

TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

February 2018



**CHAPTER LEADERS
PREPARE FOR
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PLANNING FOR 'PR
WEEK' IN FULL SWING**

**+ TAKING ADVANTAGE
OF YOUR PRSSA
MEMBERSHIP**

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

Spring is nearly upon us, and with spring comes

interview season. The snow starts to melt, cold days fade into budding warmth and employers are ready to hire.

Whether you are looking for a summer internship, a part- or full-time job in the field, know this: you are prepared.

Every experience, every class, every assignment, every firm project and every professional development activity has equipped you for this. Your skillset, résumé and portfolio should be polished and primed for this point in your life. Be confident.

Don't be afraid to take a position that is a little outside your comfort zone or

desired area of public relations. The experience will help you develop into a well-rounded and well-versed professional. Plus, you might find that you like the position or the area better than you thought you might, and you'll make connections that will benefit you in the future.

Additionally, don't hesitate to take an internship as a recent

graduate. Whether it is paid or unpaid, an internship will benefit you in many ways. It will look great on your résumé and will show employers that you have paid your dues and are willing to put in the time as a beginner.

Finally, (professors, look away for this one), remember that grades are not everything. Try not to stress over your GPA. I have had employers tell me that grades have little to nothing to do with whether or not they hire a person, and most employers today prefer that your GPA is not even included on your résumé. I believe that your grades are important, but I also believe that they are not indicative of who you are as a public relations professional. Do your best in the classroom, but focus more on actually learning the content than pulling out an A.

Best of luck on your job and internship endeavors! May you all land your dream position and make Waynesburg University PRSSA proud.

Best always,

Maura Fenske

Chapter President

FIRM MEMBERS ASSIST HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Gabrielle Coy
Special Events Coordinator

The Washington County Habitat for Humanity held its 9th Annual Benefit Dinner

and Auctions Show at the Meadows Racetrack and Casino Feb. 9, with the help of Red Brick Communications, Waynesburg University's Nationally Affiliated, student-run public relations firm.

Washington County Habitat for Humanity became a client of Red Brick Communications in fall 2017. The account team, led by Account Executive Maura Fenske, consists of Adam McKnight, Mackenna Drazich and Tanner McKnight.

Throughout the year, the team has assisted the organization with public relations outreach and strategy. Preparation for the annual benefit dinner and auctions show began in the fall and team members were eager to help.

"Planning and volunteering at the event was a great experience," said Fenske. "It was exciting to see everything come together after all of the work we put into making the dinner a success. We hope to utilize event planning even more in the future, seeing as it is such an important sector in the public relations field."

The event was aimed at bringing the community together and raising funds to support programs of the organization, specifically helping to provide safe and affordable housing for Southwestern Pennsylvania families.

The account team solicited sponsorships and items for the silent auction by reaching out to local businesses in the Washington County community. Volunteers from the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter and the Red Brick Communications team also attended the event and helped with set-up and programming.

Opportunities like helping with the benefit dinner and auctions show help to strengthen the relationships between clients and account teams as well as give firm members experience in developing their skills, said Amanda Troncone, Chapter vice president and firm director of Red Brick Communications.

"When our firm members have the opportunity to plan events with a client, it expands their skill sets and allows them to have professional event planning experience," Troncone said. "It is extremely crucial for us, as students to have professional experience upon graduation and I am extremely grateful that we have this opportunity through our clients and the firm."

CHAPTER LEADERS PREPARE FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Grace Hutchison Historian Miami, Florida is one of the most popular destinations in the United States for students to visit around spring break, known for its beaches, white sand and warm weather. But that isn't what is bringing Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America.

Maura Fenske, Chapter president, and Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director, are travelling to the location to attend PRSSA National Assembly event on behalf of Waynesburg University's chapter March 8-11.

"It's 100 percent an honor to represent Waynesburg University's chapter at national assembly," Troncone said. "With any national event, as a representative you are there to represent Waynesburg's values and embody the school."

National Assembly, which both Fenske and Troncone have attended in the past, traditionally contains speakers, a state-of-the-society address, as well as leadership training sessions and a formal voting day where delegates meet to cast their votes on behalf of their chapters.

PRSSA typically funds one dues-paying delegate to represent each chapter at the voting meeting. Troncone will act as the voting delegate for Waynesburg University PRSSA and will submit her opinion on matters including changes to the by-laws of the organization and National Committee elections.

"Anything that could change on the national level that could affect the chapters has to be voted on at National Assembly," Troncone said.

Troncone said attending National Assembly is beneficial for a number of reasons.

"I think that going to a national event to attend an official meeting is a great skillset to have under your belt," Troncone said. "Not only can you then apply it to the meetings on-campus, but you will have experience when you graduate with stricter and more professional meetings."

Opportunities to network is also one of those benefits, said Troncone.

