

TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

October 2018



CHAPTER ATTENDS
PRSSA NATIONAL
CONFERENCE

CHAPTER RECEIVES
STAR CHAPTER STATUS
FOR SIXTH YEAR

+ 3 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE
NETWORKING

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
PRSSA Public Relations
Student Society
of America

DR. F. H. TEAHAN
2015
OUTSTANDING
NEWSLETTER
AWARD

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Nicole Tobias The Public
Chapter President Relations
Student

Society of America's mission is to broaden your network, enhance your education, and launch your career. These three elements are incredibly evident at the PRSSA National Conference.

Our Chapter was fortunate to send four members to this year's National Conference, "Art of PR," held in Austin, Texas from Oct. 5 to 9. During National Conference, our Chapter members broadened their networks by connecting with peers from all over and developing strong relationships with them. We were also fortunate enough

to strengthen our relationships with those we have already connected with locally and globally.

If there is one thing I learned during this year's Conference, it is to not be afraid. Do not be afraid to take risks. Do not be afraid when something may not work out how you intended. Do not be afraid that you have made the wrong choice by choosing to embark in a career in public relations.

Keynote speaker Kate Lowery addressed this clearly, encour-

aging all of us to "Discover your true colors, find your passion and give it your all."

When I first began my journey as a public relations student, I believed I had to fit a certain role and had to conform to a certain behavior and persona. I now know that you do not have to conform to anything and that being yourself is incredible, welcomed and appreciated. National Conference provides an environment filled with such diverse individuals with unique talents and personalities, who can help you grow not only as a practitioner, but as a person as well.

I look forward to attending next year's National Conference in San Diego, California with the Chapter, continuing to make memories and deepening relationships with my Chapter members, friends and mentors I have made this year.

For those who are wondering whether they should apply to attend Conference next year or not, do it. I promise you will not regret attending.

Sincerely,



Chapter President



Nicole is a public relations major and has been the Waynesburg University PRSSA President since June 2018. If you are interested in the Chapter or have any questions, email Nicole at tob0917@student.waynesburg.edu

CHAPTER ATTENDS PRSSA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Teghan Simonton
Public Relations Director

The Waynesburg University
Public Relations Student
Society of America sent four
members to Austin, Texas, for

the annual PRSSA National Conference Oct. 5 to 9. For Nicole Tobias, Chapter president, this year's conference, themed "Art of PR," was an exciting opportunity to connect with fellow students and learn outside the classroom.

"There is so much to be learned from each speaker and person who attends these events, and while you may be gaining knowledge from others, you can also be a great resource to those you connect with," Tobias said.

Tobias attended the conference with Vice President and Firm Director Gabrielle Coy, Fundraising Coordinator Tanner McKnight and senior Chapter member Amanda Tronccone. Sessions and panels covered topics including crisis management for incidents of mass shootings, black public relations history and the #MeToo Movement.

This year's National Conference was Tronccone's fifth national

PRSSA event. She said attending as a senior, set to graduate this December, completely altered her perspective.

"I have never experienced a national event from the perspective of a senior 7 weeks to graduation, and what struck me this year was the vastness of a public relations degree. I can, quite literally, go into any field or sector and that is entirely dependent upon what I want to do," said Tronccone. "Also, I am never going to stop learning. The field of public relations is growing right now, in this moment as new technologies and trends are emerging."

Tronccone said each national event has been unique from the last, and each one has given her new memories, knowledge and experiences. Tobias agreed that attending national events like National Conference is a priority for the Chapter.

"Attending PRSSA National events will play such an important part in developing you to become an incredible pr practitioner one day," said Tobias. "You're also going to make incredible memories that you will never forget, and have such an unforgettable time."

CHAPTER RECEIVES STAR CHAPTER STATUS FOR SIXTH YEAR

Olivia Kelley
Content Coordinator

The Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America won its sixth consecutive Star Chapter Award this October.

The Chapter's name was announced at the PRSSA National Conference in Austin, Texas, along with a number of other esteemed chapters that achieved Star Chapter status.

