

**Public Relations  
Student Society  
of America:**

*a brief*  
**HISTORY**

**THE FIRST**  
*two decades*  
By Dr. F.H. "Chris" Teahan, APR

**THE SECOND**  
*two decades*  
By Dr. Susan Gonders and  
Dr. Barbara DeSanto, APR, Fellow PRSA

a 40th anniversary gift for  
students and their advisors  
from

**CHAMPIONS**  
*for* **PRSSA**

# Foreword

2007

While legions of enthusiastic, supportive and persistent PRSA members played key roles in the formation of PRSSA, these three led the way in making it happen in November 1967:

**JON RIFFEL**, APR, persuaded PRSA leaders that “the time has come.”

**DR. F.H. “CHRIS” TEAHAN**, APR, wrote the original PRSSA constitution.

**J. CARROLL BATEMAN**, APR, the PRSA President who presided over the Assembly that voted unanimously to establish PRSSA.

Their pioneering efforts made these three visionary men the **FOREMOST FOUNDING FATHERS** of today’s strong and thriving student organization.

PRSSA Godfather Chris Teahan’s parting gift to the student organization he loved was to write the history of its early years. His work documented the birth pains of PRSSA and his influential partnership with two other Godparents – Jon Riffel and J. Carroll Bateman. It’s an exciting story of a long, stubborn struggle by educators, students and practitioners – climaxed by triumph at the November 1967 PRSA Assembly in Philadelphia, where delegates voted unanimously to establish PRSSA.

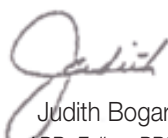
One story that’s missing from Chris’ account came from Jon Riffel. After the vote, he left the Assembly floor and headed up to his hotel room. Strangely, the door was open. Even stranger was the sight of a familiar University of Florida student on the phone. His explanation: He had talked the housekeeper into letting him in to wait for Jon. His irresistible apology: He was keeping an open line to a Gator in Gainesville so that campus would be the first to get the word about PRSSA and to celebrate! For years, Jon told that impudent story with special delight.

All three Godfathers are no longer on the scene. But they are represented with special spirit by Carroll’s only son, Walter, a retired insurance CEO. Like all three once were, Walter is an ardent Champion. He attends every PRSSA Conference, inspires students about business ethics, and serves annually as a Bateman Competition judge. Walter is a strong supporter of PRSSA scholarships, awards and – yes – this book.

Reporting the second 20 years of PRSSA are two other remarkable PRSSA Champions – Dr. Susan Gonders of Southeast Missouri State University and Dr. Barbara DeSanto of Washburn University. Their labor of love and research represents the unfailing dedication of generations of educators to students, their studies and preparation for the practice.

With this 40th anniversary gift, the Champions salute the authors, PRSSA, its progress and promise, its founders, its advisors, and PRSA, its parent which continues to nurture the student organization.

For those who know its history, PRSSA has proved to be one of the most significant achievements in defining public relations as a profession. Read and take pride, our colleagues!



Judith Bogart  
APR, Fellow PRSA  
PRSA Past  
President



Kent Landers  
PRSSA Past  
President and  
PRSSA Hall of Fame



Gary McCormick  
APR, Fellow PRSA  
PRSA Foundation  
President



Betsy Plank  
APR, Fellow PRSA  
PRSA Past  
President

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# **THE FIRST** *two decades*

**By Dr. Frederick  
"Chris" Teahan, APR**

1988

The Public Relations Society of America was established in 1947, and PRSA founded the Public Relations Student Society of America in 1967-68. Chris Teahan served as Vice President of Education for PRSA and the first Executive Director of PRSSA. He retired in 1987 and, with welcome prompts from Jon Riffel, APR, and Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA, he wrote the history of PRSSA's first two decades in 1988.

Succeeding Teahan were Colleen McDonough and Elaine Averick, followed in 2000 by the current Director of Education, Jeneen Garcia. PRSSA now has more than 9,600 members in 284 universities.

The mission of PRSSA is two-fold: (1) to serve members by enhancing their knowledge of public relations and providing access to professional development opportunities; and (2) to serve the public relations profession by helping to develop highly qualified, well-prepared professionals.

IN 1950, the Public Relations Society of America first expressed interest in forming a student counterpart. However, enthusiasm soon waned, despite the zeal of a few forward-looking professionals. The times inspired other commitments of the society, many members even denying that public relations could be taught. Besides, the fraternal organizations of Tau Mu Epsilon at Boston University and Pi Alpha Nu at San Jose State College (now University) filled current needs.

In 1965, Howard Penn Hudson, APR, chairman of PRSA's Education Committee, again pressed for formal affiliation with students whose on-campus public relations "clubs," "fraternities," or "societies" had meanwhile increased to six in number. In addition to San Jose and Boston, they were located at West Virginia University and the universities of Florida, Southern California and Texas.

The first step was taken when representatives of each of the six schools were invited by Ovid Davis, APR, 1965 President of PRSA, to attend that year's National Conference in Denver as guests of PRSA. Their welcome by professionals, most of whom had never before met face to face that new species, the public relations student, prompted Robert B. Wolcott Jr., APR, 1966 President of PRSA, to invite a repeat performance in New York.

The next strides were almost simultaneous.

The late Professor James Young, of West Virginia University, noted in April 1967 that the increase in the number of independent student groups, with no central guidance and no common objectives, might be more cause for alarm than joy. As president of the Public Relations Division of the educators' organization called the Association for Education in Journalism (AEJ), he urged PRSA to take the lead by establishing a professionally oriented national student organization.

In the same month, the Long Range Planning Committee of PRSA issued a statement at the PRSA Spring Assembly in Pebble Beach, California: "Perhaps our greatest concern for the future is the question of where the 'next generation' of practitioners will come from. Let public relations grow wild, without the benefit of academic preparation, and a half century from now it will be as forgotten as phrenology."

The "next generation" was personified at the Pebble Beach meeting by members of Pi Alpha Nu of San Jose State. At the invitation of Jon Riffel, APR, member of the Board of Directors (and 1971 President of PRSA), they exhibited to the Assembly what could be done through cooperation of professionals and academics.

November 11, 1967  
Birth of PRSSA

April 4, 1968  
First PRSSA  
Chapter Charters

Thus during the same year two influential groups – PRSA and AEJ’s Public Relations Division – had agreed that a commitment should be made “soon.”

At that same Pebble Beach meeting, Delegate Walter Seifert, APR, of Ohio State University, moved that “soon” be “now”! He asked the Assembly to adopt a resolution urging the PRSA Board of Directors to study the possibility of creating a national student society. Delegates passed the resolution unanimously, calling for a report at the next Assembly, to be held in Philadelphia the following November.

The late J. Carroll Bateman, APR, 1967 President of PRSA, immediately appointed a joint advisory committee, composed of members of the PRSA Education Committee and the Public Relations Division of the AEJ. Chris Teahan, who was Education Director at PRSA at that time, prepared a position paper on the subject – including a proposed constitution and set of bylaws governing the hypothetical student society.

The paper was presented to the PRSA Assembly at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia on November 11, 1967. It received unanimous approval. The Public Relations Student Society of America was born.

The enthusiasm was so high that a special organizational meeting was called that day by Jon Riffel. Students attending the Assembly in anticipation of the birth of PRSSA convened, along with several educators – among them Raymond Simon, APR, of Utica College; Alan Scott, APR, of the University of Texas; Carol Hills, APR, of Boston University, and Walter Seifert. At the PRSA board meeting the following day, Jon Riffel reported, “It was the consensus that plans be accelerated right away rather than wait until the first of the year.”

One of the first actions by the 1968 President of PRSA, the late Edward P. VonderHaar, was to appoint the “Committee on the Formation of a Student Public Relations Society.” Its members were the ubiquitous Professor Seifert, Professor Pearce Davies, APR, of San Jose State College, Norman Dolnick, Chicago public relations counselor, and two students, Matthew Joey, of San Jose State, and Timothy Blake, of the University of Florida, Jon Riffel was the obvious choice as chairman. If the committee’s title was cumbersome, its actions were anything but. It rallied all known independent student groups, tightened national regulations, encouraged and reviewed applications for PRSSA charters and defined the relationship between PRSA and PRSSA.

On April 4, 1968, the PRSA Board of Directors created the first PRSSA chapters at nine schools which met the charter

## 14 Alpha Chapters

*Chartered in 1968*

Central Missouri  
State University

University of Florida

University of Houston

Kent State University

University of Maryland

North Dakota University

Northern Illinois University

Ohio State University

San Jose State College

University of  
Southern California

Syracuse University

University of Texas  
at Austin

Utica College

West Virginia University

requirements, including offering a minimum of two public relations courses. Those charter chapters were the University of Florida, the University of Houston, the University of Maryland, Ohio State University, San Jose State College, the University of Southern California, the University of Texas at Austin, Utica College, and West Virginia University. The total charter membership was 196. Three additional chapters were approved on June 28: Central Missouri, North Dakota and Syracuse universities. One more – Kent State University – received its charter on September 13. Another, at Northern Illinois University, was created on November 17. A total of 14 PRSSA “alpha” chapters in that first year!

