SALUTE

PRSSA
Public Relations
Student Society
of America

Fall 2015 Review
ABOUT US

Who we are
We are the James S. Measell Chapter of PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America), created in 1983 on the campus of Wayne State University.

Our mission
Our mission is to provide guidance, motivation and opportunity to upcoming public relations professionals in the city of Detroit.

What we do
We create programming and opportunities so students can keep pace with the ever-changing industry of PR. Our workshops compliment our classroom studies, our tours give us insight into potential careers, our shared events with PR professionals help us build networks and our executive board positions teach us leadership skills.

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wsuprssa.org

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Dear Reader,

If we have not met yet, my name is Amanda and I am lucky enough to serve as your Wayne State PRSSA Chapter President this year. At this time last year I was just starting to learn the PRSSA world as a new member. As I reflect on this past fall, I am astounded by the progress I have made toward a career in PR. With so many brand new members this year, I hope that my reflections helps each of you realize how far you can take yourself and what this Chapter can do for you along that journey.

For new members who are reading this, or those who are considering becoming a member, my advice to you – jump right in. PR is better learned first hand. If you give your time to this PRSSA chapter, it will help you build your skills, your network and a career. It has done so for me. I joined the executive board in an attempt to give back to an organization that has done so much for me, and instead, I keep winning.

I also have to thank the wonderful executive board that I have the honor to work alongside. These 11 members amaze me each day with the passion, commitment and creativity they bring to their roles on this board. I would choose them as my co-workers any day. This past fall we have brought a variety of programming, tours, social events, mixers and more. I look forward to this next semester as we bring more programming, co-host a regional conference and hold our annual luncheon.

I am also very excited to bring you the fall edition of our biannual newsletter, Salute. It is not only a great way for our members to showcase their writing, but is also a way for us to highlight how our Chapter promotes ongoing professional development. I am so proud of our members and I cannot wait to read the amazing stories they bring to us next semester.

Thank you all for making our PRSSA Chapter so successful.

Sincerely,

Amanda Knaebel
This fall...

MEMBERS
43 BRAND NEW
33 RETURNING
76 TOTAL

PROGRAMMING
05 TOURS
05 WORKSHOPS
03 KEYNOTES
03 SOCIAL

Funds Raised
$3k+ SCHOLARSHIPS
$9k+ SPONSORIZATIONS

Travel
03 CONFERENCES
12 FLIGHTS
02 HOTELS
12 REGISTRATIONS

Meet

Amanda Knaebel
President

Catia Sabak
Immediate Past President

Stacey Kendall
VP Professional Development
our 2015-16 board

Katie Pusz
VP Chapter Development

Travis Gamblin
VP Member Services

Angela Meriedeth
Social Media Director

Freya Thodesen-Kasparian
PR Director

Gretchen Maurer
PR Coordinator

Christiana Lumaj
PR Coordinator

Katie Tomaszewski
Salute Team

Kyle Taylor
Salute Team

Randy Kester
Salute Team
Hilary Hanson McKean presented information to a group of students and young professionals attending the PRSSA National Conference in Atlanta. The presentation focused around helpful hints on how to speak up and stand out as young professionals within the world of public relations. McKean is a global partner and managing director for Ketchum. She also provides counsel to some of Ketchum’s well-known clients like Wendy’s, 7-Eleven and Rubbermaid.

Throughout her presentation, many helpful tips were presented to the audience regarding standing out -- specifically in the interviewing process that young professionals must prepare for. McKean discussed the fact that ultimately, everyone is his or her own brand manager. It is up to us as young professionals, to decide what makes us unique and to take it one step further by showcasing that material in a way that makes you stand out even more. Packaging your own unique brand through the use of social media is a great way to showcase this. McKean also mentioned that having internships under your belt could make you appear interesting to a variety of companies, especially if your internship is unique in the sense that not everyone else is doing what you are doing.

Making the attempt to always raise your hand and to be the one who is willing to try the things that no one else wanted to do will always make you stand out. McKean stressed to always be a “hand raiser” and to not be a “finger pointer.” She also shared that being yourself is extremely important when interviewing for jobs.

