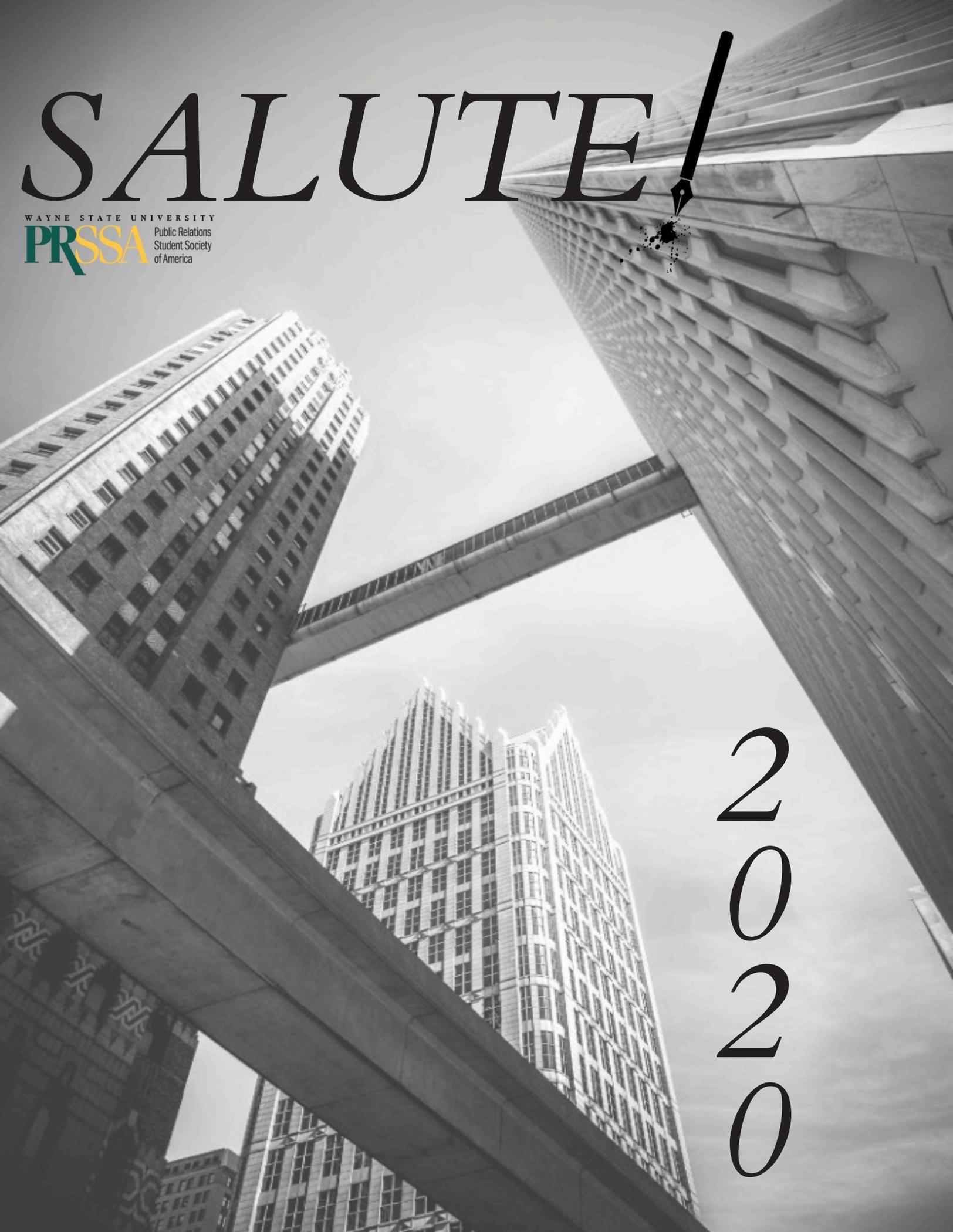


SALUTE!

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
PRSSA Public Relations
Student Society
of America

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2019-2020 Executive Board



Jaymi Gittens, President



Emma Seidel, VP of Membership Services



Nina Knauf, VP of Programming



Lyndsey Spilos, Assistant Programming Director



Gale Thompson, VP of Fundraising



Elizabeth Ryan, Assistant Fundraising Director



Shelly Najor,
Faculty Advisor



Mary Henige,
Professional Advisor

Letter from the President



Dear all,

With my undergraduate career coming to an end, I can't help but reflect on the moments that have impacted my life the most. Many of the best moments in my life came from being a part of PRSSA and the Wayne State public relations program. Our chapter has accomplished so much this past year. We were awarded our second district conference, where we raised \$5,600 in sponsorships and booked 24 presenters. We coordinated eight agency tours, hosted eight fundraisers and participated in three community outreach events. Unfortunately, our winter programs were cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic. My heart was broken sending out cancellation emails to our members and professionals, but we had to ensure the safety of our community.

