

Member Story: Laura Negraeff



Laura Negraeff, CPHR, is an HR professional and theatre artist living and working in Saskatoon, SK. Laura taught business for 12 years in local post-secondary institutions, focusing on HR. Laura left teaching to follow her passion for theatre. On this journey, she also used her HR skillset to work in administrative and leadership roles at various arts organizations, most recently working as Executive Artistic Director at Lolabrickida Theatre. She also has her sights on launching a consulting business to help other nonprofits and arts organizations grow. Laura loves connecting her business knowledge with her artistic passion and does so by serving on boards and volunteering her time with various arts organizations,

such as Theatre Saskatchewan. Laura also brings unique insight into inclusion and accessibility due to her lived experience of disability.

Membership with CPHR Saskatchewan

New to the HR industry and eager to discover a career path, Laura joined CPHR Saskatchewan as a Student Member. The membership allowed her to connect with the HR community and learn from people actively working in the field who have valuable insight into current challenges and trends. This led her to obtain the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources (CPHR) designation.

When Laura obtained the CPHR designation, she experienced a sense of validation – it acknowledged both the education and the work experience it took Laura to get to that point. The CPHR designation sets knowledge and experience standards, and Laura has experienced the benefits firsthand. She believes a great benefit to being a CPHR is having the base of knowledge, while also being held accountable to learn and stay current to continue to serve your community.

Path to Human Resources

Laura was working in the retail and service industries when she discovered her passion for supporting others on their career journeys. She had a manager who encouraged her to take management training, and she was drawn to all things under the human resource umbrella. Her favourite thing about this new passion was seeing people who were often overlooked thrive and achieve their own goals, while also

accomplishing company goals. Laura found she had a talent for tapping into the employee's intrinsic motivation instead of relying on external pressures to increase productivity while also helping people be the best they can be. She knew then that she wanted this to be her life's work.

Mentors and Inspiration

Laura's mentors have primarily come from outside the HR community but have embodied traits that she wanted to bring to her work within the industry. These mentors were both professors while she was completing her Master of Education and supervisors in the retail and service industries. These mentors were often women, mothers, and Indigenous peoples. These mentors raised Laura up on her journey and made her feel it was possible to accomplish her goals. These mentors instilled in her values and skills that have been an asset in her career. Laura now tries to be that support for the many students and peers she has mentored during her career. She also directs many of them to CPHR Saskatchewan's mentorship program because she knows how important mentorship and support can be in shaping a career and accomplishing goals.

The Future of HR

Laura believes the future for HR professionals lies not in being an administrative function of business, but as true leaders with a seat at the decision-making table. HR understands business acumen, while understanding their employees as holistic humans is key to long-term success. While in the past many CEOs have come from

accounting backgrounds, Laura has noticed a trend of HR people making their way to the top in both large companies and small organizations. Global pushback against human rights and inclusion requires that people with passion and training in these sectors rise and help guide businesses of all sizes, not only for the good of the business, but for the good of society as well. CPHR professionals are strategically poised to do this, blending their knowledge of education and real-world experience to make real, lasting change in the workforce.

Personal Accomplishments

Laura is very proud of having started her own theatre company, Lolabrickida Theatre, in Saskatoon, currently producing one show a year. If Laura is not working, her favourite thing to do is have experiences with her family, including acting like tourists in their own city. They love finding all the hidden gems Saskatoon has to offer! Laura is a valued member of CPHR Saskatchewan and we wish her the best in all her pursuits.