

CAOWInews

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Roundtables Draw Capacity Attendance

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CAOWI's Best Practices Roundtables earlier this month drew a capacity attendance of CAOWI members eager to meet their colleagues and to share their ideas on how to conduct workplace investigations.

In Oakland, 30 CAOWI members packed the conference center of the office building of Best Practices Committee Chair Cynthia Remmers. In Sacramento, 23 members filled the seats at the conference table of the Weintraub law firm, in which CAOWI member Lizbeth West is a shareholder. In Los Angeles, 44 CAOWI members filled a large training classroom at USC provided by CAOWI Board Member Jody Shipper, who is in charge of investigations there. That meeting had been moved from a smaller room at the last minute after registrations for it doubled.

Just as impressive as the attendance for the inaugural event of this new organization was the breadth and depth of topics covered at each roundtable in just a few hours. At the Oakland roundtable, facilitated by Bobbi Lambert and Cynthia Remmers, the discussion was so fast-paced and intense in such a packed room that it was all the facilitators could do to capture the dozens of issues and sub-issues raised. In Sacramento, with fewer people who were actually able to sit around a single large table, facilitator Vida Thomas led numerous in-depth discussions on a smaller number of issues, while still covering the entire agenda. In the large classroom in Los Angeles, facilitators Cathy Balin and Jody Shipper moved the discussion smoothly yet briskly from one topic to another, while still managing to hear from almost everyone present in the very diverse group of investigators.

In addition to the skill of the facilitators and the enthusiasm and expertise of the members in attendance, the success of the roundtables was due to the many hours the Best Practices Committee spent planning for the roundtables. The committee prepared an agenda consisting of 15 topics covering the lifecycle of a workplace investigation, starting with deciding whether to conduct an investigation, and ending with post-investigation, special ethical issues, and other considerations. The agenda itself is a significant analytical and organizational accomplishment. The committee will now analyze the results of the roundtables and make recommendations regarding the next steps in CAOWI's unique effort to develop a publishable document embodying the collective expertise of its members.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Amy Oppenheimer



As CAOWI approaches 150 members, almost two-thirds of whom recently gave a full day of their time to attend our highly successful Best Practices Roundtables, I can now say it with confidence--CAOWI is here to stay!

It was less than a year ago that we decided to start this organization. Since then CAOWI has incorporated, adopted Bylaws, established a Board of Directors and a temporary website, hired a half-time Executive Director, obtained federal tax exemption, enrolled almost 150 members, established 8 committees and 14 Local Circles of Colleagues, published our first 14 page CAOWI Quarterly, held our inaugural Best Practices Roundtables, put together groups of members to sponsor CAOWI exhibits at the 500-person HR West Conference in South San Francisco in April and the 10,000-person SHRM Conference in San Diego in June, scheduled two full-day training seminars in June co-sponsored by the State Bar of California Labor and Employment Section and the Bar Association of San Francisco, is working on a permanent website with a members-only section and a listserv, and planning its first annual conference in Oakland in November.

But more important than CAOWI's impressive list of accomplishments is the sense of community it is providing for its members. Many workplace investigators work alone, either because they have their own business conducting workplace investigations, or because they are the only person within a larger organization who conducts workplace investigations. Many of our members have told me that with CAOWI they no longer feel alone. This is especially gratifying to hear, because that is the main reason we started CAOWI. During each of the Roundtables, our Executive Director asked how many members were seriously considering attending CAOWI's annual conference in November, and almost every hand in each of the rooms immediately went up. With that level of enthusiasm, I am pleased to tell you that we are no longer alone, and that we are not going to be alone again in the future, because CAOWI is here to stay!

CAOWI SPONSORING TABLE AT HR WEST APRIL 26, 27, AND 28

CAOWI is sponsoring a table at the HR West conference in South San Francisco on April 26, 27, and 28. HR West is the annual conference of NCHRA, the Northern California Human Resources Association, which will be attended by approximately 500 human resource professionals.

This will be an opportunity to introduce CAOWI, and the 17 CAOWI members who will be sponsoring the table with CAOWI, to the members of NCHRA. CAOWI will produce a high quality brochure featuring CAOWI and the member-sponsors for distribution at the conference.

