

TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

September 2017



YEAR EXPECTATIONS
FROM THE NEW
CHAPTER PRESIDENT
AND FIRM DIRECTOR

NATIONAL
CONFERENCE PREVIEW:
THE REVOLUTION
CONTINUES

+ 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE
YOUR LINKEDIN

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA Public Relations
Student Society
of America

DR. F. H. TEAHAN
2015
OUTSTANDING
NEWSLETTER
AWARD

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Maura Fenske
Chapter President

At this time last year, I was just beginning my Chapter presidency, and was filled with anticipation as I looked at the year ahead. I had all of the nerves, though I did my best not to make it seem that way. I had lofty goals, not only for myself, but also for our Executive Board and our general body members.

Not only did we achieve a great number of those goals, but in many cases, we far surpassed them.

As you will remember, last October, we were awarded Star Chapter status by Public Relations Student Society of America National for the fourth consecutive year. To top that, in January, we were named

the 2017 PRSSA Chapter of the year by our sponsor chapter, Public Relations Society of America Pittsburgh.

In an unforeseen but exhilarating turn of events this past spring semester, our former Chapter Public Relations Director, Natalie Gloady, was chosen as the PRSSA National Publications Editor-in-Chief, making her the first Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter member to ever be named to National Committee. Having a member sit on National Committee and hosting FORUM, PRSSA's national newspaper, had been goals that I had set far in the distance, thinking neither would happen during my time at Waynesburg.

Leave it to Natalie to speed up the process and make both things happen much sooner than we had planned.

Another Chapter "first" occurred early this summer, when we learned that a group of Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter members had been chosen to present a Chapter Development Session at the 2017 PRSSA National Conference in Boston this

October (much more on that in this issue!)

So...does all of this mean we sit back on our heels, pat ourselves on the back and take a break?

Absolutely not.

We still have so much left to do. I want to see our Chapter funds increase exponentially this year, which will not happen without a concentrated focus on fundraising efforts and participation from all of you. I also plan to extend our High School Initiative outreach program even further into our region. My goal is to bring in not only new Chapter members, but dedicated public relations majors, who will continue to carry on the legacy of our Chapter, program and Department long after the seniors and I graduate. Additionally, I hope to bring home news from Boston that we have been awarded Star Chapter status once again, as well as some of the other PRSSA Chapter Awards for which we applied this summer. We all know that we are already a "winning team," and we hope that our work is also recognized at the National level.

To accomplish all of this, we must not become complacent. We have to keep pushing forward, challenging what we think is good, making it not only great, but outstanding. We must all be willing to put in those long hours, to work those Saturday events, to make an investment into our careers and our futures.

Last year, I closed my very first letter to you in Trending Topics by saying, "Let's see just how far we can go this year."

Now, let's see how much further we can go this year. Keep working hard. I thank you for your commitment to our Chapter and to your own education and career.

Best always,

Maura E. Fenske

Maura Fenske, Chapter President

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- Oct. 12:** Annual dues must be paid
- Oct. 12:** Powder Puff Football Game at 4 p.m.
- Oct. 12:** General Body meeting at 9 p.m.
- Oct. 19:** PRSA Pittsburgh PR Summit
- Oct. 26:** Business Club Financial Literacy Speaker at 11 a.m.
- Oct. 26:** Harvest Fest at 4 p.m.
- Oct. 28:** Parking Lot Party at noon

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 2:** Red Brick Communications meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 2:** General Body meeting at 9 p.m.
- Nov. 9:** Red Brick Communications meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 16:** Red Brick Communications meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 16:** General Body meeting at 9 p.m.
- Nov. 30:** Red Brick Communications meeting at 11 a.m.

DECEMBER

- Dec. 7 :** Red Brick Communications meeting at 11 a.m.
- Dec. 7:** General Body meeting at 9 p.m.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE PREVIEW: THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES

Grace Hutchison
Historian

Four members of the Waynesburg University Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America

chapter will be flying to Boston Oct. 6 to attend the Public Relations Society of America 2017 International Conference, “The Revolution Continues.”

The attending Chapter members include Maura Fenske, chapter president, Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director, Nicole Tobias, professional development coordinator and Gabrielle Coy, special events coordinator. For Tobias, National Conference offers opportunities not only to learn within the field, but also to meet potential employers.