Missing still was an exclusive publication of the new student society. In the fall of 1968, all existing chapters were invited to submit bids for its production. The expert prospectus submitted by two seniors at Utica College – including a new name, *Forum* – won. The first six-page, two-color issue appeared in the spring of 1969.

★ ★ ★

What an unlikely time it was for the PRSA leadership to create a junior branch of the society. Unlike Dickens’ assessment of events two centuries earlier, the 1960s and early 70s were not the best of times *and* the worst of times. To many, they were the unmitigated *worst* of times. Riots devastated cities. Violent protests about involvement in Vietnam were commonplace. The assassination of public figures both sickened and frightened. Widespread radicalism assaulted all American institutions – religion, government, the military, democracy. Universities themselves were denounced as “irrelevant.” And all of this was inevitably connected in the popular mind with Student. The champions of a public relations society of young collegiates, however, were undaunted. Radicalism appeared to be absent from the ranks of those pre-professionals.

★ ★ ★

PRSA did not immediately hand over the governance of the new junior society to students. Although they were enthusiastic in their support of the *idea* of PRSSA, members of the parent society themselves were not altogether certain of what PRSSA’s structure should be or how it should be managed. There was, after all, no precedent.

Consistent with one of its objectives in establishing a student society – the preparation of young people for eventual active participation in the parent organization – PRSA created in 1969 a new category of membership exclusively for graduates of PRSSA, “Pre-Associate.” Under a new ruling, PRSSA members, after receiving a baccalaureate degree, could join

1970 - 1990  
PRSSA National Chairs

1974  
Joan-Patricia O'Connor  
University of Southern California

1975  
L.W. Scott Mall  
University of Georgia

1976  
Maureen M. Pater  
University of Dayton

1977  
Robert E. Maples  
San Diego State University

1978  
Daniel S. Pelino  
Western Kentucky University

1979  
Laurence Jahns  
University of Dayton

1980  
Alan D. Kelly  
University of Southern California

1981-1982  
Kathleen Schoch-Ziprik  
Glassboro State College

1982-1983  
James R. Neumann  
Boston University

1983-1984  
David Tolleson  
University of Georgia

1984-1985  
Laury Kline  
West Virginia University

1985-1986  
Brian M. Hujdich  
Glassboro State College

1986-1987  
Tom Beyer  
Northern Arizona University

1987-1988  
Elizabeth Culley  
West Virginia University

1988-1989  
Sean Essex  
University of Wisconsin at Madison

1989-1990  
Chuck Hartlage  
Western Kentucky University

PRSA, regardless of whether or not they were yet employed in a public relations capacity. Pre-Associate status could be maintained for two years, by which time, it was hoped, the graduate would have found permanent work in the field.

★ ★ ★

During the next five years the growing interest of professionals was very evident. PRSA chapters across the country became increasingly eager to involve students. “Pro-Am” programs, in which professionals and students worked together on local projects, gained in popularity. The Foundation (now Institute) for Public Relations Research and Education began early its generous and continuing support of PRSSA members by establishing an annual Graduate Scholarship Program in 1969. Student-run public relations firms, guided by teachers and practitioners, began to spring up on campuses around the country.

Inevitably, the increase in PRSSA’s growth resulted in increasing costs to PRSA in providing services. During the period of national economic recession, PRSA took a hard look at its finances. In 1973, it was determined that the parent society had been spending up to \$50,000 annually in support of PRSSA, whose chapters now numbered 35, with a total nationwide membership of 1,000. The annual PRSA Conference alone – for which the society paid one-half airfare for a representative of each PRSSA chapter, all of whom received complimentary registration as “PRSSA Assembly Delegates” – cost nearly \$10,000.

Interestingly, it was the students themselves who proposed a national dues structure for individual members of PRSSA to help make the student organization more self-supporting. The plan was adopted in November 1973 with predictions that membership would be reduced by half. Instead, it promptly increased by 20 percent!

★ ★ ★

The early 70s also witnessed the increasingly expressed desire of responsible students for a more authoritative voice in managing PRSSA.

Joan-Patricia O'Connor, a graduate student at the University of Southern California and one of the two “token” students on PRSA’s Committee on Student Organization, took the initiative. In 1973, she presented to the PRSA Board of Directors and Assembly a resolution calling for PRSSA to be managed by students. The Assembly and Board, led by Betsy Plank, 1973 President of PRSA, gave their formal approval during the PRSA Annual Conference in November in Honolulu. The Public Relations Student Society of America

*the 1960s*  
PRSSA National Advisors

Ludwig Caminita (1969)  
Pearce Davies, APR (1968)  
Robert W. Faulkner (1969)  
Jon B. Riffel, APR (1968)  
Walter W. Seifert, APR  
(1968-1969)  
Raymond Simon, APR (1969)

National Committee then superseded the six-year-old PRSA-dominated Committee on Student Organization.

Three days later, the first-ever election of national student officers took place at the sixth annual meeting of PRSSA delegates to the PRSA Conference. Not surprisingly, Joan O'Connor was chosen first National Chairman of PRSSA and took office on January 1, 1974. Elected with her were a Vice Chairman, National Editor, and nine District Chairmen, who were counterparts of PRSA's nine District Chairmen. The PRSA Board, on the recommendation of students, appointed two Faculty Advisors and two Professional Advisors, all with limited voting privileges, and the then-Education Director of PRSA as PRSSA Administrator.

At the same meeting in November 1973, the PRSSA Assembly, composed of one delegate from each chartered chapter, was established as governing body of the student society. The entire structure was regulated by "PRSSA Rules and Procedures," based on the organization of its parent society. (Although PRSA had added Article XV, regulating PRSSA, to the society's bylaws in 1972, PRSSA National Bylaws were to be a product of the future.)

Students had thus demonstrated their organizational acumen and readiness to assume responsibility on a national scale. It remained for them to demonstrate to professionals what public relations students were learning in the classroom. The vehicle for this purpose was provided by the PRSA Education Committee in the form of a case study competition.

In September 1973, two months before the Honolulu Conference, PRSSA chapters were notified that, upon arrival, their representatives would be given a case problem prepared by the committee. They were to decide that same evening whether or not they wanted to enter the competition. The next day, each participating school was assigned a room in which its team could prepare a "solution" to the problem between 8:30 a.m. and noon, their presentations being scheduled for 2:30-5:30 p.m. The work performed was impressive, considering the very short time allowed for preparation, and the oldest continuing program in behalf of PRSSA members was born. Now known as the J. Carroll Bateman Case Study Competition and sponsored by the Institute for Public Relations Research and Education, it has involved hundreds of enthusiastic students and professionals over the years.

★ ★ ★

A major break in tradition occurred in 1976. The annual November Conference of PRSA, anticipated by PRSSA members as the occasion when they could meet with pro-



*the 1970s*

## PRSSA National Advisors

Grace Barrett (1972)  
Robert Blann (1978)  
Rulon L. Bradley, Ph.D., APR  
(1970-1972)  
Ludwig Caminita (1969)  
Allen H. Center, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1977)  
Michael L. Cooper, APR (1977)  
Kip Craven, APR (1975)  
Judith Cushman (1973)  
Paul E. Dannelley, APR (1975)  
Noel Griese, APR (1975)  
Walter E. Griscti, APR  
(1973-1974)  
Jim Haynes, APR (1976)  
Jack J. Heeger, APR (1978)  
Kenneth E. Kefauver, APR (1973)  
John W. Lawson, APR (1979)  
William W. Marsh, APR (1971)  
Richard T. McCartney, APR (1973)  
Arthur P. Merrick, APR (1974)  
Paul C. Morgan, APR  
(1977-1979)  
Helen W. Nash (1971-1972)  
Douglas Ann Newsom, Ph.D.,  
APR (1979)  
Judson M. Perkins, APR (1979)  
Charles W. Pine, APR (1973)  
Arlyn S. Powell, APR (1973)  
Walter W. Reed (1970)  
Raymond Simon, APR (1973)  
Ward B. Stevenson, APR (1970)  
Kirk T. Stewart (1979)  
Gordon B. Strayer, APR (1975)  
Warren Thompson, APR (1970)  
Fredrick C. Whitney, Ph.D., APR  
(1975)  
Donald K. Wright, Ph.D., APR  
(1978)  
Frank W. Wylie, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1976-1979)

professionals, was not held. Instead, in celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial, a World Congress of Public Relations, co-sponsored by the International Public Relations Association and PRSA, convened in Boston – in August. Because it coincided with summer vacation, student attendance would be predictably low. Understandably concerned about what might be a fatal gap in the PRSA-PRSSA relationship, Maureen Pater, the 1976 National Chairman of PRSSA, rallied fellow students at the University of Dayton and convened the First National PRSSA Conference on that campus in October. It was immensely successful, attracting more than 300 students and professionals – and made \$26!

