

# FORUM



## Five Takeaways from PRSSA “Art of PR” National Conference



### Thoughts from the President’s Desk: Mindfulness and Spring Cleaning

By Ashleigh Kathryn  
National President

The “New Year, New Me” mindset is trending and school is about to start up again. Your classes are

posting assignments, your Chapter is promoting its first meeting of the semester and you are making your way to the gym and trying to eat healthier. You are sprinting down the track of success, but old habits slowly creep back in and before you know it, you are burnt out by March. Does this sound familiar?

This cycle may happen a few times throughout the year, but it continues to do so because we want to keep improving. We keep moving forward and forget about being “mindful” in the present. We say yes to everything trying to get ahead, but we become so overwhelmed that we actually make matters worse in the long run.

Be present. Be mindful. Discover success. I was at a dinner with PRSSA students and public relations practitioners when I heard about being “mindful” and what it really means. “It suggests that the mind is fully attending to what’s happening, to what you’re doing, to the space you’re moving through.” A student shared with me that he was writing a blog about mindfulness in communications and the practitioners brought up points about how now students are constantly re-setting the bar, but are often so spread thin.

Ambition is our double-edged sword. It can make or break us depending on how we manage our attention and execution. Take the steps this semester to be more mindful of your presence, instead of focusing on constant change.

“Solutions that ask us to change who we are or become something we’re not have failed us over and over again. Mindfulness recognizes and cultivates the best of who we are as human beings.”

Mindfulness will allow you to discover success as a “process” of learning new insights. These insights are the key things that might be hindering your growth as a leader, innovator and student within your Chapter or Firm.

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### By Members of Grand Valley State University

Grand Valley State University PRSSA traveled to Austin, Texas, for the PRSSA National Conference. After a wild weekend in the South, “Art of PR” had us fixin’ to spill the beans on our biggest takeaways!

### Emily Gagnon: There’s more than one way to bake a cake

PRSSA National Conference opened my eyes to the variety in Chapters and their organizational structures. The exposure to different Chapters made me realize just how beneficial it is to be part of an international association, allowing for networking and learning beyond our boundaries. This Conference also proved just how naive I was to naturally think that all PRSSA Chapters were structured the same. There was a workshop where members were able to discuss their Chapter’s best practices and address issues they have come across. This was inspiring because we were able to brainstorm, problem solve and come up with new ideas together. This not only strengthens our individual Chapters, but improves PRSSA as a whole.

### Amanda Hume: Advice from PPro

PRSSA National Conference provides attendees the opportunity to see and hear some high-ranking public relations pros share their stories and experiences in the industry. These professionals not only freely handed out advice to us aspiring public relations students, but talked about how they got to where they are today. Hearing each speaker talk about their journey to success opened my eyes to the many pathways we have once we graduate from college. One example is Gary McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA, who had a session focused on strategic event planning. He shared that he never would have imagined he’d be an event planner but his organizational skills and strategic planning led him in that direction and allowed him to work with a big-name client such as

HGTV. It’s also reassuring that there is no right or wrong direction to take when heading into the “real world,” as there has been success shown in various ways and forms. Each person entering this field has a unique story to share.

### Delaney Mackenzie: The Art of Conflict and Crisis

One of my favorite sessions was “The Art of Conflict and Crisis,” led by Dr. Raquel Perez, Aileen Izquierdo and Heather Radi-Bermudez from Florida International University, which experienced its own public relations crisis last spring when a pedestrian bridge on campus fell and killed six people. These three women led a powerful discussion on crisis, how it is inevitable and how to recover from one. The best piece of advice they gave was to think of worst-case scenarios, prepare and make sure every employee understands the message. These three women delivered such a riveting session that I can still hear their words of advice echoing in my head. It was a presentation I will never forget.

### Allyssa Murphy: The fuel of emotions

One of the most interesting sessions that I was able to attend was titled “Becoming the Change: Rising From Tragedy to March for Our Lives.” The guest speakers were Brendan Duff and Delaney Tarr.

