

Small Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Tri-State SHRM (Texas)

**Program Title:** “Advancing Local HR Professionals”

**Description:** As a result of a chapter-wide strategic planning session in 2018, Tri-State SHRM members created a two-part chapter strategy to increase the relevancy and awareness of the HR profession in the community, to help build HR skills within local businesses, and to support the growth of their local SHRM chapter and SHRM membership. Tri-State SHRM partnered with SHRM to deliver “SHRM Essentials of Human Resources”—a 12-hour SHRM course providing quality, basic HR training for area HR employees of small to midsize businesses. The program grew community business leaders’ knowledge of basic HR practices and functions, and provided attendees with resources to determine what is needed from HR to support their businesses.

Medium and Large Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** HRA of Greater Oak Brook (Illinois)

**Program Title:** “HRA of Greater Oak Brook Mentoring Program”

**Description:** To increase engagement with tenured members and strengthen local college relations through more value-added services, HRA of Greater Oak Brook implemented the “HRA of Greater Oak Brook Mentoring Program.” The program, which was designed to facilitate relationships between career HR professionals looking to give back and younger HR practitioners looking to expand their knowledge outside of their workplace, carefully matched 25 pairs of participating mentors and mentees. The mentorship program resulted in avenues for career development and increased awareness around SHRM and SHRM certification.

Mega and Super Mega Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Chicago SHRM (Illinois)

**Program Title:** “Leading Through a Racial Crisis”

**Description:** Chicago SHRM pioneered for over 300 attendees a five-part education series, “Leading Through a Racial Crisis,” that provided the support, education, opportunity for healing and a path forward that the Chicago community needed after the murder of George Floyd and the national demands for racial equity. The series has paved the way for conversations on allyship to answer the question of what HR can and should do to respond to racism and inequity in the workplace. It has created a community where voices can be heard and stories can be shared, and has opened hearts, enlightened minds and sparked actions. All proceeds from the program benefited a local social justice organization.

State Council Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** California State Council of SHRM

**Program Title:** “CalSHRM Education Series”

**Description:** As a result of its 2019 strategic plan, California State Council of SHRM created a strategic initiative to establish itself as a SHRM Education Partner. The initiative was framed around four key areas: 1) financial resilience and sustainability; 2) infrastructure creation and implementation; 3) curriculum and program offerings; and 4) volunteer leadership and instructor accountability. Because all aspects of the initiative’s goals were exceeded, California State Council of SHRM can now focus its efforts on sustainability and building a synergy of powerful collaboration.
ADVANCING THE HR PROFESSION

Small Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Stateline SHRM (Illinois)
Program Title: “STEP Forward”
Description: Stateline SHRM developed a unique program called “STEP (Stateline Transforming Employment Potential) Forward” to help both job seekers and employers in the community. Through the program, 20% of Stateline SHRM members were involved in workshops aimed at destigmatizing job seekers with a criminal background, providing 64 job seekers with guidance, feedback and encouragement while they worked to re-enter the job market. The program successfully linked two sides of the hiring equation, providing education and resources to each.

Medium and Large Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Charlotte Area SHRM (North Carolina)
Program Title: “Library Outreach Program”
Description: To help increase the workforce readiness of local unemployed, underemployed and underserved citizens, Charlotte Area SHRM partnered with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library to provide access to life-changing information to those in need through a professional, friendly and open environment—at no cost to the chapter or the local library system. Charlotte Area SHRM successfully conducted 23 workshops in public libraries across the county and has served nearly 400 people in need of HR expertise to date.

Mega and Super Mega Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Louisville SHRM (Kentucky)
Program Title: “Better Workplaces, Better World (BW2)”
Description: Louisville SHRM, in partnership with community leaders and the University of Louisville, launched “Better Workplaces, Better World (BW2)—a citywide research project aimed at demystifying and quantifying what matters most to the Greater Louisville’s workforce. The research was framed to answer questions regarding: 1) which benefits and amenities matter most to employees; 2) which aspects of workplace culture are most vital; 3) how satisfied the workforce is in these areas; and 4) how these insights shift by demographic. Louisville SHRM organized a free, virtual data-reveal event to make the research available to the public, as well as unveiled a data dashboard, created in partnership with the Workforce Cabinet, that presented the research findings.

