

TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

April 2015



**P2P CAMPAIGN
HELPS GREENE COUNTY
COMMUNITY MEMBERS,
STUDENTS**

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**+ "I HAVE A
DIPLOMA.
NOW WHAT?"**

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Megan Bayles



Megan Bayles has served as the Waynesburg University President since the Spring 2014 semester. If you have any questions regarding the Chapter, contact Megan Bayles at bay2547@student.waynesburg.edu.

During my time as Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter President, I have been provided with an unfathomable amount of opportunities. I have enhanced my leadership skills and learned how to manage my time more efficiently. I have attended conferences all across the nation and made some great friends along the way. I have been able to meet and network with public relations professionals from around the globe.

Through my endeavors, I have learned all about networking. I have learned that growing and nurturing relationships is extremely important, but it can also be extremely difficult. Networking, in a way, is like a sport. In order to be prosperous, you must constantly be practicing your craft.

Okay, so we all know that networking is important. We constantly hear people saying, "Network! Network! Network!" Well, how exactly do you network, and what makes you stand out among a crowd of other young professionals?

From my experiences, I have created a little acronym all about networking. What better acronym for networking than NETWORK! Enjoy!

Sincerely,
Megan Bayles

N: Never be afraid to say hello to someone. Even if they are the CEO of the world's largest company, they are still a person, just like you and me.

E: Every time that you meet someone, make sure to follow up. You could add them on LinkedIn, e-mail them or even reach out with a phone call.

T: Take the time to write a hand-written thank you note. For those connections that have helped you in some way, make sure to send a hand-written letter. These a long way than the generic e-mail.

W: When adding someone to your LinkedIn network, always personalize the request.

O: Organize the contacts that you make! Keep a spread sheet of all of those whom you have met at events, conferences, etc. Include their contact info, the last time you spoke with them and even some details from your last conversation. Trust me, it will help!

R: Remember to mind your manners. This may sound like common sense, but it can make you stand out.

K: Keep in touch! Networking is all about nurturing relationships. Make sure that you do not just reach out to a contact you made once. Every so often, check in with them, even if it is something as simple as, "We haven't talked in a while. How are you?"

THREE TIPS TO MAKE YOUR PRESS RELEASES MORE EFFECTIVE

Natalie Gloady

Social Media Coordinator

What could be worse than a bad press release in public relations? Simply nothing, considering that press releases are one of the strongest and oldest tactics you can use. With bad press release habits, your client or event may not receive the coverage you or they had hoped for. By following these three simple steps, you can significantly make your release more effective and increase the likeliness of catching positive media attention.

1. Cut out meaningless modifiers

Some words are not necessary, and do not always matter; cut these out. It causes the brain to slow down and not retain what you are intending for your audience to remember. If you take out these "modifiers," you will realize that your sentences still have the same meaning that you were aiming for, but now have a stronger punch because they are more direct.

2. Consolidate lengthy phrases as sentence subjects

If your subject is a phrase, shorten it to a single word.

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA

NEWS RELEASE
Contact: Brittany Semco
Public Relations Director
sem0900@student.waynesburg.edu

Header

FOR RELEASE Date

WAYNESBURG, PA—

Chartered in 2010, the Waynesburg University chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America strives to prepare members for their future profession through experience, opportunity and achievement. We aim to enhance members' knowledge of public relations and provide access to professional development opportunities.

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3. Eschew "to be" verbs and excessive preposition use

"To be" verbs and overuse of prepositional phrases result in longer sentences. Replace both of these with stronger verbs. Words like "is," "are," and "am," are usually vague and can often be replaced in order to be more specific. For example, if you can change the vague word to something with an apostrophe + s, do it.

Hopefully with these simple tips, you can create better press releases, increasing your client's bottom line.

SPECIAL EVENT PLANNER HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL "COMM. JOB FAIR"

Abigail Wernert
Historian

The Waynesburg University Department of Communication Job Fair was held for the second consecutive year Thursday, March 26.

The event, which lasted from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Stover Conference Room, featured professionals from various areas of communication, including representatives from Asayo Creative and Stick!, CBS Radio, Greene County Tourist Promotion Agency, West Virginia University Graduate Program and many more.