The Dayton experience bore fruit in 1977, when the late Dr. Kenneth Owler Smith, APR, of the University of Southern California, was PRSA President. Recognizing the ability of students to organize a large-scale, national conference, PRSA invited PRSSA to hold a second annual conference, this time concurrently with PRSA's in San Diego. The practice continues, ensuring the effective interaction of students and professionals.

It was in 1967 that Chris Teahan had drafted a constitution and set of rules and regulations governing the workings of the new student society. Many long hours were spent whacking these out on a manual typewriter at PRSA headquarters.

The results of the effort were serviceable for a while – until PRSSA's sixth National Chairman, Laurence Jahns, another University of Dayton student, appeared on the scene in 1979. Endowed with peculiarly acute perception, he tactfully suggested that the author's "constitution" was full of holes, his "rules" toothless, his "regulations," though fine when PRSA consisted of 20 chapters, were hopelessly ineffective when 90 chapters were involved. With expert persuasiveness, he asked a team of professionals to draft the first genuine, legally sanctioned bylaws of the student society. They were printed in 1980 with the enthusiastic approval of the PRSA board and still remain in force. Gone were the Swiss-cheese "rules and regulations."

At the same time, PRSA also recognized an essential inadequacy in that section of the PRSA Bylaws pertaining to PRSSA. For 12 years, a school had only to offer two public relations courses to qualify for a PRSSA charter. The 1975 Commission on Public Relations Education, co-chaired by J. Carroll Bateman and Professor Scott Cutlip, APR, had already dismissed the notion that two courses in the subject prepared one for a career in public relations. The commission, sponsored by PRSA and AEJ's PR Division, recommended a basic four-

*the 1980s*  
PRSSA National Advisors

Judith S. Bogart, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1985-1986)  
Mary L. Cusick, APR (1988)  
Anthony J. Fulginiti, APR  
(1982-1983)  
Gerald M. Gee, APR (1981, 1986)  
Michael B. Hesse, Ph.D., APR  
(1984)  
Kathy M. Hyett, APR (1984-1989)  
Patrick Jackson, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1980)  
Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D., APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1989)  
Frank T. LeBart, APR (1983)  
James A. Little, APR (1984-1985)  
Hunter P. McCartney, Ph.D., APR  
(1987-1988)  
Edward J. Menninger, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1982-1983)  
Arthur P. Merrick, APR  
(1981-1982)  
Paul C. Morgan, APR (1980)  
Carol E. Oukrop, Ph.D., APR  
(1980-1981)  
Isobel Parke, APR, Fellow PRSA  
(1985-1988)  
Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA  
(1981-1983)  
Dolores Sanchez, APR (1989)  
Linda Scanlan, APR (1982-1983)  
Donald F. Schwartz (1989)  
Shirley Serini, APR (1988-1989)  
Roy L. Simmons, APR  
(1988-1989)  
Gordon B. Strayer, APR (1984)  
Elizabeth Lance Toth, Ph.D., APR  
(1985)  
Judy VanSlyke Turk, Ph.D., APR  
Fellow PRSA (1984)  
Frank Walsh, Ph.D. APR (1981)  
Dennis L. Wilcox, Ph.D., APR  
(1987)  
Frank W. Wylie, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1981)

course curriculum. Led by PRSA President Patrick Jackson, APR, the 1980 Assembly, with no dissenters, declared that only schools offering four such courses qualified for a PRSSA charter.

Another tradition came under scrutiny in 1981: the terms of office of PRSSA National Committee members. For eight years, the tenure of officers at the chapter, district and national levels was a freewheeling affair. Some chose the calendar year, January 1-December 31; some the fiscal year, March 1-February 28; some the academic year, September 1-August 31. To rectify the confusion caused by these inconsistencies, Kathy Schoch-Ziprik, of Glassboro State College, who became PRSSA National Chairman in January 1981, oversaw the procedure standardizing office tenure nationally as June 1-May 31. This enabled all student officers to become familiar with their positions before the summer break so that in the fall they could tackle their jobs with confidence.

In the process, the 1981-82 National Committee was in office for the unprecedented period of 18 months, during which time two further basic changes in governance occurred. The annual PRSSA Assembly, traditionally held during the November Conference, became a spring event in 1982. That same year, during the administration of PRSA President Joseph F. Awad, APR, the professional connection with PRSSA was strengthened. It became mandatory for Faculty Advisors to be PRSA members and for PRSA members serving as Professional Advisors to be Accredited.

In 1981, Betsy Plank reentered the PRSSA scene as a National Advisor. At the very first meeting she attended, she sensed that although the young leaders on the National Committee were aware of their strong ties with PRSA in general and were able to identify many professionals who were currently demonstrating their interest in PRSSA, they were not aware of many others who, during the previous 13 years, had actively championed, counseled and encouraged the student society. She quickly realized, however, that their unenlightenment sprang from the ephemeral nature of their own membership in PRSSA. Two years was the average length of time they participated – then they graduated. To bridge that persistent gap, she and Jon Riffel promptly founded the informal organization, Friends of PRSSA, in 1981.

Designed to reinforce strong and productive relationships between professionals and students, the Friends are primarily PRSA members who have a special ongoing interest in PRSSA and in public relations education. They match PRSSA's annual dues (\$33) and the collective fees are used for programs

## Charter Scholarship Friends 1989

Paul Alvarez, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Aluminum Company of America  
Mrs. J.C. Bateman  
Don Bates, APR, Fellow PRSA  
John R. Beardsley, APR  
Louella Benson  
Edward L. Bernays,  
APR, Fellow PRSA  
Boston PRSA Chapter  
Janis Brett-Elspas  
Prof. William Brody, APR  
Barbara Burns, APR  
Harry Carroll, APR  
Chicago PRSA Chapter  
Mrs. George Crowson  
H.J. Dalton Jr., APR, Fellow PRSA  
Prof. Paul Dannelley, APR  
Pat Derus  
Bob Dorf, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Dorf & Stanton  
David Ferguson, APR  
Lawrence G. Foster, Fellow PRSA  
Milton Frank, APR  
Anthony J. Fulginiti,  
APR, Fellow PRSA  
Alan D. Galletly  
Bernard Goodrich, APR  
Graphic Controls  
Heinz USA  
Francis Faust Johannson, APR  
Johnson & Johnson  
Wayne Kaplan, APR  
Ketchum Communications  
Anne Klein & Associates  
Conni and James Little, APR  
John Ludlum  
Alan Marcus  
Debbie Mason, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Jean K. Oldham  
Padilla-Speer-Beardsley  
Joseph R. Piedmont, APR  
Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA  
May C. Randazzo, APR  
Jon Riffel, APR  
Dolores Sanchez, APR  
John Sattler, APR  
Kathy Schoch-Ziprik  
Donald F. Schwartz  
J.R. Shackleton, APR  
Dwayne Summar, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Dolores M. Swift, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Prof. Frank W. Wylie,  
APR, Fellow PRSA

and incentives which could not otherwise be provided by PRSSA or PRSA. Those include the production of this booklet and a videotape dealing with PRSSA history, publication of interviews with professionals and a skills handbook, underwriting the launch of a newsletter to encourage professional advisory councils in schools offering public relations programs, and annual cash awards totaling nearly \$4,000 for PRSSA chapters which excel in performance. Annual awards are also underwritten for outstanding Professional and Faculty Advisors of PRSSA chapters.

Pledging \$1,500 from its annual dues, in 1989 the Friends established the profession's only national scholarship program open to all PRSSA members in their junior or senior year of public relations studies.

★ ★ ★

In the main, the mid-80s were years of innovation and self-examination. One resource had long been overlooked: students who had been members of successive PRSSA National Committees since 1973. They had been all but forgotten. Recognizing that waste of experience, Brian Hujdich, 1985 National Chairman, formed an Advisory Council of still-enthusiastic past officers.

These years have also seen the proliferation of student-run public relations firms, creating a situation not unlike that of the 1960s when public relations student groups were multiplying independently of one another, with neither professional guidance nor common goals. PRSSA is now working with PRSA's Counselors Academy to help meet the needs of student agencies through workshops and stronger affiliation with PRSSA. Guidelines have also been developed for the operation of student agencies affiliated with PRSSA chapters.

The emphasis on academic excellence is also a product of these years. The National Gold Key Award, established in 1983, annually honors those members of PRSSA who are in their senior year, have earned a grade point average of at least 3.4 in public relations studies, and have held positions of leadership at the national, chapter or district level.

