

# The Relay



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Issue 2

## Focus on PR networking

This issue offers a description of various networking opportunities on and off campus available to students interested in learning more about public relations.

### EIU alumni come back with good advice for PR students

By Stephen A. Cook

A strong emphasis on real world experience with constant learning and adapting was part of the Wednesday, Oct. 13, public relations/marketing panel, at Communication Career Day in the Union.

The panel was composed of three public relations professionals, each practicing in different positions: Todd Jones, vice president of production services, and Sean King, associate account executive for Jones & Thomas marketing communications, and Peggy McCarthy-Havenar, director of recruitment and selection for the Carr Group of Northwestern Mutual. The companies are located in Decatur and the Chicago area, respectively.

"Being able to adapt to communication needs in today's market is key for success and survival in today's market," Jones emphasized.

Jones knows a thing or two about adapting to change. A typical day for Jones consists of internal meetings in the morning with creative teams and then production of radio and TV spots for Jones & Thomas later in the day.

Jones was in different positions inside the agency before landing in his present position. A 1994 graduate of Eastern Illinois, Jones began his career doing account work for Jones & Thomas.

Account work is the major job description for King, a 1999 Eastern graduate, who began his career seeking work in the lucrative but competitive pharmaceutical sales industry.

King soon found himself at Jones & Thomas. As an associate dealing primarily with clients, he also found a sudden need for sound research, solid preparation and

attention to detail when representing an agency externally.

"Account management is all about making sure the clients get what they want," said Jones, a former Jones & Thomas account executive himself. "And that it's perfect."

"In college I wasn't always prepared and didn't study as much as I should have," King admitted. "But if you let

that happen to you in the real world, things are going to happen as a result of your lack of preparation."

A typical day for King usually involves internal agency dealings as well. He is responsible for bringing client information to Jones & Thomas' creative and production teams.

King usually works on the entire public relations process, taking the client communication to the actual production of the campaign. Jones, however, deals with the "product" intermittently, working with the campaign off and on during several different stages. Consequently, retrieval of information is a huge

part of Jones' job, as things may have changed in the transition from one stage to the next.

Jones, whose studies at Eastern included an interpersonal communication concentration, finds himself more than capable at performing the various duties his job demands.

"You don't realize how much you've learned in school until you're done with school," Jones said.

That's certainly something Havenar has learned. Havenar urged students to enroll in persuasion, listening and discussion-based classes while at Eastern, as these classes have much to do with sales and give students preparation for real-life work.

**Being able to adapt to communication needs in today's market is key for success.**

—Todd Jones,  
Jones & Thomas  
marketing communications

Advice continued on page 3

## Dining with professionals helps get a foot in the door

By Kimberlee Boise

Several Eastern students attended a PRSA dinner Sept. 23 at Marsha's Waterfront Restaurant in Decatur, at which Edward Kraus, a public relations professional from L.A., spoke.

"I felt his presentation did a good job of revealing the complexities of human behavior in organizations, addressing the differences in those behaviors, dealing with the obstacles and how this can lead to effective change management in organizations," said PRSSA Adviser Brian Sowa.

Kraus came to discuss how to survive change that takes place in an organization. He introduced the four quadrants to the audience. "There are four stages in the process of change," said Kraus, "Denial, resistance, exploration, and commitment" Kraus talked about the four steps, the characteristics of each and how management can help move people through the process.

"Mr. Kraus' presentation didn't specifically focus on public relations in business settings, but many of the key points of his presentation could be applied to the development of internal communications for companies," said Jon Rule, a student from Eastern Illinois University. "He also provided valuable information on management techniques in dealing with changes that occur in business settings."

According to Kraus, the first stage that a person goes through is denial. This is a phase where a person is either in disbelief, or they might be apathetic to the change. "During this time there is activity, but not much progress," said Kraus. At this stage it is important that the employees are shown what is going to change and told how it's going to affect them and the organization.

When the individual goes into the resistance phase they start to feel anger, depression, and they may be stubborn or confused about the changes that are happening. "During the resistance phase a dialogue can be started between management and the workers," said Kraus. "Once people get to the resistance stage people are still skeptical and uncomfortable with the changes." Kraus said that it was important for employers to ask



Photo by Terri Johnson

From left: EIU students Jon Rule, Kimberlee Boise and Jacob Sweet all network at the PRSA dinner in Decatur, Sept. 23.

employees for feedback and to acknowledge their complaints about the change.

