



NEWS

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Alliance Benefit Group Raising The Bar On Employee Competency
SPARK curriculum ensures ABG professionals are the most knowledgeable in the 401(k) plan marketplace

Peoria, IL (October 20, 2004) – Alliance Benefit Group (ABG), a leading provider of retirement plan services, is offering employees of their fifteen licensed offices the opportunity to earn key designations from the Society of Professional Administrators and Recordkeepers (SPARK). The program, known as *ABG School*, is part of an ongoing effort by ABG to retain the most highly qualified retirement plan professionals in the industry.

The SPARK curriculum, consisting of online coursework, followed by classroom sessions and continuing education requirements, provides an educational foundation for familiarizing professionals with all aspects of qualified retirement plans. Employees of ABG will be primarily seeking one of two designations, including the Accredited Retirement Plan Specialist (ARPS), earned by administrative and recordkeeping professionals who have demonstrated their proficiency in plan operations; and the Accredited Retirement Plan Consultant (ARPC), awarded to sales and marketing professionals who have demonstrated the knowledge required to provide employers and employees with plan information.

“The feedback we have received from our first formal class confirms our belief that this new training program will enhance our ability to meet our clients’ needs,” said Linda Blossom, AIFA, vice president and senior consultant at Alliance Benefit Group. “It will make our staff more confident and alert as they interface with clients and provide the quality service required in a competitive industry. A client that is not served well will look for someone else to do so.”

By earning SPARK designations, ABG professionals will acquire a firm understanding of retirement savings plans available in today’s market while recognizing the history of plans

and issues presently facing industry stakeholders. Designees will also gain an unparalleled comprehension of regulatory requirements and the overall legislative environment relating to the retirement plan industry.

For more information on Alliance Benefit Group and the SPARK led “ABG School”, please contact the ABG National office at 1-800-224-4015 or visit www.abgnational.com.

ABOUT ALLIANCE BENEFIT GROUP

Alliance Benefit Group, headquartered in Peoria, IL, has independently owned and operated offices in more than fifteen cities across the United States and provides retirement plan services for more than 3,300 plans with over \$5.9 billion under investment management. Alliance Benefit Group strives to provide employers with the “perfect plan” through knowledge and independence.

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