

The Relay

a publication for PR students

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PRSSA year in review

New officers

Professional adviser visits PRSSA

By Katherine Kelley

A senior account executive, for Hultz, Fritz, Matuszak, Karen Korsgard, gave an enlightening presentation on internships for college students and professionalism.

Korsgard is a past president of the Central Illinois Chapter of PRSA. She graduated from Illinois State University in 1982. Korsgard was a mass communication major with a public relations minor. During her time at Illinois State she was a teachers assistant and was the event coordinator for three years for the March Madness event that her sorority put on as a philanthropy for St. Jude's.

Her professional career includes a number of jobs. She has worked at the Illinois Secretary of State's office, Illinois Governors office, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Chamber of Commerce, and is currently at Hultz, Fritz, Matuszak.

As Korsgard explained a little bit about herself, she wanted to get to know everyone else who was in attendance for her presentation. She was able to get a real sense of where everyone was in their college career, which in turn helped her to stress how important internships are for college



Karen Korsgard, APR, and Dr. Brian Sowa smile for the camera after Korsgard spoke to PRSSA members and guests, sharing tips about jobs and internships. Korsgard, who is accredited in public relations and a former president of the Central Illinois Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America serves as professional adviser to the Daniel E. Thornburgh PRSSA Chapter at Eastern. Sowa is one of the two faculty advisers to the group.

Photo by Cara Fumagalli

students.

Her first slide of her presentation simply stated: "January of Senior Year is too late. Better late than never."

After starting off with that she explained how it is easier to get internships when you are younger in college than when you are a senior. The main

point of having an internship is for the experience and to build your résumé. It isn't about the money, but for the learning experience of the way the business world works.

Korsgard gave links to internships for those students who had not had an internship

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"Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some hire PR officers."

— Daniel J. Boorstin

PRSSA attends Central Illinois PRSA meeting

By Crystal R. Alston

Eastern's PRSSA Daniel E. Thornburgh chapter traveled to Peoria to attend the Central Illinois PRSA meeting, March 4.

Five PRSSA members, including junior communications studies major Cara Fumagalli; senior journalism major Kyle Piurek; senior communications studies major Kelly Wittenmeier; junior journalism major Crystal Alston and president of Eastern's PRSSA Chapter, junior communications studies major, Tara Rosenbaum traveled with faculty advisers, Professor Terri Johnson and Dr. Brian Sowa, to the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino, to learn how a former General Motors public relations executive created a community relations program.

Matthew Kelly, Eastern Illinois University graduate and former Eastern PRSSA president, was in attendance with other student members, professionals and educators from many parts of Illinois. Kelly now serves on the board of Central Illinois PRSA with Sowa and Johnson.

Students were able to network, socialize and gain knowledge of new approaches to public relations.

Guest speaker Ron Actis, a management graduate from University of Illinois and former GM executive, discussed the Synchronous Communications Management system presented in his book, *Management's Last Frontier: A Communications System to Focus and Sustaining a Culture of Achievement*.

The 11-point system Actis describes is a public relations/communications planning process that he developed at



Ron Actis, speaker at Central Illinois PRSA, left, joins Cara Fumagalli, junior communications studies major, Kyle Piurek, senior, journalism major, Kelly Wittenmeier, junior, communications studies major, Matt Kelly, 2008 journalism grad, Crystal Alston, junior, journalism major, Tara Rosenbaum, junior, communications studies major, Dr. Brian Sowa, communication studies professor, and Terri Johnson, journalism professor, for a picture after the meeting in Peoria in March.

General Motors, which became GM's worldwide model.

"The process is based on how to get the right information to the right audience, at the right time to the right channel," explained Actis. "Whatever I put in the system has to get people to act."

"Actis brings a unique framework to the field of public relations," Kelly said.

Actis is an accredited member of PRSA and has received many awards for his contributions in the field.

His awards include recognition from the International Association of Business Communicators, Community Relations Institute, Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Advisory Board and Black Community Leadership

Group along with numerous citations from a variety of civic and charitable organizations.

"After hearing Actis speak, I gained great insight on the professional world of PR and how small steps can lead to big advancement," said Rosenbaum.

PRSA meetings are not just speaking engagements but a place where students can learn and progress in the field of public relations.

"Attending PRSA meetings gives us an opportunity to meet new contacts and exchange ideas," said Rosenbaum.

The Central Illinois PRSA also met April 8, at Central Station Café, Bloomington, Ill.

Guest speaker, Allen Fore, Director of Community Relations for Rocky Mountain

Express Pipeline, spoke about the unique community relations efforts that the Rockies Express Pipeline experienced, the efforts they implemented to introduce their projects to communities and how the program was successful. The meeting was entitled, PR and Community Relations: "Not in my back yard."

