

The Relay

a publication for PR students

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The Agency works with Eastern athletics to host 'Pack the Place'

By Mike Leon

The Eastern Illinois University Athletic Department and The Agency, Eastern's student-run public relations firm, teamed up in a new campaign aimed at getting students out of the residence halls and into the stands at Eastern sporting events.

The newly launched "Pack the Place" campaign offers incentives to students both on and off campus for attending and supporting athletic events. The focus of the campaign is a competition between all residence halls; challenging each to have the highest percentage of residents attending games. The athletic department and The Agency award the winning halls a pizza dinner courtesy of Domino's, Pizza Hut and Papa John's. Students representing halls can check-in on arrival with their panther card at a specified booth before the game. The campaign also includes giveaways throughout the events such as saving bonds, dining dollars and EIU athletic T-shirts.

"Pack the Place" hosted its first event on Nov. 15 for the Panther Football senior night game. Cory Dimitrakopoulos,



The Agency
Eastern's Top Public Relations Firm

student director of The Agency, said that despite harsh weather, the campaign attracted more students to the game, with Lincoln Hall having the most in attendance. Students who attended were given Eastern drawstring bags.

"Coming to the games is really important to helping create a 'home field advantage' and supporting our athletes," said Ryan Gilmore, director of marketing and promotions for the athletic department.

Gilmore said he wishes for students to become more involved in campus athletics because the games allow for a good social atmosphere where students can support their peers while also meeting and networking with new people.

Kyle Valentine, an intern for athletic department marketing

and promotions at Eastern, said students should become more involved by meeting the athletes on campus.

"It's a lot easier to cheer when you know someone on the team," Valentine said. Events hosted by teams on campus create a good opportunity for students to meet with and become familiar with athletes.

The next "Pack the Place" event will take place Dec. 4 at 8 p.m. in Lantz Arena for the Eastern men's basketball game against Tennessee State. Students may check-in for their residence halls beginning at 7:15 p.m. The first 100 in attendance will receive an Eastern athletic drawstring bag. The campaign plans to award an iPod during the game as well. The winning

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Fisher works to increase community service at Eastern

By Courtney Kerch

Just as Rachel Fisher was preparing to leave Eastern Illinois University, where she worked as the acting director of health education, she was offered an opportunity she could not pass up. Fisher was offered a job in the student affairs department as the interim director of student community service.

President Bill Perry created this position on July 31 to increase leadership and community service opportunities at Eastern. Fisher said this was a wonderful opportunity and perfect timing for her.

With this new position she hopes to “unite the campus and community in volunteer efforts.” She does this by providing connections for students both on campus and off campus with different charity organizations. At her office, located within the Student Life Office in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union, students can stop in to learn about volunteer opportunities. Fisher talks with students to find a good fit for them based on their interests, schedule, and how much time they want to volunteer. Opportunities include animal care,

counseling and mentoring, elderly care, health services, nature conservation and youth development and outreach through various charity organizations. Something is out there for everyone, and Fisher encourages students to volunteer to connect with their community, sharing their skills as well as learning new ones and meeting new people.

Not only does Fisher enhance volunteer programs, but she also works to create new programs. She has been working with One Campus, One Community, a service group at Eastern, to advise them on their service projects. Jillian Staley, a graduate adviser in the student life office said that One Campus, One Community has been around for about two years but hasn’t had a lot of success. With the addition of Rachel Fisher and the new student community service office, Staley says this group is really starting to pick up.

“Rachel has so much knowledge about Charleston, the community and its needs,” said Staley. Together they have already organized a food drive, toy drive and a trash clean up day. Fisher also helps with



Fisher works to join Eastern students and the Charleston community through service. She is the interim director of student community service.

Panther Service day, which is a day for students and community members to get together and help clean up the town.

Fisher, who graduated from Marquette University with a degree in public relations and theatre, worked for Marriott Hotels and Oakwood Worldwide before getting her masters at Eastern in communication. She says it is very important for

college graduates to get professional experience after graduation even if they plan on going to graduate school.

She said her best piece of advice for anyone trying to find a job after college is to stay motivated and optimistic and “see the potential in every job and realize that there is the possibil-

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Calender of Events

The Agency - meetings every Wed. at 6:30 in Buzzard Hall room 2434.

December

3 - PRSA meeting at 6 p.m. in Springfield

4 - Pack the Place!

**8 - PRSSA Holiday Party @ The Stadium Grill
Mattoon, 4:30 p.m.**

15-19 - Finals Week

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hall will be announced later in the evening.