People like to hire people who are interesting, unique and relatable. Using some of the tips that McKean shared in her informative presentation, you can be ensured that you stand out against those competing for that interview you might have your eyes on.
How Nationals made me appreciate “The Breakfast Club”

By Amanda Knaebel

As a commuter student, it is easy to get lost in the transitions of classes, work, internships and professional development that it can be easy to forget an essential part of PR – human camaraderie.

While attending a PRSSA National Conference is hands-down one of the most beneficial experiences in my professional development, the most valuable takeaway from the conference was bonding with the individuals whom I work with each day to bring programming to our members of PRSSA.

Much like the characters serving detention in “The Breakfast Club,” our executive board is filled with a wide range of personalities and diverse backgrounds. Over the course of our long weekend, I had the chance to gain a deeper appreciation of what makes up each of these members.

Empathy is a key element in public relations and in order to gain empathy we must gain understanding – starting with those we work with.

At Nationals, I learned about global communications and found out about the experiences several of our members had abroad. I received tips about crisis communications while discovering how some of our own members had to overcome crises of their own. We heard from General Motors on corporate communications and we cheered on two of our members before their interviews with GM later that day. I was able to learn practical tips and advice while finding the human elements that apply to each scenario.

Finding my very own breakfast club in Nationals has given me even more stamina toward my primary goal as this year’s president of PRSSA – to create a community for our members, our chapter and our school.

I look forward to continuing my work with our board as we create programming that helps members learn valuable skills in a way that engages and offers the ability to form peer mentors, friendships and family.

Sincerely yours, The Breakfast Club...
Theo Tyson of Trinity Productions talked with us about what public relations looks like in the fashion industry -- from interviewing to event planning. Similar to many fields there are different paths to take when it comes to the age old question, where am I going to work? For those who have a drive for fashion there are two main options of a PR role in fashion, agency and corporate. Sometimes when we picture working in the fashion industry, we see someone like Miranda Priestly. Unfortunately, life is not always as polished.

Tyson references finding the perfect fit in a job just like the fit of those favorite perfect pair of jeans. When they fit, they look flawless and everyone is asking where they can get a pair -- a job works the same way. Working in-house for a fashion company like Dior, you live, breathe and believe Dior and what they stand for. Always follow your gut and how you feel about the company, from what they stand for to the work that they do. If you do not believe in the product you will not have as many successes as you would if you did believe in the company and its products. As Tyson says, “It can still be ugly if it’s Gucci.”

When touching on event planning and working in an agency setting she provided some great advice on how to communicate with clients -- always under promise but over deliver. Do not set the bar too high right off the bat or make promises that you are unable to keep. Your clients will be happier when the event or program you are planning goes better than they could have expected.

There will also be times that what the company or client wants is much bigger than what you have room for in the budget. It is important to be creative, come up with the best solutions to maximize that budget that you are approved for. According to Tyson, the best thing that you can do is to be authentic, strategic and memorable.

Michigan Chapters meet in Atlanta to show their Mitten PRide!
Presenting at Nationals

Amanda Knaebel, Freya Thodesen-Kasparian, Stacey Kendall and Catia Sabak presented on the unique challenges of engaging members on a non-traditional campus, such as commuter schools. Their advice? Ask members what they want to see, use tools like Doodle to see when everyone is available, and most importantly - free food!

#PRunderdogs
PR program recognized nationally

By Amanda Knaebel

PRSSA members at Wayne State University will have just one more thing to brag about at interviews: Wayne State’s undergraduate PR program is the first in Metro Detroit, and only one of two schools in Michigan, to receive national accreditation from Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) as of July 11, 2015.

The certification was formally announced November 2015 at the National PRSSA Conference in Atlanta. Dr. Shelly Najor, director of the PR program and faculty advisor of Wayne State’s PRSSA, and 10 executive board members attended the conference and accepted the award.

Wayne State University is one of only two schools in Michigan to have a nationally-accredited PR program.