Sowa and Piurek attended the Bloomington program. The multi-state pipeline presented a variety of challenges, but Fore explained strategies to overcome them and safely and competently get the job done with as few problems as possible.

Central Illinois is one of Eastern's sponsoring chapters. Hoosier Chapter in Indianapolis also is a sponsor.

Eastern graduate gives insight into 'Real World'

By *Cara Fumagalli*

"The real world is not college...but it's not necessarily more difficult," said young professional and 2008 EIU journalism graduate Matt Kelly. Kelly spoke at the PRSSA meeting April 26 informing students about his real world experiences working with social media at State Farm Insurance.

As the public affairs specialist on the social media team, Kelly works on projects such as the national Home Run Derby Tournament State Farm sponsors, media measurement, and social media pitching.

Describing helpful advice learned during his first year of work, Kelly hopes to assist future young professionals. New to the professional world Kelly stressed: the importance of writing, adaptability, not jumping to tactics and knowing the difference between public relations and marketing. Kelly shed light onto helpful insights for fellow Eastern students.

Advocating the importance of knowing how to use social media in an effective manner Kelly stated, "It will be assumed you know how to use social media because of your age." Social media sites play a key role in public relations today used to stay connected with the public. Since social media is a fairly new, older generations expect college students to have knowledge of this trade.

A few social media sites that are commonly used by organizations to promote messages include Facebook, Twitter, and blog sites. Working with social media at State Farm Kelly uses the sites to: build relationships, educate customers, engage new

audiences and align with the brand statement.

Giving advice on how to find internships and jobs Kelly promoted the professional social networking site LinkedIn. Kelly described the site as a great way post your resume online and create relationships with employers. Taking advantage of internship opportunities and building your portfolio is another point Kelly made in order to keep ahead of competition.

Kelly also encouraged students to take full advantage of Eastern's resources. Using faculty as advocates and taking part in RSOs will help students gain valuable experiences and relationships. Leaving a legacy at Eastern has been a part of Kelly's collegiate years. As a former PRSSA president, director of The Agency, co-founder of Charleston's Respect for Youth University Mothers Against Drunk Driving and a Founding Father of Beta Theta Pi National Fraternity, Kelly enjoys coming back to EIU to see students carrying on the tradition.

A student here just two years ago, Kelly has moved forward with successful career in social media. Now balancing graduate school at Ball State University as well as a full time job, Kelly still made time to visit the place he once called home, according to Professor Terri Johnson, journalism..

Kelly is a board member of the Central Illinois Chapter of PRSA. He completed the course work for his master's at Ball State University and is now completing his master's thesis.

While at Eastern, Kelly was named the *PR News* Student of



Eastern Police Chief Adam Due, left, visits with 2008 graduate Matt Kelly. The two worked extensively together to educate students and the community about the dangers of drunk driving through Eastern's Respect for Youth chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Photo by Colleen Rowan

the Year, a national honor that he traveled to the Press Club in Washington, D.C., to accept.

Kelly had internships at Disney College, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Centers, and at State Farm. He was a finalist for the State Farm position among professionals with Ph.D.s and more than 15 years experience. He thinks he got the job because co-workers knew what to expect from him and what he could do thanks to

the internship.

Kelly spent Monday at Eastern. He spoke with four classes — Prof. Johnson's Public Relations in Society and Public Relations Case Studies classes, Dr. Brian Sowa's Public Relations Techniques class and Dr. Bryan Murley's Multimedia Journalism class.

In addition to speaking at the PRSSA meeting, Kelly also spoke at the Respect for Youth/UMADD meeting.

Eastern graduate, now Caterpillar lobbyist, gives insight into life in the Beltway

By Cara Fumagalli

Kathryn S. Himes, Eastern alumna, came back as the Arts and Humanities speaker. Himes spoke to students and faculty regarding her professional career at Caterpillar Feb. 24, in Doudna Fine Arts Center.

Currently working in Washington, D.C., as the senior governmental affairs representative, Himes has spent 11 years working for Caterpillar. Throughout her

career, Himes has held a variety of positions, everything from working on the manufacturing line to corporate news editor.

Himes received her undergraduate and graduate degrees in speech communication from Eastern Illinois University and her Master's of Business Administration from McDonough School of Business at Georgetown University and ESADE, an international

academic institution.

During her presentation, Himes focused on the importance of meaningful work by explaining her position, as an "issue manager" which Himes mentioned is a nice word for lobbyist.

"My efforts align with my belief in providing Caterpillar with the best possible labor benefits," explained Himes.

Himes' job in governmental affairs is to inform, educate and persuade members of Congress to pass items of legislation that support Caterpillar's business policies or deter those that do not.

Himes describes the most challenging part of her job: "I have no control over how Congress votes."

Himes is responsible for tailoring a message for all walks of life.

"Although my work is challenging, it is the most rewarding," said Himes.