State Council Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Kentucky SHRM Council
Program Title: “Bus to Business: Uniting Kentucky Schools, Employers and Human Resource Leaders”
Description: To combat the struggle Kentucky’s business community felt regarding a workforce shortage, the Kentucky SHRM Council partnered with the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce to create the “Bus to Business” initiative as a way to connect businesses with students in local communities. Students in kindergarten through 12th grade were given the opportunity to explore future careers while local employers and HR leaders were able to speak directly to their potential future workforce. During the first year of the program in 2019, 30 schools visited 32 businesses in 24 counties statewide, resulting in over 1,200 students impacted.
ENHANCING THE SHRM COMMUNITY

Small Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Sussex-Warren HRMA (New Jersey)

**Program Title:** “To Be or Not to Be, That WAS the Question. It’s Not Anymore!”

**Description:** The Sussex-Warren HRMA rose to the challenge of making its chapter more impactful in the areas of branding and marketing, membership, programming, partnerships, and chapter administration. Through the launch of several successful activities and initiatives in these areas, Sussex-Warren HRMA has thrived, with a 400% increase in social media engagement through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram, as well as a 21% increase in members. Sussex-Warren HRMA continues to retain 96% of its existing members and has seen a 563% increase in meeting attendance.

Medium and Large Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Prince William SHRM (Virginia)

**Program Title:** “Resilience”

**Description:** Prince William SHRM embraced the theme of resilience during this unprecedented year in three ways: 1) refocusing and doubling its monthly programming to provide more options for its members to earn recertification credits; 2) diversifying its programming by adding content directly related to COVID-19 and social injustice; and 3) rethinking fundraising efforts to benefit the local community. Prince William SHRM led a coalition, together with Loudoun, Northern Virginia, Dulles and Fauquier/Culpeper SHRM chapters, to create a regional invitational letter explaining the value of joining a local chapter, resulting in a 12% increase in membership for the region.

Mega and Super Mega Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Greater Cincinnati HRA (Ohio)

**Program Title:** “Introduction of Cerkl Artificial Intelligence into GCHRA Chapter Communications”

**Description:** Greater Cincinnati HRA introduced a new weekly newsletter alongside the launch of an innovative member engagement tool through Cerkl. The member engagement tool allowed for automatically personalized communication based on the interests of each individual in an audience across all potential communication touch points. Getting to the heart of member engagement, the newsletter allowed users to easily log in, update contact information, register for any of the month’s programs and customize the type of weekly content received by the member. As a result, Greater Cincinnati HRA can move the focus of its efforts to program content, social media promotion and awareness, and general operations.

State Council Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Oregon SHRM

**Program Title:** “Fiscally and Financially Responsible HR Practices”

**Description:** Through its strategic financial planning over the last three years, Oregon SHRM was able to take the necessary steps to set a financial foundation and to build its financial reserves, ensuring preparation to weather any storm ahead. Oregon SHRM’s refined financial planning tactics shaped its decisions, including those surrounding what initiatives it supports, and increased its understanding of the expenses of its state conference. In two years, the chapter’s reserves have been funded by 80% and will be fully funded by the end of 2020—two years ahead of the intended schedule. As a result of its focus, Oregon SHRM has been able to effectively pivot to meet the unprecedented challenges of 2020.
2020 FINALISTS:
SERVING THE HR PROFESSIONAL

Small Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Volusia/Flagler SHRM (Florida)
**Program Title:** “The Sky’s the Limit”
**Description:** In its tradition of “Cultivate, Connect, Contribute,” Volusia/Flagler SHRM gathered important information on virtual HR programming and communicated this information to chapter members and over 1,900 local professionals through a single resource.

Medium and Large Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Rhode Island SHRM
**Program Title:** “The COVID-19 Resource Center”
**Description:** Recognizing an unmet need among HR professionals for simplicity and clarity during the COVID-19 global pandemic, Rhode Island SHRM created its own COVID-19 resource center.

**Affiliate Name:** SHRM Guam Chapter
**Program Title:** “SHRM Certification Shines Even from 7,000 Miles Away”
**Description:** In order to build confidence and validate credibility in those who represent the HR profession in Guam, the SHRM Guam Chapter created the “SHRM Guam Certification Program,” which has helped create opportunities for its members by demonstrating the value of SHRM certification, stressing the importance of being certified and encouraging its members to become certified.