To Waynesburg PRSSA though, it's not so much about the award itself. The Chapter is focused on cultivating growth and maintaining strong, consistent leadership; and as those areas are prioritized, the accolades seem to follow.

Chapter president Nicole Tobias is proud of the awards garnered by the Waynesburg University PRSSA and aspires to uphold the Chapter's respected reputation.

"Our Chapter has always been known as a driven and hardworking Chapter in PRSSA National, and that is something we would like to maintain," said Tobias.

Past upperclassmen leaders who helped build the Chapter's growth and the production of only the highest quality of work inspired Tobias to foster that same kind of culture.

"As a freshman, looking at all the great leaders before me, I wanted to be able to help the Chapter keep thriving like they did during my first two years in the Chapter," said Tobias. "To be able to follow in their footsteps and



Photo courtesy of Nicole Tobias



Photo courtesy of Nicole Tobias

helping the Chapter continue to thrive is a great honor." Chapter vice president and firm director of Red Brick Communications Gabrielle Coy said this achievement is not only an honor, but is also extremely indicative of the Chapter's excellence in leadership.

"Being awarded Star Chapter is really a testament to how hard our Chapter works and how that work ethic is continually passed down and instilled in each year's leaders and Chapter members," said Coy. "Our Chapter is really passionate and proud of the work we do, and receiving the Star Chapter award reaffirms that."

The Waynesburg PRSSA has made obtaining this status look easy. However, Chapters must meet eight out of 10 stringent requirements listed on PRSSA's website to receive the award. Coy extols the Chapter for the way it creatively and holistically approaches meeting these requirements.

"We are constantly trying new ideas to continually grow as an organization and grow as professionals, and utilizing new, creative ideas supports that growth," said Coy. "We understand that these requirements aren't simply requirements for an award, but are guidelines for creating programs within our organization that strengthen our skills as students and young public relations professionals."

The Waynesburg PRSSA seeks to further the Chapter as a whole while also promoting the growth of Chapter individuals.

FROM THE FIRM DIRECTOR'S DESK



Gabrielle Coy is a senior and has been the Waynesburg University PRSSA VP/Firm Director since June 2018. If you are interested in the firm, or have any questions, email Gabrielle at coy7702@student.waynesburg.edu

Gabrielle Coy
VP/Firm Director

Every year, there are about two to three weeks where you can see change. The leaves start to change color, the air feels colder and Pumpkin Spice Lattes are found in the hands of many.

The change is also in the workloads of students. Project deadlines loom and assignments pile up.

These past few weeks have been busy for Red Brick Communications. We have events and projects that are in the works for clients, all of which take time and dedication to produce. We are striving to meet our goals and create the best work for our clients, sometimes without

thinking about how we are to accomplish everything.

Navigating this part of the semester can be challenging, knowing that there is still so much work to be done in a small timeframe. To help alleviate some of the stress that accompanies this time of year, I wanted to share some pieces of wisdom that have guided me.

Rely on your team.

In Red Brick Communications, we stress the importance of teamwork. Each person, no matter the position, has something to bring to the table. We are one Firm, with one overarching goal in mind: create quality work while cultivating great relationships with our clients.

While this is our main goal, we also have the goals of lifting

each other up and learning from each other—in and out of the Firm. Need help with something? Ask. You have a built-in support system ready to help.

Relax.

In the midst of multitasking between time-consuming assignments, it can be beneficial to take a break. Juggling multiple projects at a time can cause strain and can affect the quality of work in the end. Sometimes you need to step away, even if it is just for a few minutes, and come back to the project with fresh eyes. Your quality of work will improve, and your brain will thank you.

Know that you are doing your best.

This is a lesson that I have to learn every single day. Our standards are high; we want to produce quality work and implement the most innovative strategies for our clients. We want to be successful in classes while simultaneously balancing our social lives.

Understanding what your 'best' is can help you improve your skills and reveal the areas you need to work on. Knowing that you did your best in each part of your day can help relieve the pressure from your own high expectations.

As we continue down the often-overwhelming road to winter break, consider using these tips to help alleviate the seasonal stress.

