

Spring 1994

## UA68/13/5 PR Perspectives

Kelly Thompson Chapter, Public Relations Student Society of America

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# PERSPECTIVES

## National Assembly In New Orleans

By Amy Warren

**M**y trip to New Orleans was full of fun, sightseeing, and of course business.


New national officers were elected for next year, updates on sub-committees were presented and a sad farewell to this year's president as she passed on the gavel.

The new national officers for next year are: Travis Parman, National President; Jason Schumann, Vice-President; Jennifer Castro, PR Director; and Dan Hoest, East Central District Director. Everyone

that ran for an office had a great speech and great new ideas. It was a tough decision, but I know that these newly elected officers are top-notch and are going to take PRSSA to higher levels.

The most emphasized and most important sub-committee discussed was the communications sub-committee. This sub-committee was started last year at National Conference in Orlando, FL. The present PR Director, Mary Beth Chunn, took on this sub-committee as part of her office. The

communications sub-committee has been trying to eliminate communication problems between Nationals, district and local chapters. The new PR Director, Jennifer Castro will oversee this new committee. The climax of the conference was the presentation of the next national conference in Baltimore, MD., in November.

The conference was a lot of fun and it's a great way to network with PRSA professionals and other PRSSA members. I encourage everyone to attend. 

## A Half Way Goodbye to the Man Who Started It All

By Gina Goff

**O**ne of the faculty members responsible for introducing Western Kentucky University to public relations and advertising has gone into partial retirement. Dr. Robert L. Blann, a journalism faculty member since the fall semester of 1971, decided it was time to take a break from everything and enjoy life a little more.

Blann will be teaching two classes per semester next year, after teaching three this semester and serving as the

internship coordinator. Blann said that in his 23 years of teaching he has taught almost 20 different public relations and advertising courses; in the first two or three years in the program he taught a total of 14 different classes.

When he first joined the staff, he was teaching 15 semester hours while working toward his doctoral degree from Ohio University, which he earned in 1978. Blann's first

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## **Terry Jones, Western Journalism Instructor Dies at Age 47**

Terry Jones, 47, of Bowling Green, KY. died at home of a heart attack December 4, 1993.

A wave of sadness rolled through the halls of the journalism department after the death of Jones.

Jones earned his journalism degree from Western in 1978. He also had a bachelors degree in biology and a masters degree in science education and communication.

He had taught journalism part-time at Western since the spring of 1989. Jones also headed the department's computer labs and assisted with summer journalism workshops.

"Terry was a great teacher and one of his best qualities was his willingness to help students with any problems especially those that were computer related," said Heather Hauer.

Jones was also devoted to his fraternity, Sigma Phi Epsilon. Jim Highland and Jones both served as faculty advisors.

"Terry Jones was one of the best teachers in this department and cared deeply for his students.

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# U.P.D.A.T.E

## **Halls of Music Contest**

PRSSA started out with 20,000 samples of Halls® Mentho-lyptus cough suppressant tablets during October and didn't get rid of them until December when some had to be given away as Christmas presents. The Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA was one of the 15-20 chapters that competed in the Halls® and PRSSA 1993 Campus Challenge. The winners were announced in February, and no, we didn't win, but all those who worked on the campaign gained a great deal of experience. When asked if she was glad the campaign was over, campaign coordinator, Dora Epley, said, "I will never be able to look at Halls® again and not think of this experience in one way or another. I know we griped at times, but it was worth it for the experience. Thanks to all who worked on the project, but I'm so glad it's over!"

## **East Central District Conference**

"Because Your First Client is You" was the theme of the East Central District Conference held April 15-17 in downtown Indianapolis. PRSSA members from Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky attended the conference. Amy Warren represented the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA. The conference gave students a chance to network with PR professionals and fellow PRSSA member from other chapters.

## **Revision to By-laws**

Revisions to the chapter's by-laws were made during the Spring semester to add a new agency assistant and change the term of the agency director. The changes were made so Creative Exchange, the chapter's student run firm, could operate more consistently. The office of agency director will now run from December to December, and the assistant will be appointed by the agency director.

## **The New 1994-95 Officers**

Next year's officers for the Kelly Thompson chapter are: Rebecca Flynn, president; Allison Donoho, vice-president; Kris Templeton, program director; Claude Bacon, PR director; Chris Daniels, treasurer; Tierra Barbee, secretary; Nicole Vaughn, national liaison/alumni relations; and Amy Warren, agency director

# Why I Became A PRSSA Member

By *Chris Daniels*

**I** joined the PRSSA chapter to prepare myself for both a successful career after graduation and for a more successful completion of my public relations degree here at Western.