This year would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment from my team of go-getters. We started planning for this school year in April 2019, roughly three weeks after we were elected into office. Our first action item was to apply for a district conference bid, knowing we had to deliver a strong plan to the national committee in order to earn this opportunity. From there, we have been working nonstop to deliver a meaningful experience for our members and beyond. Though our conference had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, I am still so proud of our countless hours spent creating programs for our members.

And, of course, we have to thank all of the outstanding professionals in our community for sharing your wisdom and donating your time to our students. Without you, we wouldn't have accomplished anything this year.

Lastly, congratulations to the incoming executive board! I know our chapter is in great hands, and I can't wait to see what you all accomplish next year.

Your 2019-2020 chapter president,

Jaymi Gittens

Letter from the Editors

Thank you for picking up the 2020 issue of Salute—we are so excited to showcase all of what PRSSA has accomplished this year. As a chapter, we are fortunate to have so many wonderful events and opportunities available to us. A big thank you to all of the professionals and alumni from the Metro Detroit area that make this possible.

Like all of the chapter members, we are saddened that this year's programs were cut short due to COVID-19, but we hope this issue of Salute can be an opportunity to reflect on all of the wonderful tours, workshops and panels that took place this year.

We would also like to thank Litho Printing for an excellent price and quality work, yet again.

Lastly, thank you to all members and students who contributed written content and photos to this year's newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this year's edition of Salute!

Carrie Paveglio and Avery Zimmerman, co-editors & designers



2020 District Conference

by Jaymi Gittens

What a crazy year it has been. Though we never saw our conference come to fruition, we still wanted to share everything we had planned. The process has been full of overcoming challenges and learning valuable lessons—and the experience is priceless. At first, we thought this would just be great event coordination experience, but as it turns out, we also learned how to effectively execute crisis communications. We'd like to formally thank our team for helping us put everything together. Without you, we would have never seen the finish line.



Conference Committee Leader and Director of Hospitality

Jaymi Gittens



Hospitality Committee

Kaci Switchulis

Lakiya Neal

Elijah Pope

Dorothy Jones



Director of Sponsorship and Promotions

Emma Seidel



Promotions Committee

Gayle Davis

Connor Coyle



Director of Programming

Nina Knauf



Programming Committee

Rebecca Ableson

Marissa Lane

Tamiya Jones



Director of Community Relations

Elizabeth Ryan

Revving Up Detroit's Brand: Our dream conference and the change of events

by Jaymi Gittens and Emma Seidel

Our bright-eyed executive board walked into our first meeting together last summer unsuspecting of the year to come. PRSSA National Committee had just sent an email blast calling for applications to be a District Conference host. A District Conference was a way to bring PRSSA members from across the nation to our beloved University. We talked about our dream conference that day: a one-day event to showcase the vibrant and unique public relations landscape Detroit offers the industry. Being Wayne State students, we knew the strength in our public relations program and its alumni. We had a strong, supportive community backing this initiative. What we didn't expect was the cancellation of an event we worked so hard to produce.

To become a hosting District Conference chapter, we submitted an interest application that asked us for the big picture of this event. We named our conference, Revving Up Detroit's Brand, a play on being the Motor City. With help from Faculty Advisor Dr. Shelly Najor, past PRSSA President Catia Sabak and Professional Advisor Mary Henige, APR, Fellow PRSA, and a lengthy pitch to National committee member, Emily Zekonis, we were chosen as one of the seven hosting chapters for the 2020 District Conferences. Later that October, we were honored during PRSSA International Conference in sunny San Diego.

In the next few months, we hit the ground running. We confirmed the Student Center as our venue, secured thousands of dollars in sponsorships, selected nearly 35 speakers and dozens of panel topics, launched a website—the list goes on and on. In the middle of March, our list of tasks was finally settling down and we were getting excited to be working on less logistical event tasks when the coronavirus began to take over our city. On March 13 we decided to cancel our beloved event. The decision came after our university moved to online learning, thus canceling all school-sponsored events. In the interest of keeping our students safe, we had to do what was best for our attendees.

Hundreds of hours of preparation went into this event and we were deeply saddened by our decision to cancel, however, the decision was not taken lightly. We quickly shifted from event planning mode to crisis communication mode. Our team quickly created messaging for each stakeholder group, proceeded with ticket refunds and offered support for our members during this time of uncertainty. After a week of high-intensity execution and decision making, our conference was officially canceled. Though this was a heartbreaking decision, we have learned more about ourselves, the PR profession and our community than before this process. The support we saw from professionals, students and faculty is remarkable. Though we never made it to the finish line, we know Detroit will never stop revving its engine.