“Networking nationally definitely helps to gain connections,” Tobias said. “Meeting people at events can help them remember you when applying for jobs, and word-of-mouth is everything.”

This year, Waynesburg PRSSA was awarded the opportunity to speak at the conference to fellow PRSSA members and peers. Their chapter development presentation, entitled “PR Week Defeated: How to Host a Revolutionary Event,” will be given just hours after they arrive in Boston. The presentation will be focused on Waynesburg PRSSA’s annual week-long series of public relations presentations and networking events, PR Week, which takes place each spring at the university.

For Fenske, it’s “one of the most exciting parts” about the trip, and

it was an honor she has been working hard to achieve.

“It’s been a goal of mine since I’ve become president, and a goal of the Chapter and Professor Krause [Waynesburg PRSSA faculty advisor] long before that,” Fenske said.

The three-day conference will feature keynote speakers including famous crisis-communications specialist Judy Smith and a survivor of the Boston Marathon bombing attacks. According to Tobias, outside of networking and the presentation, hearing wisdom from the survivor might be “a highlight of the trip.”

When the busy days of networking, gaining public relations knowledge and interacting with fellow public relations students wind down, Fenske and the other chapter members also look forward to doing some sightseeing while in Boston.

“There is a lot to do in Boston,” Fenske said. “There’s so many museums and it is very historic...I am excited to have it be a time of bonding for all of us,” Fenske said.

As the attending Chapter members polish their presentation and prepare themselves to go, Tobias can’t help but feel eager for the opportunity.

“I am incredibly excited to learn from the professionals around me, interact with fellow students, and see all of the wonderful sights of Boston,” she said.



*Maura Fenske,
President*



*Amanda Troncone,
Vice President/Firm Director*



*Teghan Simonton,
Public Relations Director*



*Natalie Johnston,
Secretary*



*Grace Hutchison,
Historian*



*Chad Walker,
Treasurer*



*Gabrielle Coy,
Special Events Coordinator*



*Tanner McKnight,
Fundraising Coordinator*



*Nicole Tobias,
Professional Development
Coordinator*

**THE WAYNESBURG
UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC RELATIONS
STUDENT SOCIETY
OF AMERICA IS
EXCITED AND PROUD
TO INTRODUCE
THEIR 2017 AND 2018
EXECUTIVE BOARD!**

FROM THE FIRM DIRECTOR'S DESK

Amanda Tronccone
VP/Firm Director

This summer, as I prepared for my first semester as Firm Director of Red Brick Communications, I knew this year would be challenging. However, I was not expecting the enormous challenge of creating an open environment within the firm. I truly believe that in order for Red Brick Communications to grow, we need to focus on three ideals: honesty, accountability and quality.

Honesty

Honesty incorporates many facets—openness, transparency, truth—all aspects we are taught in our classes and ethics conversations to embrace. Red Brick Communications has always stood with a

Amanda Tronccone is a junior and has been the Waynesburg University PRSSA VP/Firm Director since June 2017. If you are interested in the firm, or have any questions, email Amanda at tro5212@student.waynesburg.edu

strong ethical backbone, but sometimes members feel burdened by expectations and confused by miscommunication. My goal this year is to alleviate that miscommunication and encourage all members to be honest in their endeavors. I know there will be times when members will be particularly busy and overwhelmed; but if we, as a firm, are honest about it, we can work together to accomplish our tasks.

Accountability

While it is important to be flexible as a leader, it is even more important

to keep firm members accountable for their actions and the work they are producing. There has to be expectations and standards set for firm members, and when those expectations and standards are not met, it must be addressed. There is a certain way to approach that conversation, and this year, I am hoping to establish a healthy relationship with each of my firm members. Criticism is a beneficial way for members to learn, but it needs to remain constructive in the process.

Quality

Red Brick Communications is responsible for producing pro bono work for clients in the community, so quality standards are necessary. While we are still learning as students, it is important that our work reflects the best we have to offer. This year, I am focusing on what quality is and how we can achieve quality as a whole.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year with all of you at Red Brick Communications. I know that as we continue to learn and grow as professionals and individuals, our work will truly shine.

Sincerely,



Amanda Tronccone, Red Brick Communications Firm Director

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY THE NEW HOME OF FORUM

Gabrielle Coy
Special Events Coordinator

Three times a year, Public Relations Student Society of America chapters across

the globe collaborate to publish a 10- to 11-page newsletter, featuring quality content about the industry of public relations. This publication, *FORUM*, is produced at the school of the current PRSSA National Publications Editor in Chief, and this year, for the first time, Waynesburg University has become the new home of *FORUM*.

Natalie Gloady, recent graduate who previously served as Waynesburg PRSSA's Public Relations Director, has transitioned into the role of National Publications Editor in Chief, bringing the publication to Waynesburg University.

Each issue of *FORUM* begins with a brainstorming session between Gloady and her team: Maura Fenske, Waynesburg PRSSA president and *FORUM* copy editor, Teghan Simonton Waynesburg PRSSA public relations director and *FORUM* content & graphics coordinator, Sam Chadwick advertising manager and Olivia Kelly, editorial assistant.

"My team and I sit down and brainstorm topics that we would like to see in coinciding issues of *FORUM*," Gloady said. "Once we have those topics established, I then pull on the list of writers that I have created through chapters all across the globe, and through chapter members who have participated in the

publication all across the globe to contribute to these assignments."

As topics are assigned, the team enters the editing phase. Submissions are edited by both the *FORUM* team as well as PRSSA headquarters, to ensure the best possible publication. The edits are sent back and forth between the *FORUM* Committee and Headquarters multiple times to pick out mistakes and possible improvements. Several versions are created before *FORUM* is finally published.

"For the fall issue, we created 18 versions before we decided on one," said Gloady.

At the end of the process, *FORUM* is distributed to all PRSSA members – more than 10,000 students and advisors – through an online newspaper format.

Gloady said *FORUM* being housed at Waynesburg brings another accomplishment that showcases the hard work of all Chapter members.

"I think that our Chapter has worked very hard in the past two years to get to the level and the standards it's at now," she said. "Being able to have *FORUM* hosted at Waynesburg to our resume is just another accolade that really continues to strengthen our chapter."



Waynesburg PRSSA at Jacketfest

The Chapter connected with students and alumni at “Jacketfest” Saturday, Sept. 30: part of Waynesburg University’s Homecoming weekend. Waynesburg PRSSA used the opportunity to update its contact database and bond with the school community, using a polaroid photo activity and personalized letters of appeal.

RED BRICK COMMUNICATIONS SIGNS NEW CLIENTS FOR 2017-18 YEAR

Teghan Simonton
Public Relations
Director

Red Brick Communications, Waynesburg University’s nationally affiliated, student-run public relations firm has started the 2017-18 academic year out

with a few changes.

According to Amanda Troncone, firm director and vice president of the Waynesburg Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America, the firm has added new clients to its repertoire.

“This year we have signed six clients, and three of them are new compared to last year,” said Troncone. “Our new clients are Greene County United Way, Washington County Habitat for Humanity and the Greene County Historical Society.”

Troncone said the firm brought in each new client in a different manner, as firm members utilized their personal connections and received tips from Red Brick’s faculty advisor, Richard Krause. She said she is looking forward to a fresh start with new colleagues, and has many plans for handling clients this year.

“My goals for the new clients this year is for us, as a firm, to understand who they are, what they do and what they need,” she said. “This is also a goal for the old clients. I want every client

to feel as if they are gaining from this relationship [with] Red Brick Communications. We need to be producing quality work for these clients so they find value in signing a contract with us every year.”

With the 2017-18 year being Troncone’s first as Firm Director, she is eager to shift the organization’s focus. “This year, I am trying to create a focus on honesty, accountability and quality,” she said. “So I am excited to cultivate this environment for our firm members. This will look like a lot of different things, but I think the biggest change will be how I approach opportunities and challenges.”

Troncone said that, in regards to all clients old and new, she is looking forward to the coming year and the changes it may bring.

“Overall, I am most excited about watching our firm members grow and flourish in their respective positions,” she said. “As a leader, I am always looking for ways to allow other students to grow and lead because that is the reason why I do what I do for this firm. I get to work with amazing people on a daily basis who are constantly surprising me and consistently supporting me, so I am honored to get to be that for them as well. When the other firm members to well, I know I am doing my job well.”

WAYNESBURG PRSSA WELCOMES FRESHMEN AT ACTIVITIES FAIR

Natalie Johnston
Secretary

Each year, Waynesburg University holds an Activities Fair to showcase all the clubs and organizations the campus has to offer. This year, Waynesburg's Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America was one of many organizations that participated in the fair Sunday, Aug. 27.

Interaction with new students is the main goal for any club or organization at the Activities Fair. Waynesburg PRSSA hoped to use this opportunity to help incoming students understand who they are and what they stand for.

"Along with Gabrielle Coy and Amanda Troncone, I planned the gift card raffle and also manned the PRSSA and Red Brick table at the fair," said Maura Fenske, senior public relations major and Chapter president. "We talked to the incoming students and encouraged them to give PRSSA a try, even if they were unsure of what they wanted to study or if PRSSA would be right for them."

Although it can seem like PRSSA is just for public relations majors, anyone can join and be a part of the Chapter, regardless of major. The Activities Fair gave incoming students an opportunity to get involved with clubs within their major and ones that might be in another discipline.

"The Activities Fair allows for PRSSA and Red Brick to pitch to freshman and other students who may have never heard of our organizations otherwise," said Amanda Troncone, junior public relations major, vice president of Waynesburg PRSSA and firm director of Red Brick Communications. "It also is a great way for us,

as leaders, to practice explaining and presenting our organizations to other people."

PRSSA looks forward to participating annually

in the Activities Fair

that Waynesburg

University holds. Every year, PRSSA tries to add variation to what the Chapter can offer to the incoming students.

"I would change the location of our table and how we are presenting our information," Troncone said. "Students tend to be bored with our conversation once they find out we are geared towards public relations and communications students. While that is our identity, I believe that there is a more creative solution to how we present the information to students, so everyone can benefit from PRSSA and all it has to offer."



Photo Courtesy of Teghan Simonton

5 TIPS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE

Tanner McKnight

Fundraising Coordinator

Many students have a profile on LinkedIn. But do they have a professional profile? Remember:

your LinkedIn profile is just like your résumé, and you should always keep it up to date. It is always a work in progress, and will not be perfect after fixing mistakes once.

Here are five ways to improve your LinkedIn.

Update your status on a regular basis.

Status updates put yourself at the top of your connections' news feeds. Updating regularly can show that you are staying up to date about what is happening in your field. Keep your connections updated about different events that you attend, whether that is PR Summit or PRSSA National Conference. These easy steps can keep you on the radar of your LinkedIn connections.

Use specific words.

Key words like "specialized," "strategic," "passionate" and "certified" show that you understand your field. Your diction can make you stand out from other applicants. But, be mindful: make sure the work you have displayed in your portfolio is consistent with your expertise. Using specific words can help you put yourself ahead of other candidates.

Use a professional head shot.

Having a professional head shot makes you appealing to potential employers and colleagues. In your headshot, wear what you would wear to a job interview or an important day at work. The picture doesn't have to be taken by a professional photographer, but it must represent you as a professional.

Brand yourself.


As public relations students, we understand the importance of branding ourselves. You can use your work experiences—like the internships you have had or the positions you've held—to brand yourself. This shows that you are developing as a professional in the field of your choice. You can also build your brand by attending events and conferences in your field of study. Then, you can interact with professionals on social media platforms or on LinkedIn.

Expanding your network.

The easiest way to improve your LinkedIn profile is by syncing your email address book. This will suggest people you already know and connect you with them. Additionally, take a chance and reach out to more people in your field of study, as well. You can also connect with people at events. Expanding your network is an ongoing process, so you must always be making connections.

September was Ethics Month!


Waynesburg PRSSA participated in a Twitter Chat with PRSSA National Tuesday, Sept. 12 about ethics in public relations. Check out some highlights from our Chapter members!

