

ERA'S EDS BREAKFAST SPEAKER TO DELIVER ECONOMIC UPDATE

ERA's annual breakfast program at EDS 2015 will again be co-sponsored with the Electronic Components Industry Association (ECIA) and will feature an economic update presentation by Dr. Esmael Adibi. He is an economics professor at Chapman University in Orange, Cal., and the director of the university's A. Gary Anderson Center for Economic Research.

The breakfast event runs on Thursday, May 14, from 6:45 to 8 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas and is open at no charge to all EDS attendees. Although there is no cost to attend, advance reservations are requested by May 1. To register, email info@era.org.

BOARD ELECTS NEW ERA OFFICERS

During its March meeting, the **ERA Board of Directors elected new officers for the 2015-17 term.** They are: chairman of the board - Paul Nielsen, CPMR, of Brainard-Nielsen Marketing; board president - Dan Parks, CPMR, of West Electronic Sales; senior vice president / fiscal and legal - David Norris of Norris and Associates; senior vice president / education - Kathie Cahill, CPMR, of Net Sales Co.; senior vice president / membership - John O'Brien, CPMR, of Coakley, Boyd and Abbett; and senior vice president / industry - Chuck Tanzola, CPMR, of the Fusion Sourcing Group.

O'Brien and Tanzola are new members of the association's executive committee. Nielsen succeeds the outgoing chairman, Mark Conley of O'Donnell Associates North, who concluded six years as a national officer. The other outgoing executive committee member is Robert Logan, CPMR, of Kruvand Associates, who served two years as senior vice president / membership. The executive committee also includes two non-voting staff members — Bob Terwall, the association president, and Tom Shanahan, ERA's executive vice president and CEO.

EVANS IS EIGHTH RECIPIENT OF RAY HALL SPIRIT OF ERA AWARD

Bob Evans, CPMR, of EK Associates in Palatine, Ill., is the newest and eighth recipient of the Ray Hall Spirit of ERA Award. The award was announced in late March. Evans has served in many leadership chairs of Chicagoland-Wisconsin ERA, including as president and national delegate to the ERA Board. He now serves as a member of the team that designs ERA's industry surveys, and he also chairs the association's Chapter Leadership Council, which manages the chapter officers leadership training and chapter of the year recognition programs. As the award recipient, Evans receives a registration, hotel and transportation package for ERA's upcoming 47th Management and Marketing Conference, scheduled on Feb. 28 to March 1, 2016, in Austin, Tex.

The Ray Hall Spirit of ERA Award was established in 2004 to honor the now-retired CEO who had served the association for more than 40 years. Hall asked that the award recognize individuals who exemplify the spirit of ERA through their commitment to serving and advancing the professional field sales (manufacturers' representative) function.

LINKEDIN CONNECTIONS MAY BE TRADE SECRETS

An ongoing court case in California is testing **whether an employee's LinkedIn connections can be considered trade secrets.** The Chicago law firm of Howe and Hutton relates that a former employee of a cellular accessories firm, who left to start a competing business, is charged by his former employer with unlawfully taking trade secrets by retaining his business LinkedIn contact information after his departure. The employee faces other charges as well, but Howe and Hutton comments that it should be "interesting to see how trade secret law is applied to LinkedIn contacts in this case." The law firm advises employers to label trade secret information as such and warn employees not to disclose it to anyone or use it for their own purposes.

MRERF PLANS REGIONAL MANAGER CERTIFICATION COURSE

The Manufacturers' Representatives Educational Research Foundation (MRERF) has announced its plan to offer a multi-year **certification program for factory sales managers** who oversee their companies' field sales reps. The debut of the first level of the regional manager course is planned in January 2016, and it will run in tandem with the Certified Professional Manufacturers' Representative (CPMR) program that the foundation has offered for many years. The CPMR course is offered for one week annually over three years at the University of Texas at Austin. The new curriculum is being designed to train and certify sales managers so they can better understand and manage their rep sales forces. For details, visit the MRERF website at mrerf.org.