Key Take-A-Ways

You're only as good as your team

1

Our PRSSA chapter is filled with incredible aspiring PR pros. The executive board has constantly shown why our PR program at WSU is nationally acclaimed. We are tremendously proud to call our PRSSA team our family. Our PR program, much like other programs at Wayne State, is rich with diversity. A major strength in planning this conference was having a diverse team that had vast backgrounds and experiences. Putting on a production of this size requires lots of moving parts and a variety of skills. Play to your teams' strengths!

Dream big, then multiply by 10 and dream bigger

Who would've thought that four students would strive to put on an event this large? We didn't. But we knew that the opportunities in Detroit are not comparable to any other city, so we were determined to bring the event to life. We started with a deep love for our city, but it grew to this dynamic event that showcased all the little things we love about Detroit. Starting with a broad idea will help flesh out the micro-level details.

2

3

Use your connections and then thank them

Our PRSA Detroit chapter has constantly served as our rock and one of our biggest support systems. We wouldn't be able to achieve what we aimed to do without them. Being affiliated with PRSA Detroit has helped us access a valuable network of professionals. They have provided us with moral, logistic and fiscal support; something that we are eternally grateful for. Thank you for your support and guidance.



SAN DIEGO

The Golden State of PR
PRSSA International Conference



PRSSA International Conference

Working with Celebrities

by Liz Ryan

This past October, I was fortunate enough to attend the PRSSA International Conference in San Diego, California with our Chapter's E-Board. During the breakout sessions at the conference, one panel I really enjoyed was called "Celebrity Focused Public Relations" presented by Rita Tateel. Rita is the President of The Celebrity Source, a public relations and marketing agency specializing in connecting businesses and non-profit organizations to celebrities.

At the beginning of her presentation, Rita said, "In your public relations careers, if you are not dealing with a celebrity at one point or another, you will at least be dealing with an influencer, and it is important to know how to work with them." Rita gave us the following tips to successfully work with celebrities or influencers in our community to ensure the best results for clients.



WSU PRSSA Members at the San Diego international Conference

1

First, it is very important to make sure the celebrity or influencer trusts you. According to Rita, celebrities are some of the most insecure people and may feel like you are only working with them because of money or other ulterior motives. It is important to make celebrities or influencers feel comfortable in order for them to open up and trust you.

Next, family and children are important to celebrities and influencers, especially if they are busy and do not get to spend a lot of time at home. When working with them, allow the celebrity or influencer to bring their family along to the event and spend time with them while completing the duties necessary for the event. It is also important to ask the celebrity whether they would like their family to have media exposure to ensure privacy.

2

3

Finally, make sure that the celebrity or influencer's time is not wasted. They typically have a busy and packed schedule, so it is important to make sure they are kept busy at the event.

Touchdown at Ford Field!

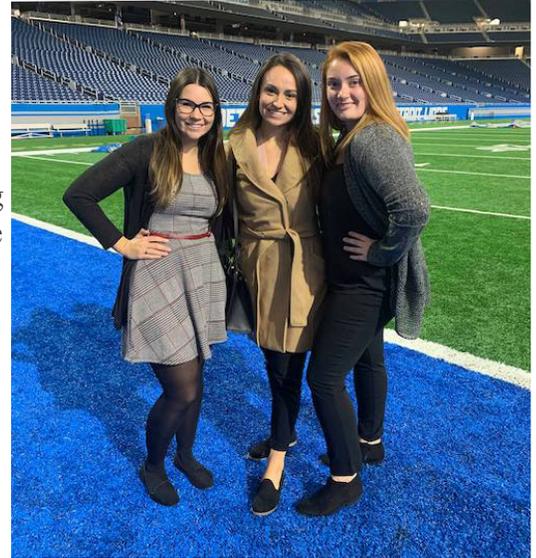
by Gayle Davis

Whether you're a football fan or not, walking through the tunnel and onto the field of an NFL football team's stadium is pretty cool. Wayne State University's PRSSA members got to do just that, and more, at our tour of Ford Field in Detroit.

On this tour, PRSSA members had VIP access to Ford Field, including the opportunity to sit in the press box at the stadium, visit the post-game interview room and snap a few photos in the locker room. Along the way, we were informed of the many different revenue streams Ford Field has including sponsorships, luxury suites and advertising space.

The advertising opportunities in Ford Field are almost endless. There are big screens to fill with sponsored messages at all games, concerts and events. These screens are designed to reach the entire audience within the stadium. The stadium recently added two large cylindrical screens at both main entrances of the field, offering yet another advertising opportunity.

