

Council Prospector

ISSUE 2 | 2016

Nuggets From Alaska SHRM



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Alaska SHRM By the Numbers
SHRM Members Take To the Hill
The Case for Continuing Professional Development
Building Mobile-Friendly Websites

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Innovation & Ongoing Changes!



UAS Student Delegation Attends State-Wide SHRM Conference



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Mission Statement

The mission of the Alaska State Council is to be a strategic partner with individuals, businesses, community organizations, SHRM and NHRMA in order to encourage the advancement and knowledge of dedicated human resources professionals by providing communication and professional development resources throughout Alaska.



Alaska SHRM State Council **message**

Anne Sakumoto, SHRM-CP, PHR, Director, Alaska SHRM State Council



College Relations Director Dr. Charla Brown has created a historical event with the creation of Alaska's first virtual chapter for students known as the "University of Alaska Southeast Student Chapter." It's exciting to see access provided for students across the State who are interested in the HR profession! In another student chapter, Wayland Baptist University was highly successful in something which has been an annual tradition during the Iditarod season. The Student chapter has had an impactful community relationship with Beans Café with Faculty Advisor Dr. Dave Rambow. Meanwhile, in northern Alaska, we are extremely proud of the UAF student chapter, whose team competed in the 2016 Student Summit event in Salt Lake City, where they placed fourth in the Western Region. Last year they competed in Portland, Oregon, where they were the first group from UAF to do so. We celebrate the wonderful achievements by that student chapter with guidance and support by their faculty advisor Wendy Tisland. We thank Wendy for her role in creating the UAF student chapter and in developing these future HR professionals as she leaves that role.

In Legislative Affairs, Ben Krisher keeps members informed about the status of proposed laws and the resources available to help us understand the impact they would have on employers. Ben shared that a clear theme SHRM anticipates is that there will be a lot of movement on efforts from past few years to get proposed changes enacted prior to the end of the current U.S. presidential term. You can stay current by

downloading the SHRM Advocacy or A-Team application. This is a free resource and is available as part of your membership dues.

Certification Director Molly Webb has obtained two seats to sit in on SHRM's exams this Spring to provide SHRM with feedback and help Alaska HR professionals and study groups into the future.

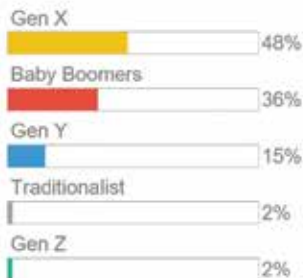
Communications Director Patty Hickok conducted presentations at the Northern Alaska Chapter and Mat-Su Chapter on the use of social media, networking and applications in the HR arena. As usual, some chapters go on hiatus for the summer and start up again in August. In the Fall (September 22-23), we are thrilled that SHRM Pacific West Director, Dianna Gould will be in Alaska to visit with some of our chapter members and leaders. If you're interested in being part of the 2017 leadership, it's not too early to think about it!

In the meantime, our award winning webinar series continues thanks to our Professional Development Director, TJ Alinen. These webinars are a wonderful way for the State Council to meet the needs of our Alaskan members by offering complimentary, first class presentations while earning preapproved SHRM and HRCI credits. For upcoming programs please visit <http://alaska.shrm.org> or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn for more information. We look forward to connecting with you soon! ✨

Alaska SHRM By the Numbers

900+ SHRM Members

Encompassing Five Generations



FIVE GENERATIONS!

The majority of members are Gen X, followed by Baby Boomers and Gen Y. A handful of members are from the traditionalist and Gen Z generations

AT-A-GLANCE



WE ARE ALASKA SHRM

To learn more about the Alaska State Council, visit our website at <http://alaska.shrm.org>

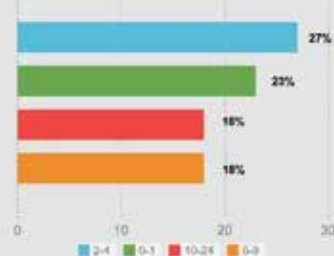
MORE ALASKA HR INFORMATION



48% of member work for privately owned (non-profit) companies. Others include:



