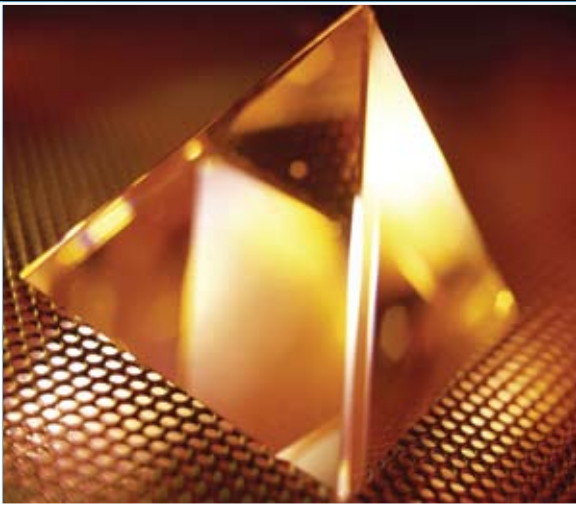


ARA Professional Certification Program



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Participating in the ARA Professional Certification Program allows you to

- expand your technical understanding of awards-related equipment, artwork, product design techniques, and materials
- improve your business management skills in finance, marketing, personnel, sales, customer service, and administration
- enhance your professional image
- create and maintain a high standard for the industry
- demonstrate your dedication to your business and profession.

What is Certification?

Professional certification is a voluntary process that recognizes an individual's qualifications and demonstrated knowledge in a specific area. Certification is used in many industries and professions to recognize commitment, education, and achievement. ARA offers two levels of certification for awards, recognition, and engraving professionals:

- Certified Recognition Specialist (CRS) is the first milestone of commitment to continuing education and expertise.
- Certified Recognition Master (CRM) is the highest level of achievement in the awards, recognition, and engraving industry.



“Enrolling in the ARA Professional Certification Program gave me contact with some of the greatest instructors in the awards industry. It has also been a powerful tool in marketing my business. Participation enhances your industry knowledge, makes you a greater asset to your business, and increases your potential for success.”

—Robert E. George, CRS, Custom Trophies & Plaques

“The ARA Professional Certification Program provided me with a broad base of industry knowledge that I would not have gained on my own. I highly recommend it to anyone seeking an easy and affordable way to add value to their company.

—Randy Allen, CRS, Engraving Concepts

The ARA Professional Certification Program offers members valuable educational training as awards, engraving, and recognition industry professionals.

Completing the certification process signifies your dedication to professional advancement and your passion for the industry—while affirming your value to potential and existing customers in a diverse, evolving, and competitive field.

Certification Levels



Certified Recognition Specialist (CRS) designation, the first level of certification, requires participating in 70 hours of qualified instruction in ARA-approved seminars—a total of at least 7.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), including:

- A minimum of .45 CEUs each from three areas of industry education: technical knowledge, business operations, and marketing
- Up to 1.0 CEU from approved non-ARA education, such as community college courses or other CEU approved courses (*optional*)
- Up to 1.5 CEUs from ARA Home Study and/or audio CDs (*optional*)
- Up to 1.0 CEU from presenting seminars or writing articles (*optional*)

Certified Recognition Master (CRM) designation requires earning a total of 17 CEUs and writing an approved CRM thesis—a total of 17.0 hours in ARA's Professional Certification Program. In addition to the 7.0 CEUs earned as a CRS, the 10 additional CEUs include:

- A minimum of .45 CEUs each from three areas of industry education: technical knowledge, management or business operations, and marketing.
- Up to 1.5 CEUs from non-ARA education (*optional*)
- Up to 1.5 CEUs from ARA Home Study and/or audio CDs (*optional*)
- Up to 1.5 CEUs from presenting seminars or writing articles (*optional*)
- A 1,200-word CRM thesis, approved by the ARA Education Chair



"I believe in education, and the ARA Professional Certification Program is an extreme educational value. The CRS and CRM designations signify commitment and professionalism to both colleagues and customers. They show you care enough to continue learning about advancements in the industry. ARA seminars and programs also offer excellent opportunities for idea exchange and practical information. As Malcolm Forbes says, 'The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one.' I encourage all recognition professionals to maintain an open mind about the ARA Certification Program."

