



P.O. Box 307  
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# The New York Metropolitan Area Chapter-ISCEBS

*e-Newsletter August 2011*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Welcome to the NY Metro Chapter of ISCEBS Second 2011 Newsletter. As we near the end of summer, I wanted to fill you in on all that has happened over the last few months. I encourage all of you to take some time to enhance your professional lives by really understanding all that our local chapter and the International Society of Certified Employee Benefit Specialists has to offer you.

The second quarter of 2011 started with an exciting session lead by **BOB MINDEL** and **JOAN SMYTH** of Mercer where they shared the results of Mercer's annual Health & Benefits survey. From there, **LOU LIBRANDI** turned 5500s into an interesting and even entertaining topic. June had us heading back to basics with our Fundamentals programs. This year, we lead two full-day back-to-back sessions with the first focusing on health and welfare topics and the second on retirement plans.

While much of the chapter's focus is on education as that is our primary mission, another important part of our value proposition is the access to fellow benefit professionals. We have noticed that with people's busy schedules, many attend an education session, grab materials (and maybe a cup of coffee) and then race back to the office. This year, we chose to dedicate July's session to

networking. We sponsored an event at the 79th Street Boat Basin as a way to thank all of our volunteers and program speakers and also give people time to meet other chapter members. The weather was great and the networking was a huge success.

Our August event dovetailed nicely with July's networking session as it focused on social media and how we can use this to engage our defined contribution plan participants. **ADAM WOOTTON** from Towers Watson led this informative and interactive meeting. August's meeting was also the NY Metro Chapter's first effort at going "regional" – we're not global yet, but with the help of technology, we were able to invite our colleagues in the Northeast region (the Boston, Southern New England, and Northern Jersey chapters). We have been able to take advantage of some other chapter's programs and were able to reciprocate. Please stay tuned as we continue to enhance and expand our program offerings as well as reach a larger base of benefit professionals.

So, we have been busy planning an exciting fall roster of programs and hope that all of you can take advantage of some of our offerings. In addition to the Chapter events, I encourage all of you to try to attend the ISCEBS 30th Annual Symposium. This year it will be held in San Antonio, Texas. This is a cutting-edge learning event that provides access to leaders in our industry and allows you to network with colleagues from the US and Canada. For more information, please go to <http://www.iscebs.org>.

A newsletter would not be complete without a call for volunteers! We value your input and want to hear from you as well as benefit from all of your experience. Please check out <http://cebsnyc.org/> and let us know your thoughts as well as how you would like to get involved!

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the summer!

Stacy Isquith Donck, CEBS

## IN THIS ISSUE...

President's Message .....	1
Upcoming, Dues Reminder, Volunteers, PayPal Reminder, Chapter Website, Symposium, CEBS Designations.....	2
Second Quarter 2011 Recaps.....	3-4
Congratulations Are In Order .....	5

## UPCOMING

- ✓ Wednesday, September 14: Global Wellness in the Health Care Reform Era  
Registration: 5:30 p.m.  
Presentation: From 6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.  
Location: CIGNA, 140 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY  
Presenters: ALLEN C. KOSKI, Vice President of CIGNA International Expatriate Benefits and FRANK WELTZ, Global Underwriting Head
- ✓ Wednesday, October 12: Financial Engines & Welfare Fundamentals

(REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ALL SESSIONS)

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## 2011 DUES REMINDER

Remember to submit your 2011 dues for ISCEBS and NY Metro Chapter membership. Payment of NY Metro Chapter dues permits a member to attend all 2011 monthly educational programs (other than our day-long fundamentals programs) at no additional cost.

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We are looking for volunteers to assist with many of the Chapter's activities, particularly with membership, education and the newsletter. We also appreciate volunteers to provide check-in assistance at our meetings. If you are interested in volunteering for any Chapter activity, please contact a board member.

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## PAYPAL REMINDER

The New York Metro Area Chapter now accepts payment for educational meetings via PayPal. Using PayPal allows you to pay for educational meetings using your debit or credit card. You do not need an established PayPal account to use this payment method.

Remember, you will still need to submit a registration form for the meeting you plan to attend. Registration forms may be sent to [silent@att.net](mailto:silent@att.net) or faxed to (973) 448-0022.