COMPANY TYPE



HR DEPARTMENT SIZE

UNIONS

YES NO

25% of Alaska companies have unions

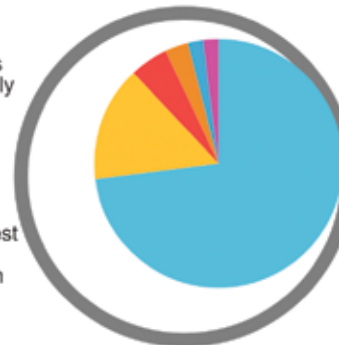
RACIAL DIVERSITY

73% White

Alaska members are predominantly White

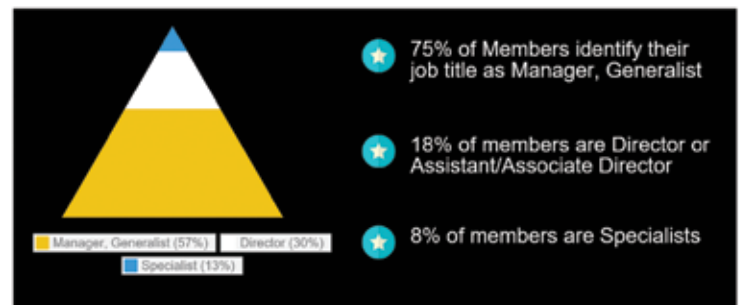
15% AK Native/AI

The second largest group is Alaska Natives/American Indians

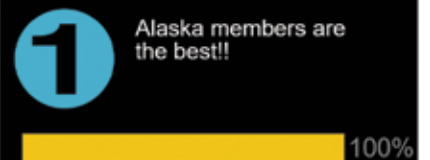


The Rest

5% African American
3% Hispanic
2% Asian
2% 2+ races



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UAF SHRM Sends Team to SHRM Student Case Competition and Career Expo!

By Johanna Bocklet, Jamie Boyle, Laken Bordner, and Sara McBride. With introduction by Wendy Tisland



Left to Right: Sara McBride, Johanna Bocklet, Jamie Boyle and Laken Bordner.

The 2016 SHRM Student Case Competition & Career Summit West took place in Salt Lake City, Utah, April 29-30. Four members of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) SHRM student chapter attended the conference, competing against 28 other universities from all over the western United States and Mexico. They presented their ideas addressing a Human Resources case in front of a panel of HR business professionals. UAF SHRM felt they were going into the competition as “underdogs” as our school does not offer a major in human resource management, but the team did extraordinarily well scoring 4th place.

Students worked hard preparing for the competition, both through fund-raising activities and practice casework. Fundraising activities included our famous baked potato bar, a raffle, and significant contributions to our school's Business Leader of the Year event. With additional support from Northwest

Human Resource Management Association (NHRMA) and Associated Students of UAF (ASUAF) the team's expenses were covered. Several HR professionals assisted with the team's preparation through visiting with the group during our regular meeting time and/or helping coach the team through practice cases. We greatly appreciate all the support received.

Aside from taking part in the case competition, students from UAF SHRM had the opportunity to network with HR professionals from all over the country and gain valuable insight into the HR function through different presentations and panel discussions.

— *Wendalyn Tisland, MBA, SPHR, CEBS, SHRM-SCP, UAF SHRM Faculty Advisor*

My favorite part of the conference was the motivational speech about White-water Leadership by Greg Hawks. In this speech, Hawks compared work-life

to navigating a raft through whitewater rapids. Just like navigating a boat through the water, we face pressure and obstacles in our every day life. Instead of avoiding obstacles all together, we should love and embrace them. Obstacles force us to become creative and focus on the things that are in front us. Overcoming obstacles means gaining experience, knowledge and strength. Just like being in a boat, it is essential to steer in the right direction. To do that, it is important to have a good team ‘paddling’ but most importantly it takes an excellent leader to guide you in the right direction. I experienced this speech as extremely motivating and it helped me put internal and external challenges into perspective and to embrace all the little obstacles along the way.

In addition to the great guest speakers, I enjoyed connecting with students and HR professionals from all over the country.

— *Johanna Bocklet, UAF SHRM Secretary, M.S. Economics Graduate Student, Class of 2016*

Attending the SHRM Case Competition and Career Summit was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me during my education. I gained valuable information, tips, and tricks to navigate my future career in Human Resources.

