

TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

April 2018



**ANNUAL PR WEEK
RETURNS TO
WAYNESBURG**

**WAYNESBURG PRSSA
STARTS ALUMNI
FACEBOOK PAGE**

**+ THREE WAYS TO STAY
SHARP OVER THE SUMMER**

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
“Closing time, open all the doors and let you out into the world... Closing time, you don't have to go home, but you can't stay here.”

These lyrics should sound familiar to many of you. At many Waynesburg University events, the campus radio station often plays this sometimes overplayed, always legendary 90s jam. As a freshman, packing up PRSSA or Mad Anthony booths after events like Harvest Fest or Relay for Life, I remember thinking, “Someday, when I leave here, that song is going to make me really sad.”

Well, guys, I have reached that day.

I've been packing up my room incrementally over the last week so that on graduation

day, after the annual Department of Communication reception on the fourth floor, I can scoot on out of here quickly and easily and go home to celebrate with my family and friends. Packing up early has also given me much time to reflect on the past four wonderful, crazy, stressful, frustrating, unforgettable years.

During my packing, I've come across some treasures that I will keep forever. Some of those include my name badges from PRSSA National and Regional events—National Conference in Atlanta in 2015, in Indianapolis in 2016, in Boston in 2017; National Assembly in Austin in 2016, in Seattle in 2017, in Miami in 2018; Regional Conference at Penn State in 2017. Other trinkets I will always cherish include my Betsy Plank pin and my PRSSA 50th anniversary pin, not to mention my Bob O'Gara scholarship award certificate and my Chapter Development

Session certificate.

As I sat on my bed in Pollock 204 looking through these and many more pieces of memorabilia, laden with countless sweet memories, I couldn't help but think of you all—my WUPRSSA family, past and present. My “PRSSbaes.”

In addition to leading the general body for the last two years, which has been such an honor, I have had the privilege of leading two incredibly talented and dedicated executive boards without whom this Chapter would have accomplished next to nothing. Instead, we have accomplished more in just two years than I could have possibly dreamed. You should all be very, very proud of that.

Without you all, my Chapter members, my time in PRSSA would mean nothing. But, because of you, it means everything.

And, of course, as I was pondering all of this, what song would come on my Spotify shuffle but “Closing Time?”

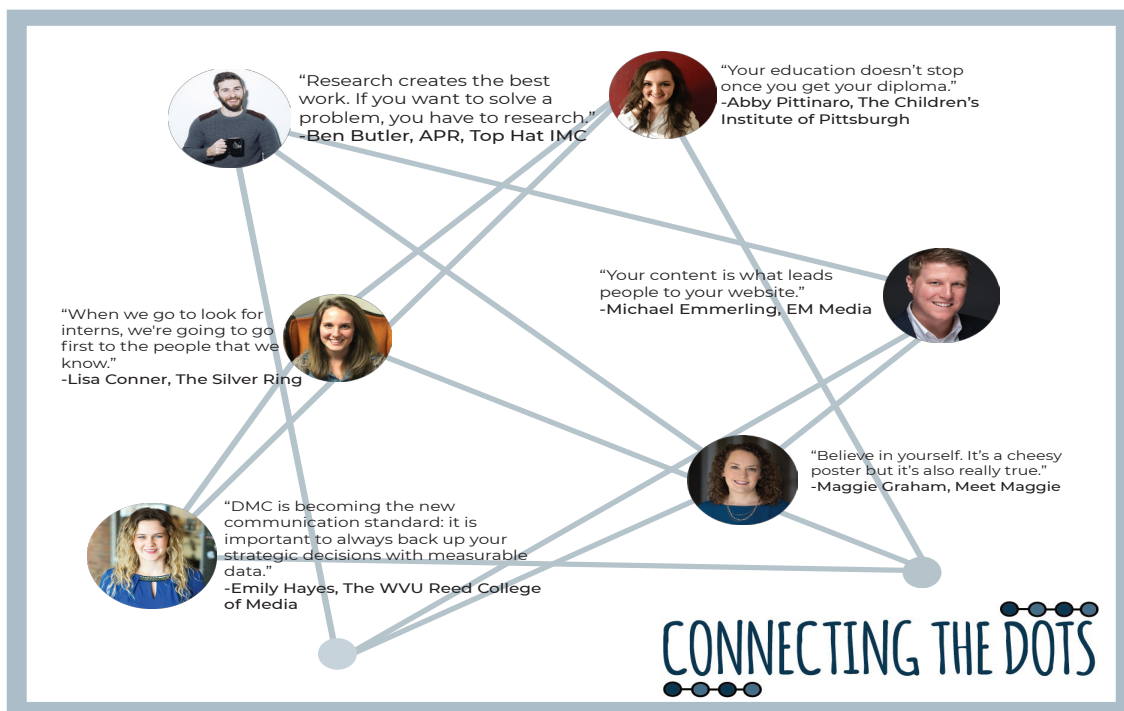
Thank you all for coming along on this journey with me, as president for the last two years and as a Chapter member for the last four. Keep in touch.

“Closing time, time for you to go out to the places you will be from... Closing time, every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.”

Best always,

Maura Fenske

Chapter President



WAYNESBURG PRSSA STARTS CHAPTER ALUMNI FACEBOOK PAGE

Teghan Simonton Public Relations Director

Betsy Plank, known as the First Lady of public relations, is a well-known champion of public relations education. Considered one of the most distinguished

females in the history of the field, she reached prestigious positions in corporate and agency public relations, and her life is still celebrated today.

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations created the national celebration, Betsy Plank Day, in the form of a social media campaign for the establishment's namesake. Student chapters and firms were invited to create a service initiative in Betsy Plank's honor, in addition to watching a Betsy Plank documentary, sharing their experiences with the hashtag, #BetsyPlank. Chapters submitted summaries of their experiences to the Plank Center for a national competition.

The Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America and Red Brick Communications, Waynesburg University's student-run public relations firm, celebrated Betsy Plank Day April 5.

Waynesburg PRSSA watched the documentary together, as a Chapter, at a regular Thursday firm meeting, and started a professional clothing drive for its service initiative. According to Amanda Troncone, vice president and firm director, the clothing drive acted as a corporate social responsibility activity for Public Relations Week at the end of the month; but the Chapter began it early to honor Betsy Plank.

"It's always important to celebrate Betsy Plank because she has done so much for the public relations industry and PRSSA," said



Photo courtesy of the Chapter

Troncone.

The Chapter gathered in Eberly Library, all wearing pink, to take part in the celebration. Troncone said Waynesburg PRSSA members were excited to take part in the collective activity, aligning with National PRSSA and chapters across the country. She said it is essential to maintaining the Chapter's notoriety.

"Waynesburg PRSSA must participate in the national initiatives to remain a Star Chapter and it shows that we support National," she said. "Our relationship with National PRSSA is extremely valuable."

This year's celebration commemorated what would have been Betsy Plank's 94th birthday. The Chapter plans to participate in the special day more in future years, in addition to other events with PRSSA National.

Have a great
summer!

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 Summer VP/Firm Director is the time for sun, ice cream and internships. Most public relations students scramble to find an internship over the summer, even if the person already has two under his or her belt. Unfortunately, an internship is not always a reality for some students, but that does not mean that students cannot gain public relations and professional development experience over the summer.

Volunteer or Freelance

As public relations students, we know every organization needs public relations expertise, but not every organization has a public relation strategy. Find a local business or nonprofit and volunteer your time and skills. Not only is this

an excellent way to build a resume and portfolio, but it also helps build a reputation within the community. Many organizations would be more than happy for help, so all one has to do is offer.

Start Your Own Project

Can't find an organization to help? Begin your own project! It goes a long way for employers to see one take initiative and build

a project from the beginning. Start a YouTube channel. Write a blog. Record a podcast. Plan an event. Design a website. Establish a brand. Create a strategy. Show a complete package. Be sure to define the goals and objectives to measure and evaluate the effectiveness. Future employers want to see that as well.

Develop Your Brand

It is always important to develop an organizations brand, but it is even more important to development your own brand. Take the time this summer to create a new brand for yourself. What do you want to represent? Be sure a résumé, online portfolio, social media accounts and website reflect that. As college students, our identity and preferences are constantly being redefined, so maybe the résumé that was developed sophomore year simply does not reflect your style anymore. That's okay: take the time to change it and find your own voice.

I am always an advocate for taking a small break over the summer; however, be sure to make the most out of your summer as well. Taking initiative and showcasing your skillsets can be done in numerous ways. All you have to do is try.

Best,

Chapter VP/Firm Director

CHAPTER STARTS RELATIONSHIP WITH REED COLLEGE OF MEDIA

Gabrielle Coy
Special Events Coordinator

Public Relations Week has become an annual tradition for Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America, where members come together to develop professionally through programming throughout the week. Each year, Public Relations Week features different speakers and events to cater to Chapter members' interests. But this year, the seven-year-old event featured something new: a sponsorship from West Virginia University's Reed College of Media.



Partnering with WVU's Reed College of Media provided Chapter members an opportunity to explore various post-graduation paths and consider getting another degree. WVU's Integrated Marketing Communication and Data Marketing Communication master's degree programs allow for graduate students to take classes online, from anywhere in the country.

