

The Relay



March 2005
Issue 2

Focus on PR as an intern

This issue offers a description of various internships and work experience for students interested in learning more about public relations as a profession.

Local library has public relations at work

by **Sally Turner**

For months, the Friends of the Charleston Carnegie Public Library, a group made up of retired teachers, EIU faculty and townspeople, have been using public relations techniques to spread the word: They want to pass a \$7 million referendum on the general election ballot to expand the downtown library.

Members have been on the radio, on television, in the newspapers and before civic groups. They have knocked on doors, posted signs, called registered voters and talked to their friends — all in an effort to gather momentum and urge people to go to the polls.

And they share what seems to work and what doesn't.

"We learned that it's better to call at night than during the day," said Bob McElwee, who is coordinating the campaign efforts for the Friends.

Jolene Whitley, a Friends member, enjoyed her time at a local elementary school reading program.

"It was better to talk to people face-to-face," Whitley said. "You can tell more about what they are really thinking. They can't fool you as much."

The library, built in 1904, is running out of room. When the library buys a new book, it has to discard one to make room on its shelves. Access for the elderly and handicapped is a challenge, as is parking. And programming for children is limited due to space constraints.

The expanded library will feature more parking and convenient access, more shelving, reading, meeting and study spaces, a larger children's area and a genealogy area.

In the final weeks of the campaign, the group of about

12 volunteer workers and many more behind the scenes supporters have been targeting various groups likely to support the library expansion.

For example, Rose Mary Shepherd, Friends president and a veteran campaigner from running successfully twice for school superintendent, talked to a retired teachers' group in Charleston. For that presentation she highlighted accessibility and easy parking. She said she also got a good response when talking about an expanded genealogy area.

"When you know the interest of the group, you can focus on that," Shepherd said.

Phyllis Sardella, a Friend and retired teacher, talked to parents at the local school's reading program.

"It was good to show them a model of the space and facilities," she said. "Different things are important to different people."

That fact has become a part of the letters-to-the-editor campaign by the various members. Each person is targeting a different group: children, elderly, educators, students — both high school and

college — the square, etc. Two recent letters in the Times-Courier have focused on small children and the family.

What these people know intrinsically is that they communicate best with people when they can relate to them. As they brainstorm, they use persuasion and argument techniques, they use their media and they present the facts honestly. They are practicing the very definition of public relations: they are communicating with various sectors of the public to influence their attitudes and opinions to promote, in this case, the library.

On Election Day, April 5, they will know if their hard work paid off.



Photo by Sara Wagoner

If the Friends of the Charleston Carnegie Public Library are successful in its PR campaign, this library in Charleston, Ill., will soon have a new look including space for more books and parking.

Internships—the place to be this summer

by **Courtney Stanley**

Being an intern is one way for students to spend the summer and enhance their public relations skills.

Sara Wagoner, a junior journalism major, will be a communications intern at the American Junior Golf Association and Whitney Self, also a journalism major, will be interning at Country Music Television in Nashville, Tenn.

Stationed out of Atlanta, the American Junior Golf Association, AJGA, a non-profit organization, is a golf tournament for teenage students who are seeking college scholarships.

“It really is a stepping stone for anyone who wants to go into any area of the sports industry,” Wagoner said.

Wagoner was one of the 32 interns chosen to work and travel around the coast of the United States for this organization that is well-known within the sports industry.

“I really want to go into sports and this will give me the experience I need for a career in the sports field,” Wagoner said.

Self said she is looking forward to moving to Nashville, Tenn., this summer because she has always lived in the Mattoon area.

As an intern at CMT, Self will help write a weekly newsletter every week for www.cmt.com, she will follow and assist music journalists that interview stars, and she will also be a runner for different stars at the Fan Fair, an event with about 200 country and R&B performing artists.

As a communications intern, Wagoner will work 80 to 90 hours a week dealing with media relations. She will be helping players prepare for the game and tournament, but mainly she will be writing news releases and working with different media outlets to encourage the coverage of the tournament.

At a three day recruiting weekend in Atlanta, Wagoner was put into a group that worked together to do public speaking, a panel interview and create a commercial.

Terri Johnson, a journalism professor, informed Wagoner of the position and the application on the organization's Web site.

“When I applied for the job, I never expected to go as far as I did,” Wagoner said.

The applicants considered for the internship position at AJGA were required to know how to write a news release and have knowledge of the media and of Associated Press style.

Students can learn more about AJGA at www.ajga.com.

At CMT, the applicants should have broadcast experience, know the technical ins and outs of a station, and have writing and communication skills.

“I'm really excited about the internship,” Self said. “It will be a new experience for me.”

Internships Summer 2005

✓ Consolidated Communications
April 1 — Sarah Greider
Sarah.Greider@consolidated.com

✓ American Medical Association*
Flexible — Mike Lynch
Mike.Lynch@ama-assn.org

✓ Country Financial Bloomington
Flexible — Melinda Zehr
melinda.zehr@countryfinancial.com

✓ University Professionals of Illinois*
April 1 — Mary Kelly-Durkin
mkellydurkin@upilocal4100.org

✓ Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital
(unpaid)
Flexible — Patti Peterson
ppeterson@sblhs.org

✓ ADM Decatur
Flexible — Chris Banocy
chris_banocy@admworld.com

✓ GolinHarris Chicago
April 15 — Ben Lincoln
blincoln@golinharris.com

✓ Lake Land College
Flexible — Kelly Allee
kallee@lakeland.cc.il.us

The best internship is the one you get because you truly want to work for that organization. Go where you are interested. If they don't offer an internship, see if they would hire you to start one! Some grant money is available to supplement what Illinois Organizations will pay.