While competing in the Case Competition was very rewarding and educational, the most beneficial portion of the summit was the abundant amount of networking opportunities. Being a senior graduating in less than a week, it is more important than ever to make these connections with HR professionals. During both days of the summit, students were able to network with over 40 HR professionals; getting help on resumes, interviews, or just making connections for future opportunities. I made connections

with a number of professionals that will help move my career forward. We even connected with HR professionals from Alaska! I am very pleased that after the conference, I have at least five solid follow up conversations and interviews to help jump-start my future career in HR.

My two biggest takeaways from the summit are: 1) networking is the key to a successful career; and 2) UAF SHRM should never be intimidated by other universities, because we rocked the competition!

— *Jamie Boyle, UAF SHRM President, M.B.A. Graduate Student, Class of 2016*

Being able to attend the SHRM Student Case Competition and Career Summit with the UAF SHRM student chapter was a great learning and growing experience for me. I was able to put my Human Resource knowledge to the test, along with my teammates, and compete against undergraduate and graduate students. We were able to finish fourth out of fourteen groups in our division!

The greatest learning opportunity for me during this event was being able to meet with many Human Resources professionals in the career connection zone. I was able to learn how to improve my resume for current and future Human Resource positions and how to choose internships wisely as I am finishing school. I was able to receive feedback that being picky is not a bad thing and choosing a company or organization that will challenge me and give me professional opportunity and practice is what I need currently.

I am so truly grateful for this opportunity and I thank all that supported us and believed in us on our journey to the SHRM Student Case Competition & Career Summit. Thank You!

— *Laken Bordner, UAF SHRM Member, B.A. Human Resource Management and Organizational Development Undergraduate Student, Class of 2018*

The SHRM Student Case Competition and Career Summit was a fantastic experience for me. The Career Connection Zone where HR professionals held 20-minute

sessions with student attendees was very valuable. I received great advice on how to make my resume more desirable to potential employers and also good suggestions for increasing my HR knowledge and experience over the next few years.

One of my favorite things about the trip, other than finishing in 4th place, was the General Discussion by Scott Ferrin on Listen, Learn, and Lead. I've always found it important to listen to those around me. Also, in order to be a good leader, people have to want to follow you, not just follow you because you are paying them to. I found the portion on "learn" to be the most important for students. Mr. Ferrin talked about students thinking that after they graduate they are done learning, which isn't the proper mindset and that it needs to be emphasized that professionals should never stop learning. By continuing your education you ensure that the work you provide is the most current, effective, and efficient way to provide your services.

— *Sara McBride, UAF SHRM Vice President, B.B.A. Business Administration Student, Class of 2017* ★

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST IS RECOGNIZED

The School of Management at the University of Alaska Southeast has recently received recognition by the Society of Human Resource Management for its Bachelor of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in Human Resource Management. The program's curriculum has been formally acknowledged by SHRM as aligning with documented standards for HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates. The guidelines are part of SHRM's Academic Initiative to define HR education standards taught in university business schools and help universities develop degree programs that follow industry standards.

UAS offers the only undergraduate business degree in the State of Alaska with a Human Resource Management emphasis and it is also conveniently distance delivered. Additionally, Dr. Charla Brown, the Chair of the Business Administration program and the faculty member responsible for leading the HR program, serves on the Alaska SHRM State Council as the College Relations Director and recently received a coveted award by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs (ACBSP) for the 2016 Faculty Excellence Teaching Award. ★



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SHRM Members Take To The Hill

By Ben Krisher



Washington DC — The Affordable Care Act's "Cadillac Tax". The Department of Labor's "Persuader Rule". Regulations providing nondiscrimination relief for closed defined benefit plans. Overtime regulations. The changes and additions to the rules that govern the Human Resources profession can come at us fast and furious, especially in a Presidential election year. Luckily, SHRM continues to provide resources for us to learn, and opportunities for us to share our experiences with the rule makers.

In March, SHRM held their Employment Law & Legislative Conference in Washington DC, welcoming hundreds of HR professionals. This year there was an even greater sense of excitement due to the upcoming election. SHRM CEO Hank Jackson opened the conference with a call for us to stay engaged and involved in the political process: "Who better than HR to assess the candidates for the job?" Jackson asked when discussing the importance of elections.

As in previous years, SHRM arranged an Advocacy Day, a time for SHRM members to meet with elected officials in Washington and provide insight into how some of the hot button issues currently being debated will affect employers and employees.