"I don't expect everyone in our program to stay in the area after graduation, but the IMC and DMC programs are all online, and therefore, applicable to all of our students," said Chapter Vice President and Firm Director Amanda Troncone. "We have to be

considering after graduation plans and grad school is a possibility to our members. We need to equip our members with the understanding and knowledge of graduate school alongside understanding the public relations and communications workforce."

During PR week, Chapter members had the opportunity to attend a session featuring Emily Hayes, enrollment specialist at WVU's Reed College of Media and alumna of the IMC program. Hayes highlighted both the IMC and newly created DMC program and the benefits of completing a graduate degree at WVU. Both programs are taught by a network of seasoned professionals and combine interactivity with creativity and communications. Hayes also waived application fees to the Reed College of Media's IMC and DMC program for Chapter members in attendance.

Partnering with WVU was a first for Public Relations Week this year, but is a relationship the Chapter would like to continue to build.

"It is important to connect with the WVU's Reed College of Media because not only are they right down the road, but their program is excellent and renowned across the country," said Troncone. "I think it's important for us to network with our neighbors and WVU is a huge contact for WUPRSSA."

FENSKE GIVES STATE OF THE CHAPTER ADDRESS

Chad Walker Concluding Waynesburg University's 7th annual Public Relations Week, Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter President Maura Fenske gave the State of the Chapter Address: recognizing graduating seniors, new members and accomplishments throughout the last year.

"The State of the Chapter address is something that was inspired by the State of the Society address that the National President gives at National Assembly each year," said Fenske. "We wanted to do something similar on the Chapter level and we saw PR Week as the perfect time to do that."

Leading a successful Chapter takes a lot of involvement and hard work outside of classes. According to Fenske this year, the Chapter was recognized as a Star Chapter for the fifth consecutive year; named PRSA Pittsburgh's PRSSA Chapter of the Year for the second consecutive year and succeeded as the home of *FORUM*, PRSSA's National newspaper.

"What makes our chapter so special and able to accomplish all this it takes a team. A team of our members helped in the process of hosting *FORUM*: Teghan Simonton, Olivia Kelley, Sam Chadwick and [myself]—served under Waynesburg alumna Natalie Gloady, who served on National Committee as the Publications Editor in Chief—the first time a Waynesburg Chapter member has been on National Committee," said Fenske "I was awarded the Bob O'Gara Scholarship by PRSA Pittsburgh, making it the second time a Chapter member has won the award; and, for the first time, we presented a Chapter Development Session at National Conference on how other chapters can hold their own PR Week event."

Being active with everything that happens in the Chapter improves your professional skills, Fenske said. As a graduating senior, anytime she gets to speak to a group of people, Fenske said it helps her grow and mature as a professional.



Photo courtesy of Maura Fenske

"In public speaking, you always need to be thinking one step ahead and must clearly deliver your message to your audience," said Fenske "This is something I have gained a lot of experience with by leading meetings for the past three years, first for Mad Anthony and then for PRSSA. You are automatically a more well-rounded professional if you are also a quality public speaker."

According to Fenske this is a very strong Chapter with a rich history, even in its eighth year. She looks forward to seeing its successes in the future, and witnessing the legacy it forges.

CHAPTER REPRESENTED AT STUDENT VISITATION DAY

Nicole Tobias
Professional Development
Coordinator

At this time of year, many high school students are either beginning to look at schools or they are making final decisions on where they will continue their education. To aid prospective students, Waynesburg University hosted a Spring Visitation Day.

Nearly 73 students and their families attended the event Saturday, April 21. To kick off the visitation day, clubs and organizations around campus gathered in the Marsh Center to inform prospective students about extracurricular activities available around campus.

Natalie Johnston, current Secretary for the Chapter and Special Events Coordinator elect, represented WUPRSSA at the visitation day. While all organizations and clubs are given a display board for their group, Johnston wanted to enhance the Chapter's display and give prospective students more information to take home with them.

"To prepare for the event, I made folders that contained fact sheets about the Waynesburg PRSSA Chapter as well as the National PRSSA fact sheet," said Johnston. "I also added the newest copy of the newsletter, so they would be able to see what we've been doing."

Several attendees visited the PRSSA table to gather more information as to what the Chapter does. Many who stopped by were prospective students interested in seeing how they can become involved in the Department of Communication outside of class. Although today, a majority of the students involved with PRSSA are communication students, Johnston believes that all students can benefit from being involved with the Chapter. Johnston also believes it is important for the Chapter to participate in informational events such as Visitation Day.