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Members of the Grand Valley University PRSSA Chapter (back row, left to right): Trevor Bryan, Sofia Anderson, Emily Gagnon, Brendan Duff, Delaney Tarr, Delaney McKenzie, Allyssa Murphy (front row left to right): Madison Farhat-Tomaszewski, Amanda Hume, Sabrina Antcliff, Courtney Fogle

# OPEN FORUM 2

Not able to attend the PRSSA 2018 National Conference this year, don’t worry! Check out the quick recap with the top five takeaways.

# 4

There are nine Regional Conferences happening this spring. We hope to see you and your Chapter at one soon!

# 7

Get ready to kick off another semester with your Chapter. The time is now to seize the moment and build upon past successes!

# Fundamental Tools to Showcase Your Personal Brand

By Colin Wylie  
Brigham Young University

Understanding who you are and sharing that with the world has become essential for young professionals. A personal brand works just like one for a corporation — giving your audience an expectation for how you might operate.

Take a large corporation like Apple or Audi. Just a glimpse of the logo makes you think of high quality products and low bank balances. The same applies to you as a professional, whichever industry you choose to work in. “As technology continues to dominate common daily processes, personal branding is “the business of people,” inclusive of perceptions and proven career leverage,” suggested LaKisha Greenwade, president at Lucki Fit LLC.

Once you take the time to craft your brand, it’s important to take an inventory of the resources available to promote yourself. There are several free and paid services that young professionals can use to build a brand.

## Social media

Your social profiles afford a vast sea of opportunities for self-promotion. Deciding whether you want your social profiles set to public or private is a personal choice. If you choose public, make sure what you post reflects what you want your brand to be. To understand how you can use your social profiles, it may be easier to break them down by platform and how they are often used in professional settings.

## Facebook

Most people use Facebook to foster personal connections and share news about their lives. Some individuals feel inclined to discuss controversial topics, but this is something to exercise caution with. Be professional in your interactions and try not to burn bridges. You never know which one of your Facebook friends could end up hooking you up with your next job.

## Instagram

Depending on your industry, using Instagram to establish your brand is essential. For example, if you are a creator, sharing visuals from your work

can be a great tool to build your reputation. You also can develop a following and impact a larger audience.

## Twitter

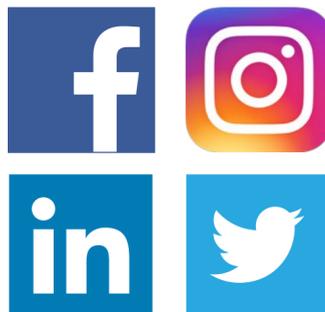
Like Instagram, the use of Twitter can depend on the industry you’re involved in. Using public relations as an example, professionals are engaged in Twitter conversations on a daily basis. Look out for scheduled industry Twitter chats, trending hashtags or stories that you could engage with. You can strengthen your network and also start to build credibility as you engage with others online.

## LinkedIn

This goes without saying, but your LinkedIn profile needs to reflect who you are as a professional. Make sure to regularly update information, images and links so future employers or connections can see what you have accomplished. This is critical, especially if you don’t have an online portfolio. Hopefully the next section will convince you to make one.

## Digital portfolio

Gone are the days of carrying around a binder full of work from your internships or classes. By creating an online portfolio, you can share your work with anyone who has a computer and an internet connection. With the continued expanse of the internet, there are many free sources that help you create an online portfolio. I’ve used Wordpress and Wix and enjoyed using both. Many of the site builders will come with templates you can look through to match your personality. Link your portfolio off your social media profiles and list the web address on your resume to start getting traffic on your page. If you want to spend some money, there are also a lot of tactics that can be used to strengthen your SEO.



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# Recruiting 101: PR For You!



By Derek Heim  
Ball State University

With the beginning of a new semester comes the start of an old stressor — PRSSA recruitment. If you’re like me, this time daunts even the best of us. You don’t want to reinvent the wheel, but you also want to be engaging and new, which leaves you with quite the predicament.