At the conference CAOWI will also be distributing a special hard copy sample edition of the first issue of the *CAOWI Quarterly*. Click [here](#) to read the first issue of the *CAOWI Quarterly* online. Future issues of the *CAOWI Quarterly* will be available to CAOWI members only. If you will be attending the HR West Conference, please stop by Table 11 and visit with the CAOWI members who will be staffing the table. Click [here](#) for more information about the HR West Conference.

SPONSORSHIP DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR SHRM CONFERENCE JUNE 27, 28 AND 29

So far over a dozen CAOWI members have signed up to sponsor the CAOWI booth at the SHRM Conference in San Diego on June 27, 28, and 29. SHRM, the Society for Human Resource Management, is the world's largest association of human resource professionals. This is SHRM's

annual conference, which will be attended by approximately 10,000 human resource professionals from around the country and around the world.

We would like to have a few more sponsors, so we have extended the sponsorship deadline. CAOWI will be producing a high quality brochure featuring CAOWI and the photographs and biographies of the member-sponsors for distribution at the conference. CAOWI will also be distributing a special hard copy sample edition of the first issue of the *CAOWI Quarterly*. The cost of sponsorship is \$500. If you are a CAOWI member and are interested in participating in this exciting and affordable opportunity to put CAOWI and yourself on the national and world map, please e-mail info@caowi.org by April 5. If you are not yet a CAOWI member, click [here](#) to join.

If you will be attending the SHRM Conference in San Diego, please take a few minutes to stop by Booth 219 and visit with the CAOWI members who will be staffing the booth. Click [here](#) for more information about the SHRM Conference.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- April 1, 2010, last day to join CAOWI as a Lifetime Sustaining Member for \$3,000. Click [here](#) to join.
- April 1, 2010, deadline for submitting speaker proposals for November Annual Conference to education@caowi.org. Click [here](#) to download the speaker proposal form.
- April 5, 2010, deadline for CAOWI members to sign up to co-sponsor CAOWI booth at SHRM Conference in San Diego in June. E-mail info@caowi.org.
- April 26, 27, 28, 2010, visit the CAOWI table at the [HR West Conference](#) in South San Francisco.
- June 1, 2010, deadline to submit articles for the July *CAOWI Quarterly* to publications@caowi.org.
- June 1, 2010, education seminar on "Mastering the Art of Employment Investigations" at the State Bar office in Los Angeles, co-sponsored by the State Bar Labor and Employment Section. Open to CAOWI members and non-members. Registration and MCLE credit for attorneys will be handled by the State Bar. Click [here](#) to visit the State Bar's website.
- June 3, 2010, education seminar on "Mastering the Art of Employment Investigations" at the Bar Association of San Francisco office in San Francisco, co-sponsored by the Bar Association of San Francisco. Registration and MCLE credit for attorneys will be handled by the Bar Association of San Francisco. Click [here](#) to visit its website.
- June 27, 28, and 29, visit the CAOWI booth at the [SHRM Conference](#) in San Diego.
- November 4, 5, and 6, 2010, CAOWI's First Annual Conference at the Oakland Marriott City Center. The committee welcomes suggestions for conference topics which may be e-mailed to education@caowi.org.

EASIER THAN EVER TO JOIN CAOWI

Membership in CAOWI is open to anyone who is dedicated to promoting and enhancing workplace investigations in California. CAOWI now has 150 members including attorneys, private investigators, human resource, security, and loss prevention professionals, auditors, and claims adjusters. We are now able to accept credit card and electronic check payments by fax. To become a member, go to http://www.caowi.org/join_us.html.

An annual membership is valid for one year from the date of application. Annual membership dues are \$150. Annual dues for sustaining membership, which includes prominent

placement on CAOWI's website and in CAOWI's advertising, and a 50% discount on all CAOWI activities, are \$1000. Until April 1, 2010, lifetime sustaining memberships will be available for \$3,000.

FOLLOW CAOWI ON TWITTER

Now you can follow CAOWI on Twitter at www.twitter.com/caowi. We've been tweeting frequently, so now you can become one of our followers so you can keep up with CAOWI's breaking news.