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the newsletter for public relations minors

PRSSA chooses CARE for spring project

By Kristen Thompson

Every year, EIU's Dan Thornburgh Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America chooses an organization for its spring service project. This year students have chosen the Coles County Animal Rescue and Education Center. The CARE's needs were brought to PRSSA members' attention at a meeting through one of its members, journalism alumna Jess Caudle, according to Secretary Katie Hull, communications studies major.

Through a presentation and a vote, members of PRSSA decided CARE was the organization members would like to help and President Jacob Woelfel, communications studies major, said he thought "the pictures of the puppies and kittens got everyone."

PRSSA is planning to do a major fundraiser for CARE on April 22. Hull said members are setting up a "CARE Feud tournament (like Family Feud). The participants will pay a fee and the earnings will be donated to CARE."

Teams will be narrowed down to two teams to play in a championship and win the prizes. Also, a sponsorship committee is asking local organizations to either donate prizes or money for the event and CARE.

A few members of PRSSA volunteer time every week for CARE, and the hope is that after the fundraiser, more awareness will be raised and more people will volunteer their time as well.

According to both Hull and Woelfel,



A few members of PRSSA get a feel for the Coles County Animal Rescue and Education Center, the organization they chose for their spring service project, as they talk to Roger Greenwell, CARE director, and "Maggie" about the fundraiser "CARE Feud Tournament" that will be held April 22.

Photo by Angie Faller

no monetary goal has been set yet, but they are both confident the fundraiser will raise a fair amount of money to help CARE. Some of the funds that will be raised will go to buying necessary items such as special kitten food, shampoo, old towels and rugs, which CARE needs.

Last spring, PRSSA did a pizza crawl around Charleston. The proceeds went to the American Cancer Society, and this fall they also did a few fundraisers for PRSSA with Papa John's and Pizza Hut, Hull said.

"PRSSA allows students to be involved in a professional organization, which creates many windows for students as they finish their education. The experience from PRSSA lets students build portfolios as well as have something to put on a resume," Hull

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"The pictures of the puppies and kittens got everyone."

-Jacob Woelfel, president of PRSSA, on the presentation that made members of PRSSA want to help with the Coles County Animal Rescue and Education Center.

Karen Korsgard gives advice on PR success

• *By Lindsey Borrelli*

“You don’t have to re-invent the wheel every time. Make sure never to burn your bridges and you can have the same people to go back to.”

-and-

“No matter what, don’t be afraid to do the grunt work. Building positive work habits and having dedication is important from the very beginning of your career.”

-Karen Korsgard gives advice on the importance of networking and dedication in a PR career.

• Karen Korsgard, senior account executive at Hult Fritz Matuszak in Peoria, places huge emphasis on reliability, responsibility and professional networking in order to ensure her success throughout her career.

• “Professional relationships are really only an extension of your personal relationships,” Korsgard said.

• With this outlook, she has been able to become a successful public relations

• practitioner for both nonprofit and for profit organizations such as Hult Fritz Matuszak, Illinois Chamber of Commerce and the Secretary of the State’s office.

• Through all of her work experiences Korsgard enjoys not-for-profit work because of the ability she has to help individuals in need.

• Her account executive experience is less emphasized on the raw public relations aspect of her job and is more focused on the ability to identify the needs of her clients and help them. It is her “desire and love to create material that has a positive impact” that excites her most about her job. Korsgard has been involved in various campaigns such as multiple sclerosis and women in need.

• Korsgard emphasizes the fact that there is no “I” in her success. Job to job, client to client, and relationship to relationship, the same people form your

network of resources which help ensure your success. She has relied on a team of support that has allowed everyone involved to play up their strengths.

• “You don’t have to re-invent the wheel every time,” Korsgard explains. “Make sure never to burn your bridges and you can have the same people to go back to.”

Beginning at her internship with Governor Jim Edgar after college, she has strived to make it known to her employees and clients that she will fulfill the job to the best of her abilities.



Karen Korsgard, APR

Korsgard’s desire to pay attention to every detail immediately upon meeting her clients has allowed her to build numerous relationships.

• “Get the job done and don’t over promise” is the advice that she offers to college students and young public relations professionals. She also emphasizes the importance of doing internships and getting real hands-on experience.

• “No matter what, don’t be afraid to do the grunt work,” she

said. “Building positive work habits and having dedication is important from the very beginning of your career.”

Korsgard is an Illinois State University alumna and is currently the senior account executive at Hult Fritz Matuszak. She has also been involved in PRSA since 2001 and is currently serving a two-year term as the Central Illinois Chapter president. She is accredited in public relations by PRSA.

In addition, Korsgard serves as the professional adviser to the Dan Thornburgh EIU PRSSA Chapter.

How to find a PR internship online

By Angie Faller

As the summer gets closer, many professors are telling their students to go out in the world and find internships. Could the Internet be the answer?

"Students should realize that finding a job via the Web has a low success rate, but it can happen," said Terri Johnson, an associate professor of journalism.

