

# The Relay

a publication for PR students

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## Dunking pros make their mark for RFY

*Team Flight Brothers is a group known for being the best slam dunkers in the U.S.*

By Barbara Harrington

Matt Kelly has always loved basketball.

Kelly has been working to bring Team Flight Brothers, a basketball entertainment group known for its extreme dunking, to Eastern's campus to help raise money for the University Mothers Against Drunk Driving chapter, Respect For Youth.

"This event really spoke to me," Kelly said. "I've been a huge fan of some of their players from And 1, a street basketball team, since

high school and now they're on the Team Flight Brothers team. I'm so grateful they are willing to help us out."

Respect for Youth is a campus organization co-founded



Photo Credit: TeamFlightBrothers.com

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## The Agency's Current Campaigns

Campaigns start fresh in new semester

As with last semester, we editors will keep you apprised of the latest campaign news of the campaigns The Agency is involved in.



Respect for Youth-UMADD was one of The Agency's largest campaigns last semester. The campaign was successful in raising awareness and knowledge of the organization's presence on Eastern's campus as well as in its goal to find ways to solve—and ultimately prevent—binge drinking, underage drinking and impaired driving.

New campaign, new campaign workers

This semester, the RFY campaign has changed hands. Eastern's PRSSA chapter has taken on the campaign as well

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# From CAMPAIGNS, pg. 1

as the challenge to publicize a large fundraising event.

## Team Flight Brothers comes to Eastern

As stated in the article by Barbara Harrington, Team Flight Brothers is a team of some of the best dunkers in the world.

RFY and TFB are linked through RFY co-founder Micah Rucker and Charles Millan, a CEO of TFB. The two are friends and Millan offered to put RFY's logo on the TFB jerseys and t-shirts.

This April, TFB will be coming to Eastern free of charge. Admission to the event is contingent upon a donation and all proceeds will go to RFY.



## Last semester's success

Participating in the Donate Life Illinois 'I Am. Are You?' Campus Campaign Challenge was successful.

The challenge included 20 colleges and universities in the state of Illinois and Eastern came in seventh place.

## 'Give Your Heart Away'

DLI kicked this semester off with an event called "Give Your Heart Away," held Feb. 13 and

14 in the Martin Luther King Junior University Union, near the food court.

Over the course of two days, members of The Agency's campaign registered at least 13 people.

## National Donate Life Month, 'The Drive for 3.5'

The month of April serves a dual role this year. Not only is it National Donate Life Month, but it also serves as the end of the initial campaign to register 3.5 million people in Illinois' new organ and tissue donor registry.

So far, the DLI campaign has registered 3.2 million people. "The Drive for 3.5" campaign's objective is to register a total 300,000 to reach the original goal.

In order to do this, the

schools that participated in last semester's Campus Challenge will once again work to register students, faculty and staff to help achieve the goal.

Also during the month of April, the DLI mascot Morgan D' Organ will be travelling the state and making appearances at different events put on by the schools. He'll come to Eastern on April 17. Be on the lookout.



In the months leading up to Eastern's Relay for Life event, Colleges Against Cancer campaign workers will be designing fliers that specifically tie CAC and the event to Eastern.



(above) Marjani Lewis explains to Alex Harris how easy it is to reregister to be an organ donor in Illinois.

(right) Lewis readies the bucket Harris eventually drew a heart from. Unfortunately for Harris, the heart he drew was blank; however, other new or re-registrants had the opportunity to draw the hearts for a prize.

## Give Your



## Away



National Liaison  
to take trip, vote



Rachel McConnell, national liaison for EIU PRSSA, will travel to San Diego, Calif., March 13–16 to vote for officers of the PRSSA National Executive Board.

McConnell will represent Eastern's Daniel Thornburgh chapter of PRSSA on her first trip representing the organization as a voting delegate.

## In the real world: Networking in college leads to new experiences

By Derrick Johnson II

Angie Taylor is one of many students in the midst of the interning process.

In the last couple of decades it has become commonplace for companies to require college students and graduates to participate in an internship before starting a job.