One of the major issues continues to be proposed changes to the regulations governing how we determine if an employee is exempt or non-exempt. As proposed, the new regulations include a 113% increase in the salary test for exempt employees – meaning that many employees who currently qualify as exempt would suddenly be non-exempt and require overtime pay. This has the potential to impact every employer across Alaska.

Luckily, there has been some pushback from Congress in the form of two bills – S. 2707 and H.R. 4773. This legislation would require the DOL to perform an economic analysis on how changes to overtime regulations would affect specific types of employers.

During this year's Advocacy Day, I had the opportunity to meet with the offices of Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Young. We discussed how the proposed regulations could affect Alaskan employers, and the need for a closer look at these regulations. Each of the offices was receptive to this information, and there were indications that all three members of Alaska's congressional delegation were supportive of this legislation.

As connected as Washington is, the reality is that many decisions do not take into account how they may actually impact employers and employees in the real world. That's why it's critical for us to continue to offer our expertise to elected officials on the issues that matter most to us.

An easy way to get started is through the SHRM Policy Action Center (www.advocacy.shrm.org) where you can learn about new legislation or policy initiatives and easily send letters directly to Congress. You can also download the SHRM Advocacy App, a one-stop shop to learn about issues and contact our legislators, all from your phone.

Finally, be sure to sign up for the A-Team; as a member, you will be among the first people to hear about ever-changing regulations and will receive critical information about different policy initiatives that could have a significant impact on your employer's operations. ✨



THE CASE FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The concept of continuing professional development (CPD) is not new. Professionals have long recognized the importance of gaining knowledge, improving skills, and developing marketable qualities. That is why medical, legal, and educational fields have put CPD requirements in place for continued licensing. What is new today is the broad relevance of CPD when it comes to everyone's success, regardless of their specific expertise.

CPD has always been part of good professional practice, but that professionalism relies increasingly on an ability to respond quickly to changing market conditions, to client requirements, and to the influences of government policies. Even though we are all being encouraged to innovate, doing so often demands mastering new skills. As a result, having access to CPD throughout

your professional career is increasingly central to your professional and organizational success. Many professions, even those without the tradition of licensing requirements, are choosing to embrace the concept of CPD because their leaders understand that learning under the guidance of one or more experts will almost certainly save them time, money, and effort.

CPD has an additional benefit. The requirements for working in the nonprofit sector often include advanced skills and knowledge that may not have been formally taught earlier, such as personnel management, business development, management techniques, and client care skills, many of which only become relevant when you are no longer a beginner. Undertaking CPD activities, when combined with experiential learning, is an essential way to help ensure that you have the necessary

all-around skills and knowledge you need as you continue to progress.

The following sections describe the top reasons for CPD in more detail.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Some experts estimate that the knowledge gained in some degree courses has an average useful lifespan of about four years. While this will vary according to the discipline, it does nevertheless highlight the increasing need to maintain an active interest in changing legislation, technology, and operational procedures. You will get left behind if you stand still.

Suppose you want to increase your managerial responsibilities. In that case, the need to acquire new skills and knowledge in a rapidly changing work environment

becomes even more acute. CPD helps you to stay interested and interesting. Although experience is a great teacher, it does not give you exposure to anything you haven't done before. Focused CPD opens you up to new knowledge, new possibilities, and new skill areas. CPD ensures that you will be more aware of the changing trends and directions in your profession as you work to stay relevant.

CHANGING EXPECTATION OF MEMBERS AND CONSUMERS

The development of a more affluent consumer society combined with access to the Internet has also resulted in a better informed and more sophisticated public. One consequence of this trend is that people expect a higher duty of care and level of service from their professional advisors than they did in the past. They can, and do, double-check information on the Internet all the time to help them determine whether you are trustworthy. Compared with the access to knowledge everyone enjoys, the skills you acquired during your initial training period or during formal classroom education may not completely equip you for the role you are now expected to take. Your ability to provide tailored customer service and to prevent information overload by identifying just the essentials is crucial. CPD can help you do both. It ensures that you maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills you need to deliver a high level of personal service to your customers, clients, and the community. CPD can lead to increased public confidence in individual professionals and in entire professions.

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE DECREASES RISK

The professions are at much higher risk from claims of negligence than they were in the past. In response, insurance companies have raised the premiums for professional indemnity (PI) insurance in recent years. Although CPD may not totally eliminate PI claims, it does make clear the potential cost of ignorance. The cost of CPD will always be less expensive than getting taken to court. Some evidence is also emerging that insurance companies may be willing to slightly reduce

PI premiums when professional staff have access to a structured CPD program.