“Graduating with an accredited PR degree from WSU means I am competitive applicant in the field of PR and that will open doors that otherwise might have been previously locked,” said Shay Franchini, senior PR major. “It gives me confidence to enter the field knowing my work is meeting industry standards for ethics and quality.”

The accreditation process took place over the 2014-15 school year, when the Educational Affairs Committee from PRSA examined the curriculum of the program, credentials of the professors, resources available at Wayne State and testimonials from students and alumni.

The campus was visited by Robert Pritchard (Oklahoma), APR, Fellow PRSA, and Don Egle (Virginia/Texas), APR, ABC, who agreed that Wayne State’s PR program met the national standards, awarding it with the Certification of Education for Public Relations (CEPR).

“This national accreditation formally recognizes what we have tried to do all along – provide excellence in academic preparedness and professional development for our PR students,” said Dr. Najor. “We share this recognition with the professional community and our alumni who continue to support the students and the program with time, opportunities and funding. We are thrilled!”

Dr. Najor spent many months gathering information needed for the evaluation and presenting it to the PRSA board. She began working on the process in April 2014, and received notice of the official CEPR July 2015.

“WSU is an amazing choice for students pursuing careers in public relations,” said Freya Thodesen-Kasparian, WSU Senior PR major and PR director of PRSSA. “The outstanding faculty, proactive hands-on approach to learning and access to the thriving professional community in Detroit make it the perfect place to get started.”

This accreditation sets the standards for Wayne State’s academic programs and its continued effort to aim higher.

Special thanks goes to: Dr. Shelly Najor, Dr. Jane Fitzgibbon, Dr. Donyale Padgett, Dr. Rahul Mitra, all the members of the journalism faculty, Dr. Kat Maguire, Dean Matt Seeger, all of the alumni who were interviewed during this process and all of the students who supported and spoke for the PR program at Wayne State.
The $65 cookie: Two members’ thoughts on PRSSA
By Madison Lewis and Aya Elsherif

Fifteen minutes after the welcome mixer had started, we were still sitting nervously in the lobby of the student center attempting to strategize our “fashionably-late” entrance. Instead we arrived in the middle of the presentation – cue the unfashionable. Despite our initial awkwardness, the enthusiasm of Professor Shelly Najor and the welcoming faces of the PRSSA executive board (and let’s not forget the cookies) left us with a true sense of belonging.

The mixer began with an introduction of the executive board members. They gave us a refreshing reminder they were in our seats just one year ago and an informative presentation regarding the nuts and bolts of PRSSA, what it had to offer for members and how we could apply that membership to our future careers. We also learned of the numerous benefits that PRSSA can offer us. That’s not to say the mixer was a hand-holding experience, but rather the first opportunity for us to take our own initiative toward networking in a comfortable environment.

The mixer made it evident that PRSSA is not just another student club, but rather a professional organization that is positively engaged and active both on campus and within the community. Any initial fears, doubts, or uncertainties were washed away within minutes, and we quickly realized there is really no reason not to join. After all, who can say no to more cookies?

PRSSA gives the gift of reading
By Christiana Lumaj

As young PR professionals, we know our number one obligation is to make sure our represented organization has corporate social responsibility. This means constantly seeking opportunities for our company to give back to its community.

This year, Wayne State’s PRSSA took part in being socially responsible by collaborating with Beyond Basics to give the gift of reading to local students in Pontiac and Detroit.

Beyond Basics is a student-centered non-profit working to bring literacy by providing supplemental programs to students in the Detroit and Pontiac school districts. The program focuses on all school aged children, from Pre-K to grade 12.

While our holiday drive only lasted a couple of weeks, the amount of books gathered proved just how awesome our community is. The book drive resulted in a collection of nearly 150 books.

“Beyond Basics and its stakeholders are always appreciative of the support our Read to Rise program receives, especially when coming from an organization with young students such as PRSSA,” said Elizabeth Nanas, director of revenue and education partnerships of Beyond Basics. “While some see a book as just another story, our students see it as an essential tool in their continuing journey to rise up.”