Dimitrakopoulos said she believes the indoor environment of Lantz will make for a good turn-out. Since the campaign began, students have been giving positive feedback.

Gilmore is also optimistic about the upcoming basketball game. “I want to pack Lantz Arena,” Gilmore said.

To promote the campaign, the athletic department and The Agency have worked together

by posting flyers around campus and speaking with housing directors to ensure students are aware of the campaign and know the necessary information.

Gilmore said he is glad to be working with The Agency for the campaign and believes this gives the firm a great way to track success.

“I think this is a great partnership,” he said. “I would like to continue working with the Agency.”

Danyelle Parker gains experience with the Red Cross

By Emily Hartwig

Danyelle Parker, a junior communication studies major, worked as a public, media and community relations intern this summer at the Red Cross in Springfield, Ill. She learned internships are essential to building a résumé.

Parker decided to ask the Red Cross about possible internship opportunities. She wanted to work for a nonprofit organization. She worked on event planning, fundraising, creating fliers and press releases, teaching courses, responding to house fires and talking to the media.

Parker says internships are essential to experience what life is like after college and testing the waters benefits future job decisions. Experience on a résumé is crucial to an employer.

"My supervisor said that more times than none, employers look at the experience a candidate has rather than the GPA," Parker said.

Parker's supervisor, Jenny Rich, said that she looks for



Danyelle Parker had the opportunity to help people through her internship with the Red Cross. Parker is now the link between the Red Cross and Eastern's Public Relations Student Society of America chapter.

summer interns that are passionate to learn and have a drive to be successful in the career field. Dependability is another quality that employers find crucial.

Although Parker's internship was paid, not all internships are, but that does not mean they are not beneficial. When pursuing internship opportunities, Parker suggests not giving up. Persevering through the process and keeping options open will give students opportunities that will benefit them in the future.

When trying to find internships, plenty of opportunities are available on campus. Eastern Illinois University's Career Services helps students find internships and jobs. Its Web site states employers, when a position opens, will look to their interns first to fill positions.

Rich said having an internship on a résumé is extremely important because "it's something that can set you apart from other job applicants. It shows that you have experience working hands on in the career

field." Rich thinks that it is the best way to gain real world experience that is a necessity.

Parker still networks with her past employer and would love to work for the Red Cross after college.

Parker is working on a campaign between Eastern's Public Relations Student Society of America chapter and the Red Cross to increase awareness of Red Cross needs and to increase the number of volunteers for the Coles and Clark County Red Cross.



Terri Johnson named chair of the PRSA Educator's Academy

By Ashley Melhouse

Terri Johnson, a journalism professor, will be come Chair of the Educator's Academy of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

The Educator's Academy was established in 1978. Johnson is currently the Educator's Academy Chair elect, an elected position one becomes after serving on the board for two years before becoming the chair. She served on the EA board of directors as the New Members Chair and has served as the Educator's Academy Chair elect for two years. She will automatically move into the chairmanship. This two year commitment requires doing different things all the time including programming for national conference. Last year's was held in Philadelphia and the most recent one in Detroit,

helping people transition from a practitioner to a professor and participating in a monthly telephone board meeting with other board members from all over the United States.

Dr. Joe Trahan, the current Educator's Academy Chair of PRSA, said that some jobs he portrayed were "fighting for the educators," spreading the word about how important education in public relations is and representing the PRSA Educator's Academy 375 members for the past two years. He said it was a real honor, a lot of fun and he looks forward to becoming the past chair and backing Terri in anyway he can.

Dr. Trahan has known Johnson for 20 some odd years now and he said it has been a pleasure working with her. Most Educators' Academy members are Public Relations Student Society of America advisers,



Terri Johnson will be the chair of the Public Relations Society of America Educator's Academy starting January 1, 2009. She has 34 years experience in PR.

as Johnson is now at Eastern. Johnson will be taking over the Educator's Academy Chair of PRSA on January 1, 2009.

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ity of moving up." She said not everyone can start off with their dream job. "You just have to keep your eyes on the prize and enjoy the experiences you have because every moment will teach you something."

Whether you need to talk about volunteering, finding a job or public relations, Fisher is always available. She encourages anyone and everyone to stop by and see her and see what they can do for the community because, "when everyone contributes, some really impressive things are going to happen."

Pack the Place

Thursday, Dec. 4, 7:00 p.m.
Lantz Arena

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General Information

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Eastern's Top Public Relations Firm