"Typically I won't have a ton of other Waynesburg chapter members with me at National Assembly," Troncone said. "It kind of forces me to go make friends and connect with other chapters."

The connections Troncone made during the previous events are still active, and, according to Troncone, the Assembly is beneficial beyond voting, speeches and training sessions.

"By going to National Assembly and creating these relationships and bonds with other chapters you are giving yourself an opportunity to reach out to them when you need collaboration," Troncone said.

In the past, according to Troncone, when she has needed assistance with an issue within the Chapter, she has reached out and received feedback from other peer leaders.

"You get the chance to learn from your peers and you learn from your other leaders," Troncone said. "That is the most important thing that comes out of national assembly."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March

- March 15:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- March 15:** Executive Board Nominations Meeting
- March 22:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- March 22:** Executive Board Elections
- March 29:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.

April

- Apr. 5:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Apr. 5:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.
- Apr. 12:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Apr. 19:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Apr. 19:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.
- Apr. 26:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.

May

- May 4:** Semester ends
- May 6:** Baccalaureate Service at 11 a.m.
- May 6:** 167th Commencement at 2 p.m.

FROM THE FIRM DIRECTOR'S DESK



Amanda Troncone is a senior 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

Amanda Troncone Spring is upon us. (Okay, maybe not, but a girl can wish).

The spring semester is always busy for the Chapter and the Firm, and I have to admit it is one of my favorite times of the school year. While it is busy, the Red Brick Communications is accomplishing and producing a variety of projects, so I thought I would share some with you.

The Greene County Special Olympics team is hard at work as they prepare for the Spread the Word to End the Word campaign, the Greene County Invitational and the new 5K race. The race is in conjunction with state-wide virtual race, so individual races across the state of Pennsylvania will

occur and our team is hard at work to create an awesome event.

The team for Greene County Tourism implemented a new online photo contest to highlight Greene County's beauty and increase the organization's social media presence. The contest has ended, but the team is continuing to evaluate and reflect upon its programming and execution.

The United Way of Greene County has undergone many changes in the new year, including a new executive director. Our team has been working with her to develop fresh social media strategies and website design. The team has been researching web development tools, with plans to implement these tools and have the new website completed by the end of the semester.

The Washington County Habitat for Humanity team assisted the organization with an annual fundraiser and redesigned the chapter's brochure; and the whole firm is assisting the Greene County Historical Society with email marketing and their bi-annual newsletter.

Red Brick Communications has been hard at work in the community and we are always getting requests to do more. I truly appreciate every student, past and present, who has made Red Brick Communications what it is today.

As I said, the spring semester is my favorite semester, because we are accomplishing so much. I will admit though, I could use a little more sun.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda R. Troncone".

Chapter VP/Firm Director

PRSSA STUDENT ASSISTS WITH CAMPUS EVENT

Chad Walker
Treasurer

Waynesburg University hosted a Major and Minor Fair Tuesday, Feb. 20, where students could meet faculty

members from different academic departments. The goal of the event, according to Olivia Kelley general body member of Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America, was to help students who are still labeled as "exploring" majors and who want to find the best career fit.

"The Major and Minor Fair is an event put on by the Office of Academic Affairs that provides students with the opportunity to learn more about the various majors and minors that the university offers," said Kelley. "It is most helpful to freshman and sophomore students or those who are still labeled exploring majors."

Kelley was involved as a volunteer for the Office of Academic Affairs.

"I served as the Event Planning Intern in the Office of Academic Affairs last semester, and I have carried over my involvement with the office as a volunteer this semester," said Kelley. "I reached out to numerous local businesses in hopes of obtaining donations that could be offered as prizes at the fair. I was successful in securing a donated prize from a local business for this event, and I also designed all of the signs that were

displayed at each academic department's table."

Kelley said facilitating the event gave her the chance to implement many of the skills she learned through the Department of Communication and Waynesburg University PRSSA.

"I felt confident in discussing logistics and being personable over the phone because of the preparation I gained from a phone-a-thon that I was required to participate through a public relations class," said Kelley. "I also was able to utilize my design skills through my use of InDesign when I created the signs for the event. More than anything, I feel that my understanding of professionalism, learned through public relations courses, allowed me to reflect the university well as I helped with this event."

Kelley said the experience gave her the opportunity to work with public relations professionals and learn from their expertise.

"I feel that I was able to gain respect from the community business owners," said Kelley. "I communicated with the university faculty that I worked alongside as a future public relations professional."

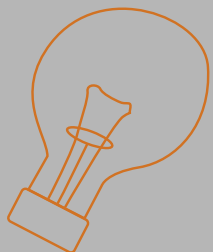
PRSSA REPRESENTED IN LAMBDA PI ETA INTERNSHIP PANEL



Lambda Pi Eta, the communication honor society, hosted an internship panel Feb. 8, to guide freshman and sophomore students about to delve into the internship process. The Waynesburg University Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America was well represented in the panel, as Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director, and Teghan Simonton, public relations director, spoke of their experiences at the Coalition for Christian Outreach and Pittsburgh Magazine, respectively.