There are also areas within the stadium that are sponsored by outside companies. These areas are named after the company that is sponsoring them and boast a large sign of their corporate sponsor for the entire stadium to see.



Ford Field is very strategic with how they spend their money, which was another key takeaway from the tour. Ford Field chooses to renovate the spaces that bring in the most revenue, leaving the less profitable areas of the stadium untouched. An example of this is the post-game interview room. Our tour guide explained that broadcasting post-game interviews don't provide the stadium a great return on investment, and therefore, the room is bare compared to other areas of the stadium.

In contrast, the luxury suites within the stadium are decked out with leather chairs, personal wait staff and big-screen televisions. These luxury suites can provide a profit upward of \$35,000 a season to the stadium, and the interior of these spaces reflect that.

Touring Ford Field helped to show Wayne State PRSSA students how creativity and innovation in marketing can help increase a client's revenue and brand presence among its audience. This tour also served as a reminder to students to invest your time where it matters—to focus energy on the things that will benefit us most in our future careers.

Small Plates, Big Ideas

by Connor Coyle

On February 28th, I had the opportunity to join several of my peers in attending the Small Plates/Big Ideas dinner, an event hosted by the Wayne State University Alumni Association. Three WSU alumni, Robert Reaves, Alaqua Bobbitt, and Jeff Adkins, who are seasoned public relations professionals, answered questions and shared stories during an intimate and fulfilling dinner with current WSU students.



Robert Reaves is the director of accreditation for the WSU School of Medicine and serves as vice president of the WSU Alumni Association Board of Directors. Alaqua Bobbitt is the Educational Partnership Manager for Davenport University and has experience in hospitality from her time working for Radisson Hotels and Focus Hospitality/Splash Universe Holiday Inn Resort. Jeff Adkins is the Public Relations Specialist for Henry Ford Health System and co-founder of Detroit Paranormal Expeditions, a blog which investigates historic buildings with reported paranormal experiences. Adkins recently joined the Board of Directors for PRSA Detroit.

Current WSU PRSSA students with industry professionals and WSU alumni Robert Reaves, Alaqua Bobbitt, and Jeff Adkins

The purpose of the event was for the professionals to share experiences, network and provide insight on challenges current WSU students of the public relations program may encounter as they begin their professional careers. While each professional contributed to the several talking points, some focused on certain topics. Reaves discussed the importance of advocating for yourself. As we enter the professional world, the potential of feeling as though our skills aren't adequate enough and even "impostor syndrome" may seep in. Working with several older and established co-workers left Reaves having to overcome impostor syndrome and have confidence in his public relations expertise, something he stressed all of us will have to do at some point. Confidence in our abilities will help us overcome any challenge in our path. Bobbitt spoke on diversity, and stressed how crucial it is in the workforce. Through her career Bobbitt has worked with individuals and groups of a wide variety of race and cultures. Public relations professionals are storytellers and we use our abilities to provide a voice for those who cannot. Adkins touched upon how simple networking can be. Regarding his blog, Adkins' partner and co-founder sent emails to many local Detroit businesses, such as Atwater Brewery, which now offers a seasonal beer based on Detroit paranormal expeditions. Networking can be accomplished just through saying "hello," and it never hurts to do because it can lead to serious growth.

Overall, this was a fantastic event. The informal nature of the dinner allowed for a more relaxed, free flowing, and honestly, quite vulnerable conversation. As a pre-professional in public relations I'm grateful for the time to speak with industry professionals and my peers and learn how we share the similar values and concerns regarding the industry. Along with my peers, I have large aspirations in relation to my career. My ambition is to work in sports communication, which is a competitive field. I left the dinner feeling confident knowing I expanded my connections and am even more eager to enter the industry.

Common Industries in Public Relations

by Hailey Cloutier

One of the most intriguing features of public relations to many students is the diversity of clients you can work for as well as the diversity of industries you can work in. There are many fields that consistently employ PR professionals all over the world, some of which happen to be relatively region specific. From the auto industry of Detroit to the tech industry of Silicon Valley, residents of these regions are typically intimately familiar with the ups and downs of local industries and may not want to devote their livelihoods to them.

Instead, when entering a career in public relations, it is worthwhile to consider pursuing work in a sector you are passionate for— not just what is nearby. And, if while looking for a job in public relations or communication management, you get frustrated by the lack of industry variety in your area, the following are a few of the industries to consider that will almost always be present.