 **Andrew Cook**
@adcook22 [Follow](#)

A1: Public relations is built on trust. If you act with integrity and ethics, you build that trust. #prssa

9:08 PM - Sep 12, 2017 · Salt Lake City, UT

1 17 36

 **Natalie Gloady**
@natgloady [Follow](#)

A1: ethics is the backbone of EVERYTHING we do as PR practitioners. #PRSSA

9:08 PM - Sep 12, 2017 · Manifold, PA


1 7

 **Ashleigh Kathryn**
@Ashleigh_K_W [Follow](#)

Q3: How can we use ethics to ensure that we are both accurate and timely in such a fast-paced environment? #PRSSA

9:20 PM - Sep 12, 2017


12 6 19

 **Nicole Tobias**
@nicole_tobias32 [Follow](#)

A3: Make sure what you post/publish is accurate, especially if it's about a major occurrence #PRSSA

9:23 PM - Sep 12, 2017

1 5

 **PRSSA**
@PRSSANational [Follow](#)

Q5: How can we use technology to learn about ethical public relations practices? #PRSSA

9:36 PM - Sep 12, 2017

13 3 8

 **Maura Fenske**
@maurafenske [Follow](#)

5: Read. Study. We have more info at our fingertips than ever before. Learning should never stop, esp. when it comes to ethics. #PRSSA

9:39 PM - Sep 12, 2017

1 12

OPPORTUNITIES

Committee Positions

The Chapter is actively seeking dedicated members to apply for one of the new committee positions through the Waynesburg University PRSSA Chapter. Contact Chapter president, Maura Fenske, for more information.

Blog Writing

Enhance your writing skills and expand your portfolio by writing for the Chapter blog. Contact public relations director, Natalie Glody, for more information.

Red Brick Communications

Become part of the nationally affiliated student-run firm and prepare yourself by providing local nonprofit organizations with pro bono public relations work. Contact vice president and firm director, Cassidy Graham, for more information.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT: SENIOR MAURA FENSKE

Olivia Kelley

FORUM

Editorial Assistant

Be involved in your Chapter.

These are the words that Chapter president Maura

Fenske encourages her fellow Chapter members and communication department peers to carry out during their time in the Waynesburg University Department of Communication.

Fenske, a senior public relations major and journalism minor, held the role of Digital Content Creation intern this summer at EM-Media's Steubenville, Ohio office. She attributed the opportunity to her involvement in Waynesburg's Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter. In fact, she made her first impression on EM-Media's owner and president, Jim Emmerling, and head of digital marketing, Nathan Blake, at the 2017 Public Relations Society of America Pittsburgh Renaissance Awards.

"I was actually placed at the same table as the two of them, and I don't believe in coincidence, so I know we were placed together for a reason," said Fenske.

The reason was clear to both Fenske and those at EM-Media. Fenske had sharpened the tools in her public relations toolbox for the past three years all for that very moment, and her dedication finally paid off. Her passion, strong communication skills and continuing success of Waynesburg's PRSSA Chapter made Fenske stand out enough to EM-Media that she secured an interview and, subsequently, landed an internship position.

During her internship, Fenske utilized a lot of skills that most public relation majors know all too well.

"...I did a lot of writing--mostly blogs and some press releases--and editing, as well as some design and some social media," said Fenske.

But Fenske did not want to limit herself to familiar tasks that she could execute with ease. She wanted to explore areas that expanded beyond her comfort zone.

"For example," said Fenske, "...our vice president called the production department one day and told them that he needed a radio spot for an event put

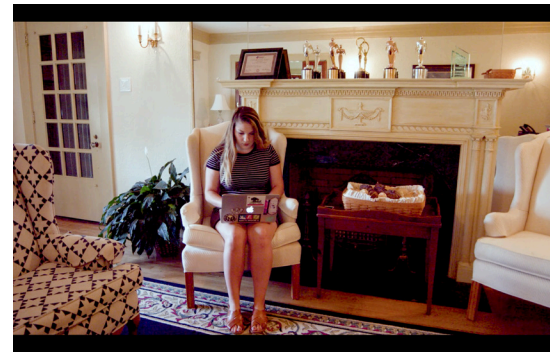


Photo courtesy of Maura Fenske

on by Youth System Services, the client I did the most work for, and that he wanted me to record it."

Fenske knew little about radio, yet accepted the challenge. She kept an open mind in all areas of her internship.

