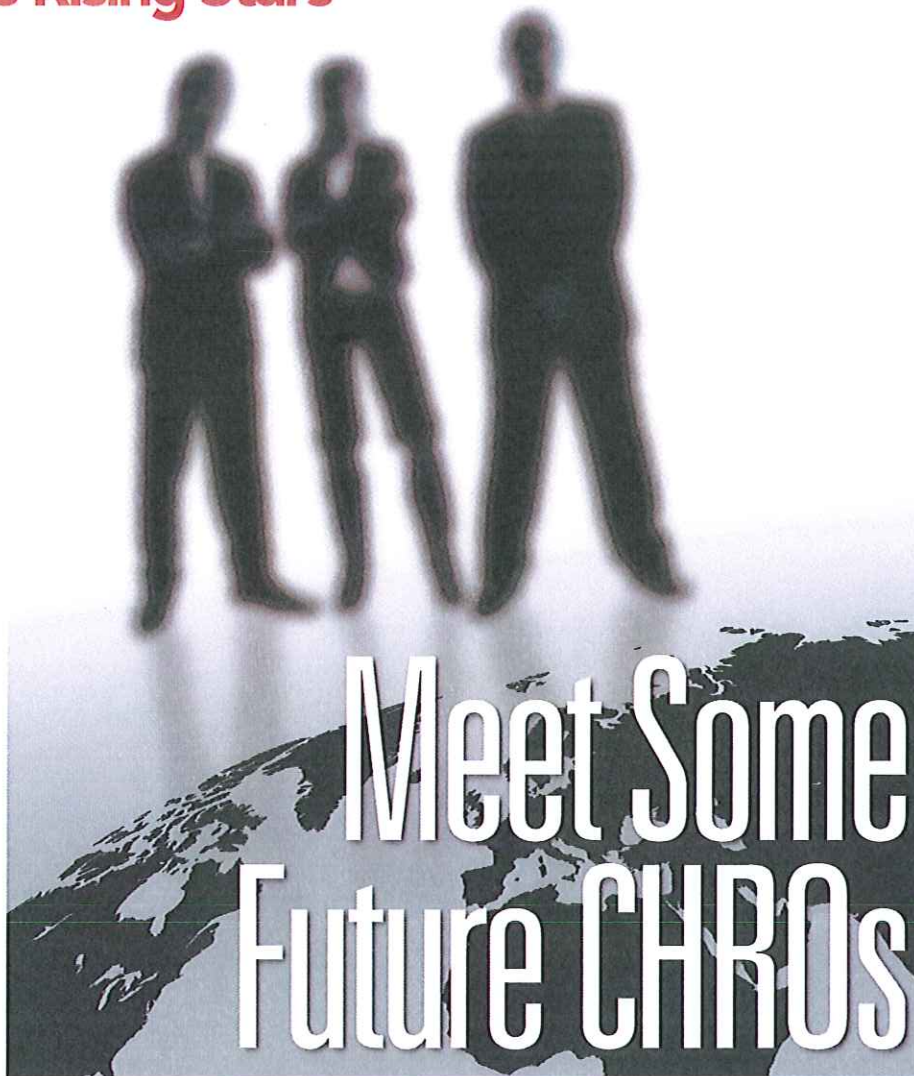


HR's Rising Stars



HRE's 2012 HR's Rising Stars exemplify the types of initiative and dedication to personal and organizational growth that will likely propel them to the tops of HR organizations—or perhaps even higher—one day.

BY KRISTEN B. FRASCH

We're proud to introduce you to some very talented and unique HR professionals, the five winners of our seventh annual HR's Rising Stars contest. Every year, members of our selection panel—myself included—face different and difficult challenges trying to finalize the slate of candidates we feel most exemplify the types of human resource leaders who will one day be heading up their own HR organizations.

This year was especially trying as we found ourselves grappling with some of our own criteria: Should they be solving out-of-the-ordinary HR challenges at the same level of difficulty that a chief human resource officer might contend with? Would a winner have to step outside the contours of his or her role to perform herculean feats or could an assigned job well done be performed in such a way to lift a candidate to rising-star status?