The books collected will be distributed to students as part of the Beyond Basics’ Read to Rise Program and will be shared as a reward for all students who publish a book in their publishing center.
Five ways to enhance your agency tour
By Rebecca Cooper

1. Research the agency before the tour. Take the time to investigate the agency you are visiting. Review its website, get a feel for the work culture, scan its Glassdoor profile and visit the agency’s social media handles. Trust me, you’ll feel far less intimidated if you walk in with some general understanding of the company you’re touring. Not to mention, you’ll understand and appreciate the scope of responsibilities of the public relations professionals you’ll meet. You wouldn’t walk into a job interview without knowing anything about the company. Treat an agency tour as a potential job opportunity.

2. Dress the part. Going on an agency tour is an excellent excuse to take a shower. You’re not going to want to roll out of bed and throw on a hoody for this. Allocate yourself with enough time to polish your look. We live in a visually-driven world where first impressions count. General rule of thumb: If you’re unsure of what to wear to your agency tour, go business casual (black pants and blazer). Avoid wearing jeans, keep the Ugg boots at home and definitely don’t wear perfume or cologne heavy enough to induce a migraine.

3. Bring a pen and paper. Take notes! Take notes! Take notes! Write down any questions you have, names of the professionals you’ve met with and anything that was said with any remote value. WRITE. IT. DOWN. Extra points if you invest in a leather bound journal. The students who participated on the agency tour with me who had notebooks looked much more professional than those who showed up with nothing at all. And trust me, being the only person in the room without a writing utensil or piece of paper is mildly embarrassing.

4. Ask questions. Do NOT be shy. Agency tours are designed for us to learn about the industry. Although it is true there are no stupid questions, I would recommend asking questions that may benefit the entire group. It’s helpful to your peers if you save personal questions for one-on-one time after the tour is complete. Keep in mind, PR professionals are extremely busy, so maximize the limited time you have on the tour with questions that get to the grit.

5. Say “Thank You.” At the end of the tour, be sure to shake hands with each individual who took the time out of his or her busy schedule to help you evolve as a young professional. This also is an excellent time to exchange business cards. So tip number 5.1 – Create an organized place where you can store all of the connections you make on your tours!
PRSA gets “Smart” about media relations

By Shay Franchini

One thing that separates veteran public relations professionals from new professionals is having established media contacts. It is not something you receive when you graduate college or even on the first day at your internship. It takes time and skill to gain a journalist’s trust and respect. Michael Smart, founder of Michael Smart PR, recently gave a two-hour training seminar to the Central Michigan Chapter of PRSA titled “New Secrets of Media Relations Superstars.” Smart discussed media relations tactics he found to yield the highest advantage on getting a story published and building media relationships.

Important Interaction

In his presentation, Smart had confirmed what I had always hoped was true - start interacting with these influencers/bloggers/journalists now before anything is pitched. He told the audience to spend ten minutes a day taking time to interact with media influencers. Let them know that you’ve read their work, especially if you enjoyed it. Twitter is an amazing tool for these nonchalant kudos. Tweeting out something as simple as, ‘Hey, I really enjoyed your story,’ can have significant impact on a journalist’s decision to open up an email from you down the road. Smart gave an excellent suggestion when he proposed giving credit to media that breaks a story first. Often times, journalists are under pressure to get news out the fastest and it is always nice to be recognized for something difficult to do in an industry.

Pitch Perfect

While one hopes that generic email pitches sent to dozens of journalists and reporters is an outdated practice, I can only regretfully say it is still commonplace. Do your research. Find out who is buying what the client is selling. Once you’ve established the demographic, research where this demographic gets their information. Sure, every client wants to be published in the New York Times or the Washington Post, but that might not be the best source when targeting a specific public.

Since there is now a need to attract Millennial purchasing power, digital-first outlets such as Buzzfeed, Huffington Post and

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Professionals recognizing the talents of our members

PR students helped OTTO Detroit and Penske cruise to victory lane at the Detroit Grand Prix.

