

CHAPTER CONNECTION

Reminder to sign up for the
September EHRA Meeting

A publication of the Evansville-Area Human Resource Association

September 2026



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EHRA
Evansville-Area Human Resource Association



2026

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 22, 2026 • 7:30 AM TO 4:45 PM

CITY VIEW AT STERLING SQUARE

210 N. Fulton Ave., Evansville, IN • cityviewevv.com

Join us!

AGENDA:

7:30 AM.....Registration/Breakfast

8:15 - 8:30 AMOpening Remarks

8:30 - 10:00 AM.....Session 1
WHEN RIGHT AIN'T EASY -
ETHICAL DECISION MAKING
Dr. Niki Walker

10:00 - 10:30 AM.....Sponsor/Vendor Break

10:30 AM - NOON.....Session 2
MIND THE GAP:
DEVELOPING LEARNING JOURNIES
JoDee Curtis

NOON - 1:00 PMLunch

1:00 - 2:30 PMSession 3
DOCUMENTING & DEALING
WITH TOXIC BEHAVIOR PART 1
Alise Isbell

2:30 - 3:00 PMSponsor/Vendor Break

3:00 - 4:30 PMSession 4
DOCUMENTING & DEALING
WITH TOXIC BEHAVIOR PART 2
Alise Isbell

4:30 - 4:45 PMClosing Remarks

LEARN ABOUT:

- ETHICAL DECISION MAKING
- DEVELOPING LEARNING JOURNIES
- DEALING WITH TOXIC BEHAVIOR

MEET WITH VENDORS

NETWORK WITH HR PROFESSIONALS

THREE
SPEAKERS
FOUR
SESSIONS

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROVIDED

REGISTER
NOW



<https://ehranet.starchapter.com/meetinginfo.php>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings EHRA Members,

As we move into September, I hope everyone is settling into a productive fall season. August was a little different for our chapter, as we paused our monthly meeting schedule to support attendance at the SHRM Indiana State Conference. While we missed seeing everyone at our regular gathering, the conference provided a tremendous opportunity for HR professionals from across the state to learn, connect, and grow.

The SHRM Indiana State Conference continues to be one of the most valuable professional development events available to HR practitioners. Attendees had the opportunity to learn from experienced speakers, explore emerging workplace trends, gain practical tools to bring back to their organizations, and earn valuable professional development credits. Beyond the educational sessions, one of the greatest benefits of the conference is the opportunity to network with fellow HR professionals who are navigating many of the same challenges and opportunities we face every day. If you weren't able to attend this year, it is definitely worth exploring in 2027.

Speaking of learning and collaboration, we are excited to resume our monthly EHRA programming in September. Our September meeting will feature Laurie Pierce, presenting "From Draining to Dynamic: A Framework for Collaborative Team Meetings." This session will provide practical strategies for transforming meetings into more engaging, productive, and collaborative experiences. If your organization struggles with meeting fatigue, communication challenges, or ineffective team discussions, this is a session you will not want to miss. The meeting will be held on September 17th at City View at Sterling Square.

At EHRA, we remain committed to providing meaningful educational opportunities while creating an environment where HR professionals can build connections and support one another. Thank you for your continued involvement in EHRA. Your participation helps make our chapter a valuable resource for HR professionals throughout the Tri-State. We look forward to seeing you in September.

"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you."

— B.B. King

Jennifer Zimmer

President



[EHRA Mission](#)

The mission of the Evansville-Area Human Resource Association, Inc. is to promote professionalism in the area of Human Resource Management by providing opportunities for networking, comprehensive education and proactive support for its members while serving as a resource and advancing initiatives in the community through the enlistment of engaged and talented volunteer leaders.



EHRA Monthly Meeting Schedule 2026

September 17th, 2026–

Program: From Draining to Dynamic: A Framework for Collaborative Team Meetings

Time: 11:00 AM—1:00 PM

Location: City View at Sterling Square

210 N. Fulton Ave, Evansville, IN 47710

<https://cityviewevv.com/>

Guest tickets are also available for purchase

Visit ehranet.org and click on meetings to register or for more information.

