

The Network

The monthly newsletter of the Greater Kansas City PRSA Chapter

June 2009

Professional Development

Feedback Needed

Professional development is a cornerstone of your membership in PRSA, and we want to ensure we're giving you the programming you desire. We understand the economy might be putting a strain on your ability to attend some sessions, so the Professional Development Committee is interested in your feedback.

Please answer the following questions via email to gina.leo@populous.com

- Does your company subsidize the cost of your attendance at monthly professional development sessions?
- Would you be more apt to attend if the cost were reduced?
- Would you consider foregoing the lunch portion of the monthly sessions to attend at a lower rate?
- Would you be interested in attending free webinars hosted by the Chapter based

From the President

What a spring it's been! While I'm sure many of you have been busy getting ready for graduations, weddings and the start of vacation season, GKC-PRSA members still found time to attend multiple Chapter events last month:

- New Pros and Senior Pros networking meetings
- PRSA's Travel and Tourism section conference
- A reception and dinner with celebrity PR blogger and HARO founder Peter Shankman
- "Who Wants to be an APR" reception for APR candidates and APRs alike



In addition to the above activities, the board advanced the Chapter's social media presence by joining Twitter; follow us [@kcprsa](https://twitter.com/kcprsa). We also launched an enhanced Web site at www.kansascity-prsa.org. Not bad (thanks to Web savvy Richard Dedor, the Chapter's VP of Communications) for a transitional site that we will use until the National PRSA's new Chapter template becomes available next year.

The PRISM Committee has been hard at work all year long, and it's paying off. We've booked a compelling speaker (see announcement later in this newsletter) and several organizations have stepped up to sponsor Kansas City's premier PR event of the year! Thank you to those organizations for their much-needed support.

Not satisfied with the glowing feedback from those attending monthly luncheons, VP of Professional Development Gina Leo is conducting a mid-year survey to find out how we can further enhance the Chapter's offerings, especially in light of the economy (see **Feedback Needed** to the left of this article). One enhancement already in the works: provide select PRSA

on National PRSA content?

Thank you in advance for your time.

National Webinars for free to members. Watch your email for more details on this offering.

Our goal is to be nimble enough to offer something for everyone, even with today's time and budget constraints. Summer will be no exception. Get ready for things to heat up!

2009 PRISM Awards - Save the Date!

Save the date for the 2009 GKC PRISM Awards Gala

Featuring keynote speaker, [Peter Shankman](#), HARO (Help A Reporter Out) founder

Friday, October 16, 2009 at The Sawyer Room
located at 11th and Baltimore in downtown Kansas City
Watch for more announcements soon

Sponsorship opportunities are still available at many levels for the 2009 GKC PRISM Awards Gala. All levels offer great benefits to the sponsors, like PRISM entries, tickets to the event and several ways to promote your organization. Please contact [Brooke Ehlers](#) or [Lacey Graverson](#) for more information.

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GKC PRSA News Briefs

PRSA's Midwest District Revitalization

The Midwest District of PRSA has been inactive for a few years and Renee Robinson, our immediate past president, is working diligently to revitalize it. Within the PRSA structure, a district's key role is to support chapter leaders and assist them in making chapters organizationally effective. The secondary role is to serve as a route for leadership between the chapter and national levels. Strong districts are important elements in chapter success and provide a vital link between the local and national organizations.

Many districts offer professional and leadership development at a regional and local level that complement national programs. These can include district conferences, leadership training, and other programs that help improve organization effectiveness, support the society's mission and further enhance the value of PRSA membership.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Midwest District's revitalization, please contact Renee at (816) 460-3027 or robinson@nicholsonkovac.com.

Boudreau Wins Last-Minute "APR" Thriller



Coming down the last question, Elaina Boudreau used her last lifeline to defeat four other opponents to win "Who Wants to be an APR?"



The contest, which promotes this year's APR sessions, challenged each contestant with five questions. Elaina answered all five questions correctly and won the APR scholarship valued at \$385. For the final question, Elaina polled the audience to answer "What federal legislation prohibits government public affairs and public information staff to use the term 'public relations' to describe themselves or their work?" In the poll, a majority of the audience correctly selected "The Gillette Amendment" and Elaina proceeded with that answer. Congratulations to Elaina.

