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UA68/13/5 PR Perspectives

Kelly Thompson Chapter, Public Relations Student Society of America

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PR Perspectives

Western Kentucky University

Kelly Thompson Chapter, PRSSA

Fall/Winter 1986

Alumni Spotlight

'PRSSA equals experience'

Alumni Spotlight will appear as a regular feature. If any reader knows an alumnus they feel should be spotlighted please tell us. Write in care of the PR PERSPECTIVES Editor.

Ed

By Dennis Rey Jones

While it may be the intentions of some people to simply go through college and complete their necessary requirements to graduate, others feel that taking an active part in organizations related to their major will give them the experience necessary to help them excel in their career.

One individual who feels this way is Daniel S. Pelino, a former member of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America.

When Pelino left New York to attend Western Kentucky University to play golf and to study public relations and business administration, he had no idea that becoming involved in Western's PRSSA chapter would play such an important role in his career.

While Pelino was a member of Western's PRSSA chapter, he served as National Editor in 1977, National Chairman in 1978 and Immediate Past Chairman in 1979. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in public relations and business management in 1979 and received his master's degree, from WKU, in organizational communications the following year.

Pelino, an advisory marketing representative at IBM Corporation in Chicago, Ill., feels that "PRSSA equals experience."

"PRSSA gives you the opportunity to get exposed to what has to be done to be an objective individual," he explained. "It also forces you to budget your time which



"PRSSA allows you to accept and take on real life experiences which will be beneficial in the future."

will allow you to budget your life." This was a very beneficial concept that Pelino received from PRSSA. Pelino attributes the fact that he has an office in Chicago, as well as Evansville, which he frequently commutes to, to this concept of time budgeting.

"PRSSA allows you to accept and to take on real life experiences which will be beneficial in the future," Pelino stated about the significance of the pre-professional organization.

Another benefit of PRSSA is that it

allows you to make mistakes," he said. "It's better to make them now so that you can learn from them, than to make them when you go to work in the field of public relations."

Pelino urges public relations majors to understand their strengths and weaknesses and to build off of them. He also advised the setting of short-term and long-term goals. He explained that students should accept the challenge to take on real life experiences.

"Simply doing the best that one can do", along with self-motivation and organization are the most important attributes a PR practitioner should possess, he feels.

He went on to explain that one misconception that some people have about public relations is the idea that they often see the results as being intangible, when in fact, "The results are very tangible and very real."

"PR is the glue to any organization and it has the ability to set the tone and direction that a corporation needs to move into," he said. This is one reason why the field of public relations is moving toward a more integral part of many businesses and corporations, Pelino continued.

"Western's chapter's success over the years," Pelino said, "has been the result of a closely integrated group of individuals working together as a whole to achieve a common goal." He noted that Dr. Robert Blann's involvement and commitment to the chapter makes a big difference in the direction that the organization is headed.

"I'm anxious to see Western's PRSSA chapter progress in the future," he said, "because the better people that PRSSA turns out, the more recognition Western will receive."

KY Consultants underway

By Ron Lafferty

Kentucky Consultants, a student-run publications agency, is an integral part of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America.

Kentucky Consultants has been in the formation stage since 1975. Over the years, many agency-type projects were handled by PRSSA, even though a formal agency was not recognized.

It was not until May, 1986 that Kentucky Consultants was formed. At that time KC signed with Navistar International's Fort Wayne (Ind.) Technical Center to produce an employee newsletter called the "Navigator"; this was the agency's first paid account. The group is paid between \$1,200 to \$1,800 an issue, for the production of the bi-monthly newsletter.

In October, 1986, Brian Douglas, KC director, met with Navistar officials in Chicago, to discuss a new account; another newsletter, "ISSUES", covering information and services provided by Navistar's corporate headquarters. The corporation also asked KC to do a second newsletter, "The Competitive Edge", a quarterly publication for Navistar's dealers.

"It was big surprise," Douglas said. "I was really overwhelmed to go for one account and to get two."

KC also has a fourth account, a newsletter concerning academic computing on Western's campus. "ON LINE", is a quarterly publication that, according to Douglas, had been proposed some time ago, but there were some problems with the budget and getting the university to pay a student agency.

These four newsletters have helped KC to reach one of its first goals: to get three or four accounts by the end of the fall of 1986 semester.

The agency is also anxious to get some accounts that will enable students to work in more mediums, such as brochures and television, Douglas said.

The agency has 15 active members and is still expanding. Although several positions are paid, when students join the agency they must work voluntarily for one semester to prove their dependability and their ability to produce good work.