For me, PRSSA fulfills what I would refer to as the three E's necessary to land the most important of employment opportunities, your first job.

The three E's include experience, education and examples of your work to include in a portfolio. Because the field of public relations is as diverse as those of us who prepare for it, many graduating seniors may be competing for jobs not only among other public relations graduates, but with other majors as well. I feel my participation in PRSSA will give me an advantage with the three E's—over other applicants based on what employers look for in employees.

Having joined the chapter only a short time ago, I have already begun to build on my PR experience. For the first time, I am writing for a newsletter and hope to become involved in future campaigns taken on by Creative Exchange. Not only will this experience help me in fulfilling future assignments both at Western and with an employer, but I will be able to better target my own interests in a variety of PR topics. In PRSSA, one is ultimately limited only by their

individual interests and abilities. Members may serve as officers in the organization or simply enjoy the many contacts made available in the business world.

Educationally, PRSSA allows me to contribute creative energy beyond the basic requirements of any PR class. I also realize that working alongside other equally motivated PR majors will push me in the right direction in the overall development of my communication skills. PRSSA also presents its members with a wide range of potential internships which stand out on any resume. In a world where the old cliché 'the strongest survive' often holds true, a membership in our society cultivates the life skill that will determine to a degree the successes we are capable of accomplishing.

By working on the various newsletters, campaigns and internships sponsored by PRSSA, I hope to build a quality portfolio of materials to present during employment interviews. These examples of various PR projects give an employer some idea of the potential of an applicant. I believe by presenting an exceptional portfolio, it will be difficult for anyone to overlook me in most employment situations.

I am a new member to the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA and have made several new friends with similar interests in PR work. Everyone

majoring in PR is encouraged to come to our meetings and become involved in the chapter. Not only will you benefit from the three E's I have already mentioned, but I feel you will add enjoyment to the list.

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## Blann

Continued from Page One

class was PR Fundamentals, which was introduced in the fall of 1972. The following year Western accepted public relations as a major.

He was teaching "all types of classes" and working with PRSA to coordinate a PRSSA chapter on our campus. In 1975 PRSSA at Western received its national charter. Blann served as faculty adviser for 10 years. During that time the chapter received over 75 district and national awards.

Blann said that he was ready to slow down a bit, so he could do things he had been putting off like reading, writing and playing golf. Blann said his semi-retirement would give him "more personal time to pursue other creative and intellectual goals."

# A Note From the President

By Heather Hauer

**I**t is so hard to believe in that just a few short weeks I will be graduating and entering the "real world." My four years at Western have been both challenging and rewarding. I have also had a lot of fun. PRSSA has been a big part of my college career. I just can't imagine trying to find a job without the experience that I have gained from PRSSA. Every semester in PRSSA brings with it new challenges and experiences and Spring 1994 has been no exception. Here is a short overview of the Kelly Thompson Chapter this semester.

Without the challenge of the 1993 Halls and PRSSA campaign, things have settled down into a normal routine for the Kelly Thompson Chapter. We began the semester with our spring membership drive and now have 28 members in the chapter. Projects for the semester have included computer training sessions for members and other journalism students, the planning of a state PRSSA workshop and preparing for district awards entries. We have also had several speakers from the Louisville and Nashville markets.

One last note on Halls, the results came in and we didn't place in the top three. This however, did not discourage the members of the Halls team. It was a learning experience that helped all of us become better prepared for our

classes and future careers. I would like to thank everyone who helped with the project.

Elections have recently been held and the new officers are a fantastic group of individuals who will do a great job leading the chapter during the 1994-95 school year. A special congratulations to president Rebecca Flynn and agency director Amy Warren. They have a challenging year upon them, but I know that they will do a great job for the chapter.

Finally, I would just like to thank everyone who has helped me this year, especially our faculty adviser John Barnum. Dr. Barnum has done a great job and has always been ready to give advice or offer suggestions whenever we needed it. Also, a special thanks to Suzie Hardin, Voletta Havener and Mrs. Albers for all of their help throughout the year and to all of the journalism department faculty.

Good luck to all the graduating seniors! I will miss each and every one of you. Also, good luck to the Kelly Thompson Chapter in the coming years. I know that you will continue to be an excellent chapter and organization.

Goodbye!

# Internship - Getting Your Foot in the Door

By Rebecca Flynn

**T**extbooks... Nothing in these overpriced, and usually outdated books of knowledge can prepare you for the ins and outs of the real world. Internships can.