The final quadrants are the exploration and commitment stages. During the exploration stage, the individual will either accept the change or move into the commitment, or they will fall back into the resistance stage. "During this stage it is important that employers are talking to employees about the change, as well as coaching them and training them to be prepared for the change" Kraus said. The exploration is the deciding phase, and a short-term goal for the organization.

The final phase, commitment, is the long-term goal of the organization. When a large number of an organization's employees are in the commitment stage, they are committed to both the organization and its change, and they are more likely to work as a team. "When people have hit the commitment stage they are focused and they are satisfied," said Kraus.

"It is important to reward the employees and to never stop planning ahead," said Kraus. "They will be more effective and efficient. Effective meaning that they will do a better quality job, and efficient meaning that they will do their job in a timelier manner."

He said that there will be a few people that will never accept the change for whatever reason. "One way those employers can help is to delegate," said Kraus. "If you have a full plate, let the people under you take on some of the smaller responsibilities so that you can worry about the big ones."

"It is important that there is a willingness to communicate what is not working so that you can make it work," said Kraus. Once a goal is set, implemented, and there is increased productivity for the organization, there is a time of immediate celebration after the success is learned. "Celebration should be consistent and sincere, not just all at once," said Kraus.

"I felt that the speaker was very knowledgeable," said Jacob Sweet, a junior communications major at Eastern. "I went up to him after the presentation to get his business card."

"Support is critical to the entire process," said Kraus. "Change is dynamic."



Photo by Terri Johnson

Stephen Cook, senior journalism student, and an Illinois State University student chat with guest speaker Edward Kraus at the PRSA dinner in Decatur, Sept. 23.

## Advice from page 1

"Every job has a degree of sales to it," Havenar said. "Whether you're selling a product to a client or yourself to a future employer." Havenar's journey has been more of a winding one than her counterparts.

Graduating in 1997 from Eastern with a communication degree featuring an on-air radio concentration, Havenar began looking for work with a big-market station. After all, she did have experience after two Chicago-based internships and her activity with WEIU while at Eastern.

Havenar discovered that in order to make it in a big market, she must first make it in a small market.

She took a job at a radio station in Springfield, Ill., only to find a year and a half later that her future was not in radio. She then started a public relations internship in Chicago, but that was not what she wanted either.

What was an unemployed 23-year-old to do?

After attending a large job fair at McCormick Place in Chicago, Havenar formed an instant connection with an exuberant, energetic associate of Northwestern Mutual. After five interviews, she was its newest associate.

"To be honest, I didn't even look at what company the woman worked for," Havenar said. "I was just so impressed with how excited she was about her job. I wanted to be that passionate about my job."

Havenar agreed with King's advice that students should

find out what they want to do on a daily basis and really go after that type of job.

She did, however, issue some caution.

"Don't clutter your résumé with too many jobs,"

Havenar warned. "That makes you look like you don't know what you want to do, that you don't have a clue. None of your résumés should be over a page long right now."

Havenar advised students to seek a job that fits their personalities and abilities and to talk to several different companies to find a good match.

On the networking front, Havenar said that 68 percent of employment is found based on who you know.

"Start looking around at people you know right now," Havenar said. "Who do they know and who do their families know?"

The panel discussed pertinent needs in today's market, all of them touching on the need for good speaking, good writing and good listening.

And what do they look for in an interview?

"There's no substitute for real-life experience," Jones said. "I want someone who can adapt to different positions and situations."

"Remember," Havenar added. "Success is defined by a constant dedication to learning."

## PR campaign in students' hands

By Holly Frejlich

A handful of Eastern students, under the supervision of Professor Terri Johnson, put their public relations skills to the test this semester by running a public relations campaign for the Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site.

The students are members of the public relations techniques class, taught by Johnson. Their assignment was to find a non-profit organization and run a public relations campaign for them. They chose the Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site. The students set objectives for the campaign and will be running the entire campaign themselves. Jim Johnson, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, is a member of the Lincoln-Sargent Board, which raises funds for the site's educational program, and will be working with the students throughout the campaign.