REASONS TO RUN FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD

Implement
creative ideas



Make an impact
on the Chapter

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA

Work in a team
environment



CHAPTER FUNDRAISING A SUCCESS IN FEBRUARY

Nicole Tobias

Professional Development
Coordinator

Nothing says love like buying yourself, your sweetie or a friend some delicious treats.

That is why Tanner McKnight,

Fundraising Coordinator, believed it was a great idea to sell Sweetie Boxes during the Valentine's Day season.

"Last year, it helped us get our name out there to the campus and we can become more known on campus," said McKnight.

Sweetie Boxes were sold from Feb. 12 until Feb. 14. Each box was \$5 and students and faculty could choose from an assortment of cupcakes, cookies, and candy to fill their sweetie boxes up. While the Sweetie Box fundraiser generated some profit for the Chapter, McKnight believes there is room for improvement to make the fundraiser even more successful.

Fortunately for those with a sweet tooth, another delicious fundraiser is on the way. From March 12 until March 23, Chapter members will be partaking in its regular Krispy Kreme fundraiser. The Chapter has done the Krispy Kreme fundraiser before and has been very successful in the past.

"It was a big success last year, and we are hoping to build off of that," said McKnight.

Because there will be a longer selling time this year, McKnight and the Chapter are hoping to surpass the amount of funds



Photo courtesy of Gabrielle Coy

raised during last year's Krispy Kreme fundraiser. Although it is not confirmed what products will be sold during this year's fundraiser and how much each item will cost, buyers can more than likely expect to see Krispy Kreme's original glazed doughnut.

Last year's fundraiser also included the chocolate iced glazed doughnut, various glazed filled doughnuts, as well as gift certificates to redeem a dozen original glazed doughnuts. Once the Krispy Kreme fundraiser is complete, McKnight will work with the store to set a delivery date for the products.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOUR PRSSA MEMBERSHIP

Tanner McKnight

Fundraising Coordinator

The mission statement of the Public Relations Student Society is "to provide

exceptional service to our members by enhancing their education, broadening their professional network and helping launch their careers after graduation." Every member of PRSSA should read into the mission statement, to get the most out of your membership and prepare yourself adequately for the professional world.

Enhance your education.

By enhancing your education, you can excel in the classroom and in the work force. By doing the best work possible, you learn ways to boost your résumé and portfolio. Later in the work force, you can use this skill by taking every opportunity handed to you. Enhancing your education will also give you the chance to meet potential mentors and connections in the field.

Broaden your professional network.

PRSSA also gives you the chance to broaden your professional network. This can be via Regional and National Conferences,

and by connecting with your parent chapter. By broadening your professional network, connecting with professionals and connoisseurs in public relations, you will learn more and possibly find an internship or job position.

Launch your career.

Launching your career is the ultimate goal. Every aspect of PRSSA helps students get closer to this aspiration. Through the mentorship, educational activities and networking opportunities, you can find the right public relations sector for you. You can jump start your career by searching through the PRSSA website and looking at the job/internship link. You can find different listings all over the country for a summer internship or a full time job after graduating.

Remember: as a dues paying member, your network is wider than you can even imagine. Employers take note of your involvement, too, creating even greater opportunities. A PRSSA membership is what you make of it – and during your college years, it is critical to take advantage of every opportunity. By enhancing your education, broadening your network and launching your career, PRSSA can help propel you to success.

Volunteering Helps your Public Relations Skills and Life



60%
of hiring
managers
see volunteerism
as a value asset



People
feel like
they have
control
over their
health

Tip:

Sign up to volunteer roles or descriptions outside your comfort zone. Look for roles and opportunities that will add to your skillset and expand the knowledge you already have.

27%
of those who
volunteer
regularly have
a better chance
of gaining
employment



“The Essence of life
is to serve others
and do good.”
~ Aristotle



87%
of people said that
volunteering
helped them
with their people skills
and teamwork skills



75%
have stonger
relationships
with community,
business and
legislative/
regulatory
stakeholders

OPPORTUNITIES

PRSSA National Individual Awards

Daniel J. Edelman/
PRSSA Award due
Feb. 27, 2017

Ruth Edelman/PRSSA
Award due Feb. 27,
2017

Blog Writing

Enhance your writing skills and expand your portfolio by writing for the Chapter blog. Contact Public Relations Director, Teghan Simonton, 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, Amanda Troncone, for more information.

PRSSA MEMBERS PRESENTING ON INTERNSHIPS

Teghan Simonton In the coming months, Public Relations Director

Waynesburg University Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America will present their internship experiences to the entire Department of Communication.

