

The Relay

a publication for PR students

What's Inside

page **2**

Richard Fox
Joe Rhea

page **3**

PRSA Dinners
Derrick
Johnson
works with
Obama

page **4**

Alumna
Jennifer
Stoops

page **5**

Internship
Opportunities
& Calendar
of Events

UMADD comes to Eastern Wide receiver turns tragedy into triumph

By Matt Kelly and Katrina Zaret

This fall Eastern joins other college campuses nationwide in welcoming a University Mothers Against Drunk Driving chapter to the campus community.

Respect for Youth, Eastern's chapter of UMADD, began with senior Micah Rucker turning a tragedy into something positive. Last January, Rucker lost his long-time girlfriend, Rebecca F. Yacob, to an underage drunk driver.

Throughout the coming year, R.F.Y. will work with the campus and local communities to spread the word about the dangers and consequences of underage drinking, high-risk drinking, and impaired driving.

R.F.Y., in order to promote its message, is bringing in inspirational guest speakers and is holding a UMADD day during one home Eastern football game. R.F.Y. will also have a

booth at most home football games and other campus events.

The Eastern Athletic Department is in full support of the cause. Cindy Tozer, director of academic services and life skills coordinator of Eastern athletics, is one of the two faculty advisers for the organization.

"I think it's great what we're trying to do. Everyone is extremely enthusiastic about getting (Respect for Youth) started," Tozer said.

Matt Kelly, senior journalism major with public relations concentration, has taken on the role as account executive for the campaign.

"This is an issue that affects everyone and because of that we've received interest from many students on campus. We have the support of the football team and the athletic department, which helps a great



deal in making our message visible to the campus," Kelly said.

Kelly does most of the designing for the campaign and came up with the logo for R.F.Y. by tracing a photograph of Yacob.

For additional information about R.F.Y. contact Matt Kelly at mwkelly@eiu.edu or Cindy Tozer at cltozer@eiu.edu.

To learn more about UMADD visit www.umadd.org.

Students encourage others to 'Donate Life'

By Katrina Zaret

At the onset of the 2006-2007 academic year, two representatives from the public relations firm Carolyn Grisko and Associates approached The Agency to be a part of the

new campaign.

The organ donation campaign, Donate Life Illinois, was trying a new angle and the idea was to get Illinois colleges involved in spreading the message of the necessity to re-register to be an organ

donor.

The 18-month Donate Life Illinois campaign began in January 2006 after Illinois law changed and a new donor registry was launched to encour

See LIFE on pg. 6



Joe Rhea, internationally acclaimed inspirational speaker, began telling his story to audiences shortly after he re-taught himself how to walk. Rhea gave a blend of two presentations titled, "Think First, then Think Big!" and "Bars, Cars and Catastrophes!" at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 12 in the Grand Ballroom of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union.

Not your average 'Joe'

By Adrienne Lopez

Approximately 300 students turned out to hear internationally acclaimed speaker Joe Rhea gave an inspirational presentation on the dangers of drinking and driving, Sept. 12, in the Grand Ballroom of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. University Union. Rhea was brought to Eastern's campus by the athletic department and the new student organization UMADD.

Rhea's presentation was a combination of his two programs, "Think First, then Think Big!" and "Bars, Cars and Catastrophes!"

His presentation aimed to teach students about the perils of drinking and driving, why to think first in all situations, and more.

Cindy Tozer, athletic academic services director and life skills coordinator for the athletic department and co-adviser for UMADD, working with UMADD officers, chose Rhea as the first guest speaker brought in by UMADD.

"Rhea has a very inspirational story and has overcome some major obstacles and we want you to hear it," Tozer said. "We're not trying to scare them (students). We just want to challenge them to be better students, make the most of their opportunities and understand that it could all be taken away."

Rhea will share his personal story, which started in the gym and on the football field, resulting in a tragic injury that left him paralyzed from the neck down. He will offer a heartfelt look into what it takes to be successful in life.

Journalism to start 'Pro'gram

By Jennifer Gritti

The journalism department has a new visiting professionals program and public relations professional Richard Fox will be its first guest.

