

A PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA AT LSU PUBLICATION

Important Dates:

Feb. 10: ImPRint applications due to Elizabeth on second floor of Journalism Building

Feb. 13: ImPRint meeting at 6 p.m. in 216 Hodges

Feb. 20: How to fundraise in Holliday Forum; dues are due at meeting

Feb. 27: Executive Board applications are due to Jensen in 246 Hodges; ImPRint meeting at 6 p.m. in 216 Hodges

March 3-5: Mardi Gras break

March 6: Executive Board elections at 6 p.m. in 143 Coates

March 10-14: Midterms

March 13: ImPRint meeting at 6 p.m. in 216 Hodges

March 20: How to put on a press conference in 143 Coates

March 21-23: PRSSA 2014 Region 5 Conference "Hollywood Under the Oaks"

The "Real" Working World Part I

by Michelle Clement, associate vice president of communications and public relations for the Louisiana Hospital Association.

Before you graduate, there are a few things you can do to put yourself in a better position to land a job.

Internships: Everyone entering the public relations profession should have at least one solid internship before graduation. If you do not have regular hours to devote to an organization, find a non profit that will allow you to do pro-bono side projects. Help them write a news release for an upcoming event or draft a public relations plan that they can implement.

Portfolio: When you are putting together your portfolio, make sure to include a variety of writing samples. An employer wants to see that you can write for a multitude of audiences and formats (e.g., newsletter, social media and news release).

Cover Letter: Use this time to perfect your cover letter. The cover letter is your opportunity to highlight your experience. Use examples of projects or work that you have completed. Point out the best parts of your personality. Are you a team player, hard worker or a strategic thinker? If so, prove it by giving more examples of how those attributes helped you to accomplish your goals. The worst resumes make bold statements about the candidate, and then do not back those statements up. Don't use clichés, and be honest.



Michelle Clement

Résumé: Of all the résumés I receive, I can narrow the pile to five candidates in just a few short minutes. I look at the organization of the overall document and the spelling first. Then, I look at experience. Proofread, proofread, proofread!

This article is a two-part series. The March edition of The PROgress Report will include more "real" working world advice and tips from a local public relations pro.

Michelle Clement also serves as the secretary for PRAL Baton Rouge.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The PROgress Report is PRSSA at LSU's monthly newsletter produced by students for students. We strive to bring you current, PR-related news, but we would love your help. Did you have a fulfilling internship experience? Want to share your social media expertise? If you are interested in contributing, please contact PR Director Erin Kenna at erinmkenna@gmail.com. It's a great way to get published and have some portfolio-worthy material. Plus, members will receive one point toward active membership.

Fall 2013 PRSSA at LSU highlights, p. 6



Letter from the President

by Paige Weber, PRSSA at LSU president

Dear members,

“Think global, act local.”

It’s a phrase commonly passed around leaders, and my newest mantra when it comes to PRSSA initiatives. In my election speech (given almost a year ago!), I told you that my biggest goal was to get our Chapter involved and recognized at the national level.

The good news is, with our five National PRSSA awards, Chapter development session and upcoming Regional Conference, we’ve accomplished that.

Now that I can cross it off my list, this semester is back and centered around you. You want more meetings? You got it; this semester there will be six instead of four.

You want more professional development opportunities outside of meetings? You got it; we’re having an e-board retreat for potential candidates, Regional Conference, agency tour and more.

Of course, we’ll still have our two community service events per month, and we’re excited to host a fundraiser that will give you the opportunity to take a nice, clean headshot for your online portfolios and LinkedIn profiles.

Again, join a committee and contact the e-board for more information on how to get involved. We want to hear YOUR opinions — we’re here to serve YOU. There are still four months left of the semester; let’s make them count!

Best,
Paige



Paige Weber

Who to follow:

@UndertheOaksLSU

@PRSSANational

@ManshipSchool

@ImPRintCommLSU

@KREWEPR

@Popmoney

@WTCNO

@CSGBR



PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

Q: What is the best piece of professional advice you’ve received?

