

A PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA AT LSU PUBLICATION

## Important Dates:

**Sept. 6:** Sports PR

**Sept. 17:** PRSSA  
National Conference  
Registration deadline

**Sept. 20:** Diversity and  
Special Elections

**Oct. 4:** Social Media  
Management and Advising  
Night

**Oct. 12-16:** PRSSA  
National Conference in San  
Francisco, Calif.!

**Oct. 25:** Travel/Tourism PR  
and dues deadline

**Nov. 15:** Political PR

## Letter from the President

Hello members!

On behalf of the 2012-2013 PRSSA at LSU Executive Board, I would like to welcome you to the first meeting of the Fall 2012 semester. Whether you're a new or a returning member, we have many opportunities for you to better yourself as a pre-professional and gain valuable information about the public relations industry.

PRSSA is a great way to network with peers and public relations professionals in the community. But remember, what you give to PRSSA is what you will get out of it. Being a part of PRSSA looks impressive on a resume, but it looks even more impressive if you were involved or held a leadership role. We encourage all of you to join one of our seven committees, apply to be a part of our student-run firm, PReStige, or submit an article to be published in our newsletter, The PROgress Report.

We implemented a "PRSSA Evaluation Survey" at the end of the Spring 2012 semester to get some feedback from members. Two main trends prevailed: 1) Members felt little sense of unity/belonging within the organization; and 2) Members wanted more community service initiatives. In order to meet your needs, we improved upon our chapter's programming. New programs include Freshman/Senior Mentorship, Advising Nights and a youth-themed community service approach titled "PRotecting Future Tigers." We will also continue our speaker series and professional development sessions.

If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns, feel free to contact me or any of the other Executive Board members. We all look forward to meeting and working with you this year!

Best,  
Mallory Richardson

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The PROgress Report is PRSSA at LSU's revamped, 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 Paige Weber at [prssalsu@gmail.com](mailto:prssalsu@gmail.com). It's a great way to get published and have some portfolio-worthy material. Plus, members will receive 1 point toward their active membership. Thanks!



# Let's talk 'diversity'

by Tran Tran

**Editor's Note:** To help with the diversity initiatives, contact Tran at [ttra112@lsu.edu](mailto:ttra112@lsu.edu).

Whether you realize it or not, diversity is something we encounter everyday, especially in school.

The University, the Manship School and the PRSSA National Committee all commit to teach diversity initiatives in their given professional fields. Aligning ourselves with these motives, PRSSA at LSU is actively developing and pursuing our own diversity efforts.

But what exactly does "diversity" mean?

The word "diversity" is often associated with race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. While these categories span a broad spectrum of differences among individuals, are they all the aspects of diversity?

The answer can be found within the very question: Being "diverse" is at the core; it's being different.

Differences that distinguish one person to another go beyond characteristics that can be observed like those identified above. They also include other aspects like age, religion, education and geography, among many others. This means in a group setting, every

person — every member in our Chapter — represents and contributes a different part into the diversity of the group. And to promote diversity is to celebrate all of these differences and encourage collaboration among them.

PRSSA at LSU aims to do this through our several diversity initiatives this year, which are:

- Creating a Diversity Committee that will work on the following initiatives;
- Analyzing the existing diversity within our current membership;
- Promoting diversity in recruiting new members;
- Organizing a membership meeting on diversity;
- Dedicating a section of the Chapter's monthly newsletter to discuss diversity;
- Carrying out case studies focusing on diversity and include findings in the newsletter's diversity section;
- Starting an open forum on the Chapter's blog for continued diversity discussions among members.

As of today, the Chapter has started on two of our initiatives, with a membership survey sent out and an upcoming meeting where we will discuss diversity. The meeting, scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 20, will welcome two special guests who are dedicated to diversity: Brandi Boatner, external relations professional at IBM and PRSA's Diversity Committee Leadership vice chair; and our very own Manship School Dean, Jerry Ceppos. We urge members to join us in this meeting.

Moreover, we urge you to join us in conversations — and in actions — to celebrate and promote diversity within our Chapter! Remember, it is all about the differences that make someone an individual: What is the characteristic that distinguishes you from everyone else? What does "diversity" mean to you? What else can PRSSA at LSU do to promote these differences?

Sound off your opinions on our blog and website, [prssalsu.com](http://prssalsu.com), or our Facebook page "PRSSA at LSU"!