★ ★ ★

The development of PRSSA had been achieved in the 70s and early 80s by a series of able national officers counseled by experienced Faculty and Professional Advisors. To ensure an equally stable future, however, a committee of students and advisors published a Five-Year Plan for PRSSA in 1982. It called for a comprehensive program to meet future needs. Five subject areas were stressed:

Commission on  
Public Relations Education  
Co-Chairs

1975 Report  
J. Carroll Bateman, APR,  
and Scott Cutlip, Ph.D.,  
APR, Fellow PRSA

1987 Report  
William P. Ehling, Ph.D., and  
Betsy Plank, APR,  
Fellow PRSA

1999 Report  
Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D.,  
APR, Fellow PRSA, and  
John Paluszek, APR,  
Fellow PRSA

2006 Report  
Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D.,  
APR, Fellow PRSA, and  
John Paluszek, APR,  
Fellow PRSA

**Administration** – efficient governance of the society which maintains programs and structure responsive to specific needs;

**Membership Audit** – frequent surveys of members and chapters, as well as the auditing of developing trends in public relations;

**Practitioner Interaction** – encouraging public relations practitioners to answer the questions and help satisfy the needs of the membership;

**Development** – upgrading the quality of student membership through improved college and university curricula;

**Promotion** – positioning PRSSA as the internationally pre-eminent student public relations organization.

In its final year, the plan set a record which any organization might envy; every objective defined in 1982 had been achieved.

Recognizing the value of long-range planning, the 1987-88 National Committee, only one month in office, created a subcommittee to prepare the Second Five-Year Plan to guide the ideas and energies of administrations through 1993. Its recommendations, presented to the PRSSA 1988 National Assembly in New Orleans, were approved unanimously.

In terms of student involvement, PRSSA has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its founders. An approximate 81,000 young people from more than 160 campus-based chapters have registered as members since 1967.

The extent to which its founders' aims have been realized is even more impressive. PRSA's stated purpose in creating PRSSA more than two decades ago was to expose students to and prepare them academically for the professional practice of public relations. The former aim has been accomplished by the unrelenting, enthusiastic support and participation of professionals. Internships, Pro-Am programs, problem-solving exercises conducted on a national scale, and simply "mentoring" have been accelerating activities since the beginning. From the beginning, too, PRSSA has been far more than a campus club. Its founders insisted that each PRSSA charter be firmly based on education for public relations.

In late 1983, a new study on the academic preparation of students for entry-level public relations jobs was undertaken by the Commission on Undergraduate Public Relations Education, co-chaired by Dr. William P. Ehling, of Syracuse University, and Betsy Plank.

The commission was sponsored by PRSA, its Educators Section, and the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). It also included members of other organizations,

such as the International Association of Business Communicators, the Speech Communication Association and the International Communication Association. After three years of research, debate and study, their consensus was that undergraduate study should be firmly grounded in the liberal arts and include at least 15 semester hours of public relations course work. Customarily, that translates to five courses, each with three semester hours of credit. In November 1987, with the strong support of PRSA President John W. Felton, APR, the Assembly adopted the Commission's recommendation as the basis for PRSSA chapter charters: schools wishing to have PRSSA chapters must offer a minimum of five courses of public relations study. Schools which already have PRSSA charters, based on the four-course requirement, have until year-end 1990 to meet the new standard.

Working since 1988 to help PRSSA chapters meet the 1990 deadline is the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee, co-chaired by David Ferguson, APR, 1985 President of PRSA, and the Chairman of the PRSA Educators Section (in 1988: Dr. Robert Rayfield, APR, of California State University at Fullerton; in 1989: Dr. William Brody, APR, of Memphis State University; in 1990: Dr. Elizabeth Lance Toth, APR, of Southern Methodist University). Meantime, with the blessing of the PRSA Board of Directors, the Educational Affairs Committee has also established a Certification Program, which offers the opportunity for schools having a PRSSA charter to invite a review of their public relations sequences by a team of PRSA members.

At its 1988 Spring Assembly, PRSSA also adopted the new five-course standard. With this action, the leadership of PRSSA reaffirmed the commitment of student members to education for public relations.

★ ★ ★

The ultimate question: Is PRSSA training leaders in public relations?

In the beginning, it was Wait and See. Even in the 1970s, graduates, still in their twenties and early thirties, were preoccupied with furthering personal careers. The cream began to rise to the top in the mid-80s. Former PRSSA members, many now Accredited, have already held positions as members of the PRSA Board of Directors, as District Chairmen, Chapter President, Section Chairmen, Assembly Delegates.

**Given the knowns is it rash to predict that within the next few years one of these erstwhile "kids" will be elected to the PRSA presidency and that future Grand Old Men and Women of Public Relations will be alumni of the Public Relations Student Society of America?**

 **and the story  
continues . . .**

# THE SECOND *two decades*

**By Dr. Susan Gonders  
and Dr. Barbara DeSanto,  
APR, Fellow PRSA**

2007

## CONTRIBUTING HISTORIANS

Elaine Averick  
PAST PRSA DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Jeneen Garcia  
PRSA DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Rick Fischer  
PAST PRSA NATIONAL FACULTY ADVISOR

Betsy Plank  
PAST PRSA PRESIDENT

Dr. Gonders brought to the classroom 21 years of professional experience serving more than 300 clients. She is now head of the public relations program and PRSSA chapter advisor at Southeast Missouri State University. She has been on the Board of the AEJMC Public Relations Division since 1999 and will serve as PRD head in 2009. She has been on the PRSA Educators Academy Board since 2005 and currently co-chairs the Certification in Education for Public Relations (CEPR) program for the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee.

Dr. DeSanto worked two decades in tourism and government affairs before becoming a full-time educator. She has taught at universities in eight states and six other countries. She is currently department chair at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. She is past head of the AEJMC Public Relations Division, editor of PRSA's *Learning To Teach* book for new educators, and a member of both the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee and the Educators Academy Board.

CHRIS TEAHAN concluded the first two decades of *A Brief History* with two questions: Will a PRSSA "kid" be elected to the PRSA Presidency? And is PRSSA training leaders in public relations?

Joann Killeen, a graduate of the California State University-Northridge Chapter of PRSSA, served as 2003 PRSA National President, and many other PRSSA alumni have held important leadership positions in the Society and in the profession. For example, PRSSA's 1993-1994 National Public Relations Director, Mary Beth Chunn West, APR, a graduate of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, was the youngest person ever elected to the PRSA National Board. She was also the ninth inductee into the PRSSA Hall of Fame. PRSSA alumni recognized for their contributions to the profession by induction into the Hall of Fame are:

- 1993 - **Kathleen Ziprik**, Glassboro State College (now Rowan University)
- 1994 - **Brian Hujdich**, Glassboro State College
- 1995 - **Laurie J. Wilson**, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA, Brigham Young University
- 1996 - **Mary Beth Chunn West**, APR, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
- 1997 - **Arthur Merrick**, APR, Fellow PRSA, University of California at Los Angeles
- 1998 - **Robert D. Stack**, APR, Boston University
- 1999 - **E. Lyle Henderson**, University of North Texas
- 2000 - **Rochelle Tillery Ford**, Ph.D., APR, Howard University
- 2001 - **Travis M. Parman**, APR, 1994-1995 PRSSA President, University of Tennessee at Knoxville
- 2002 - **Sonja Popp-Stahly**, APR, Ball State University
- 2004 - **Kent Landers**, APR, 1998-1999 PRSSA President, University of Tennessee at Martin
- 2005 - **Chad Darwin**, University of Florida

To better train the profession's upcoming leaders, the Society has also elevated its initiatives in **EDUCATION** for career preparation, **SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION** of student achievements, **COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING**, and **MEMBER SERVICES**. In fact, a growing number of people are overall **"CHAMPIONS"** for PRSSA students.

Certified in Education  
for Public Relations  
(CEPR)

Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana  
Brigham Young University  
Provo, Utah  
California State University  
at Fullerton  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Richmond, Kentucky  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Ohio Northern University  
Ada, Ohio  
Radford University  
Radford, Virginia  
Rowan University  
Glassboro, New Jersey  
Seneca College  
Toronto, Canada  
Southeast Missouri  
State University  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri  
Universidad Argentina  
de la Empresa  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
University of Alabama  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama  
University of Maryland  
College Park, Maryland  
University of Memphis  
Memphis, Tennessee  
Valdosta State University  
Valdosta, Georgia  
Virginia Commonwealth  
University  
Richmond, Virginia  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

*PENDING REVIEW*  
Indiana State University  
Indiana University  
University of Cincinnati  
Utica College

\* \* \*  
**EDUCATION**

Certification in Education for Public Relations (CEPR) was established in 1989 to offer colleges and universities the opportunity for review and endorsement of their undergraduate public relations education programs. CEPR is a voluntary process administered through the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee. In 1999, the first CEPR review outside the U.S. was authorized by the PRSA Board and conducted at Seneca College, Toronto, Canada. Since then, the Universidad Argentina de la Empresa has been certified, and applications have been received from several universities in other countries. Plans are also in progress to expand CEPR in 2007-2008 to include master's level programs both in the U.S. and abroad.