Amanda Knaebel celebrates with DTE Energy co-workers after receiving PRSA Detroit’s 2015 Donald P. Durocher Memorial Scholarship.
One of the cornerstones of the public relations program at WSU is the outside experience and internships that students are connected with each semester. Building and maintaining a formidable resume is of utmost importance in the PR field, where professional development – both inside and outside of the classroom – is a top priority.

Though I have been connected with many rewarding experiences throughout my time as a student in this program, one of the most interesting and dynamic was that of the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix at Belle Isle.

During the month of May 2015, myself and 19 other students in the public relations and broadcast journalism programs at WSU were invited to manage and develop content for the Detroit Grand Prix social media channels. We were expected not only to be the driving force (pun intended) behind content for the weekend of the race itself, but also for the month leading up to the big event.

Our work involved direct supervision from Mark Russell of Otto Detroit, Merrill Cain of Penske Racing and Alex Fulbright of Franco Public Relations to actively engage audiences on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

While there were many exciting aspects of being the voice behind social media platforms with such dedicated fans, there were certainly a few highlights that stood out.

One of my personal favorite experiences was the Media Hot Lap, in which reporters and journalists from the local media market were invited to take a test drive around the Belle Isle track with professional racecar drivers. It was not only an incredible adrenaline rush to go soaring from start to finish line at top speeds, but it was also insightful and interesting to experience a media event firsthand.

Race weekend itself consisted of rainy weather, open laptops and constant monitoring of social media platforms. Public relations and broadcast journalism students were put into several teams to not only manage interactions through social media, but to consistently create engaging content using interviews with fans and drivers, and uploading photographs and video clips of the race festivities.

Over the course of race weekend, the efforts of the students running the social media accounts were noted for their creative and humorous approach to getting people engaged and excited about the race.

The experience stressed the importance of being flexible, being prepared for the unexpected and being able to work under tight deadlines. Sudden changes were a regular part of the programming, but the whole team pulled off an incredibly successful result in the end.

The WSU students on the Detroit Grand Prix social media team helped contribute a 34 percent increase in total social media impressions from 2014 to 2015, as well as an 86 percent increase in total reach of the social media channels from 2014 to 2015 – reaching a total of 12.4 million people in 2015.
According to Rachel Godsil, “scientists estimate we only have access to 2 percent of our brains’ emotional and cognitive process.” In laymen’s terms, you and I have implicit biases. We have preconceived views of people and things, and we aren’t even aware of it.

The purpose of the Diversity Summit was to hopefully uncover some of these deeply entrenched biases. So how do we dismantle our own implicit bias? After all, our brains process 11 million bits of information at a time, but we are only cognizant of 40 bits. Our minds’ subconsciously compartmentalize information without our consent.

Rachel showcased an eye-opening neurological explanation of implicit bias. She shared with us how the brain organizes sensory input (external stimuli) into schemas within the brain. Essentially, we have preconceived templates for nearly everything and everyone. In order to combat inherent bias, we must first acknowledge the existence of this impassive cognitive process and stop it in its tracks by changing the dialogue.

What resonated with me the most was Rachel’s belief we need to veer away from conversations that emphasize negative societal disparities. Rachel suggests we shift the tone to a more positive and empowering narrative. Highlighting the successes, the triumphs and the anomalies will be the gateway to a paradigm shift.

Acknowledging only negative implications of inherent bias will inadvertently reinforce bias. Methodology that focuses solely on negatives is dangerous because it discourages efficacy and it is paradoxical to the cause. Bombardment of negativity incites feelings of hopelessness. People will not change if they do not believe they have the capacity to do so.

The presence of inherent bias in my life is most easily identifiable in the context of race. My boyfriend, Darren, is not Caucasian like me. Physically, he doesn’t fit the template of a “white person.” To me, he’s the man I plan to marry. To others who meet him for the first time, his physical appearance raises questions. As the comedian, Amer Zhar, at the summit joked, ‘where is he from, from?’ is a question a lot of outsiders ask about other races.

Darren doesn’t quite fit the conventional description of a “black person” but also doesn’t necessarily look “white.”