## ABOUT PR

At its core, public relations is about influencing, engaging and building a relationship with key stakeholders to contribute to the way an organization is perceived.

Public Relations Society of America



## JOIN PRSSA!

- Biweekly meetings
- PR professionals as guest speakers
- Resume workshops
- Agency visits
- National and regional PRSSA conferences

## PR IN BIOLOGY

Entire agencies in the public relations industry are devoted to biotechnology, genomics, bioinformatics and molecular and synthetic biology. Public relations professionals can specialize in any topics within biology to become the perfect representative of a lab’s image and work.

Specialists can also take research to a national level, using connections with journalists and impeccable writing skills to promote research to a wide audience.



Handout courtesy of Ball State University for their “PR in You” campaign

This is where the PRSSA Chapter at Ball State University found themselves at the beginning of the year. Our numbers were down, our outreach was low and we were on the hunt to rebrand our Chapter. After countless brainstorming sessions — and even more dry-erase markers — the Executive Board came up with the idea for our “PR and YOU” recruitment campaign. At our Chapter, public relations majors usually find their way to our biweekly meetings one way or another, but the students outside of our program are the ones we can’t guarantee. Lindsay Grant — our chair of member relations and recruitment — worked closely with me, Chapter president, to develop handouts distributed at our university’s activity fair. These handouts highlighted how public relations applies to different majors and professions such as biology, education, history and so much more. We know that public relations can be used in anything, but the goal of this campaign was to get everyone else to know that as well.

This campaign delivered impressive results; more than I initially expected. Students came up to us at the activity fair and actively searched through the flyers to find their major. Then, looking into our meetings, we have one life science major, multiple communication studies majors and some history minors, all with regular attendance. Analyzing our current recruitment efforts, and knowing that we did not have the bandwidth to launch a brand new, never-before-heard-of strategy, we devised a way to take what we are currently using and elevate it to the next level. Who said you need to reinvent the wheel? Start with giving them a good rotation!

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## Firm of the Issue: 1910 PR

By Ashleigh Kathryn  
Vice President of Professional Development

Winter is near and the semester is wrapping up. Holiday breaks are great for refreshing motivations and aspirations, which provide the perfect opportunity to evaluate your firm’s fall semester and prepare for the spring.

New Firms could use these next few months to build a framework or standard of operations with their Faculty Advisers. PRSSA provides a Student-run Firm Handbook, which provides best tips and practices on how to do this. Once this is in place, reach out to clients and start planning recruitment efforts to launch your firm in the spring.

Established firms should use the upcoming breaks to evaluate client work, operations and retention. Use this time to understand what

worked with your firm and why. Collaborate with your colleagues and make sure to note successes and failures to apply in your strategy for the spring semester.

A Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firm that takes advantage of these opportunities to plan ahead is 1910 PR.

“Step by step we have been building this firm, starting in the spring with naming, branding and formation of a client list,” said Emily Kinsky, associate professor of mass communication and adviser of 1910 PR. “It has been thrilling to see this dream come to fruition and provide real-world PR experience for our students.”

Firm Director, Hope Stokes, has even identified new opportunities this past semester to grow the Firm and sustain its success in the future.

“One of the primary practices that we are implementing at 1910 PR is a mentor program.

We are going to require our leadership to identify and train a protégé throughout the semester in order to achieve smoother transitions between leadership positions in the future.”

1910 PR is unique because they started as a spring 2017 course

offered at West Texas A&M called “Establishing a PR Firm”. They have utilized that opportunity for strategic planning to strive ahead and achieve National Affiliation by the end of spring 2018. They continue the course as they apply to host CreateATHon and participate in national events ahead.

This is a firm that embodies the “work hard” sentiment and continues to take advantage planning ahead. Stokes shared some of their best practices on how your firm can optimize planning.

“Here are a few things I suggest your firm can do to prepare for a new semester:”

- Select and train students to move into leadership positions before the next semester starts.
- Identify if you have client work that needs to be completed during the break or rolls over into the next semester, and devise a way to complete that work on time.
- Contact clients before the current semester ends and start working on a plan to keep them on board during the next semester.
- Make sure your firm’s information and past work is accessible for the incoming students. We use Google Drive and Slack.