Waynesburg University holds different job fairs every year, though this is the second year where one has been focused on communication students.

"Last year during the Special Events Planning class, my partner, Jordan Mitrik, and I chose to implement the job fair because we wanted to specialize it specifically for the Department of Communication students," said Kara

Bemer, a senior public relations major and special events coordinator for the Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter who planned the event.

According to Bemer, much of the event was kept the same as the job fair held last year for example the number of professionals, the set-up of the room and the light refreshments.

When planning for the event this year, Bemer went through a process similar to the job fair from last year. Bemer reserved the venue through Student Services, reached out to professionals within a 50 mile radius from Waynesburg and drew a mock-up of the final set-up of the venue.

This year, however, Bemer did make some slight changes. Bemer reached out to professionals earlier than last year to give the companies attending a longer time frame to check if their schedules were open as well as to confirm.

The job fair this year also gave students the chance to participate in a mock interview with the professionals, something senior public relations major and professional development coordinator of PRSSA Taylor Bombalski help set-up as part of her responsibilities for the Chapter.

Bemer also set up a table at the event which contained job postings for students currently applying to jobs to look at.

"The students seemed to like this added feature to the job fair," said Bemer.

After the job fair was held last year, Bemer collected feedback from those who attended the event to see what changes could be made for the job fair this year.

Bemer did the same this year, and is hoping that, should the event be held again next year, the students in charge of planning the event can use the feedback to their advantage.

Some of the feedback received said to possibly change the time of the event to lunch time, as it will allow commuters to have a better chance of attending and students who go will already be dressed up.

"Always look for things to keep in mind and improve and always look for feedback," said Bemer.

"ALWAYS LOOK FOR THINGS TO IMPROVE AND ALWAYS LOOK FOR FEEDBACK."



Photos courtesy of Brittany Semco

RBC “Produce to People” campaign assists community



Cassidy Graham
Fundraising Coordinator

Communications, has been working diligently on client Salvation Army’s “Produce to People” campaign.

Entitled “A Commitment to Service: The Salvation Army’s Produce to People”, the campaign took place on March 26, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Chapter volunteers worked by sorting fruits and vegetables into bags and passing out food from the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank to Greene County residents in need.

Greene County, the hometown of Waynesburg University, is one of the poorest counties in Pennsylvania.

Produce to People uses community volunteers to distribute food on a monthly basis to serve community members and is a program run by the Corner Cupboard Food Bank, with food provided by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The Salvation Army organizes the distribution, recruits and coordinates volunteers and oversees the whole flow of the day.

“When students from Waynesburg University volunteer, their energy and enthusiasm is contagious,” said Sister Audrey Quinn, Greene County Service Center director. “The distribution moves at a much quicker pace.”

The month prior to the event, the Salvation Army client team was busy rallying support for the event and volunteers to work for the March 26 food distribution date. Campaign volunteers were busy hanging flyers, handing out Greene County hunger infographics and presenting students with the opportunity at an information table.

The campaign produced 21 volunteers from the Waynesburg University community. Jordan Mitrik, PRSSA vice president and Red Brick Communications firm director deemed the campaigning efforts

This semester the Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter’s firm, Red Brick

of the Red Brick Communications volunteers successful.

“I am truly happy with the outcome of the campaign. Our goals were to raise awareness of this philanthropic event in our area, stress the importance of volunteering as well as encourage people to participate. After it is all said and done, we definitely achieved our goals and made a difference in the community,” said Mitrik. “My long-term goal for this campaign is to keep [it] ongoing. I want to expand to the residents of Waynesburg and target a select group who may have an interest in volunteering. It would be amazing to see the entire community rally together to help feed the hungry.”

**“WU
STUDENTS’...
ENERGY AND
ENTHUSIASM IS
CONTAGIOUS.”**

This particular cause was chosen because there is an impending hunger problem in Greene County that affects the lives of youth living in the area. The Salvation Army, in conjunction with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is combatting this problem. According to census data, there are 4,980 food insecure individuals in the area and of that number, there are 1,570 food insecure children in Greene County.

The March Produce to People distribution served 532 households with 1,173 individuals in those homes served.