While CEPR provides a quality assurance seal of approval from PRSA for students considering which school to select, support is also provided for students who have already begun their studies.

\* \* \*  
**SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION**

Numerous awards programs and scholarship funds were established and developed during PRSSA's second two decades with annual grants now totaling approximately \$20,000.

The *Teahan National Chapter Awards*, sponsored by Champions For PRSSA in honor of F.H. "Chris" Teahan, encourage chapter achievements and total \$2,900 annually with the following categories:

- \$500 Outstanding Chapter
- \$400 Chapter Firm
- \$300 Chapter Development
- \$300 PRSA/PRSSA Chapter Relationship
- \$300 Community/University Service
- \$300 Outstanding Regional Activity
- \$200 Chapter Newsletter
- \$200 Chapter Website
- \$200 Chapter with Outstanding Faculty Advisor
- \$200 Chapter with Outstanding Professional Advisor

Since the beginning of PRSSA in the late 1960s, the commitment of PRSA leaders to the student organization has been evident. Scholarships awarded to 58 juniors and seniors from 41 schools have totaled more than \$82,000 since 1988. The scholarships were sponsored by the Champions for 19 years, and PRSSA named the program for Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA, in the 1990s. In 2005, the PRSA Foundation, led by its president, Gary McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA, recognized

the 1990s

## PRSSA National Advisors

John S. Blakemore, APR  
(1993-1995)

Rick Fischer, Ph.D., APR, Fellow  
PRSA (1995-2000)

Rochelle Tillery Ford, Ph.D., APR,  
(1996-1998)

Cathryn Gibbs Harris, APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1990-1992)

Linda S. Holsinger, APR  
(1995-1997)

Stanton H. Hudson Jr., APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1996-2000)

Dean Kruckeberg, APR, Fellow  
PRSA (1990-1991)

Debbie A. Mason, APR, Fellow  
PRSA (1991-1993)

Michael Parkinson, Ph.D., APR  
(1991-1993)

Dolores Sanchez, APR  
(1990-1991)

Robert D. Stack, APR, Fellow  
PRSA (1992-1996)

Joseph V. Trahan III, Ph.D., APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1990-1992)

Laurie J. Wilson, Ph.D., APR,  
Fellow PRSA (1992-1996)

Carol McBurney Zimmerman, APR  
(1993-1995)

the need to assure the future of these awards. An endowment campaign was launched, with \$68,000 of the \$100,000 goal contributed by 2007, and the Foundation now sponsors the annual program.

The most prestigious awards competition for PRSSA chapters was established in 1973 to test their ability to apply public relations principles to case problems. It is named for J. Carroll Bateman, APR, 1967 PRSA President and 1980 president of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). After a career at the Insurance Information Institute, he was a professor and PRSSA chapter advisor at the University of Tennessee. Originally, Bateman competitions were based on hypothetical case problems written by national faculty advisors. In the 1990s, the competition changed into a campus marketing tool for corporate sponsors. Recognizing that this was a distortion of the purpose of the competition, PRSA turned down a corporate sponsor for the 2005 competition and provided funding for a competition based on a case problem involving ethics. In 2006, Champions Co-Chair Gary McCormick enlisted his employer, Scripps DIY Network, to sponsor the competition to benefit Habitat for Humanity. This set the pace for corporate sponsorship on behalf of community service and nonprofit organizations. The pharmaceutical company, Eisai Inc., in cooperation with the National Caregivers Association and the National Alliance for Caregiving, sponsored the 2007 competition on behalf of Family Giving. General Motors is sponsoring the 2008 competition on behalf of Chevrolet's Safe Kids Buckle Up program.

Three other programs focus on ethics. The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, located at the University of Alabama, presents \$2,750 annually in *Ethics Advocacy Awards*. The \$1,000 *Sidney Gross Memorial Award* is funded annually by friends and family of the New York University professor, and the \$500 *Norman S. Fenichel Scholarship* was established in 2004 by his son and daughter-in-law, Douglas M. Fenichel and Dr. Karen Fenichel.

PRSSA members with financial need are eligible to apply for the \$2,400 *Gary Yoshimura Scholarship*. The Alaska Chapter of PRSA sponsors the \$1,500 *Leonard McLean Public Relations Scholarship*. Allison & Partners established the \$1,500 *Stephen D. Pisinski Memorial Scholarship* to honor the late PRSA President and Champion. BurrellesLuce sponsors the \$1,000 *Arthur Wynne Jr. Memorial Award*, and the \$1,500 *Lawrence G. Foster Award for Excellence in Public Relations* was established by the PRSSA chapter and the College of Communications at



the 2000s

### PRSSA National Advisors

- Rick Fischer, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA (2000-2005)
- Rochelle Tillery Ford, Ph.D., APR (2005-2007)
- Stanton H. Hudson Jr., APR, Fellow PRSA (2003-2004)
- Stephen Iseman, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA (2007-2008)
- Craig Miyamoto, APR, Fellow PRSA (2000-2004)
- Travis Parman, APR (2006-2008)
- Mary Beth West, APR (2003-2006)

### FERGUSON AWARD RECIPIENTS

- 1997 - Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 1998 - Patrick Jackson, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 1999 - Jack Felton, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2000 - John Paluszek, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2001 - Jon Riffel, APR
- 2002 - Isobel Parke, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2003 - Judith Bogart, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2004 - Lawrence Foster, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2005 - Daniel Edelman, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2006 - Gary McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA

the 2000s

### PRSA Board Liaisons

- Sue Bohle, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Michael G. Chersonon, APR
- John J. Deveney, ABC, APR
- Carole Gorney, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Sandra Longcrier, APR
- Gary D. McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Mary Beth West, APR

Pennsylvania State University in honor of the long-time corporate vice president at Johnson & Johnson.

Two PRSSA students per year are recipients of the \$1,500 *PRSA Multicultural Scholarship* initiated in 1989 by the PRSA Multicultural Section, and National Conference registration fees have been provided for as many as eight students per year through the *Codispoti Technology Award*.

Since 1980, the *Daniel J. Edelman Award* has included \$1,500 plus a three-month paid internship in one of Edelman's U.S. offices. The runner-up receives \$500 and an opportunity to interview for a full-time position. Also recognizing the value of strong internship experiences, bj Altschul, APR, funded for six years, beginning in 2002-2003, the \$300 *Altschul Champions For PRSSA Outstanding Internship Award*.

The competitive *PRSA/PRSSA Internship Program* brings one student per summer to Society headquarters in New York for a 12-week paid internship. The program began in 2003 with Michael Holland, Radford University, followed by Stephanie Floris, University of Miami, 2004; Sarah D'Andrea, University of Georgia, 2005; Michael Taylor, Southeast Missouri State University, 2006; and Chase Long, University of Alabama, 2007.

Among other forms of recognition for student accomplishments are the National Gold Key Awards, established in 1983, and the National President's Citations. The Champions recognize returning PRSSA national alumni with the Jon Riffel Award.

Two awards also recognize significant contributions to the advancement of public relations education. Outstanding Educator Awards were established by PRSA in 1970, and the David Ferguson Awards have been conferred to practitioners in honor of the 1985 PRSA President since 1997.

★ ★ ★

## COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING

The second two decades brought an explosion of communication and networking opportunities for PRSSA students, whose outreach went "down," "up" and "all around."

One 1993-1994 goal was to get the National Committee online, and PRSSA's National Electronic Communication Task Force established <http://www.prssa.org> in 1995, almost immediately posting PRSSA's national publication, *FORUM*, online. Significant advances in PRSSA's Website were made in the last half of the 1990s by Eric Hawkins, Ruth Nettles and other Vice Presidents for Public Relations. When the Webmaster became an appointed position on the National

the 2000s  
PRSSA National Committee  
Editors and Webmasters

2000-2001

Editor: Shanique Bonelli  
Webmaster: Sergei Golitsinski

2001-2002

Editor: Sally Hallingstad  
Webmaster: Sergei Golitsinski

2002-2003

Editor: Tracy Leong  
Webmaster: Roman Gaponenko

2003-2004

Editor: Andrew Graham  
Webmaster: Jacob Burke

2004-2005

Editor: Michael Keliher  
Webmaster: Jacob Burke

2005-2006

Editor: Barbara Tate

2006-2007

Editor: James M. DeVoy

2007-2008

Editor: Ryan Casey McShane

Committee, two University of Northern Iowa students from Russia, Sergei Golitsinski (2000-2002) and Roman Gaponenko (2002-2003), took PRSSA's Web presence into the new millennium. Following the 2003-2005 work of Jacob Burke as National Committee Webmaster, the job became a staff position at the PRSSA offices in New York.