"I think it's important to let perspective students know who we are," said Johnston. "I think it's more beneficial to those who are looking into the Department of Communication, but I think that anyone could be involved with PRSSA here at Waynesburg."

CHAPTER COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER

Nicole Tobias

Professional Development
Coordinator

From March 12 through March 23, Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America held their

annual Krispy Kreme Fundraiser. Buyers had their choice from choosing original glazed doughnuts, chocolate iced and sprinkled glazed doughnuts, various glazed filled doughnuts as well as gift certificates and bogo cards. Many of the products sold between \$8 and \$10.

The Chapter found great success in the event, as anticipated. More than 50 dozen boxes of doughnuts were sold, as well as a fair amount of bogo cards and gift certificates. Tanner McKnight, Fundraising Coordinator, attributes the success of the fundraiser to all of the dedicated Chapter members.

“I think everyone helped played their part in the fundraiser to make it this successful,” said McKnight.

Krispy Kreme gives around 50 to 60 percent of the profits made during the fundraiser back to the organization selling them. Because of the large amount of orders placed, the Chapter was able to make a great profit off of the fundraiser.

“We raised right around \$250,” said McKnight. “This was after we went and payed for the doughnuts, and I think this is a great start for the travel fund for the Chapter.”

The Chapter first began participating in the Krispy Kreme fundraiser in the Spring of 2017 and has since only done it in the spring. However, the Chapter may consider expanding how often they do the fundraiser, according to McKnight.

“For the past 2 years, we have only done it once a year, but I think in the future we are going to do it twice a year,” said McKnight.

Fundraising can be challenging, but McKnight believes Krispy Kreme is a wonderful group to partner with for a simple and profitable fundraiser. Overall, McKnight believes any Chapter or student group can use this fundraiser to support their programming.

“I would recommend the Krispy Kreme fundraiser because it is a simple and easy fundraiser for other chapters to do,” said McKnight.

THREE WAYS TO STAY SHARP OVER THE SUMMER

Tanner McKnight

Fundraising Coordinator

How can you stay sharp over the summer? There are many different ways, it could be an

internship, freelancing or even reviewing your notes from your different public relations classes.

Landing an internship.

Finding an internship is a long process that everyone goes through, but it's the practical experience you get from the opportunity that will make the effort worth it. During an internship, you will hone the skills you've already developed like editing, writing and networking. These skills are something that everyone needs to practice continually because they are required on a daily basis. Additionally, an internship doesn't just give you the opportunity to further practice the tools you already have but also learn new ones in the work force.

Becoming a freelancer.

Another way you can develop yourself is through freelancing – it's like a part time job. Not only do you get paid, but typically freelancing is more flexible. Some of the task assigned to freelancers could include blog writing, social media post, design work and even web design. All of these task can help you sharpen your skillsets. With the experience you gain from

a freelance position, you'll be better prepared entering into a future job or school year.

Review, review, review.

Over the summer you could pull out your old books and notes from previous classes and re-read them for the upcoming school year. By reviewing your notes, you are reinforcing what you already know. The different things that may be valuable to look over could include notes from an introductory class for public relations, advanced public relations notes or even classes founded in communication theory and research. By continuing practicing the old and new concepts you've learned over the years, you'll better solidify what you've learned.

These are just a few ways you can stay sharp over the summer. By finding an internship you can learn new concepts and even learn a few new things, all while getting practical experience. If you need more flexibility, you could explore the path of a freelancer. Additionally, at any point, you can always go back and look over old concepts you've learned over the past year in school.

Through approaching the summer with a sense of purpose, you'll be able to better expand upon your skillsets and develop as a more valuable practitioner for the workforce.

WUPRSSA: A YEAR IN REVIEW

2017-2018



JUNE 2017 ★

Natalie Gloady is named PRSSA National Editor in Chief, and Waynesburg PRSSA becomes the home of FORUM.

At National Conference in Boston, three Chapter members present a Chapter Development Session, and WUPRSSA is named a Star Chapter for the fifth consecutive year.

★ **OCT. 2017**

NOV. 2017 ★

Amanda Troncone, Nicole Tobias and Maura Fenske present a High School Initiative program at Thomas Jefferson High School.

Maura Fenske is named to the PRSA Pittsburgh Board of Directors for 2018, the eighth Chapter member to become a member of the board.

★ **DEC. 2017**

JAN. 2018 ★

At the annual Renaissance Awards, PRSA Pittsburgh names WUPRSSA their PRSSA Chapter of the year for the second year in a row.

Led by Amanda Troncone, Gabrielle Coy and Tanner McKnight, the Chapter holds its seventh Public Relations Week celebration.