A: Confidence. A few years ago I sat down with a very respected colleague and he stressed to me the importance of being confident at all levels of your career — during the most challenging projects as well as the seemingly insignificant tasks.

Q: What is the most important thing we (as students) should do before entering the workforce?

A: Land an internship...or a few. Internships give you a first glance into your career and can help you narrow down a specific field or company for which you would like to work. (I’m speaking from experience on this one!)

Q: What is unique about your organization?

A: WTC New Orleans was the first WTC in the world. There are now more than 300 worldwide. That’s pretty unique!

Q: How do you see public relations developing in the next 5-10 years?

A: I think public relations will develop at the pace of technology and as the public demands. According to a recent report published by Cisco, global mobile data traffic grew 70 percent in 2012, and it’s estimated that two-thirds of the world’s mobile data traffic would be video by 2017. In the next 5-10 years, public relations and marketing will likely focus more on experiences and storytelling to reach a growing mobile audience.

Jessica Steverson is Marketing Director of the World Trade Center of New Orleans. She is originally from Gretna, Louisiana and graduated from the University of Louisiana Lafayette in 2008 with a B.S. in Business Administration. Steverson is also a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in Orleans Parish, Louisiana and regularly volunteers with a number of civic organizations.



Jessica Steverson,
marketing director
of the WTCNO

PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

Q: How did you get started in your career?

A: I honestly just landed in nonprofit — I have worked in retail, education, news and business services prior to landing the marketing position at Cancer Services through contacts.

Q: What is the best piece of professional advice you've received?

A: Cultivate and maintain your relationships.

Q: Describe a typical day at work.

A: A day could contain some or all of the following: meeting with the marketing and development department to brainstorm and plan upcoming initiatives, touch base with the social workers about the client stories, thank a volunteer who's there to help answer phones, write a website story, try to fix the printer that always breaks because it was purchased on a nonprofit budget, share a foundation's fundraising event on Facebook, schedule tweets on Hootsuite, write a press release for an upcoming event, have a Beyoncé YouTube break, call a fellow nonprofit PR practitioner to get their feedback or opinion, contribute to writing a grant, fulfill a speaking engagement at a large corporation on behalf of United Way, work with Red Six on a direct mail or visual identity project, represent Cancer Services at a community event, eat some king cake a home health organization dropped off, etc.

Q: What is the coolest experience you've had while at your current job?

A: Getting a very sweet letter from a woman I met at a community event who donated after speaking with me. In her letter she shared she lost her daughter to cancer. Thought I wasn't aware of her situation when we spoke, I'm grateful to have connected with her to help her find a way to celebrate her daughter.

A Baton Rouge native, Connie Boudreaux has been with the Cancer Services marketing and development team for three years. She graduated from LSU's Manship School of Mass Communication in 2009 and immediately ignored that degree to spend a year teaching in France. After returning to Baton Rouge, she continued her illustrious career as a sales associate at Ann Taylor LOFT while working behind the scenes at WBRZ before joining the nonprofit community in Baton Rouge.



Connie Boudreaux,
marketing coordinator
of CSGBR

Q: What is your favorite part about being in the public relations field?

A: Event planning is the best part of my job, and I am so fortunate that I am able to do it for an organization that does such great things for the community. There are so many public relations components that go into event planning and as a result, I am continually embarking on new challenges.

Q: What is the most important thing we (as students) should do before entering the workforce?

A: Find an internship in the field you are interested in working in — even if it is unpaid. It will give you real world experience and will look great on your résumé. An internship can also help build key relationships that will benefit your career for years to come.

Q: What is unique about your organization?

A: Cancer Services is an amazing agency that fills a dire need. Our mission is to improve life for those living with cancer and, through targeted programs, we are able to help our community. I feel so fortunate to help fundraise for a non-profit that is doing so much good in our community.

Q: How do you see public relations developing in the next 5-10 years?

A: One of the best things about public relations is that it is constantly changing. I look back to when I was in college and cannot believe how much the field has changed. It is exciting to see how things will continue to progress.

