

## AGCAREERS.COM ROUNDTABLE ROUNDUP



Bringing Together Human Resource Professionals, College and University Faculty, and Association Representatives to Discuss Recruitment and Retention within Agriculture and Food

### Raising the Bar on Recruitment and Retention within Agriculture at the 2009 US Ag HR Roundtable

It is hard to believe that August has passed! From an AgCareers.com perspective, August brings great anticipation and excitement as we look forward to hosting the US Ag HR Roundtable and many of our industry friends. This year, was not a letdown! With the help of hosts, ADM and The University of Illinois, AgCareers.com hosted over 140 human resource professionals for the 7th Annual AgCareers.com Ag HR Roundtable,

August 3—5, 2009 in Champaign, Illinois.

“With all that is going on in the economy and travel restrictions being placed within organizations, we were very pleased with our attendance and it is a testament that the agriculture and food industry still is thriving and has many great career opportunities to offer,” said Eric Spell, president of AgCareers.com. This year was one of the most highly attended years in Roundtable history.

Unlike previous years, this year’s event was kicked off on Monday afternoon with a panel of executives from a variety of organizations that discussed critical issues being talked about within their organizations in regards to recruitment and retention. Many great insights were provided from not over doing metrics to ensuring leadership is playing a role in engaging human capital, and the importance of career mapping for employees to understanding that employees are



Participants find the networking time one of the most valuable assets of attending the Roundtable. No where else can you find this group of peers brought together all with an agriculture focus.

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 2010 US Ag HR Roundtable will be held August 2—4, 2010 in Minnetonka, MN on Syngenta’s campus. We’d like to thank Syngenta for hosting us and look forward to another successful event.

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truly the wealth of the company.

Alexandra Levit, a workplace author and columnist, provided a fresh perspective on the Millennial generation. Focusing more on how employees of this generation work and how they work best in teams provided Roundtable participants with more than just the characteristics of each generation. Levit took a look at the recruitment and engagement proc-

esses and how this young generation views current practices as well as tips for improving the effectiveness and tailoring the programs for Millennials. Discussion from this session led immediately to social media and an interesting debate took place among our Millennial Roundtable participants, with some stating that they liked using social media as a tool for recruitment and others did not. The verdict is still out on that one, but Alexandra said it really

## 2009 PARTICIPATING

## ORGANIZATIONS

1st Farm Credit Services  
 Abraham Baldwin Ag College  
 ADM  
 AFA  
 Ag Partners LLC  
 Ag Processing Inc.  
 AgrowKnowledge  
 Ahern International Seeds  
 Alpha Zeta  
 Arizona Western College  
 ASI Agriserve  
 Auburn University  
 Bartlett and Co.  
 Bismark State College  
 BPI, Inc.  
 Bunge  
 Cargill  
 CHS  
 Creative Ag Solutions  
 Dow AgroSciences  
 Elburn Coop  
 Farm Credit Services of Mid-America  
 FCC Services  
 Gavilon  
 Global Harvest Foods  
 Growmark  
 Heartland Farmers Inc.  
 Helena Chemical Company  
 IL Agriculture in the Classroom  
 International Performance Solutions  
 Iowa State University  
 Ivy Tech Community College  
 JAG  
 JBS United  
 Jefferson College  
 Jenner Sales  
 JG Consulting Services  
 JR Simplot  
 Kansas State University  
 Kirkwood Community College  
 Lakeland College  
 Land O'Lakes  
 Landis International  
 Michigan State University  
 Monsanto  
 Murphy-Brown, LLC  
 National FFA Organization  
 Oklahoma State University  
 ORC Worldwide  
 Osborn-Barr  
 OSI Industries  
 Oxbo International  
 Parkland College  
 Penn State University  
 PIC NA  
 Pioneer Hi-Bred  
 Purdue University  
 Redlands Community College  
 Rich Connell Agri-Search  
 Seaboard Foods  
 SouthWestern Association  
 Syngenta  
 Tennessee State University  
 Texas A&M University  
 The Maschoffs  
 The Parks Companies  
 The Scouler Company  
 Tyson Foods Inc.  
 University of Florida  
 University of Illinois  
 University of Missouri  
 University of Tennessee  
 University of Wisconsin  
 USDA/APHIS  
 Valencia Community College  
 Washington State university  
 West Central  
 Willard Agri-Service

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depends on the way you use social media – blanket messages are ineffective and will act as a turnoff, but using them as a way to converse on a personal level, she has seen be effective.

Roundtable participants had the opportunity for more discussion and interaction during the panel entitled, *'Out-of-the-Box On-Campus Recruiting'*. The panel of experts comprised of career services, university faculty, community college faculty, and industry provided a well rounded group of experts for the audience to ask questions of.

“Being able to learn from career services representatives from the schools was probably the best part of the conference for me,” said Beth Schou, Employment Specialist with Ag Processing Inc. “Learning how to understand today’s students in addition to seeing how other companies have accomplished successful branding on campus was the highlight!”

To wrap up the conference we had an entertaining and very informative presentation from Rashad Delph of Tyson Foods. He shared perspective on gaining and sustaining buy-in for training and education within the organization. In a type of case study format, Delph took participants through some of the critical components of offering training, why Tyson places so much value on their training programs, and how



One of the panel events at the 2009 US Ag HR Roundtable.

training is an integral part of an employee’s life throughout many stages of their career from on-boarding to retention. Rashad’s unique way of relating training completed by athletes to training conducted in a corporate setting really resonated with participants.

Along with the great general sessions, a number of concurrent sessions allowed participants to tailor their learning and select topics that were of interest to them or their organization. These smaller discussion groups really allow participants to dive into the topic and get one-on-one feedback from the presenter. This year’s concurrent sessions included: *Populating the Pipeline of Talent at the High School Level*, *Transitioning Interns into Full-Time Employees*, *Weighing Ag vs. Non-Ag Backgrounds*, *What’s New in Employment Law*, *Growing*

*a Business Yet Maintaining that ‘Small’ Feel, and A Formula for Finding the ‘Right’ Hire.*

Of course the Roundtable wouldn’t be complete without a little networking and fun! Participants had the option to participate in networking breakfasts and tours of our host facilities, ADM and The University of Illinois. As well, Syngenta sponsored our Welcome Reception and AgCareers.com and AgrowKnowledge hosted a reception on the second evening leading into dinner. Another highlight of this year’s event was dinner at Memorial Stadium – while the Fighting Illini were not practicing or playing, the views were great and networking exceptional.

AgCareers.com would once again like to take this opportunity to thank this year’s hosts – ADM and The University of Illinois, as well as our additional sponsors, Syngenta and AgrowKnowledge. We would also like to thank again our speakers as well as those that attended as participants. We thank you for your time and commitment to raising the bar within the agriculture industry!



AgCareers.com thanks our 2009 hosts: Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) and the University of Illinois. — Eric Spell, AgCareers.com; Jenny Neef, University of Illinois; and John Taylor, ADM.