Symposium Highlights

The beautiful and historic city of Boston welcomed benefits professionals from across North America in August for 2½ days of timely educational content, networking and more. Nearly 600 attendees learned the latest information on blockchain technology, pharmacogenetics, and legal and legislative updates. Other timely and critical topics included paid family leave, medical marijuana, student loan assistance benefits, data analytics, workplace wellness, LGBT benefits, mental health benefits, sustainable investing, issues surrounding successful management of diabetes and opioid addiction, and much more.

Connections can be critical in getting things done and moving your career forward, and the Symposium is known as the place to meet the best in the business. With opportunities including the luncheon roundtables, receptions, meals and session breaks, attendees found time to connect over common interests and goals and to share ideas, challenges and best practices. A variety of open discussion forums on health care, retirement and Canadian benefits provided a space to unpack challenges and questions as well as ideas sparked by earlier sessions. Additional sessions on business ethics, global benefits and a U.S. legal update rounded out the afternoon options.

A special thank-you goes out to the loyal attendees who consider this event a can't-miss component of their professional development. Among the attendees were nearly 200 first-time attendees, who were invited to a special meet-and-greet luncheon on Sunday, and 98 new CEBS graduates; GBA, RPA and CMS designees; and first-time ISCEBS Fellows whose accomplishments were recognized at a conferment ceremony on Sunday evening.

Along with a packed education agenda, attendees found plenty to do and see in their downtime. Many thanks to the Greater Boston Chapter for coordinating sightseeing tours, sign-and-dine evenings and other activities. Attendees also took advantage of fitness opportunities, including stand-and-stretch yoga, the morning power walk/run and a daily step challenge that boasted totals with the #SympStepChallenge.

The Symposium received an excellent overall rating of 9.0, and 95% of attendees said the conference met or exceeded their needs. Year after year, the Symposium continues to provide the education, solutions and networking that make it a winning choice for benefits professionals.

Mark your calendar and make plans to join us next year September 8-11 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Peter Miller, CEO of The Institutes, opened the conference on Monday with an insightful presentation on blockchain technology, how it works and how it could be applied to benefits and retirement plans.
Graduate Recognition

2018 International Foundation President and Chair Paul Hackleman addresses the impact of the work benefits professionals do.

2018 ISCEBS President Lisa Kaiser, CEBS, encourages the graduates to never stop learning and growing.
Welcome Reception

A returning favorite, the Monday Welcome Reception provided a space for conversation, networking, and new and renewed connections. It’s no longer a secret that it pays to bring business cards showing your designation, Compliance and Fellow status to be eligible for fabulous prize drawings. Gift cards went to Natasha Norbjerg, GBA, for advertising her GBA; to Julie Younce, CEBS, for displaying CEBS Compliance; and to Elizabeth Sennett, CEBS, for displaying her Fellow status. Other drawings gave away a variety of Society and International Foundation products and services. Taking home the grand prize—a registration and hotel package for the 2019 Symposium in New Orleans—was Virginia Rosales, CEBS!

Congratulations to the prize-drawing winners!
Back row (L-R): Lynette Yates, CEBS; Lori Carnvale, CEBS; Ivor Kiwi; Nicole Weis, CEBS; Natasha Norbjerg, GBA; Angela Subera, CEBS
Front row (L-R): Robert Tangney, CEBS; Jerilynn Smith; Jacqueline Martin, CEBS; Beth Sennett, CEBS; Julie Younce, CEBS; Virginia Rosales, CEBS; Melissa Zaino, CEBS

Welcome First-Time Attendees

Those attending the Symposium for the first time were invited to a meet-and-greet luncheon on Sunday afternoon. Hosted by Governing Council officers Lisa Kaiser, CEBS, Sam Henson, CEBS, and Carey Wooton, CEBS, the event served as a preview to the conference and included introductions and icebreakers, an overview of each day’s events, and tips to maximize the available resources, amenities and networking opportunities.