These are just a few of the ways your firm can get ahead and stay on track for success. Connect with 1910 PR on all social media platforms, @1910PR, for further questions on best practices and tips.



Members of the Student-run Firm 1910 PR

## The State of STEM Public Relations

By Ryan Will  
Vice President of Events and Fundraising

The advent of the internet and its resourceful connectivity has revolutionized the way we communicate about the things that matter, what these matters are and how they touch our lives as consumers. Along with the internet, a number of technological advancements have propelled us into a new world of what used to be science fiction. For communicators, this is a profound opportunity to articulate the narrative of technologies driving progress and changing the world around us.

As public relations continually evolves, there is an ever-present need for strategic communicators in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields. Better known by the acronym “STEM,” these fields can cover anything from medicine to nanotechnology. As messengers, I believe we have a responsibility to connect these incredibly intelligent yet jargon-filled professional communities with the various publics influenced and affected by their decision-making. This realization drove Rachel Rhodes and I to co-host the Nationally-Affiliated STEMulate PR Regional Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina this past spring, to highlight the growing public relations opportunities in STEM industries.

While there is a need for more communicators in the STEM space, there is also a call for an integration of more technical skills and analytical thinking into public relations practice and education.

At the PRSSA 2018 National Conference in Austin, Texas, former National President Brandi Boatner led a breakout session titled “Code for Communication” discussing and reinforcing this integration. As the social and influencer communications lead at IBM, Boatner discussed a need for disruption in the public relations industry with the development of #PRTech and utilization of technical skills to advance the industry. Her recommendations and forward-thinking ideas resonated with the audience and left members feeling empowered and energized.

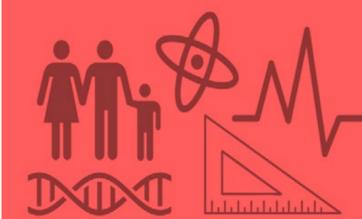
Her recommendations included a list of fifteen suggested competencies for students pursuing careers in public relations and integrated marketing

communications. Proficiency in 4 to 5 of the following will ideally make you a competitive candidate for most positions in the industry: Social media listening, keyword research, search engine optimization (SEO), visual literacy, content creation, video, social advertising, influencer relationships, media analytics, digital media relations, basic coding, google analytics, metrics, digital dashboard, reporting return on investment (ROI).

Taking Brandi Boatner’s advice, it’s also important to heed the message of the PRSA International Conference’s keynote speaker, Jonathan Mildenhall and be cognizant of your purpose. Communicating life-changing, impactful and highly technical messages is an exciting and purposeful opportunity for some but not necessarily for everyone. Understanding and further articulating the significance of topics that technical professionals dedicate their lives to can be taxing and difficult at times but certainly has the potential to be just as fulfilling.

The future of the public relations industry, along with the future of our society at large will be contingent on the effectiveness of the communicators in highly technical yet impactful fields (i.e., medicine, fintech, engineering, etc.). As a young professional benefitting from my technical communication experience, a citizen of a bustling tech hub, Research Triangle Park – RTP, and an advocate for STEM communications, I highly recommend exploring opportunities within the space and learning more about the impact you can make.

## State of STEM Public Relations



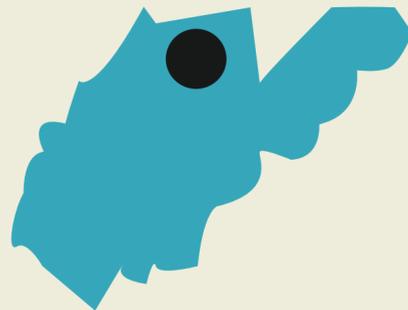
# PRSSA 2019 Regional Conferences

Every year, students show their event planning and promotion skills by hosting Regional Conferences. Chapters compete for the ability to host these conferences, which are endorsed by PRSSA National. There will be nine conferences across the country this upcoming spring. Regional Conferences, like the National Conference, have workshops, guest speakers, and great networking opportunities.