RAISING THE BAR

The fact that so many organizations emphasize quality assurance, continuous improvement, and workplace ethics means that CPD has increased relevance in these areas as well. Quality assurance and continuous improvement both require education and training. Additionally, ethics are often taught in continuing professional development classes that teach participants how to recognize and do the right thing.

SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS OF COMPETENCY

One of the primary roles of professional bodies is to safeguard standards of competence. In a society that is driven by consumer demand, industry standards have had to rise dramatically in recent years. CPD has a key role to play in the communication of agreed standards and in ensuring that members comply with specified procedures. CPD ensures that your capabilities keep pace with the current standards of others in the same field. CPD also helps you continue to make a meaningful contribution to your team. As a result, you can be increasingly effective in the workplace. This assists you to advance in your career and move into new positions where you can lead, manage, influence, coach, and mentor others.

INCREASING THE VALUE OF EMPLOYEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The recent recession has re-emphasized the highly competitive nature of modern business. Whether in the private sector or, increasingly, the privatized public or state sector, the competitive market edge consists of being partly or totally focused on client care, quality of service, and technological innovation.

Albert Einstein has been credited with saying, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." To be effective at solving problems, organizations must invest in the development of people skills. CPD is one way organizations can help people to develop these necessary skills.

By improving the efficiency and impact of our nonprofit organizations, there are two immediate benefits:

- Efficient organizations whose impact is optimized make a bigger difference within the community than organizations that don't have the same set of skills and strengths. You can learn how to optimize your organization through CPD.
- Donors and volunteers are selective about the organizations they support because they can only donate so much time and money to any specific organization. If you want to maximize the chance that donors will correctly identify your organization as one that is worth supporting, use CPD to make it easier for donors to identify your organization as a professional one, and perhaps even as an industry leader.

Nonprofit organizations provide an important interface that connects people with different skills, education, information, and benefits with each other so they can create a stronger and more vibrant community, one that is unified by meaningful relationships and that helps people understand, firsthand, the value of having an active nonprofit community that can improve quality of life for everyone. CPD is a crucial part of that process. ✨



2016 SHRM Chapter Visits

The Alaska SHRM State Council has visited the MatSu and Northern Alaska chapters this Spring. Board member Patty Hickok has presented “Social HR: More than Tea Time” that brings not only up to date information but also pre-approved credits for recertification.

Social HR is the use of social media to fulfill HR functions. It is not about the tools - it is about creating communities. Organizations use it in various ways, including sharing information on company events, showcasing company activities within the organization and around the community, communicating wellness initiatives, weekly HR blogs, emergency notifications, recognition and more!

*Thanks to the chapters for their hospitality and kudos on a job well done! **



UAF students and advisor Wendy Tisland at the Northern AK chapter's meeting



MatSu SHRM Chapter





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Building Mobile-Friendly



Google began rolling out its mobile-friendly update on April 21, 2015. Mobile-friendly websites will get a ratings boost for providing high-quality results that are relevant, that have readable text without the need for tapping or zooming, and that don't contain unplayable content or horizontal scrolling.

There's a reason Google is making this move. After all, as much as 60 percent of the online searches being done today are performed by people who use some kind of mobile device. That percentage (which will probably continue to increase) delivers a clear message: as people continue to move away from using a desktop computer and increasingly use mobile technology instead, it's not enough to just have a website. The website also has to be mobile friendly.

According to Google's Webmaster Central Blog, the update only affects search rankings for mobile devices. However, it also affects the search results for all languages, and applies only to individual pages rather than to an entire website.

What does it mean for a page to be mobile friendly? This is one of those few areas in life that have a yes or no answer. There is no gray area. Google determines your website ranking by evaluating 200 different factors during its Mobile Friendly Test and then gives you an answer. The test can be found at the following address: <http://bit.ly/1NNlwDw>.