The Department of Communication holds internship presentations each semester, in order for students to gain academic credit for completing their internship. After taking a workshop course during the semester, students must articulate what they learned during their internships, and how those lessons will help them in the future .

This semester, Waynesburg University PRSSA will have a strong presence in the presentations. The first group of presenters will consist of Chapter members Olivia Kelley, Michelle Frye and Audrey Domasky, as well as electronic media major and film studies minor Megan Cook. They will present Monday, March 19 at noon.

Kelley will talk about her experiences as an event-planning intern in Waynesburg University's Office of Academic Affairs. Frye was an intern at Markowitz Communications, a small marketing firm in Pittsburgh, and Domasky interned at Silver Ring Thing, a Christian ministry organization for youth-related topics.

Two weeks after the first group, in April, Maura Fenske, Chapter president, will present about her time at EM Media. Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director, will speak of her experiences with the Coalition for Christian Outreach. Gabrielle Coy, special events coordinator, will present about her internship at Lifesteps, a non-profit.

Finally, during the final week of presentations, Teghan Simonton, public relations director, will speak of her experiences at *Pittsburgh Magazine*.

Three of the seven Waynesburg University PRSSA members - Fenske, Troncone and Coy - will present as part of a special session during the Chapter's annual "PR Week." Their presentations will take place Monday, April 9, beginning at noon.

Fenske, Troncone and Coy will tailor their presentations to focus on what they learned about the public relations sector.

"My internship at the Coalition for Christian Outreach gave me the opportunity to combine my love of public relations with my love of the Lord, and I'm so excited to share that experience with the rest of the Department," said Troncone.

Troncone said she is especially excited to present during PR Week, as her internship group fairly represents the variety of focuses available in the public relations industry: Fenske spent her summer at an agency, Coy at a non-profit, and Troncone at a ministry program.

"There is just so much to do in this field," she said. "And we really want to showcase that during PR Week. So, the fact that our internship experiences were so diverse is perfect."

During February, the students were in the midst of rehearsal, preparing in earnest for next month.. In addition to presenting, students in the internship workshop must also submit a final report, a journal of their experiences and a comprehensive portfolio of the work they produced. The presentation is the most important factor, though.

"Presenting on our internship experiences gives us the chance to share what we've learned with other students in the Department," said Troncone. "It also shows professors that we can implement what we've learned in class, and we are ready to take on the professional world."

Connect With Us!

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

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PLANNING FOR 'PR WEEK' IN FULL SWING

Teghan Simonton
Public Relations
Director

Waynesburg University Public
Relations Student Society of America
has earned notoriety for its annual
event, 'PR Week,' a week dedicated to

learning about public relations and networking with nearby professionals. Valuable connections have been made during the event in the past, and Chapter members even presented on the week's success at the 2017 PRSSA National Conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

This year, the planning committee is more ambitious than ever, attempting to make the next event unique and better than ever.

"My main goal this year is to invite others from outside the Chapter to our events," said Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director. "We have such a great pool of students from business to other communication majors that could be involved, so I am trying to make PR week appeal to them as well. I think that we are in a place where we can create programming that could interest many students, so we need to be sure we are promoting those programs to them well."

Troncone is looking forward to the event and its variety. She said Waynesburg University PRSSA will be hosting programs focusing on several sectors within the public relations field: there is something for everyone.

"I am most excited about how we are integrating a [Corporate Social Responsibility] piece into the week," she said. "I think the Chapter has done well at getting a variety of presenters and other activities, but we haven't done this before. I am excited to try it. We are still in the process of determining the details, but it is looking like it will be exciting."

For Troncone, PR Week is a product of all Chapter members' hard work and dedication.

"PR Week is a time for Waynesburg PRSSA to celebrate what we have accomplished, learn from our community and cast vision onto the future," she said. "We all work for our Chapter throughout the year, so this is the culminating event."

PR Week is an essential opportunity for professional development, Troncone said, one that should not be missed. Waynesburg PRSSA has high goals for this year.

Topics for discussion will include politics, inbound marketing, sports management and many others. The week will incorporate panel discussions, presentations and time specifically designated for networking.

"Particularly for this year, we, as a Chapter, have not attended a regional conference, so this year is will be vital for our members because they aren't getting that experience elsewhere," said Troncone. "PR Week is an event that started at Waynesburg University and we will always be known in PRSSA for that, so we have to continue to strive for excellence for the event."

PR WEEK PROGRAMS WILL INCLUDE...

**INTERNSHIP
PRESENTATIONS**

**PRESS CONFERENCE WITH
WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT**

**SPORTS MANAGEMENT
PANEL**

INTERNSHIP FAIR

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

**YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
PANEL**

SEO / INBOUND MARKETING

**STATE OF THE CHAPTER
ADDRESS**

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA Public Relations
Student Society
of America