

Webcast Series Expands Global Outreach

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Through ILR Online, a webcast series offered two or three times a semester, ILR faculty members share their expertise with practitioners and policymakers worldwide.

Each webcast addresses a contemporary workplace issue and presents best practices. Topics often relate to human capital development, labor relations, inclusion or diversity.

“We identify problem areas and issues that allow us to create a dialogue with audiences we’re trying to reach,” says Associate Dean of Outreach Susanne Bruyère.

“For presenters, we draw on our own faculty, as well as collaborators they’ve worked with, external experts, policymakers and people who represent these interests in Washington, D.C.”

“Our hope for the series,” she says, “is that it translates into more informed policy and practice.”

Webcasts are interactive, allowing participants to submit questions and respond to polls. Presenters may appear live in studio, be videotaped or take part from remote locations via videoconference.

The series, which began as an alumni-focused initiative,

is produced by ILR’s Office of Communications and Marketing, in collaboration with the Dean’s Office and Alumni Affairs and Development. It resulted from a 2007 survey by the ILR Alumni Association.

Beth Florin MS ’85, managing director of the compensation consulting firm Pearl Meyer & Partners, designed and implemented the survey.

A key finding, she says, was that alumni wanted to continue learning and to hear about professors’ research. “Our firm had just started using webinar technology to facilitate information sharing across widely dispersed audiences, and this vehicle seemed like the perfect answer for ILR.”

During 2013, an average of 450 people registered for each webcast. Of those, about 25 percent were alumni.

Senior Extension Associate Hannah Rudstam of the Employment and Disability Institute was a presenter for “Beyond Yellow Ribbons: Putting Veterans with Disabilities to Work.”

Afterward, she received calls from the New York State Governor’s Office and the New York State Department of Labor.

“We had some good conversations about what they could do to ensure that New York state veterans find and keep jobs, even when working with a disability,” she says. “We also discussed the possibility of several collaborative projects.”

Rudstam was also contacted by other participants, including officials from Manpower, Northrop Grumman and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Mark Harf, Center of Excellence lead in Global Commercial Operations at Pfizer, whose professional background spans human resources, general management and operations, finds the series useful “from all perspectives, and especially so because of its business orientation.”

“The series was particularly useful in the aftermath of the 2008 economic shifts, as it touched on a relevant set of topics to everyday business,” he says. “The webcasts’ value to me came from their fact-based, future-oriented perspective, as opposed to just opinion or repeating the news.”

ILR Online can be accessed via tablet, smartphone or computer. To view past webcasts, go to www.ilr.cornell.edu/media/ilronlinewebcasts.html

