Summer 1988

UA68/13/5 PR Perspectives

Kelly Thompson Chapter, Public Relations Student Society of America

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu_org

Part of the Advertising and Promotion Management Commons, Mass Communication Commons, and the Public Relations and Advertising Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/stu_org/128

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Organizations by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.
Seminar gives students professional insights
by Johanna Jennings

Public Relations, Making It Work For You, was the title of the second annual development seminar hosted by Western Kentucky University's Kelly Thompson chapter of PRSSA on April 7th.

The seminar was designed to help plan, utilize and improve public relations skills. Six professionals from Kentucky and Tennessee spoke about different aspects of public relations.

Several professionals attended the seminar, which was held at Downing University Center on Western's campus.

Kim Doran, APR, senior account executive for Holder Kennedy Public Relations in Nashville, opened the program with a discussion about how to organize special events.

Doran said a special event is "promoting an idea, service, product or person in an effort to promote goodwill."

Several components go into a special event according to Doran. Research, planning and communications are general PR skills that aid in their success.

Some specific components Doran cited were production skills, advertising, merchandising displays, community involvement and publicity.

Getting publicity involves working with the media. According to Brad Hughes, "The only way you are going to communicate with the news media is if they understand you and your agency."

Credibility is vital, according to Hughes, because it does two things: it makes a story more acceptable and it gives you an edge above others in selling the story.

Hughes, a 1975 graduate of Western, stressed one-on-one communication, timeliness and accuracy as factors that enhance media relations.

Mark Kooyman deals with many more publics than just the media.

Kooyman is director of decision support for Eric Ericson & Associates Inc. "We, as a country are a study in diversity," says see success page 3.

PRSSA celebrates a year of growth
by Chuck Hartlage

The Thirteenth Annual Awards Banquet for the Kelly Thompson chapter of PRSSA was held at the Holiday Inn, Holidome April 30.

The keynote speaker of the banquet was Ms. Judith Bogart, a former national president of PRSA. Bogart is currently the executive vice president and manager of the Southwest Ohio Office of Diversified Communications, Inc. She is also a new member of the journalism department's professional advisory board and PR program. She addressed ethics in PR and current problems in the field. She commented on the recent book by Larry Speakes, in which he admitted he made up quotes without getting them approved by President Reagan.

Bogart was recognized later in the evening when she was presented the Professional Award. She has continued to exemplify the high standards of professionalism in PR.

Dr. Robert Blann, coordinator of Western's PR program, was presented a new putter in recognition of his thirteen years of outstanding service.

The presentation of the external awards were as follows: the University Service Award to Western Kentucky University's Greek System for its outstanding donations of time and money to worthy causes; the Community Service Award to the Bowling Green High School for its Drug and Alcohol Prevention program.

The Alumni Award went to Martha Crawford Johnson, supervisor of employee publications at Ashland Oil.

Mark Gibson presented Kentucky Consultant's awards to the four members of the staff for their outstanding work.

The outstanding first year member was awarded to Joe Burnette.

The outstanding senior award was presented to Cliff Whalin.

Cliff Whalin wrapped the awards ceremony up with recognizing 110% effort on the part of Pam Shook, Chuck Hartlage, Lauren Scott, Mitch Randolph and Don Franks.
Much has happened in the chapter since the last issue of PR Perspectives was published. This semester has been a time for us to reap the rewards from hard work in the fall.

January brought still another successful membership drive, as 19 more students joined PRSSA. This brings our total roster up to 53, a 266 percent increase since the fall.

Western's chapter was once again well represented at meetings throughout the country. February was the month of our district caucus at Purdue University, which proved to be a great developmental experience.

In March, nine members attended the PRSSA National Assembly in New Orleans. For the third consecutive year a Kelly Thompson member, Chuck Hartlage, was elected East Central District Director. A second Western student was elected to the national committee as the number two officer in the nation. Raymond Skibinski will be the National Vice Chairman for 1988-89.

The spring semester gave us the opportunity to share our talents with other organizations. The chapter promoted both the Kentucky/Area Five Special Olympics and Senior Send-Off, an event the Alumni Association sponsors.

In April, several events proved successful for the chapter. Our Bateman Case Study team submitted an entry of high quality, which should stand up well in competition.

We also hosted our Second Annual Professional Development Seminar, titled Public Relations: Making It Work For You. The event was again a success. The local television news even covered the event.

District conference was held toward the end of the month and the Kelly Thompson Chapter brought home four awards:

--District Outstanding Chapter Award
--District Outstanding Chapter Development Award
--District Outstanding Member Award (Raymond Skibinski)
--District Director's Award (Cliff Whalin)

Looking back, the 1987-88 year has truly been fantastic for Western's Chapter. The awards banquet theme, "A New Beginning," truly summed up our accomplishments over the past several months. Because of this revitalization the Kelly Thompson chapter has, again, reinforced the foundation for another exciting and productive year, beginning next fall.

Sincerely,

Cliff Whalin

Direct personal contact: the new classified ads

by Ron Cantera, APR

I never got a PR job by answering an ad.