Taylor is currently interning with Carolyn Grisko and Associates, a public relations firm located in Chicago. Her internship began on Jan. 21 and is scheduled to last for three months—although circumstances could extend Taylor's stay, she said.

An internship can help students find work after college, but attaining an internship may not always be simple. Getting a good internship is a competitive process.

Because of the competitive nature of the intern application process, many prospective interns turn to networking to aug-

ment their marketability; Taylor used networking contacts to pass on her résumé while visiting friends in Chicago, she said.

"I learned of Carolyn Grisko & Associates through Eastern's Agency's work on the Donate Life Illinois campaign," Taylor said. "Scott Meis and Jeff Slutz came to an agency meeting to discuss the campaign and passed out business cards to interested students."

Meis and Slutz are the account managers for the DLI campaign, which has worked with Eastern since spring 2007. Taylor used her connections through The Agency, the student-run PR firm, to reach them.

"I contacted Scott in October and asked if he wouldn't mind showing me around while I was in Chicago visiting friends," Taylor said. "When I met with him at CGA in November, I just really loved the location, the office environment, and the type

of work done at this firm. He passed on my résumé, and I interviewed in early January."

Taylor said the networking she did before gave her more confidence during the actual application process.

"It helped a lot that I had met with Scott for an informational meeting, and then gave him my résumé," she said.

"Doing that prepared me for the interview because I was more relaxed and felt better prepared because I had visited on an informal basis before."

Taylor advises students to utilize contacts and become familiar with the their prospective organization.

"I would advise anyone to set up an informational interview," Taylor said. "I've had great success with getting my foot in the door by just contacting someone at the organization I was interested in, and just asking them if I could meet and learn more about their position and their company."

## From TFB, pg. 1

by former wide receiver Micah Rucker with Kelly, Katrina Zaret and Cole Stinson. On Jan. 28, 2007, Rucker's girlfriend was killed by a drunk driver, which prompted the start of the group. RFY is concerned with finding solutions to binge drinking, underage drinking and impaired driving.

"We're not against drinking; we're against drinking irresponsibly," Kelly said. "And we're not naive, we know people drink underage."

Team Flight Brothers will perform 7–9 p.m., April 15, in Lantz Arena.

Rucker has known the

CEO of Team Flight Brothers, Charles Millan, since high school. Kelly said because of Rucker, the team is coming to Eastern for free to help RFY raise awareness and money.

The professionals will play against a team composed of RFY's executive board, Honorary Team Captains and local EMTs.

"We have no intention of winning!" Kelly said. "Who doesn't want to see Bill Perry get dunked on?"

President William Perry, an RFY Honorary Team Captain, may play in the game.

Respect For Youth hopes to raise more than \$1,000 at the event.

"As soon as we get an endowment in the account, the sooner we will be able to get things to start happening without them being pro bono," Kelly said.

Respect for Youth also wants to raise its membership to more than 1,000 people, Kelly added.

An alcoholism panel featuring representatives from Eastern's Health Education Resource Center, Rucker and Kelly, will be held before the game. The panel will focus on making responsible choices, Kelly said. Those who attend the presentation will be able to attend the game for free.

Kelly said he is excited Team

Flight Brothers will help spread the word about RFY, but admits he is even more excited about seeing them play.

"I'm like a little kid," he said. "I've always been a basketball fan and getting to see them play will be a real honor."



# The Coles County Meth Awareness Coalition: awareness, education and promotion

By Jacob Bough

The Coles County Meth Awareness Coalition was formed in 2003 by local social service and law enforcement agencies, youth program providers and concerned citizens to address the growing methamphetamine concern plaguing Coles and nearby counties.

The Coalition's mission is based on two guiding principles: "to provide educational and informational activities to increase public knowledge and encourage a comprehensive community response to the meth epidemic," and "to support the efforts of local and regional agencies and facilitate a widespread prevention effort."