The answer: It all depends—on the challenges they face, their leadership and poise in solving them, the industries

they navigate and, most importantly, the marks they leave on their functions and tasks at hand.

As in past years, all of our 2012 Rising Stars have left, and continue to leave, impressive imprints on the roles they've been given. In different ways, they've all taken on problems and called them their own, showing personal initiative and conviction in overcoming them and helping their organizations grow.

Also, like last year, these winners seem to be calling on an ever-widening array of skills and backgrounds to fill the shoes of tomorrow's top HR leaders ... and, in a sense, breathe some diversity and new life into the function and the people it serves. Some might even take their enhanced skills elsewhere, diversifying and invigorating other top functions as well.

Lincoln Financial Group's Matthew Geis has a bachelor's degree in political science from Towson University, where he played football. Having started his HR career after spending a number of years running his own business, he brought business savvy, relationship-building skills and an entrepreneurial spirit to his achievements in recruiting,

leadership development, organizational design, performance management ... the list goes on.

Hospira's Pamela Puryear dipped into a well of experiences—with an education in organizational psychology and organizational development, and prior careers in real estate and consulting—to design, develop and deliver impressive development plans for leaders and employees, as well as a much-needed cross-cultural solution for a new acquisition in India.

Corey Turner of Jones Lang LaSalle—with degrees in rehabilitation and Spanish, and stints in rehabilitation counseling and recruiting—weathered intense hiring challenges in an industry already challenged and compromised, and did it with creativity, compassion and a commitment to diversity.

The Internal Revenue Service's Susan Greer started her career as a field investigator with the Office of Personnel Management and later—with the IRS—worked as a security program analyst. From recruiting to strategic-leadership development, she, too, has put a special stamp of personal initiative and ownership on everything she's accomplished.

And, like Puryear, Express Scripts' Melanie Curtis brought strengths from an organizational-psychology education and background—survey methodology, statistical analysis, and drivers of employee engagement and culture creation—to lead her company through some huge transformations in the way leaders are developed and assessed, and the way all employees handle change.

Can this panel see these five as CHROs one day? Without question. We're also excited and intrigued to see what future contests yield.

As in the past, judges for this year's contest included Charlie Tharp, executive vice president for policy at the Center on Executive Compensation, a division of the HR Policy Association, and former senior vice president of human resources for Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.; Michele Darling, president of Michele Darling and Associates in Mississauga, Ontario, and former executive vice president of corporate governance and human resources for Prudential Insurance Co.; Gregory Hessel, senior client partner with the Human Resources Center of Expertise at Korn/Ferry International's Dallas offices; and Kristen B. Frasch, managing editor of *Human Resource Executive*® magazine.

This year, the panel also welcomed John Boudreau, professor at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business and research director of its Center for Effective Organizations, as its fifth member. For stories on past winners and access to next year's nomination form, visit the HRE Rankings section of *HREOnline*®.

Send questions or comments about this feature to hreletters@lrp.com.



Puryear's Perfect Evolution

If ever there was a walking, working ambassador for the merits of changing course in one's life and career, it is Pamela Puryear. Not only has the vice president of organization development for Lake Forest, Ill.-based Hospira Inc. done it once. She's done it multiple times.

Raised in the Bronx, N.Y., by two parents with doctorates (her father's focus, business; her mother's, social work and public administration), Puryear was almost instinctively independent, with strengths in, and profound respect for, education, entrepreneurship—and, “from my mom’s influence,” she says, “a commitment to helping those less fortunate ... and a sense that you have a responsibility to try and make a difference.”

With a bachelor's degree in psychology from Yale (focusing on organizational behavior), an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School and an early career in the pension-fund-advisory business (focusing on real-estate), Puryear—in the late 1990s—went on to found her own consulting practice specializing in business strategy before eventually moving on from there to organization and leadership development in 2005. In 2008, she rediscovered her “earlier passion for

psychology,” as she puts it, and pursued and earned a doctorate in organizational psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology. Loaded with such disparate and far-reaching expertise and experience, she joined Hospira in 2009 and proceeded to do what her gut always told her she could do: She started changing the world, at least her corner of it.