One student who found a public relations job online is Ashley Walz, a 2005 Eastern alumna and the director of public relations at Illinois AMVETS, an outreach organization that helps veterans.

"I had pinpointed what city I wanted to live in, and looked specifically at local business Web sites," Walz said. "Illinois Skills Match is the Web site that actually got me the job, which is a state Web site. I would definitely recommend filling it out. Also, if you're looking for a job in journalism, I found www.journalismjobs.com helpful."

Students can begin a job search online by typing key phrases into search engines. "Remember that PR can encompass a variety of things," Walz said. "Search using the term 'communications' and you'll get a wider range of results."

Johnson, who also advises Eastern's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America, recommends that students use the Internet only to supplement job searches.

"Students ought to use any resource they have, but face-to-face is still the best way to find a job," Johnson said. "If you find out about a job online, then you can

follow-up in person."

Johnson recommended that students looking for a PR job or internship should network through organizations such as PRSSA. Students who are members of PRSSA have access to the organization's Web site job center, which has approximately 65 internship listings.

Non-members can access the site's career resources section, which has an article on how to find an internship, a printable 16-step job search campaign strategy and tips on how to write a résumé and cover letter.

The public relations industry is projected to grow faster than average, but competition for entry-level jobs positions will be fierce, according to the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site. College graduates who have had an internship will have the best opportunity for these jobs.

Web sites such as www.monster.com, www.careerbuilder.com and www.hotjobs.yahoo.com allow job seekers to upload multiple résumés and cover letters, search for jobs and have relevant job postings e-mailed to their address.

"Currently, 1,323,800 jobs are live on Monster, which is convincingly a big number," said Pradeep Kumar, a Monster central-customer representative. "The count of résumés in the Monster database is 60,909,192, which shows that most of the people rely on the Internet for their job search."

Students also might find Career Services' online-job database useful. Students who are registered at Career Services have access to a database with

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Networking Opportunity

What: Central Illinois Chapter of PRSA: Master Communicator Awards Dinner

When: Thursday, March 23, 6 p.m.

Where: Decatur, Hickory Point Banquet Center

Who: Guest speaker Peter M. Smudde, Ph.D., will discuss message formation and framing. Emcee Julie Staley, WICS-TV will award the Master Communicator Awards for Central Illinois.

Student cost: \$20

Contact: Terri Johnson for more information or to RSVP at tljohnson@eiu.edu

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said.

CARE is a small not-for-profit county rabies control and animal shelter, according to www.petfinder.org. CARE does have a set list of rules and requirements and there is an adoption

fee, before someone can adopt a pet from the shelter, but staff are willing to work with the potential adopter in order to have a good outcome for all involved.

Dogs and cats are always available

Panel spoke about crisis communications

By Lindsey Borrelli

The public relations and crisis communication panel at Communication Day on Feb. 22 emphasized the different aspects of communication needed, especially in crisis situations such as Hurricane Katrina.

Dr. Brian Sowa, Dr. Tim Coombs, and Anita Sego were the panel members in the discussion.

Anita Sego, former director of the American Red Cross in Coles County, spoke about varying your communication techniques and approaches based on the audience. "Who, what, when, why and how are my Bible," Sego said. "Without knowing the answers to these questions and adapting your communication accordingly, your message will be ineffective."

Sego provided many examples of ways to vary your communication. One example dealt with low-income families. She said some do not have phones, so asking them to call for registration does not work. She also said the time of an event should be shifted based upon the

audience

"An 8 a.m. meeting for college students isn't a good idea," Sego said. "However, a night meeting for the elderly wouldn't work either."

Other areas of variations were where to put fliers and what word choice and medium to use.

Dr. Tim Coombs, associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies, closed the panel with a discussion on Hurricane Katrina and why those in poverty had difficulty evacuating.

Coombs discussed how the government has a Web site, which helps people prepare for disasters with checklists of helpful hints to help people be prepared. However, Coombs pointed out in an event like Hurricane Katrina, people in poverty do not have extra money to buy food for a survival kit, let alone the Internet to check the Web site.

"Katrina showed holes in communication with those below poverty level," Coombs said. "People were told to evacuate, but if they didn't have a car they weren't given an additional way to leave the city."

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nearly 2,000 job listings, said Bobbi Kingery, a career advisor.

"Our jobs come from two primary sources," Kingery said. "The ones that we (career services employees) enter, and companies that have been cleared by us also post jobs. The other jobs come from the Experience Network, a national software package used by major universities."

An advantage to using Career Services' database over other databases "is that most people who use this database are looking for entry-level positions," Kingery said. "They (employers) know they are dealing with mostly college grads."

The top four methods of Internet job searching in 2003 were reading online ads or listings, researching potential employers, submitting a résumé or application and posting a résumé with a job listing site or with a service, according to a survey on the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Statistics Web site.

When searching for a job online, Kingery suggests that students backtrack their results. "First, make sure the Internet is not your only method of job searching. Post several places, but go back and see where you're posting and what is working. Your best search will be to start hitting individual sites of companies you are interested in."



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