You probably won't either -- at least not a good job.

The best positions in PR, as any recruiter will eagerly tell you, don't appear in the classifieds. You only hear about them on the network.

The network isn't ABC, CBS or NBC. I call it DPC -- Direct Personal Contact. If you tune in, it could make a big difference to your career.

My favorite PR job illustrates how DPC works. It developed because my wife worked for a man who had a friend who needed an assistant. The classifieds never said a word about the position. But the boss told my wife all about it.

Why? Because of DPC. The boss knew --because he knew my wife -- that I had a degree in journalism, experience with publications, and knowledge about hockey. Those were the perfect qualifications. One interview later, I was his friend's assistant -- writer, editor and publicist for the Detroit Red Wings. That led to the best PR job of my career -- Director of Public Relations for the Red Wings.

Every other PR job I've held developed the same way -- from DPC. I became Director of Sports Information at Harvard because a Boston sports writer I know introduced me to the university's associate director of athletics. I joined the PR staff at Honeywell when a colleague contacted a good friend of his who ran the operation. And I landed a vice president's position with the largest agency in Boston after I interviewed the president for my Master's thesis.

You may have had similar experiences. Most people have a network, even though they don't necessarily think about it in those terms. The network can be as simple as one friendly old professor. Or it can be as complex as five past presidents of your fraternity/sorority; seven executives at the organization where you did your internship; and a family friend who plays golf with the chief executive of a Fortune 500 company.

Most people have a network, even though they don't think about it in those terms

The important thing to remember is that you've got to keep the network tuned in. Write occasional short notes to the people on your frequency. Send them a newscliping you know they'd like to see. Remember special occasions -- a birthday, or anniversary, for example.

If you haven't built much of a network yet, it's probably time to get started. It won't cost any more than answering the ads, and you'll get a lot more for your money.

PRSSA promotes

Special Olympics

In an attempt to become more involved in the affairs of the Bowling Green community, the chapter leadership decided to take on a special events account.

After meeting with Special Olympics Area Coordinator Jo Verner, the chapter agreed to handle all promotion and publicity for the state-sponsored event.

A subcommittee, comprised of six chapter members was immediately formed to handle the account. The group stated its objectives and devised a six-week campaign.

A series of press releases were sent to local newspapers and television stations. It was arranged for Verner to appear on WBKO's news feature program, Midday. Posters were designed and posted in high-traffic areas.

An evaluation of the results showed this year's games set the attendance record.
Seminar labeled a success

Kooymans, "and we live in a state of rapid change." He said we must find better ways to segment the marketplace.

Geodemography is one effective way of doing that according to Kooymans. Geodemography pinpoints groups with similar likes and dislikes who live in the same neighborhood.

The seminar's highlight came when Barbara Hadley Smith spoke at the luncheon. Smith is the former press secretary to Governor Martha Layne Collins.

The keynote speaker addressed two events which public relations played a large role. The first was the relocation of the Toyota plant. Smith said her role was to educate Kentuckians about the benefits of the plant's move to the state.

The other event she discussed was the education reform package. Smith said gaining favorable public opinion was a vital part of getting the bill passed. Smith said she tried to push an upbeat message about the opportunities available if the package was approved.

As manager of corporate relations for HCA Hospital, David McFadden travels across the country trying to convince hospital executives of the importance of communications and public relations.

Professor Blann continues devotion after thirteen years

by Mitch Randolph

No one can deny that Dr. Robert Blann stays busy. At one time during the 70’s, he was rearing four children, directing both the advertising and public relations programs, completing a dissertation for the Ph.D. and, of course, advising PRSSA.

PRSSA was only beginning. In order to be granted a charter from PRSA, certain criteria had to be met. One was a 10-member minimum. "We only had nine members," Blann said. "We all chipped in and paid (dues) for the tenth. We just put someone's name down."

Getting a charter was the main goal during that first year. The second year brought a national award to the Kelly Thompson Chapter. The Outstanding National Community Service Project award was given for a multi-media program designed by PRSSA for the Bowling Green-Warren County United Givers Fund.

That was the first of seven national awards for the chapter, which also has received 19 district awards. "It's not just shooting for the awards," says Blann. "We're trying to provide extensive, out of class professional experience." He said the awards themselves aren't important, except that they reflect the quality of work the students do.

The students are another source of pride for Blann. Under his guidance, about 250 students have graduated from PRSSA. In nine of the chapter's 13 years a Western student has been a member of the prestigious National Committee. Five have held national office and six have been elected East Central District Director, including the last three years in a row.

Aiding students in their professional development is also the reason Blann pushed for the Macintosh computers. He says the computers are "outstanding tools" for providing practical, professional experience. He did point out, however, that the time he has spent on the computers caused his golf game to suffer. "My golf handicap went from 12 to 16, but my computer handicap went from 16 to 12."