Billed as the essential ingredient for success in today's post-graduate job market, internships have become more than a resume builder. According to some professionals, they are a requirement.

"A college degree used to separate qualified candidates, now internships and experience make the difference," said Mary Ellen Price of Nashville's Dye, Van Mol & Lawrence Public Relations firm.

Making copies and fetching coffee may be the extent of some internships while others will allow hands-on-experience. Be patient and learn everything you can about the company.

But how do you get that first internship with no practical experience? Don't panic. Employers look for any career related experience as well as part-time jobs and campus activities that show you have made good use of your college career.

To gain materials for a portfolio, many professionals suggest volunteering your services to local businesses, organizations, and charities.

Stay up to date on internship opportunities, by stopping in the PRSSA lab or see Dr. Blann or Dr. Barnum.

# The Right Way to Interview

By Julie Hickman

**F**ormer PRSSA president Eric Davis graduated from Western in May of last year. He started working at the second largest public relations agency in Nashville, McNeely, Pigott, and Fox, the following Monday. Within six months, he was promoted to assistant account executive. How can you be so lucky?

Professionals in public relations shared one advice tip with PRSSA members throughout the semester, and that was a good interview.

"If you haven't made your case in the first three minutes, you're dead," said Dr. John Barnum, public relations sequence director and professor.

Three minutes? How is this possible? According to professionals, preparing for these three minutes can take hours of research and personal reflection.

To make a good impression, know everything you can about the organization you want to work for. Davis knew what agencies he wanted to work for and proceeded to study them. He also took the time to find out who was interviewing him—a must for anyone seeking a job.

"You will stand out by being better informed," said counselors in Western's Career Services

Center. This includes being informed about yourself. Try to anticipate questions an interviewer might ask.

If you have answers sketched out to typical questions such as, "Why should we hire you? or "What qualifications do you have?" you may see the interview run more smoothly. Appearance, both physically and socially, plays a crucial role in your evaluation. Appropriate dress, personality, verbal skills, and mannerisms are

important to 80 percent of employers, according to a national labor study.

"You can make an absolutely awesome impression on your interviewer just by the way you come in and sit down," said Lou Anne Beckham, Special Events Director of Western's University Relations.

Professionals suggest that the best way to dress for an interview is conservatively. Women should not wear ornate jewelry, short skirts, bright colors, or heavy perfume. Men should stick with a traditional blue or black suit, white shirt, and a conservative tie.

"Body language can also be an important consideration. Sit up straight, look the interviewer in the eye— don't

**If you haven't made your case in the first three minutes you're dead.**

## Graduating Seniors

Congratulations! After all the hard work and dedication the following seniors will be graduating on May 8, 1994. PRSSA wishes you the best of luck in accomplishing all the goals you set for yourself in the future.

**Dora Epley  
Susan Flanders  
Wayne Hallett  
Heather Hauer  
Julie Hickman  
Kevin Lloyd  
Nadine Lakies  
Karen Moss  
Kari Short  
Ami Shrader**

### Jones

*Continued from Page Two*

We will miss him a lot. He added a dimension to this department that most could not accomplish," said Highland.

He is survived by his mother, Lena Jones of Tompkinsville; his wife, Scottie; his daughter, Kim Williams of Scottsville and two grandsons.

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## Interviewing

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let your eyes wander about the room; don't let nervous ticks get the best of you: wagging your foot, wringing your hands, popping knuckles, etc.; and most importantly, SMILE!!

"An impressive touch can be having a portfolio of your work available. Physical evidence of your work experience, many professionals say, can be recalled better than the spoken word.

Davis suggested that you always come prepared with a portfolio, but don't get it out unless the interviewer has agreed to see it.

Always be prepared with a list of your references because employers like Beckham may check you out with them.

"I always call references, and I'll want to talk to the people you worked for and with," she says grinning, "because you never treat your boss the same way you treat your fellow

employees."

Most people being interviewed do not realize that they have a say in the interview. Mary Ellen Price, a WKU graduate who is now account executive at the firm of Dye, Van Mol, and Lawrence in Nashville, recommends "interviewing the interviewer" after he or she has finished questioning you. She stated that you have as much right to want a good employer as they want a good employee.

After the interview, professionals say you should write your interviewer a thank-you note. A simple message may say, "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview with you. I look forward to hearing from you."

# PR CALENDAR

April 21  
Awards Banquet

May 2-6  
Finals Week

May 8  
Graduation

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PERSPECTIVES

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