An initiative of the 1998-1999 National Committee condensed monthly mailings into a bimonthly summary, *Connecting with PRSSA*, which was launched in September 1999 and moved online in 2006-07.

The 2000-2001 National Committee expanded the size of *FORUM* and launched the online JobCenter, <http://prssa.org/jobcentermembersite>, with 300 initial listings. Nearly 5,000 PRSSA members and more than 1,100 employers are currently registered on the JobCenter.

A Student-Run Firms Manual made its debut in the late 1990s, and a PRSSA faculty advisors listerv was established early in the next decade. Now posted are online standards to qualify as a nationally affiliated student-run firm in schools chartered for PRSSA chapters. An arena to discuss ideas, opinions, trends and public relations issues, the PRSSA blog, <http://www.prssa.org/blog>, was launched in November 2006.

The PRSSA online community now includes discussion forums, PRSSA-Talk, PRSSA Firm Directors, PRSSA Webmasters, PRSSA Advisors and PRSSA Professionals (for professional advisors), all available at <http://www.prssa.org/com->

OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1970 - Scott Cutlip, APR, Fellow PRSA                 | 1989 - James E. Grunig, Ph.D.                                       |
| 1971 - Walter W. Seifert, APR                         | 1990 - Hugh M. Culbertson, Ph.D.                                    |
| 1972 - Alan Scott, Ed.D., APR, Fellow PRSA            | 1991 - Glen M. Broom, Ph.D.   |
| 1973 - John E. Marston, APR                           | 1992 - Judy VanSlyke Turk, Ph.D.<br>APR, Fellow PRSA                |
| 1974 - Otto Lerbinger, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA        | 1993 - Donald K. Wright, Ph.D. APR, Fellow PRSA                     |
| 1975 - Raymond Simon, APR                             | 1994 - Elizabeth Lance Toth, Ph.D., APR                             |
| 1976 - Albert Walker, Ph.D., APR                      | 1995 - Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA                     |
| 1977 - Walter E. Griscti, APR                         | 1996 - Larissa A. Grunig, Ph.D.                                     |
| 1978 - Ray E. Hiebert, Ph.D., APR                     | 1997 - Maria P. Russell, APR, Fellow PRSA                           |
| 1979 - Kenneth Owler Smith, Ed.D., APR                | 1998 - Melvin L. Sharpe, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA                    |
| 1980 - H. Frazier Moore, Ph.D.                        | 1999 - Carole Gorney, APR, Fellow PRSA,<br>and Barbara Hines, Ph.D. |
| 1981 - Frank E. Walsh, APR                            | 2000 - William C. Adams, APR, Fellow PRSA                           |
| 1982 - Douglas Ann Newsom, Ph.D.,<br>APR, Fellow PRSA | 2001 - Laurie J. Wilson, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA                    |
| 1983 - Paul E. Dannelley, APR                         | 2002 - Clarke Caywood, Ph.D.  |
| 1984 - Dennis L. Wilcox, Ph.D. APR, Fellow PRSA       | 2003 - Don Winslow Stacks, Ph.D.                                    |
| 1985 - Norman R. Nager, Ph.D. APR, Fellow PRSA        | 2004 - Kathleen Kelly, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA                      |
| 1986 - Parry D. Sorenson, APR                         | 2005 - Rick Fischer, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA                        |
| 1987 - Anthony J. Fulginiti, APR, Fellow PRSA         | 2006 - Bruce Berger, Ph.D.  |
| 1988 - William P. Ehling, Ph.D.                       |   |

1990 - 2008  
PRSSA National Presidents

1990-1991  
Laura DeGross  
Boston University

1991-1992  
Tina Mowry  
University of Iowa

1992-1993  
J. Michael Neumeier Jr.  
University of Florida

1993-1994  
Kimberly Dickson  
Rowan University

1994-1995  
Travis Parman  
University of Tennessee at Knoxville

1995-1996  
Valliere Jones Portie  
Brigham Young University

1996-1997  
Gail Liebl  
Minnesota State University at Moorhead

1997-1998  
John Starkweather  
Brigham Young University

1998-1999  
Kent Landers  
University of Tennessee at Martin

1999-2000  
Gina Pesko Laughlin  
Syracuse University

2000-2001  
Cedric Bess  
Florida International University

2001-2002  
Dirk Munson  
University of Northern Iowa

2002-2003  
Natalie Neczpor  
Rowan University

2003-2004  
Jeremy D. Bridgman  
Otterbein College

2004-2005  
Sarah Yeane  
Pennsylvania State University

2005-2006  
Scott Iwata  
Central Washington University

2006-2007  
Kevin Saghy  
Ohio Northern University

2007-2008  
Melissa Csuhran  
Ohio Northern University

*munity/default.asp*. Publications available online include *FORUM*, *Connecting with PRSSA*, annual reports, biweekly e-mail updates, and the National Committee's situation analysis.

Looking "down" to high schools, Synergistic Outreach is a PRSSA recruitment initiative in coordination with the PRSA Foundation. Looking "up" to PRSA, students are encouraged to transition to the professional Society. "Pre-Associate" membership became Associate membership in 1995, allowing PRSSA graduates to join PRSA within three months of graduation for only \$12 for each of their first two years. In 2006, when Associate membership had gone up to \$60 per year (compared to \$225 for regular PRSA membership), the opportunity was expanded so that students could hold dual PRSA/PRSSA membership for up to five months prior to graduation. And once they transition to PRSA, graduates have a support system due to the 2005 establishment of the New Professionals Affinity Group, an initiative led by two PRSSA alumnae – Gail Liebl, APR, and Mary Beth West, APR.

A pilot project in the mid-1990s provided an opportunity for students at a few test universities to take the APR exam without the requisite five years of professional experience. Although only a few passed the exam and the project was tabled, it was an experiment that aimed to more closely align PRSSA students with PRSA professionalism.

Looking "all around," 2006-07 was the pilot year for the PRSSA Affiliate Program, which was the result of an issue that had surfaced in 2000. In the interest of expanding the outreach of PRSSA, the PRSA Board considered an amendment to the bylaws that would waive chapter affiliation for PRSSA membership. Such an "at-large" member need not be affiliated with a school offering a program of public relations studies nor with faculty and professional advisors who were PRSA members. However, discussion with concerned educators and practitioners recognized that such educational requirements for PRSSA charters had unique value in encouraging schools to strengthen preparation of students for the profession. The issue was then wisely referred to PRSSA's National Committee for resolution. Based on a study headed by PRSSA Past President Sarah Yeane, the students' decision achieved both objectives – retaining chapter affiliation for PRSSA membership but offering outreach to interested students (called Affiliates) in schools not yet meeting charter standards. Affiliates, while not PRSSA members, can now receive Society communications and discounted rates to attend conferences. These students will thus be exposed to the values of the profession, and it is hoped this outreach will encourage the growth of new chapters.

*the 2000s*

## PRSSA Vice Presidents

2000-2001

Todd Bailey, Flora Beal,  
Ben Blair, Kelly McNab,  
Sarah Sims and Teri Yanagawa

2001-2002

Vanessa Bilanceri,  
Shanique Bonelli, Amy Jacobs,  
Mike McGill, Natalie Neczypor  
and Jacque Sonderoth

2002-2003

Kelly Albanese, Jeremy Bridgman,  
Lara Golike, Chris Knudson,  
Brandi Littlejohn and Ciara O'Brien

2003-2004

Nichole Felix, Nelson Locher,  
Katie Peltier, Kimberly Prohaska,  
Chris Schenk and Sarah Yeaney

2004-2005

Scott Iwata, Devin Knighton,  
Katie Peltier, LeAnn Rasachak,  
Rory Swikle and Bridgette Wright

2005-2006

Michael Cowen, Vernetta Kiser,  
Erin Pierce, Maria Quidez,  
Kevin Saghy and Cristina Seiter

2006-2007

Marshall Bryan Blaise,  
Melissa Csuhran, Brooke Ehlers,  
Kimberly Gouz, Jessica Randazza,  
Jennifer Rice and Lisa Travnik

2007-2008

Brandi Boatner, Denise Kreft,  
Ryan Matejka,  
Rebecca "Kelly" McFall,  
Brenda Schulze, Allison Tomei  
and Dwayne W. Waite Jr.

Members also looked "*all around*" the globe in PRSSA's second two decades. Among the goals of the 1993-1994 National Committee was an increased emphasis on the benefits of multicultural awareness, and they asked that a student liaison be seated on the PRSA Multicultural Committee. The PRSSA International Task Force was formed in January 2007, and an International Online Resource Center is being developed so members can network with students worldwide to learn about cultural differences and share best practices. Kevin Saghy, 2006-2007 PRSSA President, attended the fourth annual conference of the Global Alliance in Cape Town, South Africa, to develop relationships with public relations organizations abroad.

