

Radford University SHRM

RU Newsletter

NFL Players seek off-season internships

Special points of interest:

- Colt's player David Thornton has interned as a high school football coach for the last four years, and has also worked for the NCAA.
- Business seminars are offered for players interested in financial fields, such as 401(k) plans, pensions, managing finances and other business topics.

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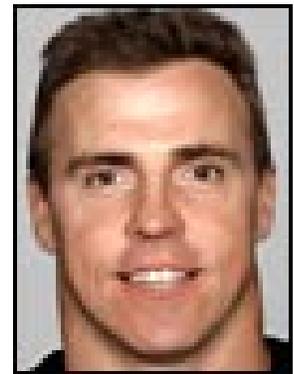
Imagine what it must be like to be at the top of your game, and then have your football career suddenly end. Fortunately, some players are already considering this situation, which could be only an injury or roster move away. The NFL and its teams are looking for off-season internship opportunities for their players. What's more, team officials are encouraging players to develop financial literacy, particularly players who would like nothing better than to run some of us out of business as entrepreneurs once they put down their helmets for the last time.

Not every employer would be a good fit for an off-season internship for an NFL player. "It's all a function of the player's interests and his projection of where he thinks he will be" after he retires, Steve Champlin, director of player development for the Colts, told *HR News*. "If it's the right fit, we'll definitely pursue it." Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning can be seen in a MasterCard commercial ogling a "game-worn" apron carried by a restaurant employee leaving work, but unsurprisingly in real life he'll probably pass on that job. Champlin says that to date the program has found many in-

ternships in sports and related fields, such as high school coaching, working with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and similar tasks. But a few other jobs have attracted players as well. For example, life insurance agent, real estate sales, and finance and investing are among target jobs, said Champlin and Chris Henry, director of player development for the NFL. "We're trying to expose them more to business, such as marketing, human resources or some other aspect of business," Henry told *HR News*.

The internship program, which began in the 1990s, "has been successful for the most part," said Champlin. "It's a process; you want to get better every year." The Colts attempt to place 10 to 15 players in internships each off season. Some opportunities are paid; some are not. "We want to create more interest," said the NFL's Henry. Part of the process entails getting past the player's warrior mentality and "trying to get them to think ahead to their next career," where, presumably, blind-side sacks and bootleg plays will be only metaphors for business dealings.

For those players who would rather lead than follow, there's a new high-powered



Bill "Romo" Romanowski
Oakland Raiders (ret.)

series of business seminars. Featuring programs on 401(k) plans, pensions, managing finances and other business topics, the seminars are currently scheduled at four rather prestigious business schools: Harvard, Northwestern, Stanford and Wharton.

After last year's inaugural sessions, "the feedback was tremendous and the program was expanded," noted Champlin. The players "are being exposed to small-business CEOs," he said. "The players check in, interact and go to school three to four days. "We've had six of our players apply" for the seminars in 2006, added Champlin. "I hope all six will be admitted. ... It's very competitive."

- Condensed from an article written by Steve Bates for *HR News*

Worker's Compensation a possible remedy for sexual assault at work

An employee of a Virginia company was sexually assaulted by a co-worker while on the job. She sued her employer, claiming that it should be liable for the actions of her co-worker. The courts had to decide whether Virginia workers' compensation law prevented her from bringing this lawsuit.

Michelle Butler began working at a retail store of Southern States, a supplier of agricultural supplies, in 2000. In 2003 the company hired Clarence Allen as a delivery person. Southern States knew that Allen had been previously convicted of felony rape.

Allen made frequent comments to Butler, saying that he wanted to date her and that he always got what he wanted. In August 2003, Butler was sent on a delivery with Allen. Allen said that Butler was exciting him and pointed to a bulge in his pants as evidence, ran his hand through her hair, licked her ear, and finally stopped the truck, grabbed her head, and tried to kiss her on the lips. Butler resisted until Allen

gave up. When Butler returned to the store, she felt ill. She left work and reported the incident to the police. Allen was arrested and convicted of assault and battery. In April 2004, Butler filed a lawsuit against Southern States, trying to recover damages from the company for negligent hiring of Allen, liability for Allen's assault and battery, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Southern States asked the trial court to dismiss the case, claiming that Butler's injuries arose out of and in the course of her employment and were therefore barred by the exclusivity provision of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act. The trial court agreed with Southern States and dismissed the case, finding that the incident fell under the scope of workers' compensation—so Butler could only receive benefits, not damages from a lawsuit. Butler appealed.

The Virginia Workers' Compensation Act states that when an employee is injured by accident in the course of

and out of employment, workers' compensation provides the exclusive remedy available. One provision of this Act, Virginia Code 65.2-301, states that an employee who is sexually assaulted in the course of employment, where the nature of employment substantially increases the risk of assault, is considered to have suffered an injury arising out of employment and has a valid claim for workers' compensation benefits. There is, however, an exception to the normal exclusivity provision of this law: an employee who is sexually assaulted may choose to sue the attacker to receive damages instead of workers' compensation benefits.

In order for Southern States to be held liable for Allen's actions, Butler had to show that the injury occurred within the scope of the employment relationship. The trial court had found her injury occurred "in the course of" employment, i.e., while Butler was working. The Supreme Court agreed with the trial court on this point. The

Court held, however, that in order for the lawsuit to be barred by workers' compensation law, the injury also had to arise "out of" Butler's employment; in other words, the fact that Butler was employed by Southern States would have to be the cause of the assault.

The Court decided that Allen had attacked Butler for personal reasons, and not because she was an employee of Southern States. It concluded that the assault did not arise "out of" Butler's employment in the context of the Workers' Compensation Act. The Supreme Court therefore held that Butler's claim that Southern States was liable for Allen's actions was not barred by the Workers' Compensation Act and sent the case back to the trial court. *Butler v. Southern States Cooperative, Inc.*, Supreme Court of Virginia, No. 050022 (11/04/05).

- Article contributed to HR Magazine by Business and Legal Reports, Inc., and condensed by RU SHRM.

SHRM Minutes



Brad Carter & Nick Haap

Bowling Social with Tech's SHRM

- Pizza, bowling, and a trophy...2/4

Guest Speaker

- Creating a portfolio. 2/7
- Eric Melniczek

Guest Speaker

- Networking Etiquette 1/24
- Dr Kathryn Jordan

Upcoming SHRM events:

- [IOOB](#)
- [Company Tour](#) (Mike is working on the ammunition plant)
- [Guest speaker](#)— Negotiations (Dale Henderson)
- [2nd Year Talks](#) - SHRM Members may attend either the 4/4 or 4/11 presentations by the second year students.
- [Salary Survey](#)— First year students will present to NRV SHRM on 4/20.
- [Tartan Article](#)— an article needs to be written to the Tartan about presentations at IOOB.
- [Letter to Senator / Congressman](#)
- [Service Project](#)— Book pick-up