Mega and Super Mega Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Sacramento Area HRA (California)
**Program Title:** “Cultivating Member Engagement, Retention and New Member Acquisition Through Active Volunteering and Donation Drives at Women’s Empowerment”
**Description:** Striving to increase member engagement and retention, Sacramento Area HRA partnered with Women’s Empowerment, a local nonprofit helping to reduce the number of homeless children who go on to become homeless adults. The partnership gave its members an avenue to actively help alleviate social problems and offer resources that can guide and play a pivotal role in keeping families intact.

**Affiliate Name/State:** Twin Cities SHRM (Minnesota)
**Program Title:** “Twin Cities SHRM Podcast: What the HR!”
**Description:** With the rising popularity of podcasts, Twin Cities SHRM wanted to use that medium to provide relevant and timely content to local HR subject matter experts—while also reaching a broader audience—to benefit both members and nonmembers.
State Council Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Garden State Council SHRM (New Jersey)

**Program Title:** “Second Chance Certification Program”

**Description:** To help give professionals in the community a better chance of becoming SHRM-certified, Garden State Council SHRM held a free statewide “second chance” class for anyone who previously had not passed and desired to retake the certification exam.

**Affiliate Name/State:** HR Virginia SHRM State Council

**Program Title:** “HR Virginia Taking College/Student Relations to New Heights”

**Description:** HR Virginia SHRM State Council provided new experiential learning opportunities for students, resulting in the creation of the “HRVA Student Advisory Council”—an organization striving to expand student competition, increase student attendance at SHRM’s Annual Conference and provide students direct access to HR professionals.

**Affiliate Name/State:** Kansas State Council of SHRM

**Program Title:** “KSSHRM COVID-19 Webinar & Discussion Series”

**Description:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kansas State Council of SHRM implemented a series of free webinars offering HR professionals the opportunity to learn from and connect with subject matter experts sharing vital information and guidance.
ADVANCING THE HR PROFESSION

Small Category:

Affiliate Name/State: HRA of the Twin Tiers/New York State SHRM

Program Title: “Human Resources Concentration Development for Elmira College”

Description: Beginning in 2018, the HRA, in collaboration with Elmira College, successfully undertook an initiative to develop an accredited Human Resources Concentration in the Business Management & Administration undergraduate program at Elmira College.

Affiliate Name/State: Licking County HRMA (Ohio)

Program Title: “Community Improvement Expo”

Description: To help foster lasting relationships between professionals and the community in which they live and work, Licking County HRMA partnered with several local affiliates to create the first “Community Involvement Expo.” The event brought together 36 local nonprofit agencies and Licking County community professionals to connect on hiring opportunities in order to keep local talent local.

Medium and Large Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Cedar Valley SHRM (Iowa)

Program Title: “Elevating Our Profession with Brand Awareness, Recognition and Community Partnerships”

Description: Through its support of local students with a mentorship program and community partnerships, as well as its support of the Getting Talent Back to Work SHRM initiative, Cedar Valley SHRM increased brand awareness, reputation and engagement with the chapter, ultimately helping to elevate the HR profession.

Affiliate Name/State: Fox Valley SHRM (Wisconsin)

Program Title: “Better Than Before”

Description: As a result of making diversity and inclusion a strategic priority for its chapter, Fox Valley SHRM partnered with NEW North, a local economic development organization, to create the publication Better Than Before: Inclusion & Diversity in Northeast Wisconsin. The publication highlighted the important work of local companies leading the way in diversity and inclusion efforts.

Mega and Super Mega Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Greenville SHRM (South Carolina)

Program Title: “Vets@Work”

Description: Through its “Vets@Work” program, Greenville SHRM improved employment outcomes for underemployed and unemployed veterans by identifying gaps in HR professionals’ understanding of veterans, as well as veterans’ understanding of the civilian workforce, and delivered programs that bridged those gaps.

Affiliate Name/State: Richmond SHRM (Virginia)


Description: To successfully engage with early-career HR professionals and recent graduates in an effort to ensure the health of its organization, Richmond SHRM created a multiyear initiative, “Rising Professionals,” which expanded in 2020 to include the “Career Launch Pad Series.”
State Council Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** Illinois State Council of SHRM  
**Program Title:** “Illinois SHRM Serves Our Veterans and Communities by Giving Back”  
**Description:** The Illinois State Council of SHRM formed the Workforce Diversity & Inclusion Committee to collectively brainstorm programs and initiatives that could benefit from the SHRM Foundation’s Veterans at Work grants and certificate program.