—Terri Johnson, The Agency faculty adviser

* Chicago

Internship offered with former EIU professor

by **Kimberlee Boise**

An internship is a hard thing to find, but luckily for all of the students interested in public relations, former Eastern professor Mary Kelly-Durkin and University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) have a solution.

UPI offers a paid internship to students interested in public relations. Internship responsibilities will include gathering news articles to be included in the UPI Digest, assisting in the promotion of UPI events, writing for the media, taking photographs and designing publications. The internship does not provide housing or transportation for out-of-town students.

Mary Kelly-Durkin, who taught at Eastern for more than 20 years, now works for UPI which is located in downtown Chicago. UPI serves four-year public universities in Illinois and is affiliated with the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers, and the AFL-CIO. UPI's membership consists of faculty and professional staff at seven Illinois campuses. The role of public relations in

UPI is to address the needs of its members in situations such as collective bargaining and grievances, adequate funding for public higher education, appropriate workloads and work environments.

Internship applicants should have an interest in public education and the union's role in education reform. As with most public relations internships, strong writing and communication skills are a must and educational or work experience with journalism is preferred. Other application requirements include a cover letter, résumé and three to five writing samples.

The internship program is new and focuses on promotions and media relations. Interns will work independently on one or two long-term assignments, as well as assist with short-term projects as needed. Journalism major Bianca Sisson was the first student to intern with UPI, last summer.

"I learned a lot about the Labor Movement, Web site

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New international faculty member wows students

by **Megan Frejlich**

Dr. Tomasz Tabako, a communications studies professor, is only in his second semester at Eastern, but has already created a positive outlook for the future of EIU.

The most interesting fact about Tabako is that he was born and raised in Poland. He said it was not until his adult life that he made the voyage on a freedom fellowship to America.

"I felt like Columbus in a sense that I had discovered new lands," he said. "Not many people around this time broke out of their totalitarian household and came to America."

When he arrived in America, Tabako initially found himself at the University of Puget Sound in the Seattle region, he said.

Tabako then earned his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. He also earned his second master's degree in mass communication and rhetorical studies, he said.

After Tabako's years of schooling, he tried to land a teaching job near Chicago, where relatives were and his international magazine 2B was published.

"I saw an ad announcing that there was an opening to redesign the communication program at EIU," he said. "This meant space for creativity and enthusiasm that I was going to open up. I liked the promise I was given to create something new."

Last semester, Tabako landed himself a job as a communication studies professor at EIU. Tabako teaches persuasion and argumentation and critical thinking.

Tabako thinks persuasion is one of the most critical parts of communication studies and public relations.

"Persuasion class teaches students to think clearly, to be able to construct a sound argument, to be able to refute one's argument, to isolate fallacies, and to construct an intelligent debate," Tabako said. "This class is designed to constitute [you] as an arguer. If you are a PR person, you need discipline to be a good arguer."

Mike Ottlinger, junior communication studies major, is a student of Tabako's.

"I have Dr. Tabako and I feel he is an extremely intellectual man," Ottlinger said. "I wouldn't hesitate to advise students to take classes with him."

Nick Sanders, senior communication studies major, is also a student who was

intrigued by Tabako.

"He's really intelligent and a very good teacher," Sanders said. "He has a very interesting life history. And also he can speak multiple languages."

In the fall, Tabako will be resuming his position and adding a new class to his schedule.

Tabako said, "I am glad that I obtained such a great position at EIU. I feel that I have something special to offer every student and my colleagues."

"I felt like Columbus in a sense that I had discovered new lands."

—Tomasz Tabako, communications studies professor

Guest speakers teach PRSSA

by **Katie Benjamin**

PRSSA President's Report

The Dan Thornburgh chapter of PRSSA was pleased to have Steve Wilcox of Belvedere Corporation, USA which is a division of the Wella Corporation, international, speak to our chapter in February. Wilcox, a former graduate of EIU, is currently the director of marketing for Belvedere, which manufactures salon and spa equipment and furniture.

Wilcox gave an impressive presentation touching on many areas of public relations due to his vast experience. He spoke about in-house public relations and marketing and also his experiences in the agency field of public relations. Wilcox has worked for corporations such as Hill and Knowlton and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide in Chicago. He was also part of a multi-million dollar campaigns for Motorola and VTEL.

He showed the chapter a number of tools that are used in public relations campaigns on a day-to-day basis such as: press kits, news releases, video news releases and news letters.

PRSSA also had Ben Lincoln of GolinHarris, Chicago, speak at the March 28 meeting at 6 p.m. in the Paris Room of the University Union. Lincoln's focus was on college students and networking skills.

Also, PRSSA will host its first "Eat to Defeat" pizza crawl, which will be Sunday, April 10, at noon. All participants will try to eat one piece of pizza from all nine participating pizza places in Charleston. The entry cost is \$12 for adults and \$8 for children and will include pizza and an "Eat to Defeat" T-shirt. American Cancer Society will receive 75 percent of the proceeds.



PRSSA's "Eat to Defeat" Pizza Crawl

Date: Sunday, April 10

Time: Noon

Cost: \$12

Start: Buzzard Hall Room 2504

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If you have an idea for a story you'd like to see in The Relay, contact Jessica at:

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design and PR," Sisson said. "They gave me a schedule of items I had to get done and I got to work on them at my own pace."

The deadlines to apply for summer semester is April 1, fall semester June 1, and spring semester Nov. 1 of the previous year.

To apply for the internship or for more information contact Mary Kelly-Durkin, Director of Communication, University Professionals of Illinois by mail at 11E. Adams, Suite 1106, Chicago IL 60603.