During the week of September 24, the program, funded by the Fox-Thornburgh Visiting Professional Fund, will last for one week with Fox visiting different public relations classes.

A public relations lecture will be at 6 p.m. Monday in the Effingham Room of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. University Union. Fox will be the guest speaker for the Public Relations Student Society of America Daniel E. Thornburgh chapter at Eastern.

Professor James Tidwell said the program will bring Fox's expertise into the classroom to share with students.

Fox said he hopes to offer

students practical, real-life examples to the basic principles presented in textbooks. He said the diversity of public relations intimidates students, and that he will help guide them as they decipher the business.

Fox graduated from Eastern in 1971 with a major in marketing and minor in journalism. While he attended Eastern he was a reporter for the Daily Eastern News.

Fox has wide-ranging experience in health care and has achieved more than 25 professional awards. To Fox, public relations is "the right mix of marketing and advertising."

The Fox-Thornburgh Visiting Professionals Fund was established by Fox to recognize Daniel E. Thornburgh, former professor and chair of the journalism department, and his many achievements. Fox speaks fondly of Dr. Thornburgh, saying, "Dr.

Thornburgh epitomized the true meaning of the word 'teacher.'"

Thornburgh pushed Fox to excel in journalism when he taught him in Pemberton Hall, back when Eastern offered journalism only as a concentration.

"One of his [Thornburgh's] endearing and enduring qualities was to challenge the group," Fox said. This helped Fox to excel in the field of mass communication for more than 30 years.

Tidwell said Fox was the "natural choice" for the first visiting professional.

Future speakers will be chosen as time allows. Eventually, the program would like to support four different visiting professionals with two journalists, one public relations practitioner, and one photojournalist visiting Eastern annually.

„ One of his (Thornburgh's) endearing and enduring qualities was to challenge the group. „

Richard Fox, PR practitioner

PRSSA goes to dinner

Network with pros

By Katrina Zaret

In most professions, networking is a key factor. In the public relations profession, networking is especially important.

The Central Illinois chapter of Public Relations Society of America gives students the opportunity to attend dinner presentations and network with PR professional members.

On Thursday, Sept. 13, at the Kickapoo Creek Winery, Cheryl Procter-Rogers presented *Creating a New Normal: How risk, ethics and confirmation bias is shaping the public relations profession*.

Rogers has more than 24 years of experience in the PR profession and will share her observations and experience on why the public relations professional has become more critical than ever to the success of business.

Students who pre-registered for this event networked with the professionals attend-

ing and gained knowledge not available otherwise.

On Oct. 4, students have another opportunity to network with the professionals of the Central Illinois PRSA chapter by attending the dinner presentation, *Research — The Key to Messaging that Resonates*, by Alice Irvan of AIRvan Consulting LLC.

Irvan has more than 20 years experience in research and various aspects of communications for businesses and nonprofit organizations. Her presentation will go over how to tailor research, what qualitative and quantitative options are available, how to use the latest software, what rules need to be followed for online research and bring attendees up to date on what the PRSA National Research Committee is up to.

For more information on either of these events, please contact Terri Johnson, tljohnson@eiu.edu, or Katrina Zaret, kmzaret@eiu.edu.



Come to PRSSA

Time: 6 p.m.

When: select Mondays

Where: Effingham Room of the Union

Want to know more?

Contact:

Kiley O'Brien, kiobri@yahoo.com

Or Matt Kelly, mwkelly@eiu.edu

Former director of The Agency finds future in PR

By Danielle Scott

Some students are under the impression they will automatically find a job in their field when they graduate from college. However, many alumni can tell them differently.

Without preparation during college, finding a career in your chosen field can possibly take a while.

Jennifer Stoops graduated from Eastern in 2004 with a major in journalism with a public relations concentration and wondered how quickly she would find a job in the PR field.

Aside from completing all her coursework, Stoops prepared for life after Eastern by joining organizations available on campus that helped her de-

velop her journalism and PR skills.