Chrissy Dupuy is a native of New Orleans and a graduate of the Manship School of Mass Communication at LSU. She began her career at Capital Area United Way in fundraising and transitioned into the marketing department a few years later. Her passion for event planning and public relations grew at United Way and helped lead to the Development Manager position she currently holds at Cancer Services.



Chrissy Dupuy,
development coordinator
of CSGBR

Aerie says so long to Photoshop

by Ti Dillard,
Manship freshman

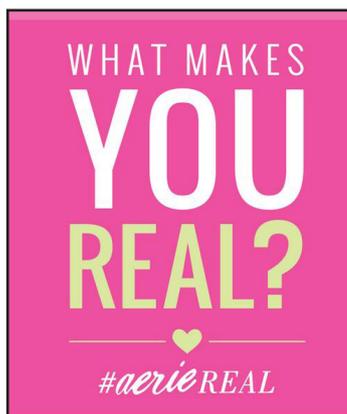


Image courtesy of the @Aerie
Twitter account

It isn't a secret that in the industry of fashion, television and music that people are airbrushed and Photoshopped in ads to achieve a certain ideal of perfection. After all, the objective of media is to control what the public is talking about.

Consequently these distributed images stay on the minds of the public.

The slender actress on the newest edition

of Cosmo has definitely been touched up more than once. But for some reason, a young woman finds herself longing to look that way. For years many people, especially young women, have complained that the use of photo-editing tools leads to feelings of insecurity.

Women often feel insecure because of the celebrities they see, and sometimes they even feel ashamed because they cannot achieve the same level of flawlessness.

Women wish to see real people instead, and Aerie is attempting to give these people what they want.

Aerie, the sister line to popular young adult apparel brand American Eagle, is known for its lingerie and intimates. Its 2014 spring campaign "Aerie Real" was just announced. Throughout the Aerie Real campaign, Aerie will no longer use

Photoshop to touch up the photos of their models.

Everything will be left the way it truly is: no more hiding tattoos or beauty marks, hollowing stomachs, or trimming thigh size. What you see is what you get. People everywhere are already rejoicing at this good news.

Some people are pleased with what Aerie is doing in hopes that perhaps this campaign will inspire other brands to stop Photoshopping.

American Eagle chief merchandising officer, Jennifer Foyle, said that this campaign was designed for women of all sizes. However some women are angered by this statement.

The Aerie models generally don't represent a variety of body weights.

Women feel the lean but still top-heavy lingerie model type has been replaced by the still

thin woman with one or two imperfections, such as a tattoo or mole.

Some are even saying that this launch was just an attempt to create some publicity for more sales, due to American Eagle's sales dropping 7 percent in the holiday season.

Whether gaining more sales was the company's only intention or not, people are definitely talking.

The Aerie Real Campaign was launched in January 2014 and uses the #AerieReal hashtag.

Ti Dillard is a freshman PRSSA at LSU member. She serves on the communication committee.

Follow her on Twitter (@rawrtirex) to express thoughts about the campaign.

Simple Stewardship

by Darby Isham, Manship senior

The public relations industry is becoming more about who you know rather than what you know. Therefore, one of the best practices we as future public relations professionals should begin is being grateful.

To make a memorable impression, we need to go above and beyond. This does not always necessarily include grand gestures, but the details matter. Rather than sending an email that takes two seconds, handwrite a thank you note. It is much more personal than typing two sentences and pressing send. The recipient will be touched by the thoughtful act. The following are a few tips on writing the perfect thank you note.

Begin first with your salutation. "Dear" is most common and can be used both formally and informally. Follow with the recipient's title and surname (Dr., Mr., Mrs., or Ms.). If the marital status of a woman is irrelevant or unknown, use Ms. Place a comma then begin the body of your appreciation.

The next step in writing a thank you letter is the body. I have made a template in order to keep my thank you notes similar and easy to write.



Example of a thank you note
courtesy of Darby Isham

First express gratitude for the gift or service. Then discuss how the gift is used or how the service helped you.

Next, reference the past and/or allude to the future. (If thanking for an interview, you may mention something that was said in the interview).

Last, express your appreciation once more. For instance, "Thank you so much for allowing me to interview you."