**Affiliate Name/State:** Delaware State Council of SHRM  
**Program Title:** “Veteran Unity Project”  
**Description:** Understanding the importance of advancing the HR profession, SHRM Delaware State Council created the “Veteran Unity Project,” which delivered four veteran-related programs to its members in Delaware. Twelve state council board members volunteered approximately 336 hours in one year, achieving a 100% project completion rate.

**Affiliate Name/State:** South Carolina SHRM State Council  
**Program Title:** “Veteran Employment & Transition Summit”  
**Description:** To address the challenges and gaps in the hiring, employment and retention of veterans across the state of South Carolina, South Carolina SHRM State Council partnered with the RECON Network and founded the “Veteran Employment & Transition Summit.” The summit brought veterans and employers together so they could have an honest dialogue about and share best practices for hiring veterans.
ENHANCING THE SHRM COMMUNITY

Small Category:

Affiliate Name/State: DuPage SHRM (Illinois)
Program Title: “HR for HR—A Candid Exchange with Your Tribe”
Description: In order to stay in touch with its members and foster a sense of connectedness in the HR community during the global pandemic, DuPage SHRM pioneered “HR for HR—A Candid Exchange with Your Tribe” as a weekly Zoom session for HR professionals to gather online and discuss challenges they were facing, as well as to meet other HR professionals near them to network, connect and share.

Affiliate Name/State: Fauquier/Culpeper SHRM (Virginia)
Program Title: “Fauquier/Culpeper & LFCC Partnership”
Description: In partnership with Lord Fairfax Community College, Fauquier/Culpeper SHRM was able to overcome unique meeting space issues before and during the global pandemic and to offer its members additional learning and professional development opportunities through the partnership.

Medium and Large Category:

Affiliate Name/State: Delaware SHRM
Program Title: “HR Awards Dinner”
Description: During the 3rd annual “HR Awards” event at the Delaware State Human Resource Conference & Expo, Delaware SHRM partnered with the Delaware Business Times to honor executives, partners and companies that have demonstrated a commitment to their employees or clients through leadership, innovation and achievement.

Affiliate Name/State: Tennessee Valley HRA
Program Title: “Member Care Connect”
Description: In response to the unprecedented challenges of 2020, the Tennessee Valley HRA reached out to its current members to see how it could provide assistance, resulting in a significant response from the membership and an increase in members’ ability to see the heart of an organization that “cares past” their core profession.

Affiliate Name/State: Western District (New River Valley SHRM, Shenandoah Valley SHRM, Southwest Virginia SHRM, Winchester Area SHRM), HR Virginia
Program Title: “Western District Collaboration”
Description: The newly formed Western District in Virginia took the negative situation of the COVID-19 pandemic and managed to see the positive by enhancing members’ experiences and nurturing a feeling of connection and engagement through the opening up of resources from all four chapters in the district during the pandemic. This included learning, recertification and networking opportunities.
Mega and Super Mega Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** HR Tampa (Florida)

**Program Title:** “HR Tampa’s #HRInspire”

**Description:** Developed in response to members’ needs, challenges and frustrations over job searching in the Tampa Bay Area, HR Tampa pioneered the “#HRInspire” initiative offering new events and support to members in their job search, including networking events, job-searching tips shared by hiring experts and free resume reviews.

**Affiliate Name/State:** New Orleans SHRM (Louisiana)

**Program Title:** “2020 Flatten the Curve, Stay Ahead of the Curve, Thrive!”

**Description:** Despite the fear of the unknown and the inability to predict the short- and long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, New Orleans SHRM took necessary action to make members-only programming free, drop membership pricing and make it free for any company to post HR professional openings on the NOLA JOB Board. This helped New Orleans SHRM increase its membership from 536 to 631 as of August 31, 2020.

State Council Category:

**Affiliate Name/State:** HR Florida State Council

**Program Title:** “HR Florida’s Voice of the Customer Research Project”

**Description:** HR Florida State Council conducted a five-stage qualitative and quantitative research project with its customers, who are HR professionals within the state, helping them identify new solutions to increase participation in membership and meetings as well as increase overall success.