With all of these electronic communication opportunities, the best forums for networking are still conferences. Each spring the National Assembly focuses on the election of national officers, consideration of bylaws amendments and leadership training. Each fall the National Conference provides everything – including a bit more than bargained for in October 2005. As students headed toward Miami Beach, so did Hurricane Wilma. The National Committee shifted straight into crisis management mode, set up a media center, posted a message online, e-mailed all registrants, and telephoned more than 200 chapter presidents to spread the word that the PRSSA National Conference was postponed. Subsequently, the PRSA National Conference was also cancelled. But the students regrouped. They surveyed members about their preferences and rescheduled. Most of the original speakers showed up in Miami December 18-21, and so did more than 240 students during their holiday break.

That was a respectable showing in light of the act of nature, but far short of the trend. A record of more than 900 students registered for the 1996 National Conference hosted by Southeast Missouri State University in St. Louis, and that record was broken the very next year when more than 1,000 students registered for the 1997 National Conference hosted by the University of Tennessee-Martin in Nashville. More than 1,300 registered for the 2000 National Conference hosted by the University of Northern Iowa in Chicago, and more than 1,500 students convened in New York City for the National Conference hosted by the Fashion Institute of Technology.

★ ★ ★

## MEMBER SERVICES

With the advent of electronic communication, the need to organize communication geographically disappeared. Instead of continuing with district directors, who were trying to cover

the 2000s  
PRSSA National Meetings

- 2000 National Assembly  
Houston, Texas
- 2000 National Conference  
Chicago, Illinois
- 2001 National Assembly  
New Orleans, Louisiana
- 2001 National Conference  
Atlanta, Georgia
- 2002 National Assembly  
San Diego, California
- 2002 National Conference  
San Francisco, California
- 2003 National Assembly  
Miami Beach, Florida
- 2003 National Conference  
New Orleans, Louisiana
- 2004 National Assembly  
Redondo Beach, California
- 2004 National Conference  
New York City, New York
- 2005 National Assembly  
Dallas, Texas
- 2005 National Conference  
Miami Beach, Florida
- 2006 National Assembly  
San Francisco, California
- 2006 National Conference  
Salt Lake City, Utah
- 2007 National Assembly  
Nashville, Tennessee
- 2007 National Conference  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

every topic and all of the problems of their turf, PRSSA could be restructured with vice presidents specializing in specific areas. That was the consensus of the National Committee during their January 27, 1996, meeting in New York. They proposed that the National Committee consist of the President, Immediate Past President and six Vice Presidents:

**VP of Chapter Development** - programming, leadership training and student-run firms

**VP of Member Services** - scholarships, awards, competitions, student membership records and national directories

**VP of Professional Development** - internships and jobs

**VP of Public Relations** - recognition of PRSSA as a credible and para-professional organization, managing publications and electronic communications

**VP of Recruitment** - assisting chapters in recruitment of new members and recruiting new chapters (this position was subsequently replaced with the VP of Internships and Job Services)

**VP of Regional Activities** - review proposals from chapters wanting to host regional conferences and assist them in planning, promotion and implementation

In place of the district conferences, which were designed to serve only members in a defined geographic area, chapters now plan regional activities that compete for registrations nationwide. Some host schools still plan “mini-national conferences” with comprehensive programs; other host schools plan themed conferences focusing on such topics as ethics and crisis management, as well as such areas of career specialization as health care, sports and entertainment promotions to give participants professional savvy specific to their interests.

**VP of Advocacy** - With a growing need for graduates to understand more about how practitioners handle problems in the profession, it was later decided to add a VP of Advocacy to the 2006-2007 National Committee. Lisa Travnik shot right out of the gate with a letter of advocacy on behalf of the profession published by *Advertising Age* in July 2006. In response to an article revealing that some public relations practitioners make undisclosed payments to the media in exchange for the placement of stories, she challenged that unacceptable practice and stressed the commitment of PRSA/PRSSA to integrity and ethical standards. A diversity initiative is also part of the duties for the VP of Advocacy.

*"Each National  
Committee makes  
small but significant  
changes in the operation  
of PRSSA.*

*It evolves and builds.*

*I was always impressed  
with the wisdom  
of the student leaders.*

*They never knew that  
something was 'too hard.'  
They just did it."*

– Dr. Rick Fischer

With the workload better distributed among seven vice presidents in place of 20-plus district directors, it was an appropriate time to update the advising structure as well. Faculty and professional advisors to the National Committee were reduced from two to one each, and the position of liaison was established to facilitate communication between the PRSSA National Committee and the PRSA National Board.

With many PRSSA chapters located significant distances from their parent PRSA chapters, the difficulty in finding professional advisors with APR credentials became clear. Proximity is still a problem, but the rule was changed so that either APR status or five years of professional experience would qualify a PRSA member to serve as a chapter advisor.

Another tool to better network students with professional practitioners – especially Champions For PRSSA – is the Cross Country Connection (CCC) program initiated by the 2001-2002 National Committee. CCC pairs a chapter with a Champion who is in another state, ideally a state across the country. This unique facet of the CCC program provides an opportunity for students to make valuable connections in another geographic area. The program aims to involve Champions in the lives of PRSSA members, to create a better awareness of Champions For PRSSA among students, and to have Champions serve as an additional resource for PRSSA members.

The National Committee is now comprised of the National President, Immediate Past President, Vice Presidents, *FORUM* Editor (appointed), National Faculty Advisor, National Professional Advisor, PRSA Board Liaison, and the PRSA Director of Education (who serves as the PRSSA Director). Student officers serve one year from June 1 to May 31, and National Advisors serve two-year terms.

National dues increased from \$33 to \$38 in 1992, to \$41 in 1998, and to \$50 in 2007. In 40 years, PRSSA membership has grown to more than 9,600 students, and 284 schools are now chartered for PRSSA chapters in 45 states plus the District of Columbia. All is testimony to the increasing interest in public relations studies and careers – and to the value of PRSSA in preparing for the ethical practice of the profession.

\* \* \*  
**I N S U M**

**The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) gave birth to the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) November 11, 1967, at National Assembly in Philadelphia. The**

**PRSA Board chartered 14 colleges and universities for Alpha Chapters in 1968. Based on a prospectus from Utica College, the first six-page, two-color issue of *FORUM* was published in the spring of 1969. Governance passed from PRSA to the students in 1973, and membership increased by 20 percent the following year after the students adopted a national dues structure to make PRSSA more self-supporting. Students produced their first independent PRSSA National Conference in 1976. Chapter charter requirements for each school increased from two public relations courses to four in 1975 – and to five courses in 1988.**

**In PRSSA's second two decades, CEPR was established to credential quality programs in public relations education, and a host of awards and scholarships were developed in recognition of the accomplishments of students, their chapters and advisors. Communication and networking went electronic and global. An Affiliate opportunity now brings PRSSA resources to interested students attending schools not yet offering strong programs in public relations studies. Member services were greatly expanded with the 1996 restructuring from district directors to national vice presidents with responsibilities for strategic program areas – and from district conferences to regional activities. And more than 1,000 students regularly attend annual PRSSA National Conferences.**

**Most important, PRSSA graduates continue to populate the ranks of public relations – to become PRSA members and leaders in the profession.**

**The Champions For PRSSA (nee Friends of PRSA) began reinforcing the tradition of professional support for the student organization in 1981. During the 40th anniversary year of PRSSA, *A Brief History* is a gift from the Champions to the 81,000 PRSSA alumni and to today's students who will shape the future of the profession. . . .**