Next year, Mr. Ron Canter will be the chapter's new advisor. After 13 years of hard work with PRSSA, you might expect Dr. Blann to sit back and enjoy some peace and quiet. And maybe he will take a few extra swings on the golf course, but you can bet he will be swinging as hard as ever for the chapter.
Chapter promotes Senior Send Off

by Jody Carmack

The Student Alumni Association sponsored a Senior Send Off offering seniors and graduate students a chance to exit with style and prizes on April 28 at the south lawn of Downing University Center.

Approximately 100 students attended the "First Reunion of the Class of 1988" which included a live broadcast by WDNS-FM, a refreshment tent and door prizes that were provided by Jim Johnson Pontiac/Nissan.

A PRSSA committee chaired by Pam Shook coordinated the full-scale promotional effort. This committee handled the responsibility for producing a direct mailer, designing a large banner, ads for the College Heights Herald, and handling media relations.

Pam Shook said working on this project offered committee members practical experience on the Macintosh computers, internal and external communications, and a realization of the importance of deadlines.

"This experience really let me put my feet in the water," Shook said.

Ron Beck, associate director of Alumni Affairs, asked PRSSA to promote the first reunion in hopes of making it a traditional event.

The information for the send-off was introduced at the March 24 PRSSA meeting by Kent Groening, vice president of student projects and programs.

Our objective was to use the event as a communication tool between the alumni association and graduating seniors.

—Ron Beck

More than 100 (above) attend the first Senior Send Off. (right) Local media accepted invitations to the day of events.
The highlight of the event included two free airline tickets to anywhere in the continental United States, $100 free credit on a Big Red Mastercard, and other prizes.

Ron Beck, associate director of alumni affairs, spent the day in the middle of the activities.

PRSSA members not only took part in promoting Senior Send Off, they also enjoyed the fun.

Friends take advantage of the special occasion to say last goodbyes.
Alumni update...

by Dr. Robert Blann

Martha (Crawford) Johnson was named outstanding alumna at the April 30 awards banquet of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA. She was secretary of the chapter and is now supervisor of Employee Publications for Ashland Oil Inc. It was great to see Martha, husband Jim, and their lovely 6-year-old daughter.

Steven L. Hunt, president of the chapter chapter, has joined MedEcon Services, Inc., as director of public relations. He was previously public relations consultant for Doe-Anderson Public Relations and director of communications for the area landbank system, which serves four states.

Brian Collins — speaking of old timers — is CEO of Commonwealth, Inc., 2940 Highland Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45212. The multi-service company specializes in record storage, retrieval, warehousing and distribution. Among his clients is Proctor and Gamble. He was PRSSA's chapter chapter vice president and next year's president.

Greg Martin is account associate for the Financial Relations Group of Kentucky's largest PR firm, Wenz-Neely, 505 West Ormsby Ave., Louisville, KY 40203. The group provides financial communications and investor services for such clients as Dollar General Corp., Shoney's Inc., TransFinancial Bank, Thomas Industries, and Kimball International. Greg was business manager for both Bowling Green Magazine and the student-run agency, Kentucky Consultants.

Jane Massey, another '87 graduate, is program coordinator for the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship. She previously served as publications specialist and communications assistant for the Tennessee Health Care Association. Her home address is Woodmont Terrace Apt. K-5, 910 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, TN 37204.

Anna White, Bowling Green Magazine's first editor, has returned to Louisville as director of Public Relations for the Humana Suburban Hospital. She previously worked with Jack Guthrie and Associates, Louisville, and as director of public relations and marketing for the Humana Hospital in Palm Beach, Fla.

Michele (Clark) Douglas is assistant director of Programs at the Sarratt Student Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37240.

Special Note: It's really great to hear from all of you, and I know your many friends are pleased to hear of your activities. I was estimating the number of graduates the other day. There must be between 250 and 300 students who have come through Western's public relations program since 1975. It's becoming difficult to keep up with all of you. So please keep the letters and address changes coming, and we shall try to provide an update with each issue of this twice-annual PR Perspectives newsletter — Dr. Robert L. Blann, PR program coordinator.

Western represented at District conference

by Chuck Hartlage

Five members of the Kelly Thompson Chapter of PRSSA attended the 1988 East Central District Conference the weekend of April 22-24 at Grand Rapids, Michigan. The 10 hour drive was not taken in vain, as the event proved to be a very rewarding experience.

Grand Valley State University organized a conference which offered sessions on a variety of public relations topics. Some of the subjects addressed included corporate and political PR, media relations, desktop publishing, sports information and PR for advertising.

Dr. Richard T. Cole was the keynote speaker at Saturday's luncheon. Cole is president of the Michigan Education Trust, America's first state tuition guarantee program, and is former press secretary to Michigan's governor. He spoke on the strengths and weaknesses of PR practitioners.

Western received the Outstanding Chapter Development and Outstanding Chapter awards at the awards ceremony Sunday. Ray Skibinski also received the Outstanding Member of the District award.

If you have a change in address or job position, please send to: 306 Gordon Wilson Hall, WKU, Bowling Green, KY 42101.