Alex Harris, a junior journalism major, now works as an intern to implement many of the concepts of the Coalition, especially those related to the first

principle: "educating the public on meth related issues and promoting awareness in Coles and the surrounding counties."

Some of Harris' responsibilities as an intern include scheduling relevant speakers and testimonials from recovering addicts, planning and organizing fundraisers, and planning and organizing a community day even called "Cook Pork, Not Meth," a barbecue held as an alternative to meth use.

In addition to Harris's responsibilities, the CCMAC also offers a number of other services to recovering addicts and the community. It provides incentives to recovering addicts. For example, each time an addict tests negative for meth, CCMAC waives his or her test fee, in partnership with the Coles county drug court team.

Wendy Hill, senior communication studies major, is also

interning with MAC.

The Coalition has also produced a documentary about meth abuse and its consequences titled "Slingshot into Destruction." The documentary, which appears in two one-hour segments, is available online on the outreach section of WEIU.net, and is also available on DVD from WEIU-TV upon request at 581-7193.

With programs in place geared toward educating the public on meth dangers, the interns and Ke'an Rogers, manager of publicity and promotions for WEIU and volunteer board president for CCMAC, hope to help eliminate the problem; and it seems to be working.



"Meth is still a problem in the area," Rogers said, "but it's not as widespread as it was four years ago, which is a good thing."

Rogers and the interns hope that through the continuing action of CCMAC, the organization will assist more people with addiction, and the fatal drug's presence here will decline.

The MAC Web site offers educational information about meth addiction and resources for those addicted to and affected by the drug. For more information, visit the Web site at [www.ColesCountyMeth.org](http://www.ColesCountyMeth.org).

## Intern for Indiana Pacers coordinates crowd-drawing events

By Carla Poch

For Eastern journalism alumnus Eric Saxton, obtaining an internship was just a few clicks of a mouse away.

Saxton searched the Internet and saw a posting that interested him. He then decided to drive to Indianapolis to inspect further. After a short drive and successful interview, Saxton is now the assistant to the public relations director for the Indiana Pacers professional basketball team.

Though he has been a dedicated Chicago Bulls fan his whole life, Saxton said the decision was not personal.

"This is work, so it's easy to get past it," he said.



*Eric Saxton, took the internship with the Indiana Pacers after completing his Bachelor's degree.*

Saxton's daily duties include keeping contact lists, e-mailing those contacts and designing sign-up sheets for future contacts.

Saxton's work with College Night is the most time-consuming

part of his internship. College Night is a promotion Saxton is heading with help from other interns. By showing a college ID, students can receive a balcony-level seat and Pacers t-shirt for \$10.

The objective of College Night is to communicate awareness of the Pacers home games, to sell more tickets to students and to generate a larger fan base among college-age students. Through sending out fliers, making campus appearances at local Indiana universities and setting up special campus events, the Pacers hope to gain more fans.

The official Pacers Web site has a schedule of the games in the 2007-2008 season included

as part of College Night.

After working as an intern in the sports information office at Eastern, Saxton knew how to perform basic sports information functions. Rich Moser, sports information director, said Saxton was given "some basis for how sports media is conducted."

Moser said Saxton has a bright career outlook:

"There are some differences between college and professional sports, but I think Eric was able to learn some basic sports public relations skills while at EIU. He was a hard worker while at EIU, and I think that will help him if he decides to pursue a career in sports media."

# A learning experience in the Nation's capitol

By Barbara Harrington

Brandon Hensley only had one week to apply for an internship that he said changed his life.

Hensley, a senior communication studies major with a concentration in public relations, was one of the first two students from Eastern to participate in 10-week program offered by The Washington Center.

The Washington Center works with different universities from across the country to set up student internships in Washington, D.C., said Dean of the Honors College Bonnie Irwin.

Hensley attended an informational meeting about the center last spring. He was the only student in attendance, allowing him to ask several questions about the program. Hensley decided to apply for the program after talking with the faculty involved and watching a video on The Washington Center.

The application deadline was only one week away.