Please mark your calendars for future 2026 EHRA monthly meetings:

***October 22nd– EHRA 2026 Annual Conference 7:30am to 4:45pm
City View at Sterling Square***

November 19th– Legal Update with Josh and Jake

Meetings are typically the 3rd Thursday of every month.

Monthly Meeting Information

Thursday, September 17th, 2026

Location: City View at Sterling Square

AGENDA:

11:00 - 11:30 Registration and Networking

11:30 - 12:00 Lunch

12:00 - 1:00 Program

PROGRAM: FROM DRAINING TO DYNAMIC: A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE TEAM MEETINGS

Turn your weekly team meeting into a shared, energizing hour that builds trust, accountability, and real momentum.

If you're leading a weekly team meeting, you're shaping your team's culture — whether you mean to or not.

Designed for team leaders, this framework works for both in-person and virtual meetings. This interactive class gives you a practical, repeatable framework for running one-hour meetings that build connection, share leadership, and move real work forward.

You'll learn a clear meeting structure that includes:

- Consistent opening and closing anchor practices
- Shared facilitation and rotating roles
- Clear accountability and record-keeping
- Time for relationship-building, storytelling, and task execution

You can implement it exactly as taught next week — or adapt the pieces that fit your context. Less burnout for you. More ownership from your team. Better results all around.

SPEAKER: LAURIE PIERCE



Laurie Pierce is the Founder and Chief Culture Facilitator of Spark Alignment, a coaching and leadership development practice. Most teams struggle with communication, conflict, and creating a culture employees want to engage in. Spark Alignment designs personalized, strategic programs built for contribution, not performance. Spark Alignment also offers one-on-one coaching programs to help leaders at all levels level up. Spark Alignment programs build trust, inclusion, and culture—reducing turnover and creating space for real collaboration and innovation. For more information about our speaker, visit the EHRA meetings page.



- The Evansville Area Human Resource Association is recognized by SHRM to offer Professional Development Credits (PDCs) for SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP® recertification activities.
- This program is valid for [1] PDCs for SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP® recertification. PDC Information will be provided after attending the meeting and completing the post-meeting survey.



The Evansville-Area Human Resources Association, Inc is proud to be approved by the [HR Certification Institute® \(HRCI®\)](#) as a provider of recertification credit. This means that all EHRA courses carry recertification credit for HR professionals holding an aPHR™, PHR®, or SPHR®. In addition, EHRA courses also provide recertification credit for those holding a Professional in Human Resources – International™ (PHRi™), Global Professional in Human Resources® (GPHR®).

THANK YOU TO THE MONTHLY MEETING SPONSOR:



Laureen Ludwig

REALTOR®/BROKER

812.430.6737

LaureenLudwig@FCTE.com

TeamMcClintock.com

F.C. Tucker Emge



Welcome New EHRA Members!

Laura Belwood— Gribbins Specialty Group

Julie Ann Eagan— Youth First, Inc

Elizabeth Finke— United Methodist Youth Home

Stacia Martin— Harding, Shymanski & Co.

Paige Stacy— Tri-State Orthopedic Surgeons

Olga Tsybulnik— Kaiser Aluminum



Please refer HR Professionals to EHRA!

*MEMBERSHIP REQUIRES DUES TO BE PAID TO BE RECOGNIZED IN EHRA SYSTEMS AS A MEMBER.

LET US RECOGNIZE YOU OR A TEAM MEMBER! IF YOU HAVE A FUN PHOTO OR KNOW OF AN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, PLEASE SEND THEM TO ABBIEG1776@GMAIL.COM TO SHARE IN THE NEWSLETTER.



HUMAN RESOURCES LAW UPDATE

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE

with Joshua B. Gessling—Legislative Affairs Chairperson

EEOC Issues Strategic Plan for FY 2026-2030

By: Joshua B. Gessling

On August 26, 2026, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) published its Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026–2030 (“Plan”). The Plan describes the EEOC’s enforcement and operational priorities for the next four years. These strategic goals include enforcement, outreach and training, and organizational excellence.