Education

If you are not completely ready to leave campus following graduation, a public relations or communication job at your alma mater is oftentimes an option. Universities, education committees or nonprofits and even large public school districts often require some type of communication and media management that could be handled by a PR representative. From press releases to event planning and management, if you are passionate about learning and empowering others, then a PR position in the education sector might be for you.

PR careers in the healthcare sector can vary greatly, and include hospitals, insurance companies, nonprofits, medicine research companies and more. Many of these institutions have dedicated public health and public relations campaigns. The job of a PR practitioner in a health care setting is to communicate often confusing situations and jargon-filled ideas to the general public in a way that is easily digestible and honest.

Health Care

Government

Wherever you are located, there is some type of authority governing you, and they always need a communication team. Even moderately sized cities need someone to communicate between them and the press, to manage the coverage of local events and to build their reputation as a trustworthy body. If being a city employee does not interest you, but government in general still does, then working on the PR team for campaigning senators or representatives is always an option.

When searching for a PR job, do not feel obligated to work in the prevailing industry of your region, as there are various other common options that may be more personally fulfilling, interesting, or lucrative.

Hands-on Learning at Van Dyke Horn

by Farah Fayz

My first time in an agency setting was when I participated in one of PRSSA's agency tours. Being a public relations graduate student never having stepped foot in an official PR setting, I was nervous. PRSSA's organized agency tours were a great way to break into the industry as an emerging professional. These events include visiting an organization with fellow PRSSA members and learning all aspects of the company.

The agency tour I attended at Van Dyke Horn was extremely insightful. I was able to inquire on everything from daily responsibilities to client management. Peter Van Dyke, one of the owners of the firm, chatted with us for over an hour about the company operations and his personal career journey. He was very interested in learning about our goals and aspirations and took the time to give us personalized intuitive advice.



The team engaged us further with an activity, which prompted us to craft PR content messages based on a hypothetical situation. After completing the activity, we sat with the entire team and analyzed our responses. We then received advice on ways to hone the strategies and messages we developed. It was a great way to interact with professionals without the pressure of interviewing and fear of being criticized.

One of the greatest aspects of the agency tour was the networking experience. I networked with my peers as well as PR professionals working in the industry.

Attending this event with my peers encouraged me to be an active participant. It was motivating to be among students seeking to establish their careers, like myself. This experience helped me build confidence to begin applying for internships and jobs. I finally knew what I was walking into, and I was extremely excited.



Hustle Culture Panel

At this panel, PRSSA members sat down with three professionals to discuss managing stress in a society that thrives on it.



Resume Workshop

Wayne State PRSSA would like to thank the professionals who contributed their time and expertise to the resume workshop. The annual event provides students with insight and advice to build professional, career-ready resumes!



Alumni Spotlight

Carol Azambuja, who graduated with a degree in public relations in 2014, was inducted into the WSU Athletics Hall of Fame at St. Andrews Hall on Feb. 15, 2020. Throughout her swimming career, she earned 24 All-American certificates and 19 conference titles. She is also a 10-time national champion swimmer.

A native of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Azambuja made the honor roll three times and graduated in three-and-a-half-years. She invited PRSSA faculty adviser Dr. Shelly Najor to join her at the celebratory event. Congratulations Ana!

10 Tips for Building a Student LinkedIn Profile

by Nina Knauf

I recently had the opportunity to go to LinkedIn's Downtown Detroit location and hear, from LinkedIn professionals, about what makes an excellent student profile. I learned about what goes into a strong profile, how to set yourself apart from other students, and how to get more recruiters to your page.

Below are 10 tips to create a strong student profile, even with minimal experience:

1. [Headline](#) Your headline should be a short and memorable professional slogan. “Honors student seeking a marketing position,” for example. You should feel empowered to check out student profiles and recent alumni you'd like to model for ideas.

2. [Headshot](#) Uploading a high-quality photo will make your profile 7x more likely to be viewed. You should ensure that you are alone and professionally dressed.

3. [Education](#) LinkedIn is not a place to be shy! Show off your GPA, test scores and honors or awards. Be sure to include all your schools, majors, and minors, courses and summer programs.

4. [Professional Summary](#) Your summary statement is the first couple of paragraphs of your cover letter. Be concise and confident about your qualifications and goals—don't forget relevant work and extracurriculars.

5. [Skills & Expertise](#) This is the section that you should put keywords and phrases that recruiters search for. If you need some inspiration, find relevant job listings that appeal to you and include specific skills and qualifications you have. (Protip: look at the profiles of people who have the kinds of roles you want).

6. [Update Regularly](#) Posting updates helps you stay on your network's radar and build your professional image. You should always be on top of mentioning your projects, professional books or articles or events you're attending. More recruiters than you think read your feed.



