The Agency plans Sexual Assault and Rape Awareness Week 2011

By Ellie Sternaman

Every two minutes, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted. Of those assaults, 60 percent go unreported. It’s an issue that affects thousands of Americans, but an issue that few talk about.

April 25 – April 29, The Agency hosted Got Consent? Sexual Assault and Rape Awareness week on Eastern Illinois University’s campus.

Barbara Harrington, The Agency director, said the goal of the campaign was to educate and empower students as well as start an open dialogue on campus about sexual assault and rape.

“While both sexual assault and rape impact several Eastern students, they’re issues that are rarely addressed by students or faculty,” Harrington said. “The Agency wanted to change that by helping to educate and empower students.”

Harrington also mentioned how the campaign was a learning experience for members of The Agency. “We wanted to put together a campaign from start to finish by ourselves,” Harrington said. “Through working on the awareness week, students were able to get hands-on experience in event planning, media relations, design and other aspects of public relations. It’s been rewarding to see students take on leadership roles and get excited about the campaign.”

The week-long awareness campaign kicked off on Monday with a lecture. Amanda Kettering and Erin Walters from the Sexual Assault Counseling Center spoke about SACIS and the dangers of sexual assault. Kettering also shared her experience of being sexually assaulted.

Tuesday night, the movie Speak was shown in the physical science building. Speak is about a high school girl who is raped at a party.

Senior communication studies major and Agency member Anton Jefferson designed the logo for The Agency’s Sexual Assault & Rape Awareness campaign, using the blue diabetes ribbon and signs for male and female.

The week wrapped up on Thursday with a panel discussion in the Doudna Lecture Hall. The panel featured local and university experts. The Agency also sold Got Consent? T-shirts throughout the week. All proceeds benefitted SACIS.

“This was a great learning experience for all involved and we’ll be able to use this campaign to build our portfolios and grow as an Agency,” Harrington said.
Students organize Diabetes Alert Day

By Crystal Alston

Students in Terri Johnson’s public relations classes hosted EIU’s first ever Diabetes Alert Day at the student recreation center, April 20.

“I am very happy with the outcome of the event. We hope EIU will continue to do it.”

“The Relay”

EIU grad tells PRSSA about TweetheartTV

By Ben Peacoy

Continuing on a streak of “Skype sessions” with professionals aimed at enhancing members’ understanding of their discipline, EIU alumni and social media guru Stephanie Wonderlin joined the Daniel E. Thornburgh Chapter of PRSSA.

Wonderlin also stressed the importance of building an online presence. Among her accomplishments are pioneering an interactive social media channel on YouTube called Tweetheart TV where she gives social media news, tips, social media marketing info, book reviews, and more. Also, Wonderlin was recently included in a list of the top 100 women in social media.

Wonderlin also addressed the importance of building an online presence. One way, she suggested, was to create an online interactive resume video with links and explanations of the various projects she has been involved in with YouTube.

“Develop Incorporated mostly worked on an internship in guest relations for 44Doors, a mobile consultant agency in Austin. Sternaman said, “I had the choice to take a position in the marketing leadership program or a position with Diners Club International’s marketing team.”

Sternaman said the marketing leadership program is an innovative rotational program designed to coach college graduates on career direction.

“While attending Eastern Illinois University, Wonderlin majored in communication studies with a minor in business and advertising.

“Another graduating senior who has promising outlooks on the horizon is Cristin Prince, National Liaison Chair for PRSSA, who will rotate into three different teams in the marketing department throughout one year,” Sternaman said. “I will spend four months with each team and at the end of the year I will move into a permanent position.”

Sternaman said she will be working on project assignments in areas such as brand management, advertising, planning & strategy, e-business, event management, campaign management, relationship management, media strategy, product marketing, and more.

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Indianapolis JCC rebrands and reboots

By Cristin Prince

A company can’t stay the same forever. Evolution is inevitable and change is essential for an organization to be successful.

Mindi Epstein, director of marketing and membership at the Indianapolis Jewish Community Center, spoke at a rebranding campaign she headed up at the Indianapolis Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators meeting, April 20.

Epstein, a graduate of the University of Michigan, began her career in media sales in San Francisco and later gained experience as an archaeologist and academic writer in Jerusalem.

As director of marketing and membership at the JCC, Epstein focuses on strategic planning, branding, art direction, project management and sales.

She joined the JCC as director of communications in 2001, prior to which she worked as a graphic designer and writer in Indianapolis, Chicago and Philadelphia.

In 1997, the JCC was part of a $25 million campus expansion and renovation. The expansion sparked the rebranding campaign and brought a revolution to the way the JCC serves its members and the community.

Epstein explained prior to the rebranding, the promotional materials the JCC had included a newsletter and a brochure. After conducting some research, the organization found that 60 percent of their client wasn’t English.

As a result, the JCC came up with a rebranding campaign that would appeal to everyone while still keeping the faith.

Epstein said she knew the rebranding process would need to be more than skin deep: looking beyond a logo and graphics to everyday interactions with employees, management and members.

Epstein and her team started by making a media audit in order to figure out in what ways their message was being sent and whether or not it was effective.

They set objectives and came up with new ideas to create a better image for the organization. “We wanted to create a branded voice that brought forth an inviting, fun and creative side,” Epstein said.

Flyers, brochures and newsletters were developed that had the new slogan, “Community is our middle name.” In addition to this, the organization launched Facebook and Twitter accounts to target younger generations.

The strategic rebranding plan coordinated numerous programs and outreach activities into a coherent brand, delivered brand messaging daily through each employee’s interactions with members and re-engaged the organization.

Since the launch of the campaign, the JCC has been operating efficiently and has seen an increase in membership.