Strategic Goal I — Enforcement. The EEOC intends to intensify its focus on systemic discrimination cases and targeting discriminatory patterns. This includes certain DEI employment practices, religious accommodation issues, protection of workers from anti-American national origin discrimination, and enforcement of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (“PWFA”). The agency also plans to enhance monitoring of conciliation agreement compliance and improve intake services through technology. In doing so, the EEOC aims to reduce pending intake inventory by 2% per year and decrease processing times by 10% by FY 2030.

Strategic Goal II — Outreach and Training. The EEOC is looking to expand employer education by increasing outreach events for new agency partners with a focus on industries and areas previously underserved by EEOC programming. The agency also plans to update existing training materials using plain language and create new resources to help employers understand their obligations under anti-discrimination laws.

Strategic Goal III — Organizational Excellence. The Plan commits to maintaining staffing at 95% or above of the agency's full-time employee baseline, investing in workforce development, and implementing at least two technology-driven operational improvements annually.

With a heightened emphasis on systemic enforcement, expanded outreach, and technology-enhanced intake, employers may wish to consider providing anti-discrimination training, implementing robust complaint-handling procedures, and proactively reviewing company policies, including EEO, DEI, PWFA, and religious accommodation policies.

This note is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If you have questions about how this information may affect you, consult your legal counsel to discuss your specific circumstances. This information should not be relied upon as or substituted for legal advice.



September always feels like a fresh start, even for those of us long past our own first day of school. Whatever this season holds for you, whether that is recruiting, onboarding, or a few too many open requisitions, I hope you are finding moments to catch your breath. Thank you for continuing to show up for this community and for the people across our region who are building their careers. This month I gathered local labor market insights, a skills first hiring toolkit, a chance to share how AI is shaping your work, and two ways to lend your expertise where it matters most.

Every item below links to its primary source. Figures are revised often, so verify anything you plan to cite or act on.

Where the local market stands

Evansville metro. Preliminary Bureau of Labor Statistics data for July put the Evansville metro unemployment rate at 3.4 percent (not seasonally adjusted). Total nonfarm jobs were down 0.6 percent from a year earlier, but the mix tells the real story: mining, logging, and construction grew 5.5 percent and education and health services grew 2.2 percent, while manufacturing fell 2.3 percent and leisure and hospitality fell 5.3 percent.

Indiana and the nation. Indiana held at 3.3 percent in July, with 101,704 open postings statewide as of August 1, per DWD. Nationally, BLS reported 162,000 jobs added in August with unemployment unchanged at 4.1 percent. Worth carrying into resume reviews: 27.0 percent of unemployed people nationally have been looking for work for 27 weeks or more, a useful reminder to read employment gaps with context.

- [BLS Evansville metro Economy at a Glance](#)
- [DWD monthly Indiana employment reports](#)
- [BLS Employment Situation, August 2026](#)

SHRM Foundation toolkit of the month: Ready for Success

SHRM Foundation's [Ready for Success: Adopting a Skills Mindset in Employment Practices](#) toolkit lays out 12 actions for hiring on demonstrated skills rather than degrees alone, including job postings built around skills, interview scorecards, a behavioral interview guide, and upskilling programs for workers with transferable skills. When some local sectors contract while others grow, the candidates in front of you may be bringing skills from a different industry. [SHRM's 2026 research](#) found that 34 percent of organizations often or almost always use skills first hiring methods, yet among organizations using these methods to any degree, 86 percent of HR professionals reported hurdles that slowed progress.

AI in HR: I want to hear from you

AI is reshaping HR work, but its value still depends on human judgment. SHRM's [Navigating AI in the Workplace: 2026](#) report found that 41 percent of workers use AI in their work, yet 44 percent of those users describe their own output as "AI slop." That makes the ability to question and verify AI output a skill worth hiring for and building on your own team.