The closing of your thank you note depends on the relationship and the reasoning. If you are writing a thank

you note to your grandmother, it is appropriate to sign "Love, [Your Name]." But if you are writing to a professional for an interview, Best or Sincerely is more suitable.

It is important to remember that professional relationships are formed through interpersonal connections. Take the extra time to handwrite a thank you note, and your effort will not go unnoticed.

Follow Darby on Twitter (@darby_isham) to learn more about her event planning aspirations.

PRSSA Star Chapter Award Requirements:

One of our initiatives this year is to win the PRSSA National Star Chapter Award. We won the award at the 2011 and 2013 PRSSA National Conference and plan to win it again in 2014. We would appreciate your help in achieving this goal.

In order to win the award, Chapters must complete eight out of the 10 criteria and submit an application to PRSSA Nationals:

1. ~~Initiate and complete at least one community service project.~~
2. Strengthen your relationship with your PRSA sponsor Chapter.
3. Give attention to ethics in at least one Chapter meeting.
4. ~~Confirm that at least one Chapter member applies for an individual National PRSSA scholarship or award.~~
5. ~~Confirm that your Chapter applied for at least one national PRSSA award.~~
6. Conduct a high school outreach session and/or promote Affiliate membership to a nearby community college.
7. ~~Confirm attendance by at least one Chapter member at National Conference, National Assembly, a Regional Conference or Leadership Rally.~~
8. Gain positive attention for your Chapter in at least one campus or community publication or other media.
9. ~~Extend an invitation to students/faculty from other disciplines to attend at least one Chapter meeting.~~
10. Confirm that at least 10 percent of your graduating seniors applied for PRSA Associate Membership.

Leading Women in Louisiana

by Andrea Pillaro, Manship senior



Image courtesy of the LABI website

Last semester I was very lucky to make a personal connection with my PR writing teacher, Kristi Williams, which led to an internship working with her at the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI).

LABI is the largest business-lobbying group in Louisiana, representing more than 2,500 members across the state.

I knew the internship would not be a walk in the park, but they really put me through the wringer during my first week, the week of LABI's 2014 Annual Meeting.

The meeting hosted several dynamic speakers including Dr. Charles Krauthammer, FOX News analyst and New York Times best seller. For the first time in LABI history, the organization also hosted a panel focused solely on women.

The panel featured the 2013 LABI chair, Maura Donahue, as the moderator. Sandra Woodley, University of Louisiana System President; Sonia Perez, AT&T Louisiana President; Ann Duplessis, Louisiana Federation for Children President and Maya Bennett, East Baton Rouge Public School Educator were the featured panelists.

The panelists discussed what women's roles would be in education, politics and the workforce as Louisiana's economy continues to grow. The panel was especially important in the wake of the Center for American Progress's report "The State of

Women in America" that found our state the worst for American women along with the recent investments in the economic future of Louisiana by IBM and other major corporations.

The women shared how they made their way through school, family and work to get to the positions they have today.

Their stories were inspiring and funny. Sandra Woodley became the UL System President after 10 years in undergrad while working and raising two children. Ann Duplessis decided to run for state legislature after an article in *The Advocate* stated she was going to run when she really just warned a colleague that she would campaign for his spot if he did not shape up.

The piece of advice that resonated the most with me came from Sandra Woodley.

"Be honest with yourself. Be honest about what you are good at and also about what you need to work on."

Woodley's words made a lasting impression on me because this is something that we as students need to remember. This is our time to grow, learn and make mistakes. Being dishonest about our skills will only hurt us in the long run.

I know that my writing skills still need developing, so I found a Manship course that will help me improve: Introduction to Journalism. This semester, I advise my fellow PRSSA at LSU members to talk to the people around you and ask them about what they believe you are good at and what you need to improve on.

No matter what, do something about it. Challenge yourself this semester. It is scary but it will be worth it when you get awesome opportunities because of all of the hard work you have done.

Andrea Pillaro (@AndreaPillaro) is a senior PRSSA at LSU member.



