

THE PROGRESS REPORT

A PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA AT LSU PUBLICATION

Important Dates:

March 7: Entertainment PR
Location: Holliday Forum

March 21: Officer elections
and Advising night
Location: Coates 143

March 25: Webinar: How to
Create a Social Media Plan
Location: Curet Room

April 11: Corporate PR
Location: Lockett 10

April 18: Webinar: How to
Grow Word-of-Mouth Cam-
paigns
Location: Curet Room

April 19-21: PRSSA Region
5 Conference at Loyola
University New Orleans

April 25: Nonprofit PR
Location: Coates 143

***All meetings will begin
at 6 p.m.**

Girl Power!

*March is Women's History Month; Let's spotlight
influential women of the industry*

by **Emily Beck**

Who Runs PR?

March is a month to look back on all the women in history who have influenced us in some way, shape or form. I decided to take a different approach; I looked at the women who are making an impact in the world of public relations today.

It's no surprise that women have made their mark in PR. Regardless of what aspect of PR you look at, you will likely see a woman at the junior and mid-levels of an agency, company, small organization, etc. However, there is still the ongoing question of whether the female-to-male ratio has changed or will change at higher ranks.

PR firm, The Powell Group, profiled some of the top and most

see **WOMEN**, p. 5

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. 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!

Meet the speaker and read advice from a PRSSA at LSU alumnus, p. 2, 3



Geaux for a Good Time: PRSSA Region 5 Conference

Who: Any paid PRSSA member

What: “Geaux for a Good Time” Region 5 Conference

When: April 19-20; Apply by April 1

Where: Loyola University New Orleans

Cost: \$50 registration fee

More Info: Visit [facebook.com/geaux-foragoodtime](https://www.facebook.com/geaux-foragoodtime) for updates and the registration form.

Coming up in Community Service

March

Cajun Classic Wheelchair Tennis Tournament

When:

Wednesday, March 20 - Sunday, March 24

Shifts:

7 a.m.-11 a.m., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., 4 p.m.-8 p.m.

More info:

Sign up at:

<https://hpta.wufoo.com/forms/r7p4w7>

April

March for Babies 5K

When:

Saturday, April 27 at 7:30 a.m.

More info:

Members have the options of volunteering the day of the event or volunteering in the main offices in the weeks prior to the event.

Members receive one point toward active membership for each community service opportunity they participate in.

Advice from alumni: Facing ethical dilemmas

by Joe Coussan

The landscape of public relations is incredible in size. There are many roles in the PR profession, and as a field that casts such a wide net, it's not difficult to come across situations that challenge your personal ethics. In fact, some roles work directly in dealing with ethical, or in some cases, un-ethical, situations.

With my work in both PepsiCo and Louisiana Economic Development, I have been fortunate to not face many situations that make me uncomfortable or challenge my personal ethics.

There were a few occasions that gave me pause. In those times, I had to take a moment to consider, evaluate and

confirm my personal beliefs. Sometimes, there are certain situations that we disagree with or that make us uncomfortable, but as professionals who work hand-in-hand with speech and communication, we have to appreciate the freedoms that go with it.

As part of the Pepsi Refresh Project, there may have been an idea or two that received grant money that I didn't feel was overly deserving of the grant, especially compared to other applicants. But, the rules of the contest were clear: ideas were posted online, website visitors voted for their favorite projects, the ideas with the most votes won the grant money.

I may not have agreed, but I supported the ideas of freedom of speech and the democratic process. That said, I swallowed my personal pride, and did my duty as a PR professional to put my

personal opinions aside and supported PepsiCo's commitment to local communities.

It's important to remember, though, that when projects are in direct conflict with your morals, I do not recommend compromising those. Speak to management and calmly express your hesitations.

Additionally, always seek out opportunities to strengthen your personal ethics. Sometimes PR is viewed in a negative light, but as our society grows more information-savvy, PR practitioners can and should be the champions of honesty and integrity.

Joe Coussan is a PRSSA at LSU alumnus and currently works at Louisiana Economic Development as the public information officer.