Two SHRM starting points:

- [SHRM AI+HI Specialty Credential](#): builds AI foundations, responsible AI use, and HR integration through hands on labs and a capstone project. There are no prerequisites, a registration fee applies, and it counts toward SHRM recertification.
- [SHRM AI in the Workplace resource hub](#): a lighter lift that includes SHRM's AI in the Workplace Playbook and research sorting 138 HR AI use cases by risk and cost. Some content requires SHRM membership.

Share your perspective. Please feel free to reach out and tell me how AI is changing your role, and what you look for when you evaluate a candidate's AI fluency. Which skills, habits, or judgment calls stand out to you? What you share helps me prepare local students and job seekers for what employers expect.

Two ways to get involved this fall

1. **Review a veteran resume.** Requests continue to come in following our visit with the Wounded Warrior Project peer support group. If you can translate military experience into civilian language, you are exactly who is needed.
2. **Support Ivy Tech and University of Southern Indiana students.** Our members support local students with mock interviews and resume reviews, giving them practice with someone who screens candidates. As fall requests come in, I will connect interested members directly.

Email me at mroconnor1@usi.edu if interested.

Thank you to all our members for your help and support.

Warmly,
Megan O'Connor, SHRM-CP



SHRM Membership Helps You See What's Coming—and Be Ready for It.

SHRM membership is for HR and business leaders who are accountable for outcomes—leaders who need their workforce decisions to hold up in the boardroom, with regulators, and with employees.

Your career. Your impact. Your future. Choose the membership that fits your needs and start unlocking your full potential today.

Why SHRM Membership Matters

Work is changing faster—and with higher stakes—than most organizations are prepared for. HR leaders are expected to protect the business, support the workforce, and drive performance at the same time.

SHRM exists to help you do that—with clarity, foresight, and real-time guidance when decisions matter most.

HR's best don't just join SHRM. They rely on it.

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www.shrm.org/membership



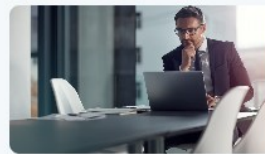
For Students

Gain access to mentors and resources to accelerate early career success.



For HR Professionals

Advance your career with toolkits, certifications, and mentorship opportunities.



For Executives & Leaders

Get strategic insights, workforce trend reports, and C-suite level connections.



For Small & Mid-Size Businesses

Reduce compliance risk with customizable handbooks and direct access to expert advice.



CLASSIFIEDS: JOB POSTINGS & HELP WANTED ADVERTISEMENTS

Help Wanted Advertisements

Companies, Recruiters, and Human Resources Professionals who are seeking applicants for human resource positions may place “Help Wanted” advertisements on the EHRA website. The advertisement, which will run for 30 days, will appear on the EHRA Jobs webpage that can be viewed by the general public. This option also provides additional reach with posts made on the EHRA Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn social media pages.

The following rates apply for “Help Wanted” Advertisements:

- EHRA Members: \$100/30 days
- Non-EHRA Members: \$200/30 days
- Staffing Agencies: \$250/30 days

To place a “Help Wanted” job listing, please visit our website and complete the online form. The Communication Chair will review the submission and contact the employer submitting the application. Once the posting has expired, the Communications Chair will contact the employer with an invoice and information on payment.

Job Wanted Advertisements

Members of EHRA who are seeking new career opportunities may place “Job Wanted” advertisements on the EHRA website. The listing, which will run for 30, will appear on the Job Link webpage viewed only by active EHRA members who are logged into the website. If the EHRA member placing this advertisement would like for the listing to be confidential, the EHRA Communication Chair will serve as liaison between the member and interested employers.

These advertisements are free of charge for EHRA members.



Don't miss this
months meeting with:

September 17th, 11am to 1pm—
From Draining to Dynamic: A Frame-
work for Collaborative Team

See you at the EHRA meeting!

**What's Happening
at EHRA**

Stay up to date on
events at our website:
www.ehranet.org

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