Photo courtesy of PRSSA at LSU's Instagram account (@prsssalsu)

As service director for PRSSA, I started with one initial idea: to get our members more passionate about their service. In my election speech, I spoke about getting our hands dirty and becoming actively involved in our community.

Since then, PRSSA at LSU has doubled the amount of service events we have participated in.

PRSSA has developed a new service goal for our organization. We planned two service events each month as opposed to just one. The goal of the new initiative was to allow PRSSA members to have two service events to choose from: one on campus and one off campus.

The ones on campus allow our members easy access to serving their immediate community — LSU.

For example, we donated cans to the LSU Food Pantry in November, which directly benefitted students without food or without food security.

The service events off campus allow members to reach outside of LSU into the Baton Rouge community.

For example, members visited the Southside Assisted Living and Retirement Center in October to play bingo.

By going outside of our immediate reach, we hope to make PRSSA at LSU a familiar name in the Baton Rouge area.

This semester we hope to volunteer

at events such as Spring Greening Day and the March of Dimes. We will also be volunteering closer to home by creating Valentine's Day cards for Our Lady of the Lake Hospital and hosting Diversity Day, which will be hosted on February 18 throughout the LSU campus.

The service events are scheduled to allow PRSSA at LSU the opportunity to serve and better both the LSU and the Baton Rouge communities. We hope to see this initiative continue to grow throughout this semester and in future semesters.

My personal goal as service director is to emphasize the importance of stewardship, especially as growing professionals. I hope participation continues to increase, and we can promise to provide valuable philanthropic outreach efforts to both LSU and Baton Rouge.

Malena serves as the PRSSA at LSU Service Director. To become involved with service, email mmore16@lsu.edu

FALL 2013 IN REVIEW



Increased membership by 20 percent



Hosted a 5K and a jewelry fundraiser to cover all PRSSANC costs

Published in PRSSA National Chapter News four times



Won five national awards at PRSSA National Conference



Participated in four community service events



Hosted four speakers and a business etiquette dinner throughout the semester

Opportunities await around each corner in PR

by Lexi Verret, Manship junior



Last semester in my public relations research class, we were required to conduct an informational interview with a public relations professional.

The assignment was to help us network and learn more about the PR profession.

I was assigned to a professional at Cancer Services of Greater Baton Rouge, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing emotional

and tangible support to those living with cancer.

Similar to anyone who is conducting his or her first informational interview, I was extremely nervous. I wanted to be professional but also personable and conversational.

I figured the best thing to do was to be myself and relax. Once I did that, the interview ended up being more beneficial than I expected. I had a great connection with my interviewee, and I was even offered an internship!

One thing I learned through this informational interview is that while it is extremely important to have the skills to do the job you are interviewing for, it is also just as important to be personable.

My interviewee said when she is hiring she focuses on the personality of the job candidate. She said while she does want someone who is

equipped, she also wants someone who is open, friendly and genuine.

When on an interview don't be afraid to let your personality show a little bit while remaining professional. If you show some of your personal side it will help you make a better connection. If you are passionate about the organization or company, show it. Employers want someone who will genuinely care about the work they will do.

Finally, be open to all possibilities the internship will offer. While you may not be doing exactly what you want, it is all leading up to bigger and better things.

Lexi Verret serves on the design team for ImPRint Communications. She can be reached at lverre4@tigers.lsu.edu or by interacting with her on Twitter (@LexiVerret).

ACTIVE POINT SYSTEM

To be considered an active member of PRSSA, dues must be paid and five points must be earned by the end of the semester. Active members are eligible to run for officer positions and are able to receive awards given at the end of each semester. Active members will also have access to PRSSA National Conference funds and in-state & out-of-state agency tours. Each activity is worth one point:

- Attended a business meeting;
- Participated in a volunteer effort or service project;
- Involved in affiliated student-run firm, ImPRint Communications;
- Involved in a committee formed by the executive board;
- Assisted in fundraising for PRSSA;
- Attended a PRSSA workshop or special event;
- Wrote an article for PRSSA at LSU's or PRSSA National's newsletter and/or blog; and
- Attended PRSSA National Events, including National Conference, Regional Conference or National Assembly.