Nina at the LinkedIn's Downtown Detroit Location during a PRSSA tour

7. [Flex your network](#) Groups you join appear at the bottom of your profile. Joining shows that you want to engage in professional communities and learn the lingo. Start with your university and local industry groups! Local networks can be so helpful at any point in your career.

8. [Collect Recommendations](#) The best profiles have at least one recommendation for each position a person has held. Recruiters are most impressed by recommendations from people who have directly managed you. If possible, go back and ask an internship supervisor or professor to write you a brief recommendation on LinkedIn.

9. [LinkedIn URL](#) To increase the professional results that appear when people search for you online, set your LinkedIn profile to “public” and create a unique URL (e.g. www.Linkedin.com/JohnDoe).

10. [Share!](#) You can also add actual examples of your writing, design work or other accomplishments on your profile, where you can share rich media or documents. This is excellent for selling your skills to potential employers and showing what you're capable of producing.

Photographic Education Annual Conference

Exploring the intersection of fine art photography and public relations

by Lyndsey Spilos

At the beginning of February 2020, I was selected as one of the four students in the Art Department to be sponsored by Wayne State University to attend the Society of Photographic Education (SPE) Annual Conference. This year's conference was hosted in Houston, Texas and the theme was "2020 Vision." This was a great opportunity because I am minoring in fine art and majoring in communication studies.

While I was at the conference, I learned so much about the world of fine art photography and how it constructs messages in society. The conference also indirectly taught me how fine art photography relates to communication careers.

At the end of each night of the conference, there were three influencers within the society of photographers that spoke. On the first night of the conference, there was a speaker named Mark Sealy, who is an exhibit curator in the United Kingdom, and he stated, "in photography, it is the photographer's duty to show society for what it is".

I have also learned within my public relation classes, that PR practitioners have a similar duty that holds them to the same standards. This responsibility is powered by the fact that PR practitioners have an inherent ethical duty to use their power of knowledge for greater good. In other words, PR practitioners should work for an agency, company, client or even start their own practice that is ethically and morally driven. Knowing this information made me even more inspired to use my education in PR and newfound knowledge of fine art photography for the greater good.

**Fine art
photographers and
PR practitioners
have similar
responsibilities**

One of the other speakers I saw was the Director of Wayne State's Photography Department, Millee Tibbs. Millee was on a panel that discussed her work and how it relates to the idea that photography is an illusion of the photographer's perception. Furthermore, fine art photographers have to deal with the perceptions of their audience. In a communications role, one deals with the public's perception, which is not always driven by facts. Instead of taking in facts, the public absorbs information based off of their own perception, just like how a photographer constructs a photograph from their own perception and their audience.

I would like to thank Millee Tibbs and my professor Ricky Weaver for choosing me to attend this life-changing opportunity. I will now apply my 2020 vision towards my photography and future career in communications.



**Perception is
everything in
Photography and
Communication
Careers**

The Village Arts Factory

by Fernanda Bottini-Sinzato and Michael Raftery

As budding PR professionals on the cusp of graduation, fellow WSU seniors and I were granted an authentic campaign opportunity this semester. In partnership with the Ford Fund, on behalf of its mission to strengthen communities and improve lives, the company commenced a plan in 2012 in alliance with the Partnership for the Arts and Humanities (PAH), a Canton-based organization dedicated to encouraging the development of the arts in the community. The plan involved a massive renovation of the historic Cherry Hill Village Ford Factory, which had been inoperative since 2000 and a comprehensive strategy to repurpose the site as a center for community engagement through the arts. By providing local artists affordable work and retail space and routinely offering impactful events to the public, the ultimate vision for the Village Arts Factory (VAF) presents the site as a regional arts and culture destination as well as a catalyst for the revitalization of Cherry Hill Village in Canton.

Upon my initial research concerning the Village Arts Factory initiative in January 2020, I remember a potent feeling of uncertainty. Renovations of the facility had completed, but the vastly multifaceted effort to repurpose and promote community engagement was ongoing, meaning my team's role had numerous possibilities. As I envisioned the infinity of potential PR necessities we'd be tasked with, the anticipation was daunting.

Fortunately, I was relieved of my anxieties during our first official client meeting later that month. The meeting, which might be more accurately described as a brisk powerwalk, was refreshingly interactive. Rather than discussing PR needs in the rigidity of an office, Ann Conklin, Board Member of PAH and supervisor to our campaign, led our team on a tour of Cherry Hill Village. We explored the quaint village together as Ann relayed the historic significance of its landmarks with expertise. She shed light on the considerable progress that's been made in the area as well as the status of future plans. The affection she had for the little village was palpable as she spoke and equally infectious. Hearing the admiration in her voice somehow made the little downtown even more admirable.