One such organization was The Agency. During her tenure as a member of The Agency, Stoops was both the associate director and the editor of The Relay. She worked with Lauren Brody, the student director at the time, to create the Mary Kelly-Durkin Agency Scholarship. Mary Kelly-Durkin, a former Eastern professor, founded The Agency in 1984. The scholarship is presented annually to a journalism major who is a full-time student and works on the Agency.

As editor of The Relay, Stoops organized guest speakers and worked on various promotional projects to further her skills in PR.

Stoops also interned at

Consolidated Communications in Mattoon, Ill., where she worked with Sarah Greider on a corporate newsletter and researching for the Consolidated Communications marketing department. She also helped plan company events.

"These experiences reinforced the importance of following deadlines and gave me a head's up on what to expect when I graduated from Eastern," Stoops said.

Following her graduation, Stoops worked part-time at Jasper County Chamber of Commerce. This particular job helped Jennifer keep her public relations skills sharp until she could find a full-time position.

In March 2006, Stoops was hired at InformPro Inc. in Ef-

ingham, Ill. At InformPro Inc., she is the Client Services Manager and meets with different clients to determine which projects and message paths are best suited for the clients' companies. Jennifer creates the advertising media—including radio spots, brochures, Web sites, newsletters, billboards—for the projects.

Stoops advises students to again as much experience they can before leaving college to help prepare them for their future.

"College is the perfect setting to gain experience and have something to show when you're in interviews," said Stoops.

See FUTURE on pg. 5

On the road with Obama

A student's experience with political campaigning

By Barbara Harrington

While his friends were enjoying a 'typical' summer working or vacationing, Derrick Johnson was in Des Moines, Iowa, working as an intern on Barack Obama's 2008 Presidential Campaign.

Before he was chosen as an intern, Johnson, a senior journalism major with a concentration in public relations, submitted an application, responded to two e-mails and participated in a phone interview.

"Next thing I knew I was on my way to Camp Obama," Johnson said.

Two weeks before leaving for Iowa in July, Johnson participated in a training ses-

sion at Camp Obama, located in Chicago, Ill. During their week of training, interns and volunteers were exposed to guest speakers and various aspects of the campaign. Typically, training lasted all day.

Johnson learned of the in-

tions.

"Being a public relations major and seeing how political campaigns work from the inside and getting the opportunity to talk to people about views of Senator Obama would give him some pretty

oftentimes leads to jobs. She explained that although some internships are unpaid, the contacts and skills students develop sometimes make up for the lack of wages.

"That's one of the nice things about an unpaid internship," Terri Johnson said. "It can lead to networking, it can lead to a job offer and many PR agencies now don't hire people right out of the market. They may offer them an internship and then after they've had that intern for awhile, they may offer them the job."

As an intern, Derrick was primarily responsible for making calls and entering response data of the public.

See Obama on pg. 5

"Having to talk to random people and being cussed at had its advantages."

ternship through his father, Derrick Johnson Sr.

Johnson Sr. has been involved in local politics and knows the benefits of volunteering and making connec-

neat experiences for his future career," Johnson Sr. said.

Terri Johnson, journalism professor and adviser, said the department encourages all students to get internships, which

The Pantherpalooza Experience

Members of The Agency, PRSSA and UMADD greet the campus and create awareness.



Terri Johnson's PR Technique's class took on UMADD as its non-profit campaign for the semester. Clockwise from left: front row: Katrina Zaret, Lakita Coleman, Marjani Lewis, Trina Cattani, Maggie Moseley; back row: Matt Kelly, Derrick Johnson, Alex Harris.



PRSSA members Alison Henry and Wendy Hill brave the heat to help promote public relations.

From OBAMA pg. 4

Interns were given a list of names and phone numbers of registered voters from the Democratic Party to call and ask a series of questions. They then put data from the calls into a database. The data allows interns to determine which candidates have the most support and what issues are important to the voters.

"The main focus of this part of the campaign is to figure out who is supporting each candidate," Johnson said. "And if they are supporting your candidate, make sure to get them into the caucuses."

To help guide interns and volunteers through the phone calls, workers were given a list of talking points. These points aided the interns in knowing what questions to ask and made talking to an unknown person easier. After making

several calls, Johnson said he no longer needed the talking points because he became familiar with the material.