“I volunteered for Produce to People to see and to grow an understanding for what the community, where I spend nine months out of the year, is actually experiencing,” said Rachel Lang, sophomore, forensic accounting major and business management minor. “It was an eye-opening opportunity to see the impact I could create on the lives of community members who are genuinely in need.”

All items distributed by Produce to People are on a “per household” basis.

For more information about A Commitment to Service: The Salvation Army’s Produce to People, please contact Jordan Mitrik, mit3036@student.waynesburg.edu or Cassidy Graham, gra4684@student.waynesburg.edu.

HOW TO PLAN AND HOST A TWITTER CHAT

Brittany Semco, PR Director

If you are a member of PRSSA, you have been a part of a Twitter Chat. Have you ever wondered what it takes to put one together or how they work? This article gives you everything you need to know to host a Twitter Chat that is sure to be fruitful for you and other PRSSA members.

1. Identify Your Audience

Before you can do anything, you need to identify who your audience will be for the Twitter Chat. Who is this Twitter Chat for? Is it for college students or PR professionals already in the field? This first step is crucial to implement a successful Twitter Chat. The question choices and the time will revolve around their preferences.

2. Choose Your Theme

As with any event, having a theme is key. If your audience is in college, ask questions about portfolios, resumes or the job hunt. If your audience includes working professionals, ask questions about methods of research or market analysis. Tailor your questions to your audience.

3. Picking Your Date and Time

Every event needs to be planned in advance. A Twitter Chat is no different. It takes days to make sure that people will be online to participate. Pick a date and time when the most people will be available. Twitter Chats usually run for one hour. If you mess up this part of your planning, your Twitter Chat won't be as successful.

4. Crafting the Questions

Would you stay online for the Twitter Chat if the questions were not relevant to you? Not many people would. The questions you create are meant to provoke helpful answers for the other participants. At this point, do not discard any questions as useless, so write down as many as you can think of.

5. Choosing Your Questions

Once you have your long list of questions, go through and take out the repeats. Try to limit the question list to 10 – that is usually the appropriate amount for a Twitter Chat. If you would like to provide more time for participants to answer each question, choose five. That's the beauty of a Twitter Chat; you can choose exactly what will be asked and how long to dwell on each question.

6. Set Up a Schedule

You will need a schedule of when each question will be sent out to stay on track because you will want to participate as well. It will be hard to send out questions, reminders of questions as well as participate as an attendee. Use Hootesuite to do this. With this site, you can schedule tweets to be sent out at specific

times. Also, it is beneficial to send out reminder tweets before each question and follow-up tweets after to create a sense of community and conversation for the Twitter Chat. An example of a follow-up tweet could be: "Thank you for your answers; our next question is coming out in one minute!"

7. Promote. Promote. Promote.

You want as many people to be online for the Twitter Chat as possible. To achieve this, you need to promote the event on your Twitter, Facebook and any other social media site you regularly use. Create a hashtag to be used during the entire chat, this helps with promotion as well as future observation of the event. Create Facebook banners and a Facebook event, inviting people to attend. Use the connections you have made with other PRSSA Chapters to increase participation.

8. The Day-of

Check multiple times throughout the day that all of your tweets are still scheduled for the right time. When the hour comes for the Chat, all your reminders, questions and follow up reminds will go out on their own so you can participate and enjoy the answers. You should have someone else with you the day of to help respond to answers, favorite, or retweet for your members to see. This helps you stay involved with the participants answering and provide useful tips to them as well.

9. Last Things

Once the hour is up, quickly go through the tweets by searching the hashtag and respond to any latecomers. Participants will linger with the Chat for approximately 10 minutes and you should, too. You should also send out a "thank you for participating" tweet.

10. Evaluation

A key component public relations students learn is to evaluate campaigns and events you partake in. The same goes for Twitter Chats. Write down what went well and what could have been better. You will love having these notes for the next time you do a Twitter Chat.

So that is how you do it! Your Twitter Chat is well on its way to becoming successful. It is up to you to promote your event and have every detail nailed down to the last second.