## PRestige

PRestige is a student-run public relations firm, affiliated with PRSSA at LSU. PRestige is dedicated to providing clients with thorough PR services and solutions. It aims to develop the future leaders of the industry by giving students hands-on experience while building solid relationships and credibility with organizations in the community. To be a member of PRestige, you must fill out and return the application packet and pay the necessary dues for PRSSA.

**For more information, contact our co-directors:**

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**Visit our website at**  
[www.prssalsu.com/prestige](http://www.prssalsu.com/prestige).

## POINT SYSTEM

To be considered an active member of PRSSA, dues must be paid and 5 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 semester and/or year. 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:

- Attending a business meeting
- Participating in a volunteer effort or service project
- Involvement in affiliated student-run firm, PRestige
- Involvement in a committee formed by the Executive Board
- Assistance in fundraising for PRSSA
- Attending a PRSSA workshop or special event
- Writing an article for PRSSA at LSU's or PRSSA National's newsletter and/or blog
- Attending PRSSA National Events, including National Conference, Regional Conference or National Assembly

**Dennis Rogers**  
Director of Basketball Communications  
New Orleans Hornets



**Q: What is the best piece of professional advice you have received?**

**A:** To get to know as many people in the industry you can, volunteer and never be afraid to introduce yourself to people in person or via email.

**Q: What is your favorite part about being in the PR field?**

**A:** The fast-paced lifestyle and the opportunities to better people's life.

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

**A:** I have been fortunate enough in just this summer to go to the Olympics and to see Anthony Davis and Austin Rivers get drafted in NYC and be the first person to welcome them to the team. I was also fortunate to be with Chris Paul for six and a half years and be with him through every step of his development into the best point guard in the NBA.

*Dennis Rogers is originally from San Antonio. He went to college at SMU in Dallas majoring in PR. Rogers started as an intern for the New Orleans Hornets where he grew through the company. He has now worked for the Hornets for the past 10 seasons.*

## PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

**Brandi Boatner**  
Digital Experience Manager  
IBM Global Technology Services



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

**A:** Master writing skills before entering the workforce. If you are not a good writer — not a decent writer, a good writer — PR is not the place for you. Really use your time in school to strengthen those skills and prepare to wow your future employer.

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

**A:** One of the coolest experiences I've had at IBM is traveling to Anchorage, Alaska for an executive conference. Having gone to graduate school in Hawaii, I've always wanted to go to Alaska. What was so great about the trip was not only the beautiful scenery but the IBM event went very well and allowed me to meet and network with amazing professionals. Additionally, I was also able to attend the PRSA Alaska meeting and meet my PR colleagues from the area. Overall, it was a very cool experience.

*Brandi Boatner is the Digital Experience Manager for IBM's Global Technology Services in New York City. In this role, her responsibilities include working to develop and drive the implementation of a C-level facing digital experience and engagement model to enhance the way IBM engages with CXOs in the digital world.*

## PRSSA Star Chapter Award Requirements:

One of our initiatives this year is to win the PRSSA National Star Chapter Award. We won the award last year at the 2011 PRSSA National Conference and plan to win it again in 2013. We would appreciate your help in achieving this goal! In order to win the award, Chapters must complete 8 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. Implement at least one National initiative.
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.

## International Insight



by Hailey Vincent

This summer, I was given the opportunity to study abroad in France with LSU in Paris. During the trip, Manship professor Lance Porter introduced me, and a handful of students, to the awe-inspiring Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, where “creatives” from all around the globe discuss creative thinking tactics and share ideas with one another. Cannes, located on the southern coast of France, was a wonderful backdrop for a festival so lively and engaging.

The festival consisted of workshops, seminars and forums for industry professionals and students alike. The diversity of the presentations, each hosted by a different business from a different country, gave me a better understanding of how cultures (that once seemed so far away) communicate.

One workshop sponsored by the Arnell Group that particularly struck a cord with me was titled “Freshing Your Brand: Reinvigorating Dusty Brands in Social Times.” It emphasized the importance of maintaining brand relevancy in an ever-changing market. There was one professional in the audience who owned a 100-year-old family business. Taking advantage of the opportunity, he sought help from workshop coordinators and a group of approximately 10 professionals and students who instantaneously came up with a strategic plan to ‘fresh’ his brand. I realized that the practices discussed in the workshop proved extremely useful in the field of public relations.

After the festival, I left with a notebook full of information and a desire to communicate with cultures other than my own. The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity provoked inspiration that will last a lifetime. I hope that I am one day able to attend as a professional.



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