## Through the Eyes of PR

University of Texas, Austin  
 March 29-31  
 Conference Coordinator: Shannon Switzer  
 Through the Eyes of PR will focus on assisting students in all fields, master their personal brand identity, diversify their assets and pinpoint the focus of the craft. This conference will prioritize the need for a dynamic and holistic viewpoint in this industry and allow participants to visualize their role within it. It will provide a lens to fully view and absorb the diverse, critical components of success in a public relations world.



## Wired and Wonderful: The Reach of Digital Storytelling

West Virginia University  
 April 11-14  
 Conference Coordinator: Emily Zekonis  
 This conference celebrates the importance of utilizing integrating marketing communications to create a brand narrative. West Virginia is known for being 'Wild and Wonderful' and pushes professionals to work beyond typical media to bring messages across the nation. Attendees will learn digital storytelling methods from current successful digital programs, network and gain advice from digital leaders, advance their career at the "post-grad" fair and gain experience with emerging digital technology.

## Point PR: Building Bridges

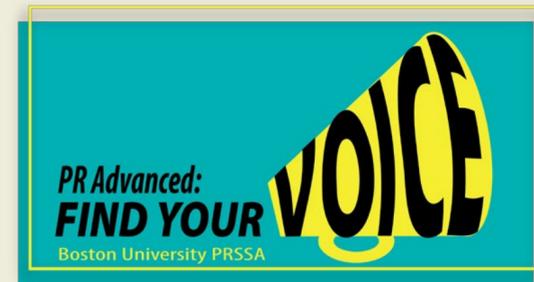
Point Park University  
 March 27-30  
 Conference Coordinator: Morgan McCoy  
 Building bridges will equip students to approach the next steps of their career ready to tackle problems with dynamism. Speakers will be challenged to provide perspectives on ways for new professionals to build the best foundation they can as they launch their careers. Students can expect visits to firms in the Pittsburgh communication scene and interactive workshops and speakers that will have you changing on their words.



POINT PARK UNIVERSITY | MARCH 22, 2019

## PR Advanced: Find Your Voice

Boston University  
 February 22-23  
 Knowing when brands and individuals should-and should not stand out in the current social, political and economic situation is essential to today's public relations. This conference will show you how, with the right voice delivered via the right medium, at the right time, organizations can craft the right messages for its audiences effectively, stay true to its brand essence and meet its objectives with a profound impact.



## It is Your Crisis Conference.

Georgia Southern University  
 February 1-2  
 Conference Coordinator: Shelby Trevathan  
 This conference will help PR students become equipped with the skills and techniques needed to effectively control and mitigate any conflict that may arise within their career. Speaker topics will include: handling a client, disseminating information, social media plans and responses before, during, and after a crises.



## It Is Your Crisis Conference.

PRSSA Regional Conference  
 Statesboro, Ga. | February 1-2, 2019

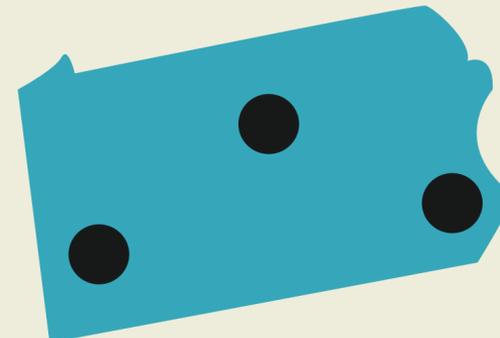
## PReboot

Pennsylvania State University  
 February 8-9  
 Conference Coordinator: Elissa Hill  
 As the technology industry expands to encompass nearly every minute of our day-to-day lives, understanding how public relations fits in is vital to the future of our profession. PReboot will cover how you think about your career by exploring the emerging technologies you'll employ as a future professional. From startups to Fortune 500 companies, learn what it's like to work in the technology sector and the skills you'll need to prepare.