CHAPTER TO PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL MINI-RELAY FOR LIFE

Michelle Dunseath
Secretary

Waynesburg University's
PRSSA Chapter will be
participating in Mini Relay

For Life April 19, 2015. Mini Relay for Life is an annual, on-campus event that provides students with an opportunity to raise money and collect donations to contribute to a well-known cause.

Relay for Life is an event that most campuses participate in because the money raised during this event goes to cancer research and prevention.

"This event is something the University holds each year," said Kara Bemer, senior public relations major. "Cancer is something that has affected almost all of us in some way."

Students believe that fighting for a cause, such as cancer prevention, can better the community and the world.

"I make it a priority to become involved each year with Mini Relay for Life," said Danielle Schuyler, senior public relations major. "As public relations students, we are sometimes obligated to participate in fighting for a cause. We learn about corporate social responsibility in our classes, and this is the time to implement it."

WUPRSSA serves its community in various ways, such as working with non-profit clients or fundraising. This reflects back to the mission of Waynesburg University and its core values of "faith, learning, and serving".

Students involved with Mini Relay for Life contribute their skills in different ways.

Bemer serves as the Special Events Coordinator on WUPRSSA's Executive Board. Her role is crucial to organize this team's progress and student's tasks and participation.

"Relay for Life allows each of us to make a difference and help fight cancer," said Bemer. "Our members should always seek new volunteer opportunities, but this truly allows members to make a difference with an illness that



Photos courtesy of WU PRSSA, 2014 Relay for Life

takes lives."

With each year, Waynesburg University chooses a different theme to be implemented during the event. This year's theme is "When You Wish Upon A Cure", featuring highlights from famous Disney movies and television shows.

WUPRSSA chose to focus on the movie "Pirates of the Caribbean".

These themes create a unique way for students to raise money and work as a team to collaborate on effective fundraising techniques.

"I was really excited when I found out what our theme was," said Schuyler. "Our group can do some fun things to raise money, plus we can dress up and have fun together."

The Chapter plans on collecting donations and selling a food or drink item at the table on the day of Mini Relay. This will help raise the funds to contribute to Relay for Life as a whole.

Relay for Life and other service opportunities will be a vital organizational function for Waynesburg University's PRSSA chapter.

FORMER PRSSA PRESIDENT SHARES POST-GRAD EXPERIENCES



Photos courtesy of WU PRSSA

Taylor Bombalski
Professional Development
Coordinator

When Samantha McClintock graduated in December 2012 from Waynesburg University, she set a professional plan for herself: work as a public relations practitioner in the Pittsburgh market.

However, a slight change in plans led

former Waynesburg University PRSSA President back to her alma mater, working as a communication specialist for Waynesburg.

“Professional plans change all the time and you have to be flexible,” said McClintock.

Determined to establish herself in the Pittsburgh market, McClintock used her networking skills and previous experience with employers to land a job that was in line with her plans.

She recently began a new position as Communication Specialist for Dollar Energy Fund, a nonprofit organization who seeks to improve the quality of life

for households experiencing hardships by providing utility assistance and other services.

McClintock’s former boss from Cabot Oil and Gas Corporation, where she completed an internship while studying at Waynesburg University, saw the job posting and recommended that she should apply.

“I would not have found out about this job without networking with my internship three years ago,” said McClintock. “I want to make a difference and this position will help me do that.”

Given her experience in the workforce, McClintock has found that both her involvement in the Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter as well as her perseverance to succeed has led her to where she is today.

She encourages public relations students at Waynesburg to immediately immerse themselves in any and all opportunities. Whether it is running for a National Committee position for PRSSA National or applying for local scholarships, McClintock believes these opportunities present students with valuable experience as well a chance to expand their network.

McClintock’s biggest piece of advice: do not give up.

For more information on her position as well as her transition from higher education to the public sector, visit <http://prsa-pgh.org/blog.php?id=80>.

MCCLINTOCK’S ADVICE FOR UNDERGRADUATES

- The most important thing is don’t give up.
- Don’t be afraid to look outside of your comfort zone.
- Business skills are more important than you think.
- Don’t be afraid to work for free.
- It is going to be hard!

I HAVE MY DIPLOMA... NOW WHAT?