Best,

Gabrielle Coy

Chapter VP/Firm Director

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November

- Nov. 1:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 1:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.
- Nov. 7:** PR Summit
- Nov. 8:** PR Day
- Nov. 8:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 15:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Nov. 15:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.
- Nov. 29:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.

December

- Dec. 6:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Dec 6:** Duel in Buhl Department of Communication Christmas Party
- Dec. 13:** Red Brick Communications Meeting at 11 a.m.
- Dec. 13:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.

January

- Jan. 14:** Spring 2019 Semester begins
- Jan. 17:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.
- Jan. 17:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.
- Jan. 24:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.
- Jan. 31:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.
- Jan. 31:** PRSA Pittsburgh Renaissance Awards

RED BRICK COMMUNICATIONS PLANS SERVICE INITIATIVE

Nicole Tobias
Chapter President

From Nov. 16 to Nov. 18, the Red Brick Communications Firm will be serving as work crew members at Laurelville, a youth outreach camp run by the Pittsburgh-based non-profit, the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation. The firm members will be serving meals to the high school students and their leaders, as well as assisting the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation staff members with any tasks needed during the camp's third weekend.

Gabrielle Coy, vice president of the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America and firm director of Red Brick Communications, said incorporating service into the firm activities is a major priority.

"Service and helping others has always been an important part of my life, and I firmly believe that we all have the responsibility to lend a hand whenever we can," said Coy. "We have a unique perspective as Waynesburg University students because service is a cornerstone of our education, so I wanted to bring that to Red Brick as well."

Coy believed serving as a work crew at the camp will have a lasting impact on the campers in attendance. She said she hopes to represent not only Red Brick Communications, but all of Waynesburg University with professionalism and

compassion.

"Waynesburg University's mission encompasses faith, learning and service. Laurelville checks all of those boxes and then some," said Coy. "Volunteering at Laurelville provides us with a really unique opportunity of being part of that experience for those students, and also providing service to the organization."

Red Brick Communications will be taking nine members to serve on the work crew for the weekend and will be serving alongside students from Geneva College.

Coy said she is remarkably excited for the weekend at Laurelville, and is looking forward to sharing this new experience with firm and Chapter members.

"I've traveled with some of our team before, and I know that an experience like this brings teams closer together, and I'm excited for our team to experience that," said Coy. "I'm also really excited to meet the students and be part of their journey through faith."

Coy hopes that those in attendance will leave the weekend with a greater relationship with fellow firm members and have a greater appreciation for service.



WAYNESBURG PRSSA PRESENT AT VISITATION DAY

Gabrielle Coy
VP/Firm Director

the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America a unique opportunity to connect with prospective students.

The events, typically held several times over the course of the year, are focused on featuring student organizations on campus. For the Chapter, attending visitation days can be the first step in recruiting new members, said Special Events Coordinator Natalie Johnston.

“It’s important to get our name out there,” Johnston said. “There are so many organizations on campus, and it’s good to get people thinking about it.”

Preparation for October’s Visitation Day included creating packets full of information about the Chapter’s accomplishments and how being a Waynesburg University PRSSA member can open up opportunities down the road for all majors.

“These folders have information on Red Brick Communications and PRSSA,” Johnston said. “This includes our awards and what we do in public relations. I like to include that it’s not just public relations majors that benefit from being involved.” The packets create a starting point on which Chapter and Red

Brick representatives can answer questions or give more information.

Brick representatives can answer questions or give more information.

“I mention the opportunities that Waynesburg University has as well as the travel and professional development opportunities that PRSSA can present to them,” Johnston said. “I also welcome them here and tell them about campus life.”

Most importantly, however, is the opportunity to connect with potential students on a personal level at visitation days.

“We have a table set up and when people stop, we talk to them about who they are and what they are interested in studying,” Johnston said. “Talking with potential students on a personal level and getting to know them is the best way to connect with them.”



Photo courtesy of Amanda Tronccone

3 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

Tanner McKnight
Fundraising Coordinator

If Attending different PRSSA events like National Conference, Regional Conference or

events with your Parent Chapter makes it crucial for you to develop some networking skills. Being able to interact and build positive professional relationships can help you find a job, internship or mentor. Here are three easy activities you can do to become better at networking.