★ **APRIL 2018**

OPPORTUNITIES

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.

CHAPTER STARTS ALUMNI FACEBOOK PAGE



Teghan Simonton Public Relations Director

Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America began a new initiative this semester, to develop stronger connections with Chapter alumni. Historian Grace Hutchison, in cooperation with Waynesburg University Director of Alumni Relations Vikki Beppler, created an alumni Facebook page.

Hutchison said the new page is being modeled after an alumni page that already exists for Waynesburg University journalism alumni, and has been one of her major projects for her first year as historian.

“I think the idea of having an alumni Facebook page has been discussed for a while,” said Hutchison. “I mentioned the idea to other members of the Chapter and they all agreed that it would be beneficial to have, especially since the journalism alumni page has been so successful. I then prioritized establishing the Facebook page as one of my major goals for this year.”

The page is still developing, Hutchison said, as she faced unexpected challenges navigating the social platform, and determining the best method for reaching out to potential page members.

“What I initially thought would be small tasks, such as figuring out the proper settings and writing the biography, ended up taking hours,” Hutchison said. “To this moment, it is still a work-in-progress that I plan on refining into next semester. Another challenge was deciding the proper channel in which to

connect with alumni, as many younger alumni may be more active on Twitter or Instagram over Facebook, though some of the older graduates could potentially only have Facebook accounts.”

Despite the challenges, Hutchison is excited about the project and confident in its success.

“I am excited about this project because, in my role as historian, one of my most basic tasks is to foster goodwill and maintain a connection between the Chapter and alumni,” she said. “I felt as though social media was an effective channel to accomplish that task. I am excited to see the group grow and become a place where the Chapter can interact with alumni, and also where members have the opportunity to connect with one another and discuss how Waynesburg’s public relations major and Chapter has benefitted them post-graduation.”

For Hutchison, this project is about fulfilling the essential purpose of public relations: building relationships. Hutchison said it is essential that the Chapter work with its alumni as much as possible.

“I think it is incredibly important for members to stay connected, not only for networking and professional purposes, but personal as well,” Hutchison said. “In our small [Department of Communication], it can be really fulfilling and provide motivation to students when they see alumni in their respective fields succeeding and giving credit to their education. I am excited for the Facebook group to act as an outlet for public relations students and alumni to share their successes.”

Connect With Us!

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

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



ANNUAL PR WEEK RETURNS TO WAYNESBURG

Grace Hutchison Historian After months of planning and preparation, Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society Association held its annual Public Relations Week, themed “Connecting the Dots”, April 9 through 13.

The week-long event consisted of speakers, workshops, panels and networking opportunities covering topics such as sports management, search engine optimization and corporate social responsibility. This year’s Public Relations Week featured many firsts, as the Chapter added several new programs.

The event was largely organized by a three-person group, with one of the lead event planners being Amanda Troncione, vice president and firm director. Troncione said planning and executing such a complex event was a team effort.

“This wouldn’t have gotten done without the help of Gabrielle [Coy], Tanner [McKnight], Maura [Fenske] and the rest of the Chapter,” Troncione said.

The theme “Connecting the Dots” was decided upon due to the diverse backgrounds and skillsets of the featured speakers, all of whom were invited by Troncione’s team after assessing the interest of chapter members.



Photo courtesy of Maura Fenske

“The Chapter was really receptive to what we were doing,” Troncione said. “They attended and it was amazing to see that comradery come together and they knew that we had worked really hard.”

This was the first year that featured a workshop—held Tuesday, April 10 at noon—where students had the opportunity to

gain hands-on experience and feedback as they created their online portfolios. Natalie Gloady, Chapter alumna and PRS-SA National Editor in Chief, returned to Waynesburg University to conduct the workshop for her alma mater.

Also for the first time, the week featured a sponsor. “Connecting the Dots” was funded by West Virginia University’s Reed College of Media, which held an event on Thursday, April 12, to discuss their online master’s degree programs available for both integrated and data marketing communications.

The event also included a keynote speaker presentation by Ben Butler, founder of Top Hat, a marketing, branding and web design firm located in Pittsburgh.

“He did a great job communicating not only what public relations is, but how we can break from norm and towards what really matters,” Troncione said. “It wasn’t about the tactics, but about the strategy and journey.”

Troncione has had experience in the past organizing special events through various internships and volunteering opportunities, but a week-long event was a unique undertaking for her.

“I have never planned something quite to this scale,” Troncione said.

She said it was an “awesome opportunity” to serve the chapter by connecting the dots and organizing the event, though it was time-demanding and took “personal and professional sacrifices.”

“I would definitely do it again,” Troncione said.



Photo courtesy of Maura Fenske

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