When Hospira, a provider of injectable drugs and infusion technologies, acquired Chennai, India-based Orchid Pharma in 2010, the company found itself straddling cultural differences and conflicts between Hospira's primarily U.S. workforce and Orchid's some 4,000 India-based employees. Puryear dug into the problem and spearheaded and developed a comprehensive cross-cultural intervention and sensitization process with input from leaders of both companies. She even flew to India to strengthen the support of the president of the new Hospira India. With the help of an online training tool by RW3 called Cultural Wizard and the co-leadership of Hospira India's senior vice president of HR, Puryear successfully improved the partnerships and performance of both companies.

Following Hospira's creation—as a 2004 spinoff of Abbott Laboratories' hospital-products division—and its acquisitions of Salisbury, South Australia-based Mayne Pharma and Orchid, the company embarked on a several-year

Pamela Puryear

Vice President of Organization Development

Hospira Inc., Lake Forest, Ill.

Greatest Challenge: In her words, “creating an organizational mind-set that transfers ownership of one's engagement, development and career management from the company to a shared responsibility of the company and the employee.”

Greatest Achievement: In her words, “building a brand, ‘Ignite, Spark the Fire Within,’ to increase employee awareness of, and access to, processes and tools that drive employee engagement in, and ownership of, their own careers.”

transformation to become more nimble and global while growing into the almost-15,000-employee organization it is today. Knowing change is driven by leaders, Puryear created a leadership-development curriculum to help them navigate the transformation and excite and unite employees behind it. Through her two classroom-based modules, *Leading@Hospira* and *Leading Growth@Hospira*, more than 500 leaders have become change agents at Hospira.

As impressive as all this seems, if you ask Puryear what she is most known for and proud of in her relatively short stint at Hospira, she'll tell you it's the Ignite

program, launched in 2010. Crafted by Puryear as a much-needed approach to employee-owned development and employee-driven engagement, and marketed as Ignite: Spark the Fire Within, it provides an umbrella brand for primary employee-facing programs led by HR, including performance management, learning and development, employee engagement and total rewards. One of the programs within Ignite is the Ignite Grant, which allows teams of employees to apply for up to \$5,000 to fund a development program or experience currently unaddressed by some other internal company initiative.

In Kevin Sheridan's book, *The Magnetic Culture*, Ken Meyers, Hospira's senior vice president and chief human resource officer, describes Ignite as “a way for employees to ‘connect the dots’ across many employee-facing programs, which drive engagement.”

As Puryear describes it, when she came to Hospira, she was “seeing that people were really still separating running the business and managing the people. There really didn't seem to be as strong a partnership between business leaders, employees and HR as there could be,” she says. Through Ignite, employees are now excited about developing, contributing to and owning their own careers, and business leaders “want us involved in talent management and planning,” says Puryear. “This is what I have really poured my passion into.”

In fact, passion is the very thing she advises anyone considering a career in business, or HR, to have. It's “the essential ingredient” for sustaining commitment and energy, she says. “My advice is to choose a business sector or company that you are proud to support, curious to know more about and committed to continuously improve through [your] work. I feel that way about working in the healthcare field, and about Hospira specifically.”

How far is up on her career ladder? “I hesitate to speculate,” she says, “because if you had asked me where I would be in 2012 five or 10 years ago when I was an independent external OD consultant based in sunny California, I would never have thought I would be leading an internal OD practice at ... Hospira.”

Wherever she goes, count on her being a success, says Meyers. She has “every ability to grow as a chief talent officer within Hospira or some other company ... [She could even] be the next CHRO at Hospira if she chooses ...”

Count on her also self-evaluating. Throughout her earlier careers, when she “was always the youngest [this], the first African-American [that],” and then a busy consultant, she enjoyed success, “but always felt [the job at hand] wasn't really my calling.”

“Really smart people can do a lot of things and do them well,” she says, “but you need to be true to your feelings about what you're doing and how you're doing it.” It won't set you back, not even as an HR's Rising Star nominee.

—Kristen B. Frasch