*Active status is the first of three levels for members. PRo Member requires two community service events, one fundraising event and attendance of half of the business meetings. Star Member requires two community service events, two fundraising events, one blog post and attendance of all business meetings.

FIND AN INTERNSHIP

PRSSA at LSU wants to help you find the perfect internship. We have a variety of postings listed on the website, and companies reach out to us each day for prospective interns.

To find available internships on prssalsu.com, use the drop-down "Membership" menu and click "Internships." Please contact an e-board member for the login information. Remember, these internships are available only to you as PRSSA at LSU members.

PRSSA National also provides internship listings within its Internship Center (prssa.org/career/internships). Take the opportunity to research your options and find the perfect internship.

The screenshot shows the PRSSA Internship Center interface. At the top, it says "PRSSA Internship Center" and "An Exclusive Benefit of PRSSA Membership". Below that, it states "In June 2013 PRSSA launched the redesigned Internship Center, making it easier than ever for PRSSA members to find and apply for internships across the country." The main content is titled "Instructions" and lists six steps: 1. Visit the PRSSA Internship Center website (http://www.prssa.org/internships); 2. Click on "Member Login"; 3. Login with your MyPRSSA username and password; 4. You're logged in. Click "search internships" to begin browsing the internship listings; 5. Click "upload resume" to share your resume with employers around the country; 6. Graduating soon? Click "tell the PRSSA jobcenter" to search for entry level jobs. There is also an "IMPORTANT NOTES" section and a "For More Information" section at the bottom.

Photo courtesy of PRSSA National

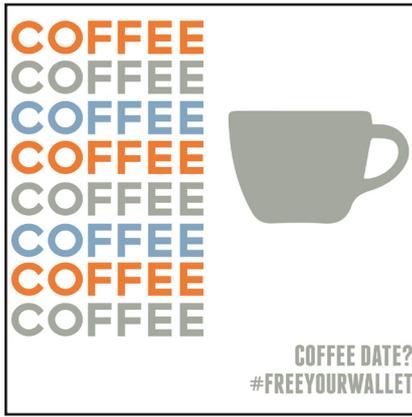


Image provided by KREWE Public Relations

When was the last time you forgot to pay someone back? I still owe Emily Beck money for Jimmy John's she so generously bought for me last week.

I'm asking you to air your dirty laundry. What I am asking, though, is for you to consider a world where paying people back doesn't include the hassle of writing a check or getting money out of the ATM.

If you're thinking, "That already exists. It's called _____ (insert name of Person to Person (P2P) payment service here) then you're two steps ahead of me.

When we were given the project brief for the 2014 Bateman Competition, I was a bit hesitant. Finally, the wheels began to turn, and creative ideas would flow from our team members with the help of Google Hangout and coffee.

We want to make our client, Popmoney®, a household P2P name. We want you to share what you've learned about the company with your friends, your parents, your landlord, your organization, and more.

Gone are the days when paying someone back took serious effort. Welcome to the world of technology where your phone is your bank.

Easily pay organization dues, easily pay your friend back for the coffee they picked up the other day, or easily split the cost for your Spring Break condo in Gulf Shores with your friends.

More than anything, we want you to free your wallet. We want you to

leave behind the tangibles and reach for convenience. We want you to discover a new form of social payment where you can add messages to each transaction. We want Popmoney to be your go-to when you pay dues and rent — all you need is a phone number or an email address.

We want you to join us as the members of PRSSA at LSU. We want your support as we embark on a journey in a national case study competition.

We want your input, we want your feedback, we want your cheers, and we want your live-tweeting. We want to see #FreeYourWallet trending in Baton Rouge.

Are you ready to help us represent the University we all love in a national competition? Are you ready to #FreeYourWallet?

Keep up with the campaign by following @KREWEPR on Twitter and Instagram and liking KREWE Public Relations on Facebook.

