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Kelly Thompson Chapter, Public Relations Student Society of America

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National conference provides insight for students

by Lindsay Mosser

"Bright Lights in the Big City", the theme for the PRSSA National Conference, set the stage for 634 PRSSA members who attended the 14th annual event in Dallas.

The conference, hosted by Texas A&M University, offered opportunities for professional growth, chapter improvement and new insight into the PR field.

During the four-day event, students attended sessions on PR topics led by PR practitioners.

The space industry, graduation advice, international PR, and agency vs. corporate PR were four issues addressed.

“What I learned (in the sessions) about finding a job after graduation was intimidating but I feel attending the conference gave me an edge,” said Western Kentucky University senior Bill Buren.

"National conference may be the largest gathering of top PR students and practitioners.”

Students not only learned about PR from professionals, but also shared ideas with PRSSA students nationwide.

“We had the chance to share common problems and offer each other solutions to take back to our chapters,” said WKU senior Becky Shirley.

“PRSSA and PRSA national conferences may be the largest gathering of top PR students and practitioners.” said WKU senior Chuck Hartlage.

See National Conference page 2

Chapter brings home national award

by Lindsay Mosser

The bright lights shined on the members of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA as they took home the 1989 National PRSSA Award for Outstanding PRSA-PRSSA Relationship.

Their relationship with the Bluegrass Chapter of PRSA in Louisville, Ky., earned the chapter $350. They also received a $100 check for the parent chapter.

The award, which recognizes the strong relationship between the PRSSA chapter and its sponsoring PRSA chapter is one of 10 awards presented annually as a part of the Dr. Frederic H. Teahan Awards competition.
Cantera succeeds Blann as sequence coordinator

by Beth Struck

The Public Relations Sequence at WKU is now in the hands of Ron Cantera, APR.

Cantera has succeeded Robert Blann as Sequence Coordinator effective with the beginning of the fall semester. Dr. Blann held the position since the PR major was created in 1971. Dr. Blann plans to devote full-time to teaching and research.

Cantera's responsibilities as sequence coordinator involve curriculum development and class scheduling. He also teaches PR classes and serves as advisor for the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA.

Cantera's background includes experience as a PR agency account supervisor and corporate PR director. He also spent several years as a television news reporter and anchor.

Cantera joined the faculty at WKU in 1987 and hopes to maintain PR's reputation for excellence.

One of Cantera's goals is to strengthen the internship program to give students the experience necessary to succeed in the professional world.

National chairman receives first Steve L. Hunt Scholarship

by Bill Buren

On Oct. 18, The Bluegrass Chapter, Public Relations Society of America awarded Chuck Hartlage, a December graduate of WKU, the first annual Steve L. Hunt Memorial Scholarship in Louisville, Ky.

Hartlage who majored in PR, was awarded the $500 scholarship during a PRSA-PRSSA Professional-Amateur day luncheon. He received the scholarship based on his grade point average, course work, extracurricular activities, and commitment to the PR profession.

"It's obviously a great honor to receive a scholarship, but to be recognized in Steve's honor makes it all the more special," said Hartlage.

The scholarship was established in memory of the late Steve Hunt, APR.

Conference continued

Keynote speakers were also a big attraction of the conference. H.J. (Jerry) Dalton, Jr., APR, manager, corporate communications, The LTV Corporation, Dallas, Texas, and PRSA president-elect, spoke at the opening ceremony.

Dalton stressed seeking an active role in PRSSA, saying that "the spectator never gets as much satisfaction from the sport as the athletes do."

National conference is an exciting experience and a way to meet new friends and see a different city. Next year PRSSA members will gather in the New York for the 1990 national conference.
Former WKU senior interns with U.S. Olympic Committee

by Bill Buren

The United States Olympic Committee selected three college students out of 500 applicants for a journalism internship at Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Jeff Rogers, a senior from WKU majoring in PR was among the few selected for the internship which started Jan. 3.

Rogers said he applied for the internship through a notice on a bulletin board at WKU. “I was chosen for the internship because I had a solid portfolio and they liked my work samples,” Rogers said.

According to Rogers, a large part of the internship will be writing. One of his duties will be to write for the “Olympic Magazine,” an official publication of the United States Olympic Committee.

The internship also calls for him to deal with athlete promotions and international media relations. Rogers said he will also serve as a liaison between the athletes and press.

When reporting about the athletes, Rogers said he would be writing background information and hometown features.

The internship will last for six months and pays $120 a month. Despite the pay, Rogers feels that the experience of his internship will benefit him in the long-run.