APR study sessions begin on June 16. Anyone interested in finding out more can log onto praccreditation.org or contact Jon Ratliff, APR at jratliff@trozzolo.com.

GKC PRSA Affinity Groups

Solo Pros

Mark your calendars for June 24, when we conduct our next resource-sharing session and welcome feature presenter, Keith Mays, who manages Web site content for the Kauffman Foundation. Hear his insights and discuss Twitter uses, current communications tech strategies and other highlights from his experience at South by Southwest.



Date: Wednesday, June 24

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Discussion to begin at noon.

Cost: Your own lunch

Location: O'Dowd's on the Plaza
4742 Pennsylvania Ave.
Kansas City, MO 64112

To RSVP or for any questions, please contact Andy DiOrio, SVP People, at (816) 480-5827 or ADiOrio@amctheatres.com.

Solo Pros provides solo practitioners/freelancers an opportunity to share resources, ideas and needs while creating or expanding your personal network.

PR Pro of the Year

With the PRISM Call for Entries soon to come, this also marks a good time to consider your nominations for 2009 PR Pro of the Year. As we announced last month, the PR Pro of the Year Award will take on expanded meaning in 2009 with this award winner taking on an ambassador role for the Chapter throughout the year.

This program will better utilize our current PR Pro of the Year, along with all of the past winners, to position our profession and our Chapter to both the business community, and our current and prospective members.

For a reminder of the opportunities for the PR Pro of the Year winner going forward, please reference last month's newsletter, visit the [PR Pro of the Year section on our site](#) or contact Andy DiOrio, SVP People, at (816) 480-5827 or ADiOrio@amctheatres.com.

New Pros/Membership



Save the date for Thursday, July 9 from 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. for the biggest New Pros and PRSA Membership event of the year! Join us at Lucky Strike Lanes in the Power & Light District to network with your peers, learn more about getting involved in PRSA, and enjoy your first game of bowling and an hour of free drinks on us!

To RSVP or for any questions, contact Kristen Grinstead at kgrinstead@nicholsonkovac.com or Sarah Wurth at sarah.wurth@fleishman.com.

Geared toward those in their first five years of the profession, New Pros provides valuable professional development programs and networking opportunities in the Greater Kansas City area. The Membership team is on a constant quest to enhance your membership and recruit new professionals to GKC/PRSA.

Time to Renew? PRSA Has Payment Options!

Worried about paying your annual dues in this tough economic climate? PRSA has two options to help current members: the Quarterly Payment Program and the Financial Hardship Plan.

The Quarterly Payment Program allows renewing members to spread their national dues payments over the course of the year. Full chapter dues and a \$10 processing fee are included in the first installment. For GKC PRSA members, that means the first payment would be \$126.25, followed by three quarterly installments of \$56.25 each. This program is open to all current PRSA members,

regardless of economic circumstance.

The Financial Hardship Plan is a new program developed to address the needs of unemployed public relations professionals. The plan gives unemployed professionals who have been a PRSA member for five or more years a one-time discount of \$110 on national dues. The GKC PRSA board unanimously voted to extend this program to chapter dues, cutting that expense from \$60 to \$30 for eligible members.

Those who are working part time, even if that job is outside of the profession, are not eligible. In addition, dues must be paid in full and cannot be combined with the Quarterly Payment Program.

For more information about either of these options, email GKC PRSA VP of Member Relations [Justin LaBerge](mailto:Justin.LaBerge@prsa.org).

Make the Most of Your PRSA Membership

Did you know [PRSA.org](http://www.prsa.org) offers most of its membership publications online? Go to <http://www.prsa.org/publications/> and see current and archived issues of its print and email newsletters as well as the PRC (Professional Resource Center), where you can search for articles addressing your most pressing research questions.

