

# SPOTLIGHT ON: Janine Dunn

## **Would you mind sharing a bit about yourself?**

When I graduated from college with a Sociology degree, jobs were not that plentiful, and I did not want to be a social worker. I took an elective course my senior year in personnel and loved the course and professor. I decided I wanted to go into HR (personnel at the time) and that's why I got a master's degree. My first job took me to Alabama, St. Louis and southern California, where I met my husband and moved to CT, where he is from. I've worked in CT for the last 30 plus years.

## **What is the best advice you were given in your HR career?**

Get to know the business.... I took interim positions short term (and still kept my HR job) and so I had the skills of managing/leading people and I also got the operational experience. It helped solidify my love of HR.

## **What made you decide to get involved with HRLA?**

I was involved in SHRM before it was SHRM. I founded a student chapter at Michigan State University and that is still going! At the time HRLA was founded, we had a local HR Chapter that was independent from SHRM called Eastern CT Personnel Association. A small group of professionals decided they wanted to affiliate with SHRM. We asked if the existing chapter wanted to merge and they declined, so we started HRLA!

It was fun to start something new. It gave me the opportunity to get to know the SHRM staff and that's how I got connected with the great people at SHRM who I am still in touch with today!



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**How has volunteering with the chapter benefitted you and your career?**

It enhanced and expanded my network; I got to know many other professionals I would not have known otherwise. My knowledge and abilities were expanded due to the volunteering opportunities. As an active volunteer, you push yourself past your comfort zone and improve in many areas you would otherwise not have the chance to do.

**What would you say to someone who might be considering volunteering with the SHRM chapter?**

When you volunteer, you get to know the chapter and other HR professionals better. You have closer ties and develop lasting friendships. You may not realize how much you get from volunteering - you get back much more than you put in.

**What is the best piece of advice you would give to someone in HR today?**

With HR being more challenging than ever before, you have to stay current in your profession (i.e. legal changes). Stay kind and keep a positive perspective. Lean into your impact on the strategic aspects of the business, culture and organizational success. Relationships matter.

**Mountains or beach?** Depends on the time of year.

**Coffee or tea?** Both.

**Favorite Ice Cream flavor?** Chocolate, ALWAYS!

**Biggest career highlight?** Two years in a row I won the award for top HR professional in my company - a large, nationwide media company.

**Best piece of advice you ever received?** Treat people the way they want to be treated (Platinum Rule).