“It’s worth putting off my career plans for six months,” Rogers said. After the internship Rogers plans on going into the field of sports information.

Rogers feels that this internship will enable him to make some connections that will help him get into the sports information field.

National officers explain benefits of membership

by Susan Wessling

Chuck Hartlage knows the value of ambition.

It helped him win his position as National Chairman of PRSSA and may mean a significant difference in his future.

“The first thing I think of is open doors,” Hartlage said. “I know people all over the country. Networking is a big advantage (of holding office),” Hartlage said.

PRSSA East Central District Director Jody Carmack also believes in being ambitious. He said his experience as a district director “definitely has helped” his job performance while interning at AG Communication Systems.

Hartlage and Carmack recommend running for national office, but caution that leadership experience at the chapter level is essential.

See National officers page 7

Students receive insight from PR professionals

by Susan Wessling

Albert Einstein got away with looking unkempt and disheveled because of his overwhelming genius, but most of the rest of the world can’t.

With that thought in the minds of his listeners, a representative of Jas A. Banks Clothiers continued with his seminar “Dressing For Objectives”. The seminar was held during the annual Professional-Amateur Day luncheon sponsored by the Bluegrass Chapter of PRSA in Louisville Oct. 18.

Thirteen WKU PRSSA members along with 14 other PRSSA members, from three Kentucky Universities, attended the event.

Students were matched for the day with a PR professional representing the corporate, health-care, nonprofit or agency fields.

WKU junior Beth Struck said that Pro-Am Day provided valuable insight into the complexities of the PR field.

Pro-Am Day was designed for PRSSA members to discover the different areas of PR while students are still in school said former Kelly Thompson chapter president Lindsay Mosser.

“It also gives members of our chapter the opportunity to mingle and meet people of our parent chapter, which is important in strengthening our relationship,” Mosser said.

The first Pro-Am day was held in 1981, under the efforts of Dr. Robert Blann and the late Steven L.
Chapter induction ceremony brings in 23 new members

by Beth Struck

Pledging to uphold the standards of the organization and conduct themselves professionally, 23 new members were inducted Nov. 1 into the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA.

The ceremony held at Downing University Center was performed by Ron Cantera, faculty advisor to the chapter. Cantera encouraged new members to become "active" and consider running for office.

Following the induction ceremony, George Kolbenschlag, APR, professional advisor to the chapter, spoke about the excitement, challenges and pitfalls of PR.

Kolbenschlag said successful PR practitioners must be persistent, honest and well-informed.

"Experience is the key and writing skills are essential, he said, because PR "promises you nothing. You have to work for it."

New members are: Leigh Borders, Amy Bristol, Richard Cunningham, Paula DeVore, Troy Dosset, Laura Fleming, Tamara Gilkinson, Troy Harrison, Joe Johnson, Dennis Jones, Nina Kissenger, Karl Miller, Jeffery Polson, Renee Rayburn, Jeff Rogers, Robin Rozenweig, Becky Shirley, Lisa Smith, Beth Struck, Becky Toomey, Susan Wessling, Peri Williams and Denise Wilkes.

Congratulations to our new officers:

President--Angela Peak
Vice President--Bill Buren
Secretary--Paula DeVore
Treasurer--Beth Struck
PR Director--Robin Morrison

East Central District Director interns for semester

by Becky Shirley

In today's competitive job market, college graduates cannot depend solely on their degrees to impress prospective employers. Experience is the key word for most employers.

Jody Carmack, East Central Director for PRSSA and former vice president of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA, realizes the importance of experience.

Carmack interned during the 1989 fall semester with AG Communication Systems Corporation, a joint venture of AT&T and GTE in Chicago.

"There is no textbook that can teach me what I have learned these past months."

Communication Systems in May. The internship was supposed to end this past summer but Carmack said he "enjoyed the corporate atmosphere and wanted to stay.

"I asked if I could continue my internship through the fall semester in Phoenix, but there wasn't enough money in the budget", Carmack said. "I decided to try for an internship position open in Chicago instead," he said.

"I had always focused on graduating in four years and sitting out this fall puts me behind schedule," he said. "I weighed the pros and cons and decided that one internship was common so I decided to do another," Carmack said.

In Phoenix, Carmack conducted employee surveys, prepared management and quarterly reports and wrote newsletters and bulletins.

In Chicago, Carmack worked on company publications and planned events at the Chicago branch.

