

PRSA Voice

The "Voice" of the Memphis Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America

www.prsamemphis.org

February 2005

Letter from the President

Hello PRSA Members,

Happy March to you all! Time is passing so quickly – the first quarter of my presidency is nearly complete. We have so much to accomplish this year and I'd like to take a moment to discuss a few key issues with you.

Our board of directors and committee chairs will be meeting the morning of March 9th for a retreat. We will be discussing ways to improve what we do as a chapter and making future plans for not only this year, but also years to come. It has been a while since we as a board have come together to plan and streamline, and I hope this meeting will result in some great goals and objectives so that our members can get the most out of membership in PRSA. Next month's PRSA Voice will bring you up to speed on our progress.

On another note, we still need committee chairs for a few committees. We are close to being fully staffed with chairpersons, but very few committee chairs have committee members. These posts are challenging to chair with committee members but extremely difficult without any assistance. If you are new to PRSA, please consider joining a committee. It is the best way to network and it greatly develops your public relations skills outside of your job. If you are a seasoned member of our chapter and have been inactive for some time, this is a great way to get back into the swing of things. And if you are accredited (APR), it's a great way to earn points toward maintaining your accreditation.

The board strives to provide all members with beneficial programs and events, but we could do a much better job if more members got involved in the chapter other than attending monthly luncheons. We want to hear from you. We want to know what you want from your membership. There is no better way to communicate your needs than to get involved in a committee. We'd love to have your expertise!

We have an exciting guest speaker on March 9. We will welcome Mayor W. W. Herenton to our podium. I expect we will also have media in attendance and I encourage everyone who has reserved a spot to attend, as we will be full. If you cannot attend, please cancel your reservation as soon as possible so we can open space for those on our waiting list. Thank you to Daphne Thomas who helped our programs chair Greg Broy to confirm this guest speaker.

I look forward to seeing all of you on Wednesday, March 9th. And, I look forward to what's to come as your president.

Stephanie Wilson Nichols, APR
President, Memphis Chapter
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EVER SO BRIEFLY...

Public Forum

The Memphis News Bureau, a source of positive news about Memphis and the Mid-South, invites all PRSA members to let their opinions be heard in its public forum at www.memphisnewsbureau.com. Each month, there will be a new topic to weigh in on.

Helping Out

At the last Board Meeting, we had a speaker talk to us regarding Memphis Works. The organization provides occupational skills training and job placement services for individuals who are under-employed, unemployed, or who have disabilities. They would like for everyone to consider hiring one of their graduates, if you have an opening. This is an opportunity to help someone or maybe even change a life. Contact Ken Paxton @ 266-0985 or Veronica McKinney @ 526-3404

Committee Position Available

The Memphis Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America has an open Committee Chair position that we would like to fill. Please consider becoming more involved in the Chapter and serve as a committee chair. The open position for our Historian. We have recently filled Sponsorship and Diversity and Board Bank. Thank you to all who volunteered to serve.

If you would like to serve on the committee, please contact Stephanie Nichols.

Benefits you may not know about

Being a member of PRSA is more than just attending monthly luncheons, hearing from speakers and attending professional development seminars. While those things are important, there's a lot more to being a member of PRSA. For example, Job Net, open only to PRSA members, can assist you in finding a new position or help you find the talent you need to fill that job opening in your department. And both members and visitors can leave their resumes on a table for potential employers to pick up. PRSA National also has several other member benefits, including:

- Liability insurance
- Professional Resource Center
- Career tools
- Discounts for office supplies
- Discounts for national teleseminars

If you know someone who may be interested in joining PRSA, contact Chapter Coordinator Samantha Jernigan at sj@midsouth.rr.com or Chris Stanley, VP of Membership at 528-4557 or cstanley@mlgw.org.

The New PRSA Professional Resource Center

by Hyun Cho with Dr. Rick Fischer

The PRSA Resource Center is great new tool for professionals who are looking for short articles and brief summaries with a heavy focus on strategies and tactics of PR campaigns. If you are looking for books, journals or news stories, you're looking in the wrong place. Case studies? Yes, you can find them here, but you can also find them at www.silveranvil.org. Both are the same two-page summaries. So what are the benefits of PRSA Professional Resource Center?

The resource center benefits members who are facing a mental block for campaign ideas. I recommend it for those who are looking to improve a dull, overdone campaign and for those who need to create a fresh, unique approach. In addition, I recommend it for those who keep up with the latest trends on the PR industry.

The articles are from three main sources—*Silver Anvil*, *Public Relations Tactics*, and *Public Relations Strategist*. The articles are approximately two to five pages in length. They have archives from 1997 to the most current issues of the three publications. The content includes helpful hints on how to make strategies and tactics work. In addition, some articles present creative and innovative ways to carry out tasks. Due to the timeliness of the articles, it is a great resource for practitioners who are continually updating and upgrading their strategies and tactics. However, don't look to find any journals or books.

I was working a research paper and I thought I would try the resource center to help me develop a good basis for my situation analysis. In my search, I found little to help me. Without the research to support the campaign, it made me question whether the success of their campaign strategies and tactics are reliable. I knew I couldn't use it to make a strong argument. I'll let *you* decide for yourself.

How to Use It

Go to <https://members.prsa.org/ScriptContent/Index.cfm>. Enter the site you and login with your PRSA ID number and password.

On the left hand column, click on "PRC Search *NEW*." Before you start, read over the instructions of how to use the search engine.

Now click on the "Click here to search." This will take you to the search window (Figure 1).

Try not to make your searches too narrow. I tried putting in "Integrated Communication" as practice area and "Entertainment" as industry with all communication channels selected and found no queries.

My advice is this: pick either a practice area *or* an industry, whichever is more important for the information you are searching. If you must, pick a communication channel. Don't search with word or phrase unless the term is very broad such as "publicity." You won't have much luck otherwise.

Happy Searching!

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Vox Entries are in! Judges come to Memphis

The 2005 Vox entries are in! Entry take-in took place this week at the Memphis Public Library, and the chapter received many great entries again this year. The Vox committee appreciates everyone who submitted their best PR work.

This year's entry judging will be done a little differently. The Vox committee has asked several PR professionals to come to Memphis and judge the awards. The committee administered a PRSA membership survey and held a focus group late last year to get feedback on last year's Vox Awards and find out what could be done to make Vox better. Overwhelmingly, chapter membership asked for the committee to change the way the Vox entries are judged. As a result, seasoned PR professionals from Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee will meet this month at the Veranda Hotel at the Grand Casino in Tunica, Miss. to judge the awards. Each judge will be announced at the Vox Gala and their bios will be printed in the Vox Gala program.

The Vox Gala is scheduled for Friday, April 22 at the Racquet Club of Memphis, 5111 Sanderlin Avenue. Back from popular demand will be the Vox All-Stars to crank out rock's greatest hits again this year. Vox committee chair Amy Thomas says that she plans for it to be a fun-filled event again this year.

The Vox Awards and Gala is the primary fundraising event for our PRSA chapter each year. We hope to see you

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