Growing up in Peoria, Himes always keeps her local community in mind. She takes to heart the impact her efforts has on her best friend's dad who works in Caterpillar's manufacturing plant.

To keep focused in Washington, Himes reminds herself why she is a lobbyist and what her success means to not only to the bottom line and Caterpillar, but also to employees and the surrounding community.

The advice Himes gives to EIU students is to explore likes and dislikes through student

activities.

"It is a low risk way to find out what you like," said Himes.

At Eastern, Himes was a teacher's assistant, involved in student government and her sorority.

Himes also advised students to seek insight from professors and take advantage of internships.

Himes recommends students interested in the corporate communication profession to look into business courses, gain exposure in a foreign language

Although my work is challenging, it is the most rewarding.

— Kathryn S. Himes



Eastern graduate Kathryn S. Himes presents her lecture on "The Meaningful Work of Communicating Inside the Beltway: Employee Relations, Corporate Communication, and Issues Management in our Nation's Capital." The communications studies alumna is now Caterpillar's senior governmental affairs representative.

Photo by Kelsey Karstrand

and as well as explore electives.

Again, Himes stressed the importance of finding harmony within your belief system and your career.

For not being back on Eastern's campus since 1998, Himes was happy to speak at a place she once called home. Working in Washington, D.C., since 2004, Himes is very satisfied with her career and all the opportunities she encountered working for Caterpillar.

Himes' visit was part of the Humanities Series: Meaningful Work. The title of her lecture was "The Meaningful Work of Communicating Inside the Beltway: Employee Relations, Corporate Communication, and Issues Management in our Nation's Capital."

Disney College internships fun, educational

By Kali Kroscher

The Disney College Program is a once in a lifetime opportunity to build great experience and put on one's résumé that he or she worked with a Fortune 100 company. The Disney College Program internship is a semester long paid internship that can be completed during spring or fall. Students can either go to Anaheim, Calif., or Orlando.

Jordan Cox, an EIU campus representative, says "I can personally say that it is a great talking point during interviews, after all, everyone loves Disney!" Cox is a junior, communications studies major.

Eastern has been recruiting for fall of 2010, and usually sends about 15 students each semester. Besides looking good on a résumé and being a great experience, a lot of students find themselves figuring out what they want to do career wise by taking the internship. This can either change students' minds completely or help them realize they are on the right track.

This internship includes three aspects: learning, living and earning. Students get to meet people from all over the world, become independent, live on their own, make life-long friends and learn about working with others using

teamwork.

Students also learn skills that can transfer over to jobs in the future, such as leadership skills.

The classes students take through "Disney University" are unique. Participants earn credit through classes that are not offered anywhere else.

"There are also ways they can get internship credit through Eastern or take online classes in order to stay a full-time student and not get behind in credit hours. And there are many networking opportunities with Disney professionals as well," said Stephanie Gruner, sophomore, communications studies major.

This internship stands out on a résumé because Disney's one of the most well-known companies in the United States and the world. The desire to work there is high. It has a strong reputation it upholds.

Recently, the American Council on Education (ACE) granted Disney the ability to give its interns credit for \$40 per course. Disney is one of the few internship programs offering hourly pay and college credit at the same time.

The amount of time spent determines the credits received. A student can earn up to nine credit hours for the semester.

During the spring or fall program six credits can be earned in five months.

If a student goes during the spring or fall advantage programs, which are seven months, nine credit hours are available. The summer program is worth three credit hours. Earning credit allows students to maintain their status in college, keep up with credits and not fall behind.

Being involved in this internship also allows students to investigate what a Fortune 100 company is all about and the requirements of a specific business in a specific area along with the expansion of a business and how one grows the way Disney did.

It's not all work at Disney. As a member of the Disney College Program, students are also considered as a part of the Cast Member team at the Disneyland Resort.

Students can treat themselves, their family and friends to programs and discounts on food, hotels, merchandise and admissions to the theme park.

The participants end up working in front-line roles such as the attractions, stores, lodging, entertainment and food, to name a few, while living in Disney's housing complex.

This housing complex separates people depending on their gender and being more than 21 years old. Interns can have anywhere from one to seven roommates depending on what they prefer.

No two jobs are the same, which is a great variety, but all allow the participant to gain self-confidence, independence, communication and problem-solving skills.

Once through, students are able to apply for a role more closely related to their major.

Interns are expected to be fully available and anticipate working anywhere from 28-32 hours per week and anytime of the day since the resort operates 24 hours. Jobs can have an hourly wage from \$8.68-\$11.50, depending on the role.

There is some hard work to be done, but students also get so much more reward out of this experience. Learning what it takes to build a work ethic and being involved with a Fortune 100 company like Disney will build excellent character and experience while helping students stay on task with hours and being paid to do it.