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Editor's note

When the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA won the National PRSSA Award for Outstanding PRSA-PRSSA Relationship, it received a $100 dollar check to give to its parent PRSA chapter.

On Nov. 15, the Kelly Thompson Chapter presented the $100 check to Park Trammel, president of the Bluegrass Chapter, PRSA. Trammel immediately returned the check to the chapter.

This gesture is an example of the supportive measures that the parent chapter has exhibited. The Kelly Thompson Chapter would like to thank each member of the Bluegrass Chapter for their support.

Internships provide students with hands-on experience

by Angela Peak

Internships provide an opportunity for students to gain valuable work experience.

Matt Collins, a December graduate who majored in PR at WKU, worked as co-director of public relations at the Barren River Area Development District (BRADD) for the 1989 summer and fall semester.

Collins' duties included publishing a monthly corporate newsletter, "Just the BRADD Facts", and helping with special events, such as Olympic gymnast Bart Conner's visit to Bowling Green.

Collins said he learned the importance of paying attention to details and making sure quotes are accurate and facts are "130 percent right."

Chuck Hartlage, also a December graduate who majored in PR, spent his summer interning at Hill and Knowlton Inc.

Although the firm is based in New York, Hartlage interned at the Chicago office, working with the sports marketing group. His job consisted of writing, researching, and making media calls.

Hartlage says the internship taught him that "It is the little things that matter the most."

Tammy Owens, a senior PR major, interned at the General Motors-Corvette Plant in Bowling Green.

Owens was responsible for assisting with the publication of the weekly employee newsletter, "Vette Gazette." She also wrote feature stories, assisted tour guides and supervised bulletin boards. Owens said she learned "organizational skills, how the 'corporate world' is structured, and most importantly, 'professionalism'."

Carmack continued

He was in charge of coordinating a flag-raising ceremony for a prisoners-of-war recognition day. He also organized the company's United Way Campaign.

Carmack worked on a communications plan for an area-code change in the suburbs of Chicago. "All of the suburbs are getting their area codes changed," he said.

"I was in charge of making sure nothing in the way of communication was overlooked. Everything will have to be changed. For example, phone numbers on stationery and phone books had to be changed," Carmack said.

Carmack returned to WKU in January to begin his senior year.

The transition to the corporate world was difficult, but he thinks the transition back to college may be just as hard. "Doing the actual work is completely different from classroom work," Carmack said.
Campaigns class enters national competition

by Becky Shirley

College Heights Communications, a 12-member extension of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA, was one of 23 teams nationwide to participate in the “College Beat With NutraSweet” campaign competition.

The group conducted the campaign as part of a PR Campaigns class taught by Ron Cantera.

This competition is sponsored by The NutraSweet Company and its PR firm Burson-Marsteller Inc.

In order to participate, the team prepared a proposal which outlined efforts to promote NutraSweet during an eight-week period.

NutraSweet gave the group $850 to implement the campaign and at the end of the competition, the chapter will receive $250 for time spent on the project.

One of many events sponsored by the group was an American Diabetes Association/NutraSweet® Aerobic Marathon, which raised more than $1,000 for the local chapter of the ADA.

The group prepared a final report which will be reviewed by a panel of judges representing agency, academic and corporate PR professionals. The judges will meet in February to review the campaign’s results and select winners.

The first-place chapter will receive a cash prize of $2,000; second-place, $1,200; and third-place, $800.

Five additional chapters will be awarded honorable mentions and will receive $350 each.

The top eight chapters will be recognized by The NutraSweet Company at the 1990 PRSSA national conference.

Former chapter president studies in Japan for semester

by Renee Rayburn

Former PRSSA chapter president Tina Howard spent the fall 1989 semester studying at Kansei Gaidai University in Osaka, Japan.

Howard was chosen to participate in an Asian Studies Program coordinated through WKU’s Office of International Programs. The program is designed to enhance cultural studies among college students.

Howard took one semester of Japanese at WKU but said learning the language wasn’t enough to prepare her for the challenge of living in another country.

“I’ve really learned the meaning of the phrase ‘culture shock’,” Howard said.

She arrived in Japan on August 25, and said, “It was scary.” Howard said she felt like an eight-year-old because she had trouble communicating.

The transition from American to Japanese life wasn’t easy, Howard said. She learned what it’s like to sleep on the floor with her pillows stuffed with small rocks.

Adjusting to the food also proved to be difficult for her. “You wouldn’t believe the things I’ve eaten here,” she said. Howard said she eventually stopped asking what her meals were made of.