His experience throughout his life has told him he needs to find a group to associate with, but this pressure is extremely alienating. Questions like, “where are you from, from?” is an everyday conversational norm for Darren. This is inherent bias working in the disguise of innocent curiosity.

As I’ve gotten older, I’ve tried to take the ineffective approach of color blindness. I’ve always viewed race as nothing more than an ugly societal construct. But pretending race doesn’t exist, will not rid the world of the evils racial divisions cause. To pretend race doesn’t exist minimizes the importance of Darren’s story.

Do I know exactly what I need to do to most effectively obliterate inherent bias? No. But I do know asking questions might ignite an alternative perspective. To be conscious of a bias is the first step to destroying it. I will start by no longer asking, “where are you from, from?”
Internships: Living what you learn

By Katie Pusz

“College is simply a money scam!” “Slide through college with the bare minimum. It’s really only your hands-on experience that counts.” “What does any of this have to do with the real world?!” We’ve all heard these college clichés at least once. Maybe you’ve even said them yourself – I know that I have at several points in my college career. And yes, sometimes you’re right – maybe that general elective is costing you money at no value to your career. Maybe you had to take a class that mostly reiterated what you already knew. But maybe, by chance, you had an experience like me: you signed up for a class that you thought would be routine and slightly boring, only to find out it was the middle of a crossroad -- the exact place you needed to be in order to succeed at that particular time.

Summer 2015 was a season of unforgettable people and lessons. I accepted a public relations internship with the Detroit Historical Museum and was finally taking my Fundamentals of PR class -- yes, my fundamentals course after a year and half on PRSSA’s executive board and two internships. As you can imagine, I expected to breeze through it without any pivotal stops. Then I walked into the perfect storm.

My previous internships hadn’t endured any crises during my studies and, to be frank, I wasn’t sure I ever wanted to know that experience after studying the crisis chapter. Just reading about the stress and examining case studies made my stomach cringe, and I tried to kill the thought of ever finding myself in a similar scenario. That fear, however, lunged out of its grave the next morning and came to life at my very own desk. The Detroit Historical Museum was under a media crisis -- how timely.

Per usual, I had brought my class materials with me hoping to study during my downtime. Instead, I found a much more helpful review in my live environment. My boss, Bob, briefed me on our communication plan, the crisis team, and informed me that he’d be speaking with the media. Hmm… Where had I heard about these management tools before? Oh yeah – yesterday. Bob went on to tell me about our legal counsel and how the situation was going to be framed.

Walking back to my desk, I overheard a co-worker on the phone with one of the museum’s sponsors, reassuring her of the truth of the scenario and that it was being handled. Just then, Bob handed me a copy of the press release as he ran downstairs to interview with the news media.

Immediacy? Cooperating with the media and publics? Check and check! Every note I had taken in class, hardly 24 hours before just played out in front of me within 20 minutes. I didn’t even have time to feel the anxious rush of plunging into a crisis.

Only on Friday, after the museum was over the peak of the crisis and the dust was settling, was I able to think clearly enough to reflect on the week. Had the crisis not occurred, the weight of the crisis chapter may not have sunken in until it was much too late, such as already having a job where I was getting paid to extinguish the fire myself. Likewise, I would have been totally clueless as to why the sequence of events was happening at the museum in that particular fashion. Being able to identify the steps and contribute educated opinions enabled me to be active in the crisis, which is something I couldn’t have contributed had I not been in PR Fundamentals.

And so my lesson was learned: give every class, internship and experience a chance before organizing it under a shameful cliché -- it might just be on your path for a reason.
The Allen Lewis Agency shares tips for creatives

By Darius Jackson

On November 16, an array of visuals artists, authors, fashion designers, photographers and more attended the “Business of Arts: PR Tips for Creatives” discussion hosted by the Alumni Office of Wayne State University’s College of Fine, Performing and Communications Arts. This event was held at Ponyride Business Center located in Detroit’s Corktown neighborhood. This unique discussion was led by public relations expert and Wayne State alumna Jocelyn K. Allen. Allen is the co-founder and CEO of The Allen Lewis Agency. The Allen Lewis Agency specializes in branding development, marketing, communication planning and reputation management. Here are the highlights of the discussion:

Be Versatile. What other relative aspect of your creativity can you harness for gain? Tap into all of your strengths. Most creatives have a plethora of skills, such as teaching in the community about your artistry that may provide extra income. Also, be open to collaborate with creatives of different mediums.