"Management positions held by upper-classmen with experience will auto-



KC staff evaluates the latest issue of the Navigator

matically be paid," Douglas said. Bonuses are given to all staff members who do outstanding work.

The agency is working with a 40 percent profit margin with most of that profit going to pay salaries, Douglas said.

"There's no reason to keep a lot of money in the agency," he said. "We think it should be going back to the students."

The main purpose of the agency is to provide practical experience for PRSSA members.

"The agency's purpose is to provide students with realistic, out-of-class experience," said KC adviser Dr. Robert Blann.

The agency is presently working to establish summer internships for PR students. As interns, students would be responsible for administration of the agency as well as writing, editing and producing KC accounts.

The main goals of Kentucky Consultants, according to Douglas, are to obtain new accounts, provide the community with the best possible staff and to have the agency to be the best it can be.

"To go to school and work for the agency gives WKU good publicity, and gives students an opportunity to get experience and to fill their portfolios," he said.

Public Relations Student Society of America Kelly Thompson Chapter, Western Kentucky University Awards and Achievements 1976 - 1986

Over the past ten years the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA has made a habit of winning chapter and student awards, holding national and district offices and hosting conferences. With the help of our adviser, Dr. Robert Blann, we have finally managed to list all of our accomplishments in one place. We present it to our alumni with thanks for making our chapter's history truly one of growth and achievement.

compiled by Christine Schabel

- 1976** Received PRSSA Charter
National Community Service Award (United Givers Fund)
Dan Pelino elected National Editor
- 1977** Chapter renamed in honor of Dr. Kelly Thompson
National Chapter Development Award
Dan Pelino elected National Chairman
Hosted East Central District Spring Caucus
Third place in East Central Case Study Competition
- 1978** Hosted National Conference in New Orleans
Dan Pelino National Past Chairman
Joie Lahnam elected East Central District Chairman
East Central District Chapter Development Award
East Central District Chapter Service Award
First Place in East Central District Case Study Competition

PR department gains national reputation

By Christine Schabel

Early this year, it was announced that Western's journalism department had been accredited. Two reigning emotions followed this announcement — some people were excited, but most of us were confused. We, the students, had participated in the accreditation process, but we were unsure of what it meant to us.

By being accredited, Western "has undergone a penetrating self-study which emphasized attention to innovative educational and training techniques," according to the Standards, Policies and Procedures Manual of the Accreditation Council in Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

The accreditation gives Western's program "a national reputation," explained Jim Highland, acting department head. "It also tells professionals that our students are receiving a significant education."

One of the primary benefits to Western having an accredited program is to ensure that journalism education continues

to encourage exposure to the liberal arts, the sciences and the social sciences.

The accreditation will also be a benefit to Western in their recruitment process.

"Our program being accredited seems to be a recruitment tool," Greg Maddox, a senior PR major observed. "It will help to bring more high quality PR students to this university."

Recruitment may also be a benefit to graduating students, but from a different aspect.

"The final outcome is that students will get hired," Highland said. "It serves notice, to employers, that the training a student receives at Western is a broad liberal arts education with limited hours in communications."

The accreditation process also included a thorough examination of the curriculums and the faculty, by professionals in each field. This examination resulted in recommendations to improve weaknesses in the four areas of the journalism department.

With PR students producing the

Bowling Green magazine every semester, the accreditation team's report stated that personal computers were needed for database and typesetting.

"The establishment of a design center, within the department, is in the planning stage," Highland commented. "This center will include four terminals that will enable the PR department to do their own typesetting."

"We are continually working to raise money for ourselves so we can get the needed equipment, for all sequences," he said.

The accreditation process has made the strengths and weaknesses of Western's journalism program evident to administrators, students and prospective employers. This should bring much recognition to WKU.

"By being accredited, we have met national standards," Highland stated. "Our program has completed a significant process that is shared by a small number of schools."

- 1979** Hosted East Central District Fall Caucus
Susan Crook elected East Central District Director
East Central District Chapter Service Award
East Central District Outstanding Senior (Dan Pelino)
East Central District Outstanding Senior (Debbie Anderson)
- 1980** National University Service Award (University Center Board)
Vicki Berling elected East Central District Director
East Central District Chapter Service Award
East Central District Outstanding Senior (Susan Crook)
- 1981** Vicki Berling elected National Vice-Chairman
East Central District Chapter Service Award
East Central District Outstanding Senior (John Lane)
First issue of Bowling Green magazine
- 1982** Vicki Berling elected National Chairman
National Community Service Award (Bowling Green magazine
United Cerebral Palsy, American Cancer Society)
National PRSSA Chairman's Citation (Tom Denk)
- 1984** National Community Service Award (Bowling Green magazine)
- 1985** National Outstanding Chapter Award
East Central District Outstanding Chapter Service Award
East Central District Outstanding Chapter Development Award
East Central District Outstanding Senior (Patti Loizzo)
- 1986** Hosted East Central District Spring Conference
Gene Crume elected East Central District Director
East Central District Outstanding Chapter Service Award
National PRSSA Chairman's Citation (Chris Schabel)