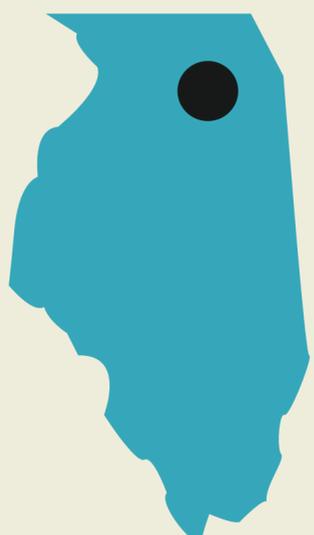
## Being a Full Service PRO

Temple University  
 March 22-23  
 Conference Coordinator: Brianna Greco  
 The lines between public relations, advertising and marketing are dissolving to create a more diverse work environment. This conference will explore the ever-changing landscape of full service agencies and how they are adapting and integrating new tactics to provide clients with a full service experience.



## PR is a Breeze in the City of Trees

Sacramento State University  
 March 29-31  
 Conference Coordinator: Jennie-Marie Britton  
 "PR is a Breeze in the City of Trees" will focus on how to manage crisis in a breeze. Speakers will provide their encounters with a crisis, how to manage the situation and what can be done in the long run to prevent disasters from happening again. Students will also have the opportunity to visit firms and companies to gain insight into the foundation of what it takes to be successful in Sacramento.



# Podcast With The Pros: Natalie Asorey

By Celeste Brown  
American University

For the 10<sup>th</sup> episode of this series, National Vice President of External Affairs Rosa Ambriz welcomed Natalie Asorey, lecturer at the University of Florida. Asorey teaches public relations writing and social media management. Additionally, she is serving as the student-run firm adviser for Alpha PProductions. She has years of experience under her belt, with time spent as head of social media and supervisor at BODEN, with clients such as McDonald's, Delta Dental, and United Healthcare. Asorey graduated from the University of Florida herself with a Bachelor of Science in public relations and a minor in communication studies.

Throughout the podcast, Asorey discussed the important topics of diversity and inclusion. While many Chapters are having these crucial conversations, many struggle to define the terms and connect them to public relations. Asorey put it simply: di-

iversity is giving someone a seat at the table, while inclusion is empowering them to speak up. She touched on her value of being included, not only for herself, but also to ensure that there are opportunities for those who come after her. In terms of connecting diversity and inclusion to public relations, Asorey explained that it is necessary to consider not just other languages, but cultures, too. She explained that America is changing, and brands must cater to that. In order to market to an audience, a brand must connect to their cultural identities and the truths that tie them together.

If you are interested in recording a podcast with a notable public relations professional, email the publications editor in chief at [publicationseic@prsa.org](mailto:publicationseic@prsa.org)



Courtesy of Natalie Asorey

# Mindfulness and Spring Cleaning

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Applying these insights gradually will sustain improvements for the future.

This mindset relies on being in touch with your key publics and understanding what works and what doesn't. Spring is a time when student leaders implement new programming and add new systems within their Chapters, which is great for capitalizing on the motivation of a new year. However, spring needs to also be a time where you reflect on what is not working for your Chapter or Firm and why.



## Do some "Spring Cleaning."

Explore why that guest speaker did not resonate with your Chapter. Determine what can be adjusted in your Firm's new structure. Write these down and begin conversations with your colleagues about what elements should be given more priority. Clear out the clutter that is blocking your success.

You can do this by setting clear, measurable objectives for the semester. By setting specific objectives for your Chapter or Firm within a realistic timeframe, you are aligning your strengths to a goal that will sustain success for future leaders to come.

Just open yourself to present awareness. It will bring you opportunities of continuous, inspired success. As the godmother of public relations, Besty Plank, said, "Aspire and be inspired."



# Editorial: The Moment Is Now, So Seize It

By Emma Ingram  
Publications Editor in Chief



And just like that, the fall semester is complete! How was it? Did you enjoy your classes? Take on a challenging internship? What about PRSSA — was fall semester considered a success among your Chapter?