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## NEY METRO CHAPTER WEBSITE

Don't forget to regularly check out the Chapter's website. There you will find the latest information regarding upcoming educational programs, news about the Chapter, list of board members, and much more: <http://www.cebsnyc.org>

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## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2011 ISCEBS SYMPOSIUM

The 2011 ISCEBS Symposium will be held October 2 – October 5 at the Grand Hyatt in San Antonio, Texas. The Symposium is one of the largest gatherings of credentialed benefits professionals in the country. Attendees represent corporations, consulting firms, health care organizations, hospitals, banks, insurance companies, investment and administration firms, jointly trustee and public employee benefit plans, law firms and other organizations involved with employee benefits. For more information, go to: <http://www.iscebs.org/Symposium/>

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## CEBS DESIGNATIONS

The CEBS program offers four highly renowned designations in the U.S. and Canada covering all aspects of benefits and compensation:

- **CEBS**—The premier designation in total compensation, considered the standard of excellence in the industry
- **GBA (Group Benefits Associate)**—a specialty designation focusing on health care and other group benefits
- **RPA (Retirement Plans Associate)**—a specialty designation focusing on all aspects of retirement plans
- **CMS (Compensation Management Specialist)**—a specialty designation that focuses on compensation and human resources

For more information, go to: [www.ifebp.org/CEBSDesignation/Overview](http://www.ifebp.org/CEBSDesignation/Overview)

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## SECOND QUARTER 2011 RECAPS

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### April 27 - Results of Mercer 2010 National Survey of Employer Sponsored Health Plans

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BOB MINDEL and JOAN SMYTH, Partners at Mercer Health & Benefits covered the following highlights from the survey:

- Plan costs increased both before and after plan changes
  - A third of employers saw costs go up over 10%
  - Total health spend was \$9,600 per employee
  - Prescription drug cost increases matched health insurance cost increases, a downward move
  - Coinsurance is being used more often in prescription drug plan design
- Plan design changes continue to shift more cost to employees
  - Average in-network deductible was \$1,172 for PPOs
  - 85% of employers (sized 50-499) have in-network deductibles
  - Total percentage of cost borne by employees seems stable, but the dollar costs are increasing along with medical cost increases
  - Consumer driven health plans continue to expand
- Health Management programs show results and gain traction
  - Health Risk Assessments are offered by 69% of employers
  - Disease management programs are offered by 73% of employers
  - Nurse advice is offered by 81% of employers
  - Plans that used intensive health management had cost increases 2 points lower than vanilla efforts

Mercer sponsored the program.

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### May 18 - Form 5500 Presentation: 2010 Plan Year

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TIMOTHY J. DESMOND, Audit Partner & Director, and LOUIS F. LIBRANDI, Principal at O'Connor Davies Munns & Dobbins LLP provided an updated on the 2010 Form 5500 filing. Attendees discussed problems with EFAST filings in 2010, the first year electronic filing was required. 5500 filing is voluntary for employee-pay-all plans and plans which are not promoted by employers. It is not recommended that employers report stop loss plans because the coverage is purchased by the employer, not the plan. Fully insured welfare plans with under 100 participants are not required to file.

There have been a few changes to the required reporting of indirect compensation. Indirect compensation over \$5,000 must be reported on Schedule C. Fees paid by mutual funds or other investment vehicles are the most common form of indirect compensation.

Mr. Desmond discussed audit requirements for employee benefit plans, when an independently qualified public accountant determines if financial statements and schedules are compliant with regulations.

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Recaps continued page 4

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## May Webcast and Webinar

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New York Metro chapter members were invited to participate in a webcast with [NEVIN ADAMS](#) of PLANSPONSOR and PLANADVISER held by the Southern New England Chapter. Chapter members were also invited to participate in a webinar on Employment Trends for Employee Benefits Professionals held by the Greater Boston Chapter. This webinar was offered to members from the Southern Connecticut, Northern New Jersey and Albany chapters. The NY Metro chapter hopes members were able to take advantage of the opportunity to attend these events.