**They continue to do us proud!**

 **just the  
beginning . . .**

# CHARTERED PRSSA CHAPTERS

JULY 2007

ALABAMA	Florida Memorial College	LOUISIANA	NEVADA	University of Dayton	Univ. of Tenn.-Chattanooga
Alabama State University	Florida Southern College	Grambling State University	Univ. of Nevada-Las Vegas	University of Findlay	Univ. of Tenn.-Knoxville
Samford University	Univ. of Florida-Gainesville	La. State Univ.-Baton Rouge	Univ. of Nevada-Reno	University of Toledo	Univ. of Tenn.-Martin
Univ. of Alabama-Birmingham	University of Miami	La. State Univ.-Shreveport	NEW JERSEY	Ursuline College	TEXAS
Univ. of Alabama-Tuscaloosa	Univ. of North Florida	Loyola Univ.-New Orleans	Monmouth University	Wright State University	Abilene Christian University
ALASKA	Univ. of South Florida	McNeese State University	Rowan University	Xavier University	Baylor University
Univ. of Alaska-Anchorage	GEORGIA	Nicholls State University	Rutgers University	OKLAHOMA	Hardin-Simmons University
ARIZONA	Clark Atlanta University	Northwestern State University	Seton Hall University	Oklahoma Christian University	Howard Payne University
Arizona State University	Georgia Southern University	Southern Univ.-Baton Rouge	NEW MEXICO	Oklahoma State University	Sam Houston State University
Northern Arizona University	Georgia State Univ.-Atlanta	Univ. of Louisiana-Lafayette	University of New Mexico	Oral Roberts University	Southern Methodist University
ARKANSAS	Kennesaw State University	Univ. of Louisiana-Monroe	NEW YORK	Univ. of Central Oklahoma	St. Edwards University
Arkansas State University	University of Georgia-Athens	MARYLAND	Buffalo State College	University of Oklahoma	Texas A&M University
Arkansas Tech University	Valdosta State University	Bowie State College	Canisius College	University of Tulsa	Texas Christian University
Harding University	HAWAII	Hood College	City College of New York	OREGON	Texas State Univ.-San Marcos
Univ. of Arkansas-Fayetteville	Hawaii Pacific University	Loyola College-Baltimore	Cornell University	University of Oregon	Texas Tech University
Univ. of Arkansas-Little Rock	University of Hawaii-Honolulu	Towson University	Fashion Institute of Tech.	PENNSYLVANIA	University of Houston
Univ. of Central Arkansas	IDAHO	Univ. of Maryland-College Pk.	Hofstra University	Bloomsburg University	University of North Texas
CALIFORNIA	Brigham Young Univ.-Idaho	MASSACHUSETTS	Iona College	California University	Univ. of Texas-Pan American
Biola University	ILLINOIS	Boston University	Ithaca College	Clarion University	Univ. of Texas-Arlington
Cal Poly-Pomona	Bradley University-Peoria	Bridgewater State College	Long Island University	Drexel University	Univ. of Texas-Austin
Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo	Columbia College-Chicago	Emerson College	Marist College	Duquesne University	Univ. of Texas-San Antonio
Cal State-Bakersfield	DePaul University-Chicago	Northeastern University	New York University	Edinboro University	UTAH
Cal State-Dominguez Hills	Eastern Ill. Univ.-Charleston	Salem State College	St. John Fisher College	La Salle University	Brigham Young University
Cal State-East Bay	Illinois State University-Normal	Simmons College	State Univ. of NY-Fredonia	Mansfield University	University of Utah
Cal State-Fresno	Loyola University-Chicago	MICHIGAN	State Univ. of NY-Geneseo	Marywood College	Utah State University
Cal State-Fullerton	Northern Illinois Univ.-DeKalb	Adrian College	State Univ. of NY-Oswego	Millersville University	Weber State University
Cal State-Long Beach	Southern Ill. Un.-Carbondale	Andrews University	Syracuse University	Pennsylvania State University	VIRGINIA
Cal State-Northridge	Southern Ill. Un.-Edwardsville	Central Michigan University	University at Buffalo	Point Park College	George Mason University
Cal State-Sacramento	Western Illinois Univ.-Macomb	Eastern Michigan University	Utica College	Saint Vincent College	Hampton University
Cal State-San Bernardino	INDIANA	Ferris State University	NORTH CAROLINA	Shippensburg University	Liberty University
Cal State-Stanislaus	Ball State University-Muncie	Grand Valley State University	Appalachian State University	Slippery Rock University	Norfolk State University
Chapman University	Butler University-Indianapolis	Michigan State University	Campbell University	Susquehanna University	Radford University
Pepperdine University	Indiana State University	Northern Michigan University	East Carolina University	Temple University	Virginia Commonwealth Univ.
San Diego State University	Indiana University	Univ. of Michigan-Dearborn	Elon University	University of Scranton	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
San Jose State University	Ind. Univ./Purdue-Indianapolis	Wayne State University	N.C. A&T State University	Villanova University	WASHINGTON
Univ. of San Francisco	Purdue University	MINNESOTA	North Carolina State Univ.	Westminster College	Central Washington University
Univ. of Southern California	University of Southern Indiana	Minn. State Univ.-Moorhead	Univ. of N.C.-Chapel Hill	York College of Pennsylvania	Eastern Washington Univ.
Univ. of the Pacific	Valparaiso University	Minn. State Univ.-Mankato	Univ. of N.C.-Charlotte	RHODE ISLAND	Gonzaga University
COLORADO	IOWA	St. Cloud State University	Univ. of N.C.-Pembroke	Roger Williams University	University of Washington
Colorado State University	Drake University-Des Moines	Univ. of Minn.-Minneapolis	Western Carolina University	SOUTH CAROLINA	Washington State University
CONNECTICUT	Iowa State University-Ames	University of St. Thomas	NORTH DAKOTA	College of Charleston	WEST VIRGINIA
Eastern Conn. State Univ.	Simpson College-Indianola	MISSISSIPPI	North Dakota State University	University of South Carolina	Bethany College
Quinnipiac University	University of Iowa-Iowa City	Mississippi State University	University of North Dakota	OHIO	Marshall University
University of Hartford	University of Northern Iowa	Univ. of Southern Mississippi	SOUTH DAKOTA	Bowling Green State Univ.	West Virginia State College
DELAWARE	KANSAS	MISSOURI	Augustana College	Capital University	West Virginia University
Delaware State Univ.-Dover	Kansas State University	Central Missouri State Univ.	University of South Dakota	Cleveland State University	WISCONSIN
Univ. of Delaware- Newark	University of Kansas	Missouri Southern State Univ.	TENNESSEE	John Carroll University	Cardinal Stritch University
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	Wichita State University	Missouri State University	Austin Peay State University	Kent State University	Marquette University
American University	KENTUCKY	Northwest Missouri State U.	Belmont University	Miami University	Univ. of Wisc.-La Crosse
Howard University	Eastern Kentucky University	Southeast Missouri State U.	East Tennessee State Univ.	Ohio Northern University	Univ. of Wisc.-Eau Claire
FLORIDA	Morehead State University	STEPHENS COLLEGE	Lee University	Ohio State University	Univ. of Wisc.-Madison
Flagler College-St. Augustine	Murray State University	Webster University	Lipscomb University	Ohio University	Univ. of Wisc.-Milwaukee
Florida A&M Univ.-Tallahassee	Northern Kentucky University	NEBRASKA	Middle Tennessee State Univ.	Otterbein College	Univ. of Wisc.-Oshkosh
Florida International University	University of Kentucky	Creighton University	Union University	University of Akron	Univ. of Wisc.-Stevens Pt.
	Western Kentucky University	Univ. of Nebraska-Omaha	University of Memphis	University of Cincinnati	Univ. of Wisc.-Whitewater
		Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln			



## Champion PRSA Chapters

Alaska Chapter  
Anchorage, Alaska

Baton Rouge Chapter  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Bluegrass Chapter  
Louisville, Kentucky

Blueridge Chapter  
Roanoke, Virginia

Central Iowa Chapter  
Des Moines, Iowa

Central Michigan Chapter  
Lansing, Michigan

Central Ohio Chapter  
Columbus, Ohio

Charlotte Chapter  
Charlotte, North Carolina

Cincinnati Chapter  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Detroit Chapter  
Detroit, Michigan

Georgia Chapter  
Atlanta, Georgia

Hoosier Chapter  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Lookout Chapter  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Maryland Chapter  
Laurel, Maryland

Memphis Chapter  
Memphis, Tennessee

National Capital Chapter  
Washington, D.C.

Nebraska Chapter  
Omaha, Nebraska

New Orleans Chapter  
New Orleans, Louisiana

New York Chapter  
New York, New York

Oklahoma City Chapter  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Palm Beach Chapter  
Palm Beach, Florida

Pikes Peak Chapter  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Pittsburgh Chapter  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Greater Salt Lake Chapter  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Southern Connecticut Chapter  
East Haven, Connecticut

Southwest Missouri Chapter  
Springfield, Missouri

Suburban Chicagoland Chapter  
Schaumburg, Illinois

Thoroughbred Chapter  
Lexington, Kentucky

Volunteer Chapter  
Knoxville, Tennessee

**YOU ARE INVITED . . .** Named here are the caring men, women and PRSA chapters in the ranks of Champions For PRSSA. If your name or chapter isn't yet listed, please join this proud, informal company now! Our fees match PRSSA dues – \$50 annually. Every dollar is used for the support of PRSSA in its educational and ethical mission. Becoming a Champion is simple – make your \$50 tax-deductible contribution (check or credit card) payable to the PRSA Foundation, noted “Champions,” and send it to Champions for PRSSA ([jeneen.garcia@prsa.org](mailto:jeneen.garcia@prsa.org)), 33 Maiden Lane, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10038-5150 (fax 212-995-0757).

## INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONS FOR PRSSA

Edward R. Albanesi	Elizabeth R. Freid	Frederick W. Morgan
bj Altschul	Del Galloway	Bernadette A. Morris
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Debora S. Foster	Luis W. Morales	Kathleen S. Ziprik



**CHAMPIONS**  
*for* **PRSSA**

PRSA Director of Education

Jeneen Garcia

*jeneen.garcia@prsa.org*

33 Maiden Lane, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10038-5150

TEL: 212-460-1466 • FAX 212-995-0757

*www.prsa.org*