Ann eventually led us to the Village Arts Factory, a massive structure on the edge of the village. We meandered through the rooms and corridors of the beautifully renovated building as she fielded our questions. Near the end of the tour, we gathered in the foyer of the factory. Ann directed our attention to the spacious wall adjacent to the front entrance. She explained that it would be the location of the mural, a handmade visual composed of tiles crafted by individuals in the community. She expressed that our leading task is to promote the mural in order to inspire people to create a tile. The resulting design would embody the solidarity of a shared love for art alongside the sincere value that is held for each individual's uniqueness within the community. It would be a constant symbol of the very reason the VAF exists, and we were to motivate its formation.

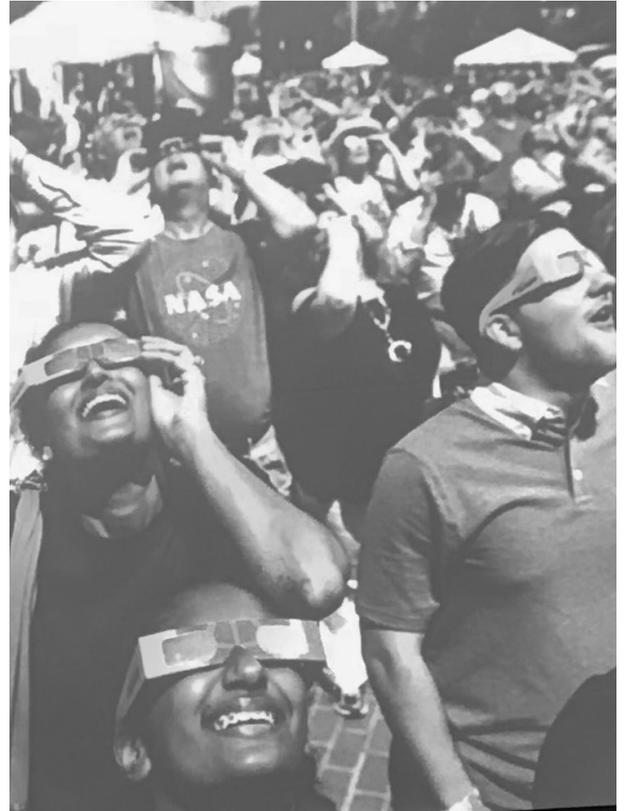
As our campaign progressed through the semester, I've become thankful for the heartfelt nature of our task. I feel not only gratitude, but motivation, that our contributions are strengthening the common bond entrenched within art. While PR work can seem somewhat detached from the practitioner at times, this campaign has highlighted the distinct advantages of practicing PR to further a cause with value to the practitioner. It is empowering to be equipped with the personal incentive upheld by the knowledge that PR work is positively impacting the community. Such a condition energizes the profession and is certainly worth seeking within future PR campaigns.



Turning a Natural Phenomenon

by Lyndsey Spilos

In October of 2019, I traveled with the executive board of WSU PRSSA to San Diego, California for the PRSSA International Conference. Although the whole conference was an experience that I will never forget, there was one presentation that really stuck with me. The time slot of the presentation was at the same time as a lot of other interesting presentations. Struggling to make up my mind, I decided to pick the one with the captivating title, “How we drew in 300,000 people to Columbia, Southern Carolina to watch the eclipse of the year.” When I stepped into the room where the presentation took place, I noticed right away that there were quite a few vacant seats. This was not a good sign given that most presentations were filled with eager Public Relations students ready to learn. I decided to ignore this and went with my gut and sat down. Before the presentation started, there were two women passing around solar eclipse glasses. After everyone in the audience received their glasses, the same two women stepped onto the stage and began.



The two women who conducted the presentation were Tracie Broom and Merritt McNeely. They spoke about how when they realized Columbia, South Carolina was a spot for full totality during the solar eclipse, they used this as a major opportunity to attract more tourists to their town. Throughout the presentation, they shared with us their magnificent story on how they pulled it off.

How They Pulled it Off

Realizing that this was an ambitious goal, Broom and McNeely emphasized the importance of starting a major project right away. Also, with big goals comes a major need for support from others. Broom and McNeely needed to get everyone on board, from small businesses to museums and even law enforcement. Broom and McNeely were able to persuade the city to dedicate not just one day to the eclipse but an entire weekend. In return, they promised the city would see a growth in income and tourists.