Monumental experience

By Cliff Whalin

Students have recently returned from the National PRSSA Convention in Washington, D.C. The Kelly Thompson Chapter was well represented by nine students, accompanied by Dr. Robert Blann. Nationally, attendance was at a record high, with over 700 students enjoying the luxury of the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

The five-day convention was highlighted by the 95th birthday celebration of Edward L. Bernays, APR.

Members of PRSA offered students several educational sessions, including: "Building Your Portfolio", "Speech-writing", "Media Training" and "Finding a Valuable Internship".

Business tours were guided at USA Today, The Washington Post and the FBI building.

Planned bus rides took nearly everyone to the hot nightspots of Georgetown; students were also free to see other sites on their own, such as the Smithsonian, national monuments and the National Zoo.

We look forward to next year in Los Angeles. See you there!

From the 'real world'

By Marla Crow

Bart Hagerman is the newest addition to Western Kentucky University's Public Relations faculty. Although this is his first semester of teaching, Mr. Hagerman is no stranger to WKU.

Hagerman is a native of Bowling Green and a 1948 graduate of WKU, the same year he was the editor of the College Heights Herald. This experience was invaluable according to Hagerman. He also received his Masters in 1949 in Education. At that time, Hagerman recalls, the university only offered one journalism class.

Following graduation, Hagerman began coaching at Elizabethtown High School before accepting a position as news director at WLBJ, a local radio station. After three years, Hagerman then became the advertising manager for Sears & Roebuck in Bowling Green. In 1958, Ashland Oil offered Hagerman a position as manager at the Bowling Green bulk plant. He later moved to the Louisville office and then finally in 1961 he moved to Ashland, Kentucky and worked there for 22 years. While at Ashland Oil, Hagerman was responsible for community and public relations, as well as advertising. Also, he began an International Valvoline newsletter and worked with the Indianapolis 500. After retiring from Ashland Oil, Hagerman accepted the vice-presidency of the Boyd and Greenup County Chamber of Commerce. That position led to the vice-presidency of the Bowling Green-Warren County Chamber of Commerce. While at the Chamber, Hagerman established an ongoing Leadership Bowling Green program.

In July of 1986, Hagerman resigned from the Chamber of Commerce and accepted an invitation to teach at WKU.

"I came only because I thought it would be an interesting experience," Hagerman said about joining Western's staff, "and maybe I could give the students a real insight into how it is 'in the real world', thus improving the quality of PR people coming out of this institution."

An interesting part of Hagerman's life is his military background. He was a glider and paratrooper in the 17th Airborne Division. He spent 10 years in Special Forces and remained in the National Guard for most of his college and working years. He has made 118 jumps, the last one earned him a set of Israeli wings in 1984.

"I am beginning to relax now, as students also relax with me, and it is getting to be fun," Hagerman said.

Alumni update

By Dr. Robert L. Blann

Martha (Crawford) Johnson has a 6-year-old daughter and is marketing officer for First Bank & Trust Company, 1544 Winchester Ave., Ashland, Ky. 41105-9984.

She helped organize a Kentucky Chapter of the Bank Marketing Association and said what she learned at Western about planning and organizing a project has been the foundation for everything else.

Kathleen Bowman is operations officer for 42 Services Squadron, PSC 1956, Loring AFB, Caribou, ME 04751. She said her PR background has come in handy in working with the public affairs office and in planning support group gatherings and award luncheons, and in writing for base publications. She recommends the Air Force as a career. Starting pay — without allowances — is \$19,00 and a lot of re-

sponsibility is handed out early...if you can make it through officer training with little sleep and no time to one's self. But she, like many of you, knows how that is. She was the Spring/Summer 1983 BG magazine editor.

Karen Kirsch is working in the public relations department of the Investment Company Institute in Washington, D.C. The institute is the national headquarters for the mutual fund industry. She is responsible for producing a bi-monthly newsletter which is sent to an audience of approximately 50,000 brokers and dealers.

Roger Cunningham has joined Nashville's Eric Ericson & Associates. He said the combination of PR and health care administration uniquely prepared him to work in the account services department for the Hospital Corporation of America account.

Keep the letters and notes coming. We shall provide more when space is provided, hopefully the Spring 1987 issue.

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