All you have to do is enter the URL for a website page and click the Analyze button. Google takes it from there, and either passes the page or fails it. If you prefer, you can also select Get Started from the menu at the top of the page, and learn more about how to make pages on a site mobile-friendly, either on your own, with third-party software, or by working with someone with the necessary technical expertise. Fortunately, compliance gives you important benefits. A good website provides an optimal online experience for anyone using it. Optimal experiences, of course, mean better results for the people who use your website. Equally fortunately, Google is providing guidance for the best ways to build a mobile-friendly website:

- It has to be responsive. This isn't new. It is just part of what has become the traditional standard for website design. Part of what a responsive website gives you is lack of dependence on a particular device.
- Content must be served dynamically, meaning it will display differently depending on how a website is being viewed. A browser will identify itself as the browser being used, including

the version and the operating system, using its user-agent string. This allows for content to be customized on a webpage so it will display differently on mobile devices versus desktop browsers.

- The website should also use Google's new technical and UX tools and guidelines.

There's a quick test to determine whether your website is responsive. Grab the side of your browser window with a site open and shrink the width. It's responsive if it automatically changes how it's displayed.

Design guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following practices:

- Give links plenty of room around them so they are not too close together.
- Use recommended font sizes (Google doesn't like anything under 16 px).
- Use the "rel=canonical" property correctly. If you have never used this particular property and need a little more information, Joost de Valk wrote an explanation on February 12, 2015 at yoast.com that tells you what it is and gives you some guidance for how to put it to work.
- Keep an eye on how fast your website loads.

Can a web page still get a high ranking even if it is not mobile friendly? According to Google's Webmaster Central Blog, the answer is yes. Content that matches a query is still likely to get a high rating because relevance sends a strong signal.

At the same time, though, you could still see a decrease in mobile traffic if you ignore the requirement to make your website responsive. There's no reason to take that risk, and plenty of reason to be compliant with the new rules. For example, your competitors are already making changes with an eye toward being more mobile friendly. According to one website, Search Engine Land, Google announced the Mobile Friendly Update two months ago. Since that time, the number of mobile-friendly websites has increased 4.7 percent. More websites will undoubtedly comply soon.

Making the changes doesn't have to be hard. Google wants people to improve their websites, and is doing its best to facilitate the process even though it is also protecting the criteria for the search algorithms. (Releasing the criteria would create headaches for Google that Google prefers to avoid.)

Don't let your website be left behind as everyone else actively courts people who conduct their searches on their mobile devices. ★



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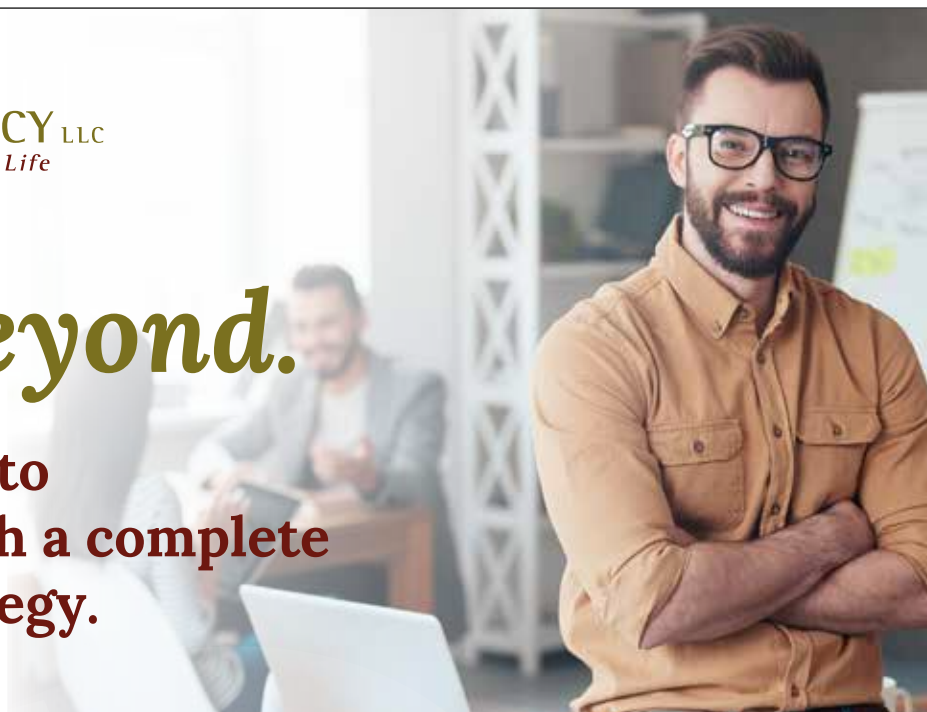
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