Be Social. What platforms can help elevate your artistry? It can be Twitter, Facebook or a simple face-to-face interaction, but no matter what means you use to communicate, be interactive and represent your brand at all times.

Be Strategic. How can you use your time that will assist you long term? Many people obtain jobs through referrals and use what Allen coins as “strategic volunteerism”. Volunteer and get involved in the organizations relative to your artistry. Being strategic as to the people you associate with and places you frequent often may provide unknown opportunities.

Be Different. What sets you apart from the rest? Once the difference in your artistry is acknowledged in comparison to others in your field, use it to your advantage because what makes your brand unique and “different” is the perfect branding tool! People tend to resonate more with brands that are outliers from the norm and do not follow the status quo. There are plenty of name brands with a flock of copycats behind them.

Allen expressed having a special place in her heart for creatives of all facets, as she spoke about the beginning of her career in creative positions such as a producer, video editor and stage manager. Allen is an abundant source of knowledge with a distinct perspective on how creatives can promote themselves through practical PR steps that can be easily utilized.

It’s all about connections...

Former PRSSA board member, Courtney Zemke invites us to GM

Members of PRSSA network with professionals and other students

PRSSA builds valuable relationships with media at PRSA’s “Meet the Media”
PRSSA has been busy this fall...

Tanner Friedman.

Mashable, all ranked in the top five for unique visitors according to Smart, are the new sought after outlets for brand or product exposure. These are not the only outlets PR professionals should be tapping into. Targeting public influencers such as celebrities and utilizing their audiences can also be key in raising public and media interest. Taking time to understand the consumer on a personal level will make formulating compelling content a breeze when pitching to the media.

**Compelling Content**

Consumers are interested in real people over corporate achievements. Finding a way to highlight these individuals over the company as a whole will elevate the chances of getting a story picked up. Smart suggested making a list of all characters involved in the story and focus on the characters most relatable to your audience. He also suggested making pop culture fads work for a client’s story. If the client is a local zoo who just built a state of the art lion den and suddenly a story about lions sweeps the country, take the opportunity to propel the client into the fad and call upon the relationships you have begun establishing with the proper media.

It does not matter if you are just trying to break into media relations or if you are an established professional, anyone can pitch to a journalist and start building a relationship. Take time to research what traditional (and nontraditional) outlets the target publics utilize. Make sure to start establishing relationships now before pitching a story and remember that corporations are much less relatable than a real person is. With these helpful tactics, Michael Smart was able to leave the audience with a confident and clear approach on interacting with the media and establishing positive relationships.
Letter from the editors

As a Chapter, we are so fortunate to have so many opportunities presented to us. Thank you to everyone who sponsored our executive board’s trip to the National Conference in Atlanta this year! Without your generous support, we would not have the opportunities that we do, not only this year with the national conference, but year round with all of your generous sponsorships of scholarships, events, internship opportunities and agency tours.

We would also like to thank our anonymous donor for funding this edition of Salute. It gives us pride to help showcase not only our member’s experiences, but their talent as well. Congratulations to our first time writers, too! We were so impressed by the quality of stories that came in from our new members. We are looking forward to seeing what you will submit next semester.

Lastly, we hope you’ll join us this March for our regional conference that we are co-hosting with Michigan State University. Check out the back cover for more details!

Sincerely,
The Salute Team

Thank you to all of the professionals who serve as our role models, mentors and teachers. Our Chapter would not be as successful without your ongoing support.
Find more information at taleofdetroitrc.wordpress.com

Facebook: The Tale Of Our City: PR’s Role in Detroit’s Revitalization

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