ImPRint Communications Happenings

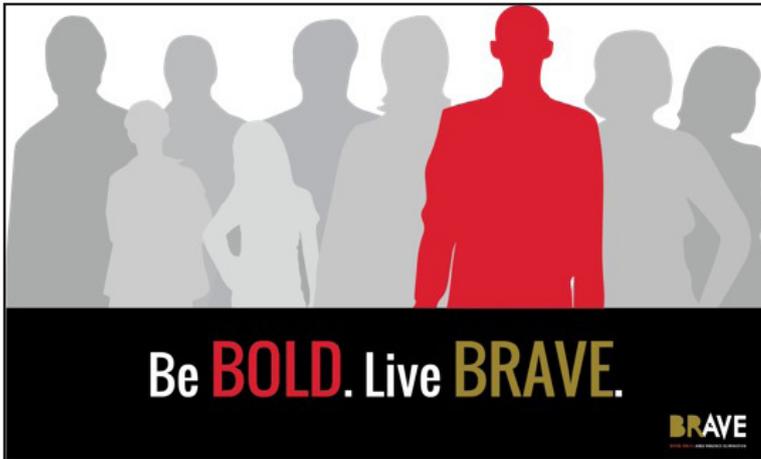


Photo courtesy of ImPRint Communications

After a nice winter break, ImPRint Communications is ready for an exciting spring semester. With much client work to be done, firm members are already back in action. Some of the bigger projects they are already working on is the BRAVE spring 2014 campaign, PRSSA's career portraits fundraiser and the university social media policy.

The spring 2014 campaign for BRAVE, the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination program, is "Be Bold. Live BRAVE." Our campaign graphic will be seen on a billboard near you soon!

In addition, the firm is in the process of being nationally affiliated with PRSSA.

Interested in becoming a part of the firm and gaining some valuable, hands-on

experience?

Stay around after the meeting to pick up an application. Applications for new firm members will be due on Monday, Feb. 10 at 4:30 p.m. to Elizabeth on the second floor of the Journalism Building.

#GeauxImPRint!

- Megan Gibbs and Cyone Batiste
ImPRint Firm Directors

Do you have ideas or suggestions for potential firm clients?
Please contact the firm directors at imprintcommlsu@gmail.com.

Hollywood Under the Oaks

Did you miss out on PRSSA National Conference in Philadelphia but still want a chance to develop professionally?

Did you see Channing Tatum filming on campus and realize Louisiana is the "Hollywood of the South"?

PRSSA is bringing the conference to you this time. Hollywood Under the Oaks is the official PRSSA 2014 Region 5 Conference and will take place March 21-23 in the Journalism Building.

It will cover public relations in the entertainment industry — from cuisine to fashion, gaming, personal branding and more.

Register by March 1 for a free T-shirt. The cost for PRSSA members is a discounted \$50. Hurry before it sells out!

hollywoodundertheoaks.com
[@UnderTheOaksLSU](https://twitter.com/UnderTheOaksLSU)

PRSSA National Assembly

By: Mallory Richardson, former PRSSA at LSU president



Mallory Richardson
PRSSA National
Publications
Editor in Chief

The PRSSA 2014 National Assembly is coming up in March in Charleston, S.C. The event is held each year for Chapters to vote on new bylaws and a new National Committee. PRSSA at LSU is sending a delegate to represent our Chapter, so we decided to catch up with Immediate Past

President Mallory Richardson to see what it is all about.

Q. What is your position on National Committee?

A. I serve as the 2013-2014 publications editor in chief.

Q. What exactly do you do?

A. It is my job to manage PRSSA's tri-annual, online newspaper, FORUM, and PRSSA's blog, Progressions. I find writers and bloggers, set deadlines and monitor analytics for both publications.

I also work very closely with Ben Butler, vice president of public relations, to maximize readership of FORUM and Progressions using social media strategies. In addition, I have a staff made up of PRSSA at LSU members who help me create and publish FORUM: Emily Herrington, managing editor;

Carli Thibodeaux, layout editor; Elise Bernard, copyeditor; and Christina Riviere, photo editor.

Q. What is it like being on National Committee?

A. It's a wonderful feeling knowing that you can serve as a resource to 11,000+ Chapter members from across the U.S. I love being able to learn from and give back to my fellow public relations peers, including the nine other members of the National Committee.