Another problem Howard experienced was homesickness. Mail was eagerly awaited because it was her only connection with home, Howard said.

Howard said being an American student is like being in a freak
National officers continued

an important first step.

Hartlage said he doesn’t know what would have happened on the national level if he hadn’t gained chapter leadership first.

Carmack cites the development of communication links within the district as his main focus since taking office.

He has updated the district directory and created the “President’s Helper” as a supplement to the chapter handbook containing guidelines for chapter officers in effective organization, management, and leadership.

“This is the first time there has been something like this from this district,” Carmack said. “The other directors are pleased with it and want to have (copies of) it.”

For Hartlage, the delegation of more subcommittee work to chapter members—a goal set at his election—has proved very beneficial.

It has evenly distributed the workload of the National Committee and allowed chapter members to become involved with national PRSSA issues.

Although Hartlage will graduate in December, he will continue to hold his PRSSA office.

Despite the pressure and hard work of holding a national PRSSA office, Hartlage and Carmack say the experience has been worth it.

“If you’ve got time and are willing to commit to the Society, then I would definitely recommend it,” Carmack said.

Howard continued

show. She said the Japanese whisper about the students and call them “gaijin,” another word for foreigner.

One benefit of being an American Howard said, is that she received frequent dinner invitations. She said the Japanese consider it stylish to have an American friend. When Howard mentioned that she is from Kentucky, they said, “Ah, Kentucky Fried Chicken.”

Howard didn’t have a chance to do public relations work because she taught English classes to a group of Japanese students.

Howard feels that the experience of a different culture has opened her mind. She also thinks that the experience of Japan will be a good stepping stone because she wants to work in international public relations.

Howard returned to the United States Dec. 20.

Farewell to our graduating officers:

National Chairman—
Chuck Hartlage

President—
Lindsay Mosser

Secretary/Treasurer—
Matt Collins

Membership Director—
Becky Shirley
Alumni Update

by Dr. Robert L. Blann

Martha C. Johnson who was named Kelly Thompson Chapter Outstanding Alumnae spring 1988 has been promoted to issues manager for Ashland Oil, Inc. She was the charter chapter’s secretary.

Mike Thomley is editor of the Louisville Health News and member of the public relations staff of the Kentucky Veterans Administration Medical Center, 800 Zorn Ave., Louisville, KY 40202.

Debbie Filer has joined Keller-Crescent Co., Evansville, IN.

Roger Cunningham is an account executive with Eric Ericson and Associates in Nashville, TN.

Joe Burnette, Jr., PRSSA chapter president in 1988, is a sales representative for Sani-Clean Services, Henderson, KY.

Angela Gibbs is public relations manager at Dollar General Corp., 427 Beech St., Scottsville.

Rebecca Morris is a reporter for the Hardinsburg, KY, Democrat.

Karen Denhul is PR assistant at Liberty National Bank, 416 W. Jefferson St., Louisville, KY.

Pamela Shook is marketing assistant at Johnson/Rudolph Educational Resources, Bowling Green, KY.

Chris Daniels is public relations director for the Winchester, VA, Recreation Department.

Gene Crume is special events coordinator in the public relations department at Western Kentucky University.

Debbie Jones is executive director of the United Cerebral Palsy of Middle Tennessee, Inc., 2014 Broadway Ave., Suite 345, Nashville, TN 37203.

Bryan Blair is news director of WTCO-AM 50 Friendship Pike, Campbellsville, KY.

Lynne Payne is account executive with Advantage Publishing, Inc., Nashville, TN.

Tommy Gore lives at 3505 Nugget Dr., Bowling Green, KY 42104.

Dreama (Walton) Ross is account executive with Neal Advertising in Owensboro, KY.

Michele Clark Douglass is assistant director for programs at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.

Last heard-from reports indicate: Jason Miller is marketing representative for Stuckey Diamonds, Inc.; Dennis Johnston is a Peace Corps volunteer; Mike Cassell has been in marketing training with Disney Co., Lake Buena Vista, Fl.

Author note: Keep the notes, letters, and addresses coming, and we shall try to provide an update with each issue of Perspectives.

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Dr. Robert Blann, Ron Cantera, APR, Lindsay Mosser, Becky Shirley, Chuck Hartlage, Angie Peak, Susan Wesseling, Beth Struck, and Renee Rayburn.

Each semester, PR Perspectives informs students, faculty, alumni and professionals about activities in the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA. If you have a change in address or position, please send it to PR Perspectives, 307 Gordon Wilson Hall, WKU Bowling Green, Ky., 42101.