—Stan Rosenberg, CRS, Senior Vice President, Victory

What is a CEU?

A continuing education unit (CEU) is the nationally recognized unit of measure for continuing education hours that do not apply toward another degree. One CEU is awarded for every 10 hours of participation in an organized continuing education program under responsible sponsorship and capable and qualified direction. Please note that CEUs are different from academic credit and are not transferrable.

You must meet three requirements to earn each CEU credit:

1. **Enrollment.** You must be enrolled in the ARA Certification Program.
2. **Attendance.** You must be present for at least 90% of the time for each seminar.
3. **Evaluation.** You must fill out a Seminar Evaluation and CEU Reporting Form following each seminar for which you are seeking credit.



Criteria for each ARA CEU session are determined by the International Association for Continuing Educating and Training (IACET); all continuing education programs are administered under these IACET guidelines. ARA has stringent qualifications for participation in its programs to ensure that a high standard of excellence is maintained.

Please note: Credit is not earned until you enroll. CEU files will be maintained for registered participants only.

Earning CEUs

There are several ways to earn CEUs; however, ARA maintains guidelines for the number of hours that can be earned from each source.

- **ARA Educational Seminars and Workshops.** Each year ARA offers a number of educational seminars. Once you are enrolled in the certification program you can attend all of these classes at a specially reduced fee. Some are available free of charge.
- **ARA Seminar CDs.** ARA offers many special educational CDs and Seminars2Go CDs at reduced fees. Simply listen to the CD and submit a Seminar Evaluation and CEU Reporting Form to earn credit from home.
- **Community College Course.** To receive credit, please submit the following:
 1. A brief description of the course and/or a copy of the course outline
 2. Information about the actual number of classroom hours required
 3. Proof of your enrollment
 4. Documentation that you completed the class

Note: ARA accepts credit for outside seminars on the basis of expertise of the speaker, relevance to the awards industry, and adherence to ARA's antitrust and nonproduct promotion policies.

Other Ways to Earn CEUs

- **Industry Associations** offering educational courses that meet ARA requirements for CEU credit. Please contact ARA before you take a course to ensure you can earn credit for it.
- **Writing** articles for *Recognition Review* or other pertinent industry publications. Articles must be at least 1,200 words in length.
- **Conducting** ARA educational seminar presentations.

If you attend ten (10) 90-minute seminars in a year, it will take approximately 4 years to earn seven CEUs for the CRS designation. Progress will be faster if you attend more or longer seminars and supplement your seminars with ARA home CDs.

Enroll Today

Participation in the ARA Certification Program is open to industry retailers, suppliers, and their employees. ARA membership is not required, although nonmembers pay higher fees. To enroll, complete this form and return it with payment. As soon as you receive confirmation, you can start earning CEUs. You can also receive credit for courses you took up to one year before your enrollment date. Please contact ARA for more details.

Certification program participants are eligible for certification discounts on all applicable ARA seminars and products. ARA also offers lifetime maintenance of CEU records. Transcripts are available upon request.

ARA Certification Enrollment Form

Date of Application _____

Please check one category and write in your ARA member number, if applicable.

ARA Member Number _____ Nonmember I would like more information about ARA membership

Company Name _____

Certification Enrollee's Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Mailing Address (if different than above) _____

City _____

State/Province _____ ZIP/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Business Phone _____ 800/ _____

Fax _____ Toll-Free Fax 800/ _____

E-Mail _____ Web site _____

Payment Information

Certification Enrollee ARA Member (\$125 per person) _____ \$ _____

Certification Enrollee ARA Nonmember (\$270 per person) _____ \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Payment Method

Check payable to ARA in the amount of _____ \$ _____

Charge my account Visa MasterCard American Express Discover in the amount of \$ _____

If rebilling of a credit card charge is necessary, a \$25 processing fee will be charged.

A charge of \$20 will apply to checks returned for insufficient funds.

If you fax this form, please do not mail the original.

Card No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Print Cardholder's Name _____

Signature _____

For more information please call
ARA's Education Department
800/344-2148 or 847/375-4800



Send form and remittance to:
Awards and Recognition Association
Attn: Certification Dept.
4700 W. Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025, www.ara.org
Fax (credit cards only): 847/375-6480