Johnson said everything was structured at the office. Interns were required to make approximately 150 contacts each week, a contact being someone who is identified as either a supporter, non-supporter or undecided.

With the amount of people who are not at home, or hang-ups, meeting the goal of making 150 contacts in a week can be difficult. However, the interns worked long hours to make sure they completed the task.

"For the most part we worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week," Johnson said.

"Next thing I knew I was on my way to Camp Obama."

However, if the interns met their goals early, they were able to take a day off.

Volunteers and interns also used the face-to-face communication technique by passing out fliers and talking to citizens.

Johnson said through the internship he was able to meet and work with wonderful people and has a better understanding of politics.

"I feel like I have walked away with more knowledge about what's going on," he said. "Through attaining knowledge, you attain wisdom and I feel like I am a wiser person than I was before."

Working on the campaign also helped Johnson develop

skills that will prove useful in his future career in public relations.

"Having to talk to random people and being cussed at had its advantages. Any type of shyness or apprehensions you have about talking to people, you get past it," he said.

Being involved with the Iowa caucuses stands out on a résumé and Johnson hopes his experience will help him find a job soon after graduation.

NOTE: Both quotes were made by Derrick Johnson.



The Agency and PRSSA member Jennifer Gritti (left) and PRSSA member Kelly Twaits work at taping candy to informational fliers for The Agency, PRSSA and UMADD to pass out to passersby if they were interested.

A big thank you
goes out to everyone
who participated in
Pantherpalooza.



Jennifer Stoops, Eastern Alumna sits at her desk working on design materials for one of her projects.

From FUTURE pg. 3

For interviewing, Stoops suggests that students find out as much as they can about the company they are interviewing with. To stand out from

other applicants, Stoops says student should "learn exactly what they're wanting and focus on your skills in that area."

General Information

This is the official publication for public relations students at Eastern Illinois University.

Printed in the Journalism Office of the Buzzard Building.

Editors:

Matt Kelly

mwkelly@eiu.edu

Katrina Zaret

kmzaret@eiu.edu

Student Director:

Katrina Zaret

Associate Director:

Matt Kelly

Faculty Adviser:

Terri Johnson



Members of The Agency—Katrina Zaret, Cory Dimitrakopoulos, Angela Taylor, and Matt Kelly—along with Jeff Slutz and Scott Meis—representatives of the public relations firm Carolyn Grisko and Associates—make a proposal to the Panhellenic Council about Donate Life, an organ donor program The Agency took on in Spring 2007. Before January 2006, family members could overturn donor decisions, posthumously.

From LIFE pg. 1

age at least 3.5 million Illinois residents to donate life—and register in the state's new organ and tissue donor registry by April 2008.

Under the previous Illinois law, families of organ donors were allowed to overturn the donors' decisions to donate their organs. Under the new law, only the donor can overturn his or her decision.

The Agency voted in favor of working on the Donate Life Illinois campaign and with the representatives from Carolyn Grisko and Associates—Jeff Slutz and Scott Meis. Both Slutz and Meis were supportive of The Agency and helped out by sending information from the statewide campaign and by sending donate life bracelets and 'I am. Are you?' pins for The Agency to pass out.

The campaign The Agency ran was small, but effective. Each Agency member was given donor cards and the message of the campaign and asked to do their part. Booths

were set up in the Dr. Martin Luther King Junior University Union during February—though the snowstorm hindered the process greatly. A greek organization outreach was planned and met with support from the greek community.

The final totals of the campaign from last year were 127 total registrants, 40 of which came from the greek community.

With the help and support from Slutz and Meis, The Agency was able to make the campaign a success.

"I just want to reiterate what an awesome job you all did last semester. This was the first time we had tried doing campus outreach, and in addition to giving us great results, you laid the groundwork for a successful campaign in (the future). You all were definitely one of our strongest groups, and I think you will be again this semester," said Slutz of The Agency's work on the campaign.

This year's campaign for Donate Life Illinois will kick off in October for a month-long competition where Eastern will compete with the other schools participating in the campus campaign for either sheer number of new registrants or percentage of student population registered.



Meis at the Panhellenic Council meeting.