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LUNCHEON SPEAKER

Emily Dickens



Emily M. Dickens, J.D., is a 2025 Top Lobbyist honoree recognized by the National Institute for Lobbying & Ethics for her leadership in shaping workplace and workforce policy. She serves as Chief Administrative Officer for SHRM—the world’s largest HR trade association and the fourth largest trade association globally. As a member of SHRM’s executive leadership team, she drives organizational effectiveness and impact across governance, global policy, legal, real estate, and philanthropy, while serving as a trusted advisor to the CEO and Board of Directors.

A sought-after thought leader on workplace trends, HR leadership, and business policy, Dickens is frequently featured in top media outlets including CNN, CBS News, NBC News, AP News, The Wall Street Journal, CNBC, Bloomberg Law, Crain’s, Marketplace, WTOP, and Yahoo Finance. She has testified before Congress and the EEOC on topics such as artificial intelligence, gender bias, and paid leave, bringing SHRM’s expertise directly to policymakers.

Dickens amplifies SHRM’s voice on key global, national, and local platforms by holding influential roles as Governance Committee Member of the United States Council for International Business (USCIB), Vice Chair of The Bryce Harlow Foundation, and Board Member of SkillUp Coalition and the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

Before joining SHRM in 2018, Dickens built a distinguished career in higher education and nonprofit leadership. Her prior roles include General Counsel and Head of Policy for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Vice President of Public Policy for the Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities, and Assistant Vice President for Federal Affairs at the University of North Carolina System. She also held administrative and external affairs positions at Duke University and Fayetteville State University.

A three-time graduate of North Carolina Central University (B.A., M.A., and J.D.), Dickens is the Immediate Past Chair of the NCCU Board of Trustees. She is Co-Chair of the HR Committee for the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) Board of Directors and a life member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, where she has served as Chairman of the International HBCU Task Force and on the Education Advancement Foundation Board of Directors.