Women of the Week during March and more

by Emily Beck

As Black History Month comes to an end, the diversity committee is proud to announce their Women's History Month ideas. We plan to utilize social media during the month of March to highlight influential women and discuss a hot topic.

Our social media plan begins Wednesday, March 6 with Women of the Week (WOW), which will highlight and promote the accomplishments of female professors within the Manship School.

We will incorporate

social media by tweeting using #wow via our PRSSA Twitter account (@prssalsu) and

posting on our Facebook page; we will also post on our blog for more in-depth information.

Each Wednesday, we will announce which women will be highlighted for the week. Keep an eye out for the women of the week, and be sure to

follow along.

The diversity committee is also planning a one-hour

Twitter chat to take place on Thursday, March 21 from 1-2 p.m. The topic will be micro-aggression toward women.

We decided to discuss this topic because of the lack of knowledge that people possess on the subject. For those who aren't familiar

with the topic, we plan to post a short blog prior to the chat describing what exactly micro-aggression is and the various way it is seen in society.

Lastly, watch out for our Diversity of Thought campaign on April 22 through April 26. We have some great ideas for the month; stay tuned.

Do you know a woman who deserves a Woman of the Week highlight? Submit your nomination to the diversity committee via prssalsu@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE

What: PRSSA at LSU Diversity Committee Twitter Chat

Topic: Micro-aggression toward women

Hashtag: #geauxPRSSA

Who can join the conversation? Everyone — So invite all your friends!

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Jay Ducote

Food blogger, creator of Bite and Booze



Q: How did you get started in your career?

A: In 2009, I began a food and beverage blog as a way to pass time while bored behind the computer screen of a 9-5 job. One night, I looked at my credit card statement and realized how much money I spent eating out. Knowing that behavior would not likely change, I decided instead to make it productive by writing about it. At first, the blog was nothing more than a hobby, but as it progressed, I eventually realized that it could be the foundation for a new career.

Q: Describe a typical day at work.

A: I don't have a typical day. At all. Ever. I work for myself. I do a blog, social media, two radio shows, podcasts, freelance writing for magazines and websites, speak at conferences, on-camera talent, video production, cooking classes, pop-up dinners, a barbecue sauce, a book and a whole lot more. Every day is different, and that's what I love about it. I like when I get some time on a computer to keep up with my hundreds of daily emails and to do a little writing and social media work. Filming or cooking days are usually different and all-day affairs. So again, there's no typical day to describe.

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

A: Students need real world experience outside the confines of the college campus. The workforce can be incredibly different than class assignments. The more you get out there and see it for yourself, the better. And take that opportunity to meet people, find mentors and figure out your own passions.

Read more about Ducote on our blog (prssalsu.com/blog) or visit his website, biteandbooze.com.

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 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.

Free PRSA Webinar Screenings

· How to Create Social Media Plan

When: Monday, March 25 from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Curet Room in Hodges Hall

Hosted by: Deirdre Breakenridge, chief executive officer at Pure Performance Communications

· How to Grow Word-of-Mouth Movements

When: Thursday, April 18 from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Curet Room in Hodges Hall

Hosted by: Geno Church, word-of-mouth inspiration officer at Brains on Fire

Are you a graduating senior that wants to join PRSA?

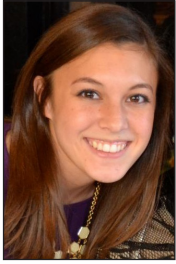
Join anytime between now and graduation and get a discounted rate! Apply online through www.prsa.org/about/PRSA/Associate. Also, please notify your PRSSA Chapter after joining.

Letter from the President

by Mallory Richardson

Hello members,

Hope you enjoyed our February professional development panels featuring both seasoned and entry-level



Manship alumni.

I sometimes forget that these people were in our shoes once, sitting in a PRSSA meeting trying to learn from those with experience. Their accomplishments are evidence that with patience and

hard work, you can do something valuable with a degree in public relations.