The Importance of a Theme

To spark interest in people to visit your town, you need to go big and be creative. Broom and McNeely encouraged the places that were most likely to attract tourists to dedicate the weekend to a solar eclipse theme. The zoo decided to show how animals react during an eclipse. A park also came up with the name “Solar eclipse of the park” to draw in tourists (who doesn’t love a good pun?) Even restaurants got creative and came up with solar eclipse dishes. Needless to say, everyone in Columbia, South Carolina was ready for an eclipse-filled weekend.

...into a PR Opportunity

When Vision becomes a Reality

As the day came closer, McNeely and Broom were notified that they had made national news for being the spot to see the solar eclipse. Broom said, "I will never forget the feeling I got when my phone blew up with notifications." The national news coverage and word-of-mouth marketing had gathered 300,000 people to watch the eclipse in South Carolina. At the end of the presentation, they showed an overview of places within Columbia, South Carolina where people marveled over the eclipse. McNeely and Broom's presentation proved to me that anything is possible if you plan ahead and work hard enough for it.



WSU at Truscott Russman GM Financial & LinkedIn



Thank you for
informative and
engaging tours!

How to Survive the Unconventional Interview

by Emma Seidel

It's that time of the year when you hunt for internships to apply for. You perfect your resume, add to your portfolio, make sure your LinkedIn is poppin' while crossing your fingers (and your toes) that you get an interview.

Fast forward. You got the interview.

Now, you study the company, the agency and the people that you are interviewing with to ensure that you nail the interview. But what happens when the interviewer throws you the dreaded curve?

Interviewer: "Should our president be impeached?"

That's right, it happened, and I am proud of the way I handled it.

1 Practice Your Poker Face

During this moment, I was completely taken-a-back. But you best believe I would not show the interviewers what was going through my head. Keeping my facial expressions in-check was difficult, but it was important. This is a crucial part of any interview that is simply not talked about enough. Your face says what your mind thinks before any words come out of your mouth, so practice your best poker face.

It's okay to take a moment to think. Often under pressure, we talk quickly or feel as though the interviewer wants the 'correct' answer, immediately after they ask. Just answer the dang question and run with the first idea that comes to your mind. Silence is okay, so pause and answer.

2 Collect Your Thoughts

3 Speak Your Truth

Be honest. It's okay if your interviewers' views do not align with your own. It's okay to disagree. At the end of my interview, it was evident that the team did not care what my political affiliations were, they wanted to test my ability to think on my feet and handle uncomfortable situations. Do not try to craft the perfect answer. Just be honest, it'll pay off in the long haul.

Real talk, you can prep and prep and prep, but the only thing that matters is that you are authentically yourself in your interview. Do not search for the perfect answers or craft the most beautiful, memorized statement because they will see right through it. Just be yourself and shine your light. Remember, diamonds are made under pressure!

Awards

Congratulations to all award and scholarship recipients!

“Look Out World” Award Winners

Kristin Shaw, 2014 Alumna
Stephen Jones, 2017 Alumnus



“Friend of the Program” Award Winner

Alexander Sebastian, 1985 Alumnus



The Jeannine Gregory Leadership Award

Elizabeth Ryan

The Berg Muirhead Scholarship for Public Relations Student

Advancement

Tia Whitman-Gillespie

The Renee M. Abraham-Harries Memorial Endowed Scholarship in

Public Relations

Corinne Duwe

Michael and Judy Layne Annual Scholarship in Communication

Ebony Binns

Memorable Moments!



PRSSA Executive Board members at FestiFall



Jaymi Gittens representing WSU at the PRSSA Leadership Rally in Scottsdale Arizona



WSU PRSSA members and Grand Valley State University PRSSA members of a joint tour of General Motors



PRSSA Alumni Dinner



Jaymi Gittens and the Eastern Michigan University PRSSA President with their PRSA awards



*PRSSA members on a tour of the
Fleishman Hillard Agency*



PRSSA hosting their Fall Mixer



PRSSA members at the PRSA East Central District Annual Meeting



WSU alumni Kristin Shaw hosting the PRSSA Digital Footprint Event

Announcing the 2020-2021 Executive Board



Nina Knauf , President



Elizabeth Ryan, VP of
Member Services



Ruth Schmidt, VP of
External Affairs



Rebecca Abelson,
VP of Professional
Development



Hailey Cloutier,
VP of Fundraising and
Philanthropy



Emily Erdt, VP of
Digital Communications



Ebony Binns, Assis-
tant Director of Digital
Communications

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We are the James S. Measell Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America that was created in 1983 on the campus of Wayne State University.

Our mission is to provide guidance, motivation, and opportunity to up-and-coming professionals in Detroit. We create programming and opportunities so students can keep pace with the ever-changing industry.

Our workshops complement our classroom studies. Our tours give us insight into potential careers. Our shared events with PR professionals help us build networks. Our executive board positions teach us leadership skills.