We all get along great and have a fun time collaborating with each other on projects, even though we're on opposite sides of the country. It can sometimes be difficult to balance my duties with an internship, school and other extracurriculars, but this experience has challenged me and made me a better public relations pre-professional.

Q. How has being on National Committee helped you grow professionally?

A. It really comes down to the scope of the work and the people I've met along the way. Serving a nation-wide, nonprofit organization forced me to rewire my brain and be more strategic in everything I do. I've also drastically improved my writing, editing, and time-management and collaboration skills.

Because you're working with PRSSA headquarters in New York City, as well as Committee members in different time zones, you learn to be patient, as well as act and adapt quickly.

I've also gotten to meet many talented

professionals through networking and national PRSSA events. That has been one of the coolest perks to being on National Committee.

Q. Any thoughts on your last semester in PRSSA?

A. It's a very strange feeling! I can clearly remember attending my first PRSSA meeting as a freshman and how excited I was to learn about my major. While I'm sad this is my last semester in PRSSA, I'm looking forward to joining PRSA and staying in touch with my PRSSA friends. Who knows? We could all end up working together someday.

Q. What is your best advice for the soon-to-be incoming National Committee members?

A. Be innovative and passionate, work hard, have a positive attitude and collaborate with others on Committee. It'll go by really fast, so cherish the experience and don't forget to stay in touch with the people you met and worked with. You never know when you might need their help down the road.

Q. How can PRSSA at LSU members follow along?

A. Members should follow along by checking PRSSA National's social media for the final results. You can also check the PRSSA at LSU blog afterward — the delegate will update it as soon as they get back!

Follow Mallory on Twitter (@malrich10) to learn more about PRSSA National Committee

Internships lead to experience



Photo from a styled shoot Tori helped stage; photo courtesy of Ashleigh Jayne Photography

Last April, a professor informed me of an opportunity to work as an intern for a local wedding and event planner, Angela Marie Events. I was set on a future in event planning and jumped at the chance to meet with her.

Angela Marie was just beginning to build up a clientele base in Baton Rouge and realized she needed an intern to help with events and social media. I was eager as a freshman to get as much experience as I could, and the opportunity turned out to be a great learning experience for me.

I began doing write-ups of each event and submitting them to various blogs in hopes of getting exposure for Angela Marie Events. To my surprise, no one was interested. After several rejections from noteworthy

wedding and party blogs, we decided to focus on our events and try to promote the business via social media. Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and word of mouth became our biggest forms of advertisement.

By the time summer rolled around, we were nearly booked for the fall season. During the fall semester my weekends were filled with weddings, photo shoots and trips out of town.

I assisted with setting up and coordinating some of the most beautiful and unique weddings I've ever seen. I cut a lot of wedding cake and poured many glasses of champagne. I learned my way around Baton Rouge by running downtown for flowers, over to Jefferson for invitations and to Perkins Rowe to pick up lunch for the bride on her big day.

However, the experience I gained was not limited to weddings. I met so many amazing people and networked more than I could have ever imagined. I was able to see firsthand the impact that social media can have on reaching an audience.

I sharpened my creative skills and, with Angela Marie's guidance, developed an eye for design. I was even given the opportunity to assist Angela Marie in styling a Southern

By: Tori Ward, Manship sophomore

Living photo shoot at Nottoway Plantation.

All of these experiences made me realize one very important thing: I did not want to be in the wedding and event planning business.

I had an incredible time in my internship, but it isn't what I want to do for the rest of my life, and that is perfectly fine.

An internship in no way means you are locked into that profession; it is simply an experience. It's an experience to see if that type of work is what you could possibly be passionate about for the rest of your life.

That is why I encourage everyone I know to gain those experiences early on. Experiences are what we learn from, and they allow us to shape our ideas and hopes for the future. My advice to all public relations students is to experience an internship. You could end up discovering your passion, or you could end up just having fun and moving on to your next experience. Either way, you will never regret gaining a life experience.

Follow Tori (@tori_ward28) to learn more about her internships.