We are officially midway through this school year. That means it's time to evaluate how you and your Chapter performed last semester

to regroup and come out of the gate stronger than ever this coming semester. If you're a senior like myself, you also may be realizing that this is your last semester to have a direct impact on your Chapter. Think about what that means — you only have a matter of months to leave your legacy on the Chapter and inspire younger students to continue building upon your work.

Here are three pieces of advice to help you and your Chapter truly capitalize on the remainder of this school year.

## Reflect on where you've been and where you're going.

Now is the time to reflect on how last semester went for your Chapter. Regardless of whether it was a positive or negative semester, it's important to take a step back and reflect on what was achieved, what was challenging and what occurred as a result.

Hopefully, you and your Chapter planned out the school year back in August. However, if you didn't, now is the time to determine what your plans are for the remainder of the year. When doing this, put your members first. What activities or efforts will provide the most value to your members? You have to think about the bigger picture because you want your members to be getting the most out of everything your Chapter does.

## Empower those around you.

You don't have to be a leader to leave an impact on the people around you. Take this semester to raise your voice, offer a different perspective, ask questions and inspire those around you. It doesn't matter if you are a freshman, new to your Chapter, or a senior with four years of experience. Everyone has something to bring to the table, so encourage people to share their opinion.

National Assembly is coming up in April. As you may be aware, every Chapter is encouraged to send one delegate to vote upon any proposed bylaw changes and the new National Committee. This is a perfect opportunity to send a younger, perhaps less experienced member of your Chapter to partake in this invaluable event. It will allow them to gain a broader understanding of PRSSA at the national level and hopefully inspire them by being surrounded by servant leaders and hearing from some incredible professionals.

## Remember that everything happens for a reason.

Whether something positive or negative happened in your Chapter's past, it's important not to dwell on those experiences but instead capitalize on them. Perhaps last semester your Chapter wasn't able to send anyone to National Conference in Texas. Well, that's alright, because nine incredible Regional Conferences are happening over the next three months. As a person, you have to realize that things happen and they don't always go as planned. Don't let bumps in the road deter you from achieving your goals on a personal and professional level. Stay positive, stay strong and stay motivated for what the future will hold.

I wish every Chapter the absolute best this semester. If you or your Chapter are in need of any advice or help, the National Committee and I are here to assist in whatever manner we can. Now sit back and enjoy the ride that this semester will bring you.



Interested in writing for the PRSSA National publications? Email [publicationseic@prsa.org](mailto:publicationseic@prsa.org) to get started today!

# Five Takeaways from the "Art of PR"

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Delaney Tarr was a student when the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, occurred. Brendan Duff was a former student and was very involved in the public relations process, helping the student activists spread their message after the tragedy they had been through. It had never clicked in my mind before that activism is a form of public relations. This session blew my mind with all the exciting and innovative ways this group of young activists is gaining the attention of people around the world, and what they are doing to continue to hold that attention. Our Chapter president, Trevor Bryan, had the opportunity to ask them a question: "How do you keep your emotions in check when going through all of these interviews; how does that affect what you do?" Their answer was perfect: "Emotions fueled our movement because it is about saving lives." They went deeper into how their emotions helped their cause, and everybody cried. We were simply in awe of their strength after everything they have gone through.

## Courtney Fogle: Working in music and entertainment public relations

One of my favorite sessions from this Conference featured Brett Cannon, senior publicist for SXSW. SXSW is a large music, film and technology conference and festival. Cannon spoke about some big names he's worked with, event planning, communicating with the press and how he makes such a huge event run smoothly. I was thrilled to hear from a professional with a successful career in entertainment public relations and ask him for some advice about my future endeavors.

For an episode of our PRSSA podcast, PR Hangover, I met with Ryan Romana, the founder of a music and entertainment public relations firm called Press Junkie PR. Having another opportunity to network with and learn from a professional in the music industry was such an amazing experience. I learned so much about media relations, working with artists and how to be successful in the entertainment industry from both of these intelligent men.