The site was once home to Thomas and Sarah Lincoln, Abraham's father and stepmother. President Lincoln was known to make frequent visits to the site. The Lincolns lived there throughout the 1840s and the present-day staff is trained to be interpreters of that time period. Each summer, educational programs are offered at the site for young students interested in learning about life in the 1840s. They visit the site for a day, dress like they would if it were 1845 and go about the daily chores of the farm. To help raise money to send those students to the site for the day, the public relations class is sponsoring an adopt-a-student program. The program is designed

to get people involved with helping to educate young children on their history. A donation of five dollars would send one student back in time to 1845. All who donate will have their names put on certificates, that will be posted for all to see. Those wishing to donate can contact Professor Johnson at [cftlj@eiu.edu](mailto:cftlj@eiu.edu).

The public relations class is also in the process of planning the creation of a new brochure for the site. Matthew Mittelstaedt, Executive Director for the Lincoln Log Cabin, has asked the students to create a brochure which will not only be given out at the site to visitors, but will be sent to various tourist centers throughout the state. The brochures will be the main source of advertisement for the site.

By the end of the semester, the students will be able to go into the world of public relations as veterans. Their first real public relations campaign will be behind them.



Photo by Dean Jim Johnson

The Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site is located ten miles south of Illinois Route 16 on Fourth Street in Lerna.



## Cookout brings in over \$500 in just a few hours

By Sara Wagoner

More than 350 lunches were served to hungry people at the Mary Kelly-Durkin Agency Scholarship cookout on Oct. 2. The cookout was held by the PR case studies class at County Market to help raise money for the Mary Kelly-Durkin Agency Scholarship.

It was a successful day for the six students who raised over \$550 that will go towards endowing the first ever PR scholarship at Eastern. For \$2, customers got a soda, chips and their choice of a hamburger, hotdog or brat. County Market donated all beverages, chips, grilling material and the location.

Manager of County Market, Bob Banning said the students did a fantastic job of promoting the cookout and raising money for a good cause. The six members of the PR class put the event together in less than two weeks. They sent out flyers to all department staff as well as

press releases to local media. Class members included Brian Hajik, Sara Wagoner, Kimberlee Boise, Ken Bauer, Michael Dixon and Genevieve Cyr.

"I thought it was a great experience. We had a great turnout and raised a lot of money. We had great support and reached our goal," said Brian Hajik who manned the grill all day long.

"We had people waiting in line, and people would come back for more. I think that was a good sign of success," said Kimberlee Boise, who stood at the corner of County Market and Lincoln with a sign advertising the event.

With the new addition to the funding, the Mary Kelly-Durkin Agency Scholarship is well on its way to being endowed. The scholarship will become the first PR scholarship at Eastern and is named after Mary Kelly-Durkin a former journalism and PR professor at Eastern.

## Upcoming Events

### November 10

By Holly Frejlich

Members of Eastern's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America, PRSSA, will be attending Half Day with a Pro in Indianapolis, Wednesday, Nov. 10.

Half Day with a Pro is an event sponsored by the Hoosier Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, in which students are invit-

ed to visit with professional public relations practitioners. Practitioners will inform students of job responsibilities in the field of public relations and students will get to see the professionals perform the daily duties required for their jobs. A PRSA luncheon will follow the morning of shadowing.

### November 15

By Cassie Fifer

Master Communicator Media and Public Relations Professional Development Program will take place at the Radisson Conference Center in Bloomington, Ill., Monday, Nov. 15.

Two workshop sessions with two tracks each to choose from, a keynote address, networking possibilities and a reception honoring members of the Association of Women in Communication Springfield and Bloomington chapters and PRSA Central Illinois chapter, will be included.

A keynote presentation by Tom Hoog, Chairman of Hill and Knowlton, will end the workshop. Hoog, a member of Hill and Knowlton's Worldwide Executive Committee, was selected by PR Week magazine as one of the 100 most influential public relations practitioners of the 20th Century. He will also speak at the evening dinner.

Anyone interested in attending this even can contact Professor Terri Johnson at [cftlj@eiu.edu](mailto:cftlj@eiu.edu).

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