"I went ahead and applied and from there it just took off," Hensley said. "I ended up going and I just felt like it was the right thing for me at the time, so I went with it."

When students apply for the program they answer questions about their interests, majors and career goals, Irwin said. The Washington Center then uses this information to place students in appropriate internships.

The center gave Hensley several housing and internship options to choose from. The fact The Washington Center took care of all the arrangements was a relief to Hensley.

Upon acceptance into the program, Hensley was given a list of potential internships.

The Washington Center sent Hensley's information to the organizations on the list and the organizations then contacted Hensley for a phone interview.

Hensley chose to intern at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services because the government agency offered him a monthly stipend to help with living expenses.

As an intern with the Department of Health and Human Services, Hensley said he worked about eight or nine hours a day. His primary responsibilities were with public affairs and Web communications. Hensley conducted research and wrote interactive pieces for the agency's Web site.

"They actually revamped the whole Web site while I was there," Hensley said. "So I had a lot to do with that. It wasn't like I went and got coffee for people. I was completely involved in the agency."

He added that "learning how to communicate and use new media was a lot of fun and it was very interesting from a public affairs perspective, which is kind of close to public relations."

In addition to his internship responsibilities, Hensley was required to maintain a portfolio and attend weekly lectures.

Although he was intimidated when the program began, Hensley said being in an unfamiliar place and not knowing anyone pushed him to succeed.

"It was challenging," Hensley said. "I really think I grew a lot because of it because I was out there on my own and you are held accountable for your job and other work."

At the end of the 10 weeks, Hensley's internship supervisor evaluated him.

Irwin said she received a great report on Hensley.



*Brandon Hensley stands in front of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., during his internship with The Washington Center.*

Now that Hensley is back at Eastern, he said he feels more confident about his communication skills because of his experience with The Washington Center.

"It really prepared me for the business and professional world," he said. "It really helped me to establish contacts that might be useful in the near future."

Hensley is the programs chair for the Daniel Thornburgh chapter of PRSSA at Eastern.

**THE WASHINGTON CENTER**

For more information about obtaining an internship with The Washington Center please visit the TWC Web site:  
[www.twc.edu](http://www.twc.edu)

# Members compete: PRSSA runs two campaigns instead of one

By Danielle Scott

Public Relations Student Society of America's Dan Thornburgh Chapter has decided to transform its normal routine.

This semester, organization members will gain practical public relations experience. Each year—sometimes each semester—PRSSA runs a campaign with a local organization.

Normally, the fall semester is more relaxed than the

usually start in the fall semester. Since this did not happen, Rannells said the PRSSA executive board wanted to make an impact this semester with two campaigns: the Children's Advocacy Center and Team Flight Brothers.



*Team Flight Brothers, an affiliate of And 1 sports, is made up of some of the best dunkers in the world.*



*Children's Advocacy Center is a place where abused children can find a refuge before, during and after interviews about their abuse.*

These campaigns are a “win-win situation” for both the students and the causes, according to Brian Sowa, a PRSSA faculty advisor. Students will gain PR experience while serving the community.

Children's Advocacy Center helps abused children to tell their story. After an incident of abuse, children at CAC answer questions about what happened in a controlled environment, away from their abusers.

Directors of CAC decided to create a home-like environment

with couches and toys so children feel comfortable enough to explain their problem. Workers and volunteers are trained to prepare the child for interviews and court hearings through mock interviews.

The other campaign, Team Flight Brothers, works in conjunction with Eastern's registered students organization Respect for Youth. TFB is a group of World-Class Athletes known for being the best slam dunkers in the United States. The group is coming to Eastern April 15 to raise funds and increase awareness of RFY.

By participating in these campaigns, PRSSA members have the opportunity to understand what future jobs in PR will require, while accomplishing a great deal for the community along the way.

spring semester. Sara Rannells, PRSSA vice president, said brainstorming and preparation

## General Information

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If you would like to become a member of either one of these campaigns, but are not a member of PRSSA, please contact [prssa.eiu@gmail.com](mailto:prssa.eiu@gmail.com).