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## June 14 - Health & Welfare Plan Fundamentals AND

## June 15 - Retirement Plan Fundamentals

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A one-day Health & Welfare Fundamentals program, followed by a one-day Retirement Fundamentals program was held at the American Management Association where attendees gained valuable knowledge from the selection of speakers and topics:

- [WILLIAM B. DUFF](#), Partner at Katten, Muchin, Rosenman LLP provided a legislative update.
- [ANNE MARIE LUDOVICI-CONNOLLY](#), National Senior Consultant at AON Hewitt presented information on wellness initiatives
- [LEONARD R. COMBERIATE](#), Director of Compensation and Benefits at NASDAQ OMX spoke at the H&W session on Flexible Benefit Plans, and again at the Retirement Plan session on Defined Benefit Plans.
- [ALAN PFEIFFER](#), Senior Vice President at the Sentinel Group, provided a history of and overview of Defined Contribution Plans.
- [GARY CHASE](#), Senior Consultant at Towers Watson, covered ERISA reporting and disclosure.
- [LEONARD R. COMBERIATE](#), Director of Compensation and Benefits at NASDAQ OMX spoke on the history of Defined Benefit plans.

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## July 27 - Networking, Happy Hour and Volunteer Appreciation

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Around 30 members and volunteers enjoyed beautiful summer weather for a summer networking event at the West 79<sup>th</sup> Street Boat Basin Café. Thank you again to all volunteers for the two Fundamentals sessions, as well as the volunteers at other events held by the NY Metro Chapter in the first six months of 2011.

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## August 10 - Utilizing Social Media to Enhance Employee Participation in Defined Contribution Plans

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[ADAM WOOTTON, Ph.D.](#) and Senior Consultant at Towers Watson, spoke about ways to get the attention of employees to educate them on benefit plans and the importance of their participation in those plans. Dr. Wootton discussed behavioral economics and why certain incentives can impact employee engagement and participation. Attendees were shown videos of games that changed individual behavior, from climbing stairs rather than taking an escalator to enjoying recycling (Volkswagen Fun Theory initiatives). Another video used by a British company showed employees what retirement investment mistakes they should not make by telling the story of a fictional person who made poor choices. People remember advice better when it is provided through a story. Online videos shown on a company's intranet can be a useful tool to get employees' attention.

Towers Watson sponsored the program.

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# CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER...

<b>CEBS</b>	<b>JAMES GAWRYCH, CEBS</b> Correspondent	<b>ADRIAN WEBSTER, CEBS</b> Compliance Specialist MMBB
<b>CMS</b>	<b>ANTHONY DeROSA, CMS</b> Vice President Dreyfuss & Birke Ltd.	<b>THOMAS ISENBERG, CMS</b> Mutual of America Life Ins. Co.
<b>GBA</b>	<b>LINDSEY KRAMER, GBA</b> HR Associate Aetos Capital	<b>SANDI KONG, GBA</b>
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<b>CEBS FELLOWS</b>	<b>EMILY BARBOSA, FELLOW</b> Dept. Head, Personnel Admin. Landbank	<b>MICHAEL BAYLEY, FELLOW</b> Systems Analyst
	<b>LEONARD COMBERIATE, FELLOW</b> Director NASDAQ OMX	<b>KAREN DEROCKER, FELLOW</b> Compliance Manager The Ministers & Missionaries Benefits Board
	<b>FRED FARKASH, FELLOW</b> Senior Consultant Buck Consultants	<b>JOHN GILDAY, FELLOW</b> Executive Director Fund Mgr. Electrical Industry Board
	<b>JACQUELINE GREENE, FELLOW</b> Benefits Officer The United Nations	<b>ARTHUR GRUTT, FELLOW</b> Vice President The Cambridge Organization
	<b>DAVID HERSHKOWITZ, FELLOW</b> Senior Consultant	<b>ERIC JACOBSON, FELLOW</b> Senior Vice President Willis
	<b>LOUIS LiBRANDI, FELLOW</b> Principal, Employee Benefit Svcs. Group O'Connor, Davies et als.	<b>HELEN MYERS, FELLOW</b> Mgr., Benefits Management White & Case LLP
	<b>CHRISTINE NICKELSON, FELLOW</b> Director, Comp. & HRIS	<b>DAVID PANZA, FELLOW</b> Director Frank Crystal & Co. Inc.
	<b>JOSEPH REMEIKA, FELLOW</b> VP, Consulting Team Leader Willis	<b>CAROLINE REPKO, FELLOW</b> Associate Towers Watson
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