# Tools to Showcase Your Personal Brand

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## Blog

Blogs aren't for everyone, but they continue to grow in popularity. There are many different reasons people start blogging — sharing opinions, helping others from your experience or trying to build a following. You might be surprised to hear there also can be a lot of money made from blogging, but you can read about that elsewhere. If you decide to start a blog, the same rules surrounding social media are involved. Be professional and make sure it reflects your best self.

## Additional tools

During a conversation with Jason Mollica, a branding professor at American University, he suggested the importance of using analytics when gauging the strength of your personal brand. "You are in control of your personal brand. It's always a work in progress and should be constantly evolving," says Mollica. He encouraged people to regularly audit themselves using free tools like Meltwater, Talkwalker and Klear.

Whatever tools you decide to use to showcase and audit your brand, the same principles apply. It's important that you start early in your career, as it will become more important as you progress. Start by taking a step back and understanding what you want people to think of when they see your name or photo. "You need a big picture look at your brand. Understand your audience and engage with them," says Mollica. Now go and start branding! You may be surprised how easy it really is.

# Outstanding Chapter Awarded to Scripps PRSSA

By Alyssa Gormley  
Ohio University

During the PRSSA 2018 National Conference, Ohio University's Hugh M. Culbertson PRSSA Chapter received the Dr. F.H. Teahan Award for Outstanding Chapter. This award is presented to a Chapter that demonstrates strong leadership, active participation and a positive community for networking.

Engagement is essential in Scripps PRSSA and is shown in various ways. For example, every week, the vice president emails 462 Chapter subscribers about the upcoming week's meeting events and details on the professional guest speaker. The vice president also selects a new member to spotlight at the weekly meeting, thus increasing the organization's interaction. Fundraisers are another notable way that the Chapter supports and expands on member participation. Past fundraisers included Chipotle, resume-consulting and two headshot fundraisers. Through these, the Chapter was able to decrease the total cost of members that planned to attend the National Conference by \$350. As current members establish strong relations in and outside of the Chapter, alumni relationships are prioritized just as highly. The Chapter invites alumni to be weekly guest speakers, holds alumni-specific events, has created a Facebook group for current members and alumni to communicate through and is in the process of creating an alumni database and outreach program in honor of our Chapter's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary (which is next year). Aside from this, the Chapter has a successful Student-run Firm known as 1804 Communications. The firm consists of 81 students and works with 13 clients. Between the Chapter and 1804 Communication, members gain heavy knowledge on how to successfully network.



Members of the Ohio University PRSSA Chapter (back row left to right): Haley Bender, Hannah Schuller, Flannery Jewell, Sydney Davis, Kate Ryan, Livi Wise, Maura Anderson (front row left to right): Jessica Rutkowski, Sierra Heilman, Margaret Mary Hicks, Brigitte Meisse, Sadie Newman, Emily O'Flynn, Alyssa Murtagh, Mishhalaina Coles

Alyssa Murtagh, the national vice president of career services, explained her reaction to winning the award, "When Andrew announced 'Ohio University', I was shocked. Not because I didn't think we could do it, but because we actually did it. There is no greater feeling than receiving Outstanding Chapter and knowing that all of the hard work from our executive board and members is well recognized!"

Chapter president Brigitte Meisse, felt the same, "I was personally blown away. Our Chapter does so much amazing work that rarely gets recognized. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing that hard work finally pay off. Our main goal for the year was to engage with National more, and winning this award will serve as a catalyst to keep moving forward on that goal (and harder than before)."

# PRSSA 2019 National Assembly

Portland, Oregon | April 4-7

Every Chapter is encouraged to send one delegate from their Chapter.



Other Chapter members, Affiliates, and Faculty Advisers are invited to attend as non-delegates.

Deadline for Registration: Friday, March 1st, 2019

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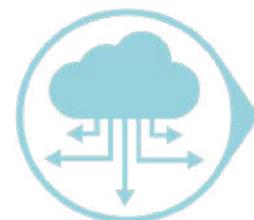
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