To find out more information about Disney internships, visit <http://www.eiu.edu/~famsci/Disney/DisneyCampusReps.php>.

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before or for those who were looking for one.

She shared many different opportunities she had found, including State Farm, Country Financial, Caterpillar, Illinois Film, and legislative internships.

Preparation was the next topic of her presentation. She said to always have a clean, and professional résumé. She also

said that if students are going into something creative, such as graphic design, then their résumés don't need to be on white paper with black writing. They can be creative.

She said that what someone may not think is very interesting may be interesting to his or her future employer. She said students should outline the tasks that they had to complete in

order to reach goals and include those on their résumés, such as a leadership roles students had while in college.

After having gone through interviews, or even sending out résumés, she said, students should not be afraid to follow up with the company who interviewed them. Korsgard also mentioned that it never hurts to send a "thank you"

note. A hand written note showing appreciation will also help show professionalism and interest in either the job or internship applied for.

Korsgard, ending on a positive and encouraging note, told students to get involved within the community and to be a go getter.

PRSSA has busy semester

By Crystal Alston

The Daniel E. Thornburgh Eastern Illinois chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America had a busy semester.

The EIU chapter of the American Marketing Association and PRSSA hosted a benefit concert for Haiti at Stu's March 25. The event earned about \$400 to help with the Haiti relief fund through the Red Cross.

In March, five PRSSA students and both advisers traveled to Peoria to hear former General Motors PR Executive Ron Actis discuss community relations strategies and tactics. (See story, page 2.)

April 8, Central Illinois PRSA met at Central Station Café, Bloomington, Ill. Guest speaker, Allen Fore, Director of Community Relations for *Rocky Mountain Express Pipeline* told about the unique community relations efforts that the Rockies Express Pipeline experienced, the efforts they implemented to introduce their projects to

communities and how the program was successful. The meeting was entitled, *PR and Community Relations; "Not in my back yard."* Publicity/public relations chair Kyle Piurek, senior, journalism major, attended, with adviser Dr. Brian Sowa, communication studies.

April 10, Illinois State University held this year's PRSSA Regional Activities at the Marriot Hotel and Conference Center in Normal, Ill. The conference is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme for this year is: Celebrating 30 Years of Professional Growth. Kelly Tompkins, fundraising chair, represented Eastern at the event. Tompkins, a junior, communications studies major, is researching the regional activities program to see if Eastern might host one next.

Tara Rosenbaum, PRSSA President, suggested that Eastern chapter should perhaps host the 2011 PRSSA Regional Activity next spring. Each spring, regional activities take place across the country.

Planned, staffed and hosted by local chapters, these activities contain a great variety of events that will allow students to improve their networks, skills and abilities. The decision to pursue this opportunity will take diligence, commitment and hard-work in which members of PRSSA are prepared to employ.

PRSSA members had a Bake Sale and made more than \$75 this week.

April 19, Karen Korsgard, APR, the chapter's professional adviser, gave the chapter insights into her job experience and tips on getting their own internships and job experience.

April 26, Eastern alumnus, Matthew Kelly, former PRSSA president and 2008 graduate, visited campus to speak with PRSSA members and other students about his experience at State Farm, and offer some valuable advice on how to be successful in the field.

Dues for PRSSA are \$60. Interested students can always check out www.prssa.org for more information.

PRSSA elects officers, board for fall

Tara Rosenbaum has been re-elected president of PRSSA. The communications studies major is a junior.

Tony Delagarza, junior, communication studies major, was elected vice president. He replaces Megan Riesenbigler, communication studies major, who is graduating, and who served also as secretary. First semester, Elizabeth Morin, junior, communication studies major, served as vice president.

Secretary for the fall will be Kelly Wittenmeier, a junior, communication studies major.

Ben von Behren, a junior, communication studies major, will serve as treasurer.

Ashley Melhouse, a junior, communication studies major, previously served.

Publicity/public relations chair will be Crystal Alston, a junior, journalism major. She replaces Kyle Piurek, journalism major, who will graduate in December.

Cara Fumagalli, junior, communication studies major, was appointed programs chair. She replaces Sara Boro, a senior, communication studies major, who will graduate in December, and Kelly Wittenmeier, who was elected secretary.

Fundraising chairs will be Jessica Dwigins and

Kelly Tompkins, both junior, communication studies majors.

Aeshia Gabriel, junior, communication studies major, is community service chair.

Cristin Prince, junior, communication studies major, will replace Tony Curcuro, senior, Spanish major, as national liaison.

Two positions remain vacant and will be filled in the fall: historian/Webmaster and membership chair.

Advisers are Dr. Brian Sowa, communication studies, and Prof. Terri Johnson, APR, journalism. Professional adviser is Karen Korsgard, APR, Hult, Fritz, Matuszak.

General Information

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