Volunteer Opportunity

American Cancer Society Seeks Communications Committee Members

The High Plains Division of the American Cancer Society is looking for communications volunteers to aid in raising awareness of Society programs, services, fundraising efforts and advocacy and diversity issues. The Kansas City Metro Communications Committee meets over lunch on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss a variety of events that the Society presents, including Relay For Life, Shave to Save, Daffodil Days, Cattle Baron's Ball, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer and the annual student news conference.

If you are interested in joining the committee and have good leadership skills as well as expertise in media relations, writing, strategic planning, graphic design, internal communications or social media, please contact Caitlin Faddis at (913) 747-6020 or Caitlin.faddis@cancer.org

Member Profile: Elaina Boudreau

Elaina Boudreau | President | BELA Communications

What are your current job responsibilities?

I have my own business, BELA Communications - PR & Social Media, so I do everything from media relations, speech writing, community relations, crisis communications preparation and response, and social media, to filing and emptying my trash on a daily basis.

How did you get involved with PRSA?

I was a member of PRSSA in college and then transitioned to PRSA when I was working in my first PR position with Becky Blades and Barb Pruitt at Blades & Associates. They were both PRSA members and talked about what an enriching organization it had been for them.

Share a bit about your background?



I started in PR on the agency side, working at Blades & Associates, Hickerson Phelps Kirtley and then Barkley. I later moved on to Sprint and GE (ERC). After that I created BELA Communications and have been doing this for three years. What got me to where I am now, is my hard



work and the great PR people I have worked with over the years. Opportunities have presented themselves to me along the way - some I had to seek out, while others have come to me through relationships I have built and maintained over the years.

What specifically about public relations motivates you?

Learning about all sorts of people, their PR needs and their fascinating businesses and then helping them garner publicity or manage messaging in tough situations. Seeing success at the end is also very invigorating and motivating.

What is your advice to recent graduates who are entering the PR profession?

There are two quotes that I think offer helpful advice to recent graduates entering the PR profession:

"I'm a great believer in luck and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it." - Thomas Jefferson

"There are no traffic jams when you go the extra mile." - Roger Staubach

What are some of your best professional achievements?

Many of my best professional achievements - from my viewpoint - have to do with the clients I have been able to win, keep and continue to work with over the years. It has been my privilege to work with so many of them and an honor that they were pleased enough with my work to call me again and again. I have learned so much through the years from the vastly different industries, businesses and individuals I have served. Learning to successfully apply public relations disciplines to them has been both a challenge and triumph for me.

So, here are just a few of my professional achievements from a client/project perspective:

1. Worked as a publicist for several celebrities/musical artists, such as Mannheim Steamroller, Julie Andrews, The Three Tenors, Mike Post and the band America.
2. Interviewed Barrack Obama, John McCain, Bill Marr and Martin Sheen for national magazine articles.
3. Helped a national cigar accessory company manage the communications surrounding trademark opposition from Castro and the Cuban government.
4. Managed the public relations surrounding a 70-city tour by a financial services company to raise USO Care Packages for U.S. military troops overseas.
5. Helped two clients - one selling multi-cultural art objects from around the world and the other selling handmade leather "kindness" bracelets - successfully manage the PR & social media strategies surrounding the launch of their e-commerce websites.

Books you recommend:

- [Straight from the Gut](#) by Jack Welch
- [How to Achieve Financial Peace](#) by Dave Ramsey
- [Awaken the Giant Within](#) by Anthony Robbins

If you'd like to be a future Member Profile or know someone who should be profiled, please email prsa@winglightproductions.com.

Update Your Member Profile and You Could Be a Winner

Take a few minutes to help PRSA serve you better. Tell us your job title, organizational setting, industry and area(s) of specialization. Each month, May through August, we will randomly select five members who update their demographics information to receive gifts, including a \$100 Amazon gift card and items from the PRSA Store. You could be a winner!

Update your demographics information on [MemberNet](#) today. If you are renewing your membership by mail or fax, you also can update your demographics on the back of the dues invoice.

Not a Member? Join at a Special Rate Today

Join PRSA National during May and June, and we'll waive the initiation fee of \$65 - bringing your cost down to just \$225. Join today at prsa.org/membership/StaySmart. Enter promotion code Spring2009 on your application to receive this special offer.

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