Kara Bemer

Special Events Coordinator

“Whether you want to believe it or not, college will come and go quickly. After furthering your education for four years and strengthening your passion in public relations, where are you left after graduation? This is something that no one can answer because the reality is that the future is unknown to each of us. However, there are a couple of tips you can keep under your belt for preparing for the unknown and be successful.

There are so many tools made available to each of us at Waynesburg University, and it is essential to use them. Not only should you continue to be as active in PRSSA and Red Brick Communications as possible, you should also invest in what is right in front of you. You go to classes Monday through Friday and have the opportunity to network daily.

Whether that is talking to a student you do not know or staying after class to talk one-on-one with your professors, it is important to network with them. As you start to apply for jobs, you will begin to notice that knowing someone who knows someone is where you want to be. Not only will you get a recommendation if you have a good relationship with this person, you will get noticed immediately. Remember, while the world is big, it is also small in regards to making connections. You never know who knows someone that could assist you in the chance to fulfill your dreams.

Resumes are always changing; sometimes employers prefer that they are more creative while others do not care and want to evaluate all of your positions on one piece of paper. How do you find a balance or decide what works for you? Personally, I have two different resumes that I rotate, one is more text heavy and the other has strong design elements. While this may be a long process to create, it is worth it.

Resumes should tell a story about you and also be tailored to the type of job you are applying to. When creating your resume, you can look at fellow classmates for inspiration and talk to professors, but ultimately it must fit who you are. Don't be afraid to create something that you think works for you; everyone has his or her own tastes and accomplishments.

How you choose to compile all of these things on one sheet of paper is up to your discrepancy, just make sure to have everything organized, professional and unique.

An online portfolio allows employers to see past your resume. They can instantly view some of your best pieces online. There are several online programs that offer free platforms for you to create an online portfolio. My favorite and recommendation is weebly.com. There are hundreds of free templates that you can use, or you can create your own. You can also add tabs that lead to certain pages such as press releases, photography and designs. It was a simple process for me to create and I have received positive feedback from employers stating that they enjoyed viewing my work online. Do not slack on this step; it is a strong and powerful tool. Plus, it is free, so you have no excuses!

I mentioned earlier to network on campus with everyone. I mean that. However, make sure to take emphasis within your department. These are professors and students who have real-world experiences. They are there to help and make things easier on you. Work hard for them because they are working hard for you. By the time you graduate, you may want to ask them for a recommendation or a reference and they do not have to say yes. Make sure to value their time by soaking up their lectures and lessons like a sponge.

When you get the chance to start applying for jobs, I have several suggestions. Start early with your applications, it is always great practice to familiarize yourself with job application formats as well as beat other competition that comes in later months. Apply to your dream job. On the other hand, do not be afraid to take an additional internship after graduation. This is a company's way of testing to see if you are a match within their company. After graduation, internships are usually shorter and result in a full-time position if completed successfully.

My final remark is to not be afraid. Graduation is another step in your life and you have countless of advocates for you from Waynesburg University. You will have to grow up and get an “adult job,” but appreciate it. You have the opportunity to land a position in a field that is passionate, busy, innovative and unique. Best of luck to all of you!

Interested in event planning?

*Contact our Special Events Coordinator Kara Bemer
at bem6178@student.waynesburg.edu!*

OPPORTUNITIES

May 22, 2015

- PRSA Diversity Multicultural Scholarship

JUNE 5, 2015

- Betsy Plank/PRSSA Scholarship
- Hall of Fame Award
- Lawrence G. Foster Award
- National President's Citation
- National Gold Key Award
- Star Chapter Award
- Stephen D. Pisinski Memorial Scholarship
- Teahan National Chapter Awards

JUNE 12, 2015

- Chester Burger Scholarship for Excellence
- John D. Graham Scholarship
- Marcia Silverman Minority Student Award
- Neumeier Family Leadership Award
- Ofield Dukes Multicultural Student Award
- Ron Culp Scholarship for Mentorship

PR Week 2015

April 13-17, 2015

Notes

MEET THE E-BOARD!



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Connect With Us!

If interested in writing for Trending Topics or the Chapter's blog, contact Brittany Semco or Jordan Mitrik.

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WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA

April 2015