Epstein said although the JCC faces a lot of competition in the surrounding area, it is still able to keep people coming with its effective message.

Epstein’s well-planned rebranding campaign rebooted the organization into high gear. Two IU communication studies majors and journalism professor Terri Johnson attended the meeting.

After the speaker, Drew Carey, president of IABC/Indianapolis and two IABC volunteer gave the students, Cristin Prince, senior, and Kelsey Hayes, junior, advice and job hunting tips.

Indiana PRSSA hosts regional activity

By Allison Trinkleback

As social media continues to develop, it becomes more and more of an important tool for PR practitioners.

Indiana University’s Beth Wood Chapter of PRSSA hosted its regional activity on April 8-9. Three IU PRSSA members attended the conference and were able to learn about the importance of social media and how to use it to communicate strategically and professionally.

Attendees had the chance to attend two different keynote addresses and multiple developments and breakout sessions that catered to social interests. The sessions focused on a variety of different topics including the latest trends in social media as well as social media strategies, case studies and tools.

Participants also had the opportunity to network with professionals and fellow public relations students from schools all around the Midwest.

Keynote speaker Jay Baer spoke on how companies can succeed at the art of purposeful sociability.

Baer also spoke about the five dangerous social media realities. Baer is listed in Fast Company Magazine as one of the three leading social media advisors in America.

Cara Fumagalli, senior communications studies major and PRSSA programs chair, attended the all-weekend conference and learned a lot of valuable information.

PRSSA members learn new social media skills

By Tara Rosenbaum

A Social Media Workshop to enhance students’ knowledge of different social media sites was hosted by the Daniel E. Thornburgh Chapter of PRSSA on March 28.

The Social Media Workshop focused on four important social media sites: LinkedIn, about.me, foursquare and personal blogs.

Cara Fumagalli, senior communications studies major and PRSSA programs chair, organized the workshop.

“We decided to host the workshop to keep members informed about the latest online sites that can help students network and develop their personal brand,” Fumagalli said. “Social media presence in the public relations field is key and it is important for PR practitioners to be on top of the new platforms.”

Jessie Dwiggin, senior communications studies major and PRSSA fundraising chair, presented on LinkedIn. Dwiggin stressed the importance of students having a LinkedIn presence now.

“It is important for students to have a LinkedIn account because more than 80 percent of companies search LinkedIn for potential employees,” Dwiggin said. “It’s an easy way to increase any and all career opportunities and it provides a platform to post an online resume.”

Tim Trahey, junior communications studies major, spoke about a new social media site—About.me.

About.me allows the user to provide a paragraph or more about oneself. Users can customize the background, font, colors and link their other social media sites to it. Sites compatible to link include Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Tumblr, WordPress, Blogger, Posterous, Flickr, Foursquare, YouTube and many more.

“About.me allows us, as students, to give one site to employers instead of trying to tell them five sites to visit,” Trahey said. “It’s very unique and useful.”

Geoff Zuhone, sophomore journalism major, presented on foursquare at the workshop.

Foursquare is a location-based social media site that is only available to users with GPS mobile phones.

To use foursquare a user “checks-in” to a place when they are in the venue. Each check-in gives the user points that go towards earning badges.

“Geotagging, the act of people using their smartphones to locate themselves and tell other people, is one of the next steps in social media,” Zuhone said. “It’s a fun way to discover places near you while reading quick reviews from other users.”

Allison Trinkleback, senior communications studies major and PRSSA secretary, said she was happy the workshop only focused on these sites. “These are sites that are not as common as Facebook and Twitter, but are just as important to understand,” Trinkleback said.
EIU PRSSA sells sunglasses

By Kelsey Karstrand

EIU PRSSA members sold sunglasses during the months of March and April to raise money for their chapter.

Jessie Dwiggins, senior communication studies major and PRSSA fundraising chair, said the chapter wanted to move away from traditional fundraisers like selling t-shirts or baked goods.

“We really wanted to do something creative and appealing to raise money for the chapter before the school year ended,” Dwiggins said. “The sunglasses seemed fun and trendy and we thought they would be a big hit with EIU students.”

The black and blue 80s style glasses have EIU and a panther paw print on the side. Cara Fumagalli, senior communications studies major and PRSSA programs chair, said the versatile glasses were equally popular among males and females.

“The 80s style gives the glasses personality and a lot of people were excited about the school spirited theme,” Fumagalli said.

PRSSA members sold the glasses for $3 a pair or $5 for two pair in the Library Quad, outside Lumpkin and Coleman Halls, and at Communication Day and still has some.

Tara Rosenbaum, senior communications studies major and PRSSA president said the profits from the sunglasses will go towards next year’s chapter.

“Our goal was to make as much money as we could before the end of the school year so that next year’s chapter has a bigger budget to work with,” Rosenbaum said. “A bigger budget means more opportunities for PRSSA. It allows us to put on campaigns, host events, and participate in more activities like national and regional conferences.”

Beigie explains ‘made media’

By Tara Rosenbaum

Earned media and paid media are now making room for a third option for communicators – “made media.”

David Beigie, vice president of public affairs at State Farm, discussed how PR professionals can seize made media to become full-blown content creators as well as how teams can create media that people actually want to watch and pass on to others at the Central Illinois PRSA meeting Thursday, April 28.

Prior to working for State Farm, Beigie served as vice president of corporate communications for T-Mobile.

Some of his many accomplishments include teaming up with Google to introduce the first Android smart phone and leading numerous campaigns that won T-Mobile a spot on FORTUNE Magazine’s Best Companies to Work For list in 2009.

Both PRSA and IABC have credited Beigie and his teams with top honors.

The meeting was at Rizzi’s Italian Restaurant in Peoria Tara Rosenbaum, current PRSA chapter president, and Tim Trahey, incoming president, attended.