"I didn't know much about the business side of integrated marketing and advertising, only about the writing and design side," said Fenske. "Even though I was an intern on the digital side of things, I learned different things from everyone on our team, all the way from our owner and president to members of the production side and the sales force."

Despite the intensity of an agency's environment, Fenske said that the atmosphere created by her co-workers was extremely fun and welcoming.

"We played Spikeball almost every day for our break, and we often shared sweets or lunch, which helped me get to know them better in a more relaxed setting," said Fenske.

All in all, Fenske gained invaluable knowledge and memorable experiences that she will keep forever. Her story is testimony to the importance of remaining diligent and steadfast in the work of Waynesburg PRSSA.

"This is why we preach within the Department, and specifically within our major, to get involved and stay involved," said Fenske. "The lost weekends, the money spent on dues, the late-night meetings, the firm assignments and the miles-long to-do lists are worth it in the end."

Connect With Us!

Contact Tegan Simonton by emailing sim6628@student.waynesburg.edu if you would like to write for Trending Topics!

@wuprssa
facebook.com/wuprssa
wuprssa.wordpress.com
www.redbrick1849.com



INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT: SENIOR MACKENNA DRAZICH

Chad Walker
Treasurer

Internships are a great résumé builder to show your experience in the field. Mackenna

Drazich, a senior public relations major, interned this summer at Sports Monster, Inc. Sports Monster runs adult amateur recreational sports. Their main sports are soccer, basketball, softball, and volleyball.

Drazich took on a couple of roles for the Pittsburgh-based company, such as administration and marketing. Some of her major tasks were processing registration, social media registrations, and overseeing operations.

Learning how to manage a company and its social media is essential to becoming the best public relations student you can be, Drazich said.

“I stepped into a huge role within two weeks of being there,” she said.

With her boss working all the way from Columbus, Ohio, Drazich felt immediately challenged, because she was running an establishment with just one other intern.

“I felt like I was under pressure to fix everything that went wrong” Drazich said.

Drazich said she relied heavily on experience from Red Brick Communications, Waynesburg University’s nationally affiliated, student-run public relations firm that helps local establishments. She said her experience writing for clients and talking to clients through the firm, which was extremely helpful during her internship. At Sports Monster, she answered several complaint phone calls, which developed with her customer service skills and enhanced her problem-solving abilities.



Logo courtesy of Sports Monster Inc.

Even at the toughest moments, Drazich said she had fun and enjoyed what she was doing. She said she is not intimidated by anything involving this field, taking everything head-on and never getting discouraged. As a senior, she is planning for the future, making connections by networking and building her résumé.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT: SENIOR SAM CHADWICK

Nicole Tobias
Professional Development
Coordinator

When looking for an internship, senior public relations student Samantha Chadwick wanted to try a new sector of

public relations, as well as a set of new skills. Chadwick gained all of this and more, when she completed her internship at Dick Jones Communications, a communications firm located in McMurray, Pennsylvania.

Chadwick discovered Dick Jones Communications during a career fair held on campus during a Public Relations Student Society of America Regional Conference in the spring of 2016.

“It was during the career fair that I spoke with Jeff Canning, an account supervisor at DJC and WU alumnus, about their summer internship program,” said Chadwick.

Her meeting led to her interning at Dick Jones Communications during the summer of 2016, as well as the summer of 2017.

As the Research and Outreach Coordinator, Chadwick worked on multiple client accounts while working closely with other practitioners in the office. Her daily responsibilities consisted of managing media relations for higher-education clientele, and allowed Chadwick to perform a wide variety of tasks.

“I created many pitch letters, op-eds, media lists, media audits and occasionally conducted interviews with new clients,” she

said. Overall, Chadwick said she had the time of her life during her internship, and gained all she expected and more.



Photo courtesy of Sam Chadwick

“I left my internship with a lot of experience in the world of media relations, as well as a bunch of clips to prove it,” she said.

Chadwick also learned about her strengths and weaknesses during her internship. She said the most rewarding part of her internship would have to be her last day, when her boss invited her to come back and work for Dick Jones Communications whenever she is able.

To those looking for an internship, Chadwick suggests that students “step out of their comfort zone and talk to people, because if I hadn’t, I never would have found such a great opportunity...”

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA Public Relations
Student Society
of America