Keep a business card handy.

Keeping a personal business card for when you go to networking events can help you meet new contacts in the public relations industry. Designing your own card can help you stand out and make your name known to other professionals. Plus, the practitioners you meet will usually give you their own cards, which opens the door for you to contact them and thank them for their time and experience.

Start a conversation.

Going to events and meeting a bunch of strangers can be nerve-wracking, but don’t let that intimidate you. Find someone who is standing alone, and start a conversation with them. Starting a conversation can be as easy as complimenting a person’s outfit or asking if they liked the speaker. You can continue the conversation by following them on social media and creating a lasting dialogue with them.

Dress professionally...with a twist.

When you go to professional events, your peers will look at how you dress. If you want to stand out, try something new with your outfit: for gentlemen, try a fun tie, pocket square or a lapel pin. For the ladies, it can be as easy as a brightly colored blazer or fun scarf. These are easy steps that you can take to help you start a conversation with someone and show your personality, making the relationships you forge even stronger.

WAYNESBURG PRSSA ASSISTS WITH JACKETFEST

Grace Hutchison
Historian

Mary Fox, event planner for the University, coordinated JacketFest alongside coworkers and with the

assistance of the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America. The Chapter, said Fox, helped contribute to the event's "warm and friendly" atmosphere.

The Chapter has assisted in the execution of JacketFest consistently since the event began, Fox said. The Waynesburg University PRSSA's specific duties for JacketFest have varied over the years, and have included student promotion of the event, running a social media booth and day-of coordination.

But the scheduled date for this year's JacketFest happened to coincide with the PRSSA National Conference, which four Chapter members attended. As a result, the Chapter was unable to manage a table at JacketFest but made up for it by assisting in the coordination of the event overall.

"While this unfortunately caused our Chapter President to nix the idea of the Chapter setting up a PRSSA table at Jacketfest, it opened the door for the Chapter to offer

assistance however the Alumni Relations office needed it during the event," Olivia Kelley, senior Chapter member said.

Kelley worked directly with Fox to organize Chapter volunteers and fulfill any event-planning needs. There were 16 organizations that participated in this year's JacketFest, causing Fox to be slightly short-staffed, compared to other years.

"I feel like there were less student organizations involved in the event than in previous years, so I think the assistance that we provided was greatly appreciated," Kelley said.

JacketFest can be hectic, Fox says. On the day of JacketFest—since it is scheduled during the heart of homecoming weekend—Fox's office could be coordinating 10 or more activities at once.

"I am so very grateful for all of the clubs and organizations that provided activities and assistance during JacketFest," Fox said. "It truly could not have happened without them."

CHAPTER COLLABORATES FOR RÉSUMÉ WORKSHOP

Natalie Johnston
Special Events Coordinator

For the first time ever, the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student

Society of America will partner with Waynesburg University's Design Club to host a résumé workshop for students interested in bolstering their résumé's content and design.

While the workshop is still in the early stages of planning, Chapter President Nicole Tobias said she is excited about the collaboration, as it is a chance to benefit from the expertise and professionalism of other students in the Waynesburg University Department of Communication. Tobias said the résumé workshop was conceptualized by members of the Design Club.

"I was actually approached by Cheyenne Nester, the Design Club's president, and she had suggested our Chapters collaborate for an event series," said Tobias. "I absolutely loved the idea when she first mentioned it to me because I know both of our Chapters could use their strengths to create a wonderful event series that will help others around campus."

The workshop will move beyond résumés, and hopefully blossom into an entire event series, Tobias said.



Photo courtesy of Tyler Godwin

"Members of both the Design Club and WUPRSSA Chapters will be helping with the event series," said Tobias. "Marie Coffman, director of career services and placement, will also be helping us orchestrate the events to ensure we are helping students as effectively as possible."

AIGA and PRSSA are looking to continue the collaboration in the future.

The upcoming workshop, geared toward juniors and seniors entering internships and the workforce but open to all, will take place Monday, Nov. 5.

OPPORTUNITIES

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, Gabrielle Coy, for more information.

WAYNESBURG PRSSA HIRES NEW SECRETