

# Crawl for the children's center

**By Cory Dimitrakopoulos**

More than 30 PRSSA members and their friends went on a pizza crawl Sunday to raise money for the Children's Advocacy Center of East Central Illinois. The crawl began in the faculty lounge of Buzzard Hall where participants ate pizza donated by Monical's Pizza.

The crawl continued, some walking and some driving, with stops at Domino's, Jerry's and Pizza Hut, where each establishment donated a number of pizzas.

Each participant paid \$10 to take part in the pizza crawl, \$5 of which went toward funding the crawl's T-shirts, and the other \$5 was donated directly to the Children's Advocacy Center. At the end of the crawl, a total of \$500 was donated to the center.

"I thought the pizza crawl idea was fun and catchy. I hoped people would come here with the children in mind," said PRSSA President Katie Hull.

The Children's Advocacy Center is an organization that provides initial services needed by children and the families of children who are victims of sexual assault and severe physical abuse.

The mission of the center is to minimize the trauma experienced by the victimized children, as well as supply support to children and their families and promote child abuse prevention.

"It's really nice to see college kids coming together on their own and helping out kids from the community," said Pam Riddle, executive director of the center in Coles County.

The center has locations in six different counties other than Coles, including Cumberland, Clark, Douglas, Edgar, Moultrie and Shelby.

"We only receive small state and federal funding, so fundraisers like

this one really help us," Riddle said.

This is the first year PRSSA has held a pizza crawl to raise money and awareness for the center.

"The pizza crawl idea came from one PRSSA held in 2005 for the American Cancer Society," said Dr. Brian Sowa, faculty co-adviser for PRSSA and professor of communications.

This year, Hull took things a step further when she successfully got Sunday, April 15, declared Children's Advocacy Day in Charleston.

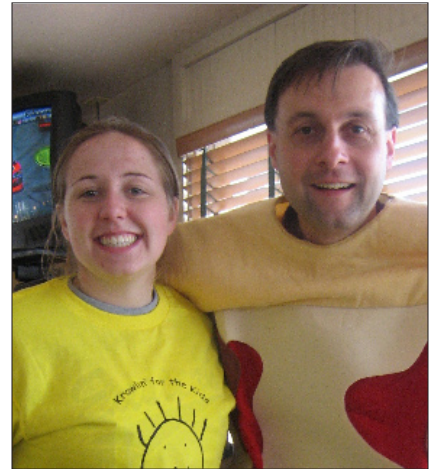
"I wrote the mayor a letter and went to the city council meeting. The mayor was really interested and even took a tour of the center," Hull said. "The Children's Advocacy Center just wants its name out there and now they also have a good relationship with the mayor."

Plans are under way to make the pizza crawl an annual fundraising event for PRSSA.

"Now that we have formed a relationship with them, we want to do something every year," Hull said.

Anyone wishing to donate to the center can contact Pam Riddle at [childadvocacy.consolidated.net](mailto:childadvocacy.consolidated.net).

**Mayor John Inyart presents Pam Riddle with the City of Charleston's declaration of April 15 as Children's Advocacy Day. Riddle said the Mayor and other city officials took more interest in the CAC after the PRSSA students brought their attention to it with the request for the proclamation.**



**Katie Hull, PRSSA president, and Dr. Brian Sowa, faculty co-adviser to PRSSA, participate in the pizza crawl for the Children's Advocacy Center. Sowa wore a pizza slice costume to promote the event. Hull wore a T-shirt sporting the CAC logo and the names of sponsoring pizza places.**



# In pursuit of public relations

**By Matt Kelly**

For years, senior journalism major Danielle Neal wanted to be a broadcast journalist.

Her aunt, a public relations professional at the University of Illinois, helped get her a broadcast internship with the WCIA news station in Champaign.

Neal successfully completed two broadcast internships with the station in 2004 and 2005.

After starting her second year at Parkland Community College in Champaign, Neal had to decide whether to attend the University of Illinois or Eastern.

She said she chose Eastern because of the journalism program's reputation.

Here, with the encouragement of journalism professor Sally Turner, Neal shifted her focus to public relations.

"I was getting sick of broadcasting," Neal said.

Since declaring PR as her concentration two years ago, she has built an impressive portfolio.

Her credentials include serving as the

associate director of The Agency, a student-run PR organization; membership and publicity chair of the Dan Thornburgh EIU Chapter of the Public Relations Students Society of America; Alpha Kappa Delta; and Alpha Sigma Alpha.

In her two years at Eastern, Neal has worked on several PR campaigns.

One time in particular solidified her decision to go into PR.

Last semester, while in Terri Johnson's PR techniques class, Neal participated in a campaign for Public Action to Deliver Shelter.

The campaign involved putting empty bags on people's doorsteps a week before Halloween. The day before Halloween, Neal and her group collected the bags. Collectively, the bags had enough food to feed the local homeless shelter for a week.

"With trick-or-treat for a cause, it really felt great to help the less fortunate," she said.

Neal was one of two students to represent Eastern at the International conference of PRSSA and PRSA in Salt Lake City, Utah. She enjoyed the networking with other aspiring PR students and many well-known professionals.

Recently, Neal has developed a flair for sports PR.

In December 2006, she took part in an externship with the St. Louis Rams.

"I got to meet all the players and really see what it would be like to work in sports information," she said.

This semester, Neal was chosen to be one of the student interns with Eastern's sports information department.

"At first I kinda hated it," she said. "But then I started working with the rugby coach, Frank Graziano. I like it now because we started working with Web technology."

When she's not busy working on campaigns, Neal works as a pharmaceutical technician at CVS pharmacy in Charleston.

"Everyone there says PR is the job for me because I talk a lot," she said.

Upon graduating in May, Neal plans to move to transfer to a CVS pharmacy in St. Louis to continue working and to begin her PR career search.



***Danielle Neal, senior journalism major with a public relations concentration, plans to start her PR career after graduation.***

# PR internship lands student job

**By Matt Kelly**

Only two years ago, while talking to a friend of the family, Katie Hull made a decision that changed her life.

The friend of the family was in the field of marketing, and she convinced Hull to go into the field of public relations.

Before the talk, she already had two years of Eastern behind her as a corporate communications major.

In the two years that Hull has been a PR major, the senior has built a résumé that would intimidate even her most ambitious peers.

She has been involved in the EIU Daniel E. Thornburgh Public Relations Student Society of America chapter for two and a half years, two of which she has been president of the organization.

Hull is also a two-year member of Lambda Pi Eta, the communications honors fraternity on campus. She has also worked at the front hall at Lawson Hall.

Hull will also take experience from two internships with her after graduation – one at a publishing firm and another in the field of corporate PR.

The publishing firm, Premiere Tourism Marketing, gave her the opportunity in Summer 2006 to design an entire magazine for them.

"I wasn't sure about working in publishing," Hull said. "But I loved it."

Since January, Hull has been working at Consolidated Communications in Mattoon.

In that internship, she writes for newsletters, among other tasks.

The experience has allowed her to work with Sarah Greider, PR director for Consolidated Communications.

Hull said her most rewarding task was an assignment in one of her classes.

The project, Hull said, involved organizing and planning a college fair day at Charleston High School.

Hull and her group in electronic media relations class did everything involved in a real PR campaign, from setting budgets to designing fliers.

The project was for a fictional campaign, but she decided to take the plan to the high

school to see if they wanted to use the project

However, it was not within their budget.

"We did everything but actually run it,"

Hull said. "It was one of the biggest projects I've ever done in my life."

In fall 2006, Hull gained confidence in PR by attending the PRSA National Conference in Salt Lake City.

"The practitioners there told me I have what it takes to be in PR," she said. "It was sort of the icing on the cake."

Hull recently accepted a job and is set to start soon after graduation.

Premiere Tourism Marketing offered her the job.

She will be performing most of the PR work for the company as well as overseeing some new projects beginning this summer.

As for the future, she seems to have everything planned.

"I'm going back home to work and try to pay off college in the first year," Hull said.

"That's my goal."

---

***"The practitioners there told me I have what it takes to be in PR. It was sort of the icing on the cake."***

***- Katie Hull***

---



***Katie Hull is all smiles after she was offered a full-time job after graduation by the company she interned with last summer.***

# Officers named for 2007–08 PRSSA

**By Zach Nugent**

The PRSSA Board for the 2007-2008 school year has been chosen. Serving as this year's president will be Kiley O'Brien, Matt Kelly, will serve as vice president.

In addition, Sara Rannells will serve as secretary and Brandon Hensley as treasurer. Erica Morisco will be in charge of fund raising and Katrina Zaret in charge of publicity. Seth Miller will serve as the historian.

Future President Kiley O'Brien has been involved with PRSSA since the fall of 2006. O'Brien is a senior communications major with an option core in corporate communications.

"I am always eager to learn about other facets of the communication field that I may not have direct contact with through my course load," said O'Brien.

Last year, she served as executive board secretary and was encouraged to run by the previous PRSSA president, Katie Hull, a May graduate.

O'Brien said she hopes to increase member participation, recruit new members and increase the PRSSA's involvement with Registered Student Organizations.

Matt Kelly also joined PRSSA last year in order to become more involved in PR organizations. Kelly said he ran for vice president in order to continue the greatness of past board members.

"They've done a great job building on the stellar

reputation of the group, and it's the new exec board's job to maintain that work ethic and dedication," Kelly said.

Sara Rannells has been a member of the association all this year. Rannells said she ran for secretary because she wanted to network with people sharing her major.

"I ran for secretary, because I wanted to get more involved in the organization. I think as secretary I will gain a lot of practical experience on campaigns and keeping a group organized," Rannells said.

Treasurer Brandon Hensley has been a PRSSA member since the fall of 2006.

"I was interested in taking advantage of the opportunity to hear professional speakers, enhance my résumé, and collaborate with other students in this exciting field," said Hensley.

Members seem excited about next year's activities. Members have said that PRSSA board members have been strong in the past and they hope to keep that tradition going.

The group has more than 50 members and meets approximately every other Monday in the Union. Anyone with an interest in public relations can join. The group just completed several service projects for the Children's Advocacy Center where the group created fundraising campaigns. Co-advisers for the group are Dr. Brian Sowa, communication studies, and Terri Johnson, APR, ABC, journalism.



*The Relay*, the monthly newsletter for EIU PR students created by **The Agency**, a student-run public relations agency.

**Editors:** Ashley Mefford & Angela Pham

**Agency Director:** Katrina Zaret

**Assistant Director:** Danielle Neal

**Adviser:** Terri Johnson, APR, ABC

To contact Ashley or Angela with story ideas or to contribute to *The Agency*, e-mail  
[almefford@eiu.edu](mailto:almefford@eiu.edu) or  
[ampham@eiu.edu](mailto:ampham@eiu.edu).



## Have a great summer!