I joined PRSSA in Fall 2010 as a freshman because PR was my declared major, and I had no clue what PR entailed. After attending my first meeting, I was hooked. The speakers were informative, and the upperclassmen were continuously willing to help out the underclassmen.

I remember my roommate and I were so inspired that we made a list of things we wanted to do before we graduated.

One of those things on my list was “Become president of PRSSA.”

I am so grateful that you — the members — gave me the chance to serve this organization as president for the 2012-2013 academic year. Through PRSSA, I have met the most determined and enthusiastic people. I have put my public speaking skills to the test (and somewhat conquered my phobia of microphones).

I have learned how to communicate better with others and how to lead

teams. I have realized that things will not always go according to plan, and you must be prepared to deal effectively with crisis. I believe I have grown as a PR pre-professional, thus gaining more confidence in my abilities.

These reasons are why I encourage all of you to consider running for a 2013-2014 PRSSA Executive Board position. See the changes to our constitution and the positions you can run for on our blog, prssalsu.com/blog.

WOMEN, from p. 1

powerful women in communications and asked them to share their insight on women in PR as well as give some advice for other women. Some of the leading ladies who were interviewed include the following: Christine Barney, CEO of rbb Public Relations; Melissa Waggener Zorkin, CEO, president and founder of Waggener Edstrom; GG Johnston, CEO and president of Johnston Wells; and Becky Powell-Schwartz, president and CEO of The Powell Group.

While eight other women made the list, Barney, Zorkin, Johnston and Schwartz had extraordinary outlooks on women in the field and offered exceptional advice for younger women entering PR.

“The future of PR will be built on the X chromosome. There was not male among the last three university PR classes who toured rbb,” Barney said.

Barney’s advice to women in communications included dressing for the job you want, leaving the “inferiority complex” behind and blending. She insists on finding what motivates you; feed your passion.

Zorkin, on the other hand, does not keep track of the ratio between men and women, but more importantly on the talent. Coming from a female professional with another female partner, Zorkin looks at the passionate people in the field who lead their organizations and take new, interesting approaches in their business.

She feels that anybody has a chance to change their workplace by simply being an influencer and having a voice.

“To me, this results in a very balanced mix of talented people — all driving a better business outcome for clients,” Zorkin said.

Her advice to future PR professionals is to do something you love, as well as not being afraid to be both the mentee as well as a mentor.

“The male/female mix in the public relations industry will continue to equalize in the coming years,” Johnston said.

The CEO and president of Johnston Wells encourages young women to “work hard, play hard.” Finding a workplace that fits your needs will be key to doing your best. Johnston also stresses the need to be

curious, committed and to help others in order to drive a specific organization.

Powell-Schwartz finds that creating balance and personal priorities are essential to having a better and more productive work environment. Setting time to help someone else in the office or leaving work to be with family can create a support team of people who will help you through the tough days.

It’s hard to say what the future of PR will look like, but one thing is for sure: Connections and networking are vital in order to make it in public relations.

There’s no telling whether women will one day rule PR, but the 10 most powerful women in fashion PR all agree that interning and becoming a well-rounded individual are essential in becoming a successful PR professional.

Jana Fleishman, head of media and artist relations for Roc Nation, shares her best advice she’s ever received: “You’re in the grown woman world now. If you really want to be an executive, there’s no crying in this world. Suck it up, move on and focus on your own growth.”

If you’d like to be inspired more, here is a list created by The Daily Muse on 20 PR Power Women to follow on Twitter:

@westlevyPR
@prsarahevans
@dbreakenridge
@ValerieSimon
@brooke
@lizziegrubman
@prtini
@AnnieJenningsPR
@AKRPR
@AlisonBrodPR
@LuxuryPRGal
@missusP
@dkny
@OscarPRGirl
@thegarnercircle
@MissSuccess
@heatherhuhman
@rachelakay
@ginidietrich
@PRjobs

Visit <http://www.thedaily-muse.com/career/20-power-pr-women-to-follow-on-twitter/> to learn about these women or to keep an eye on what is going on in the PR world.

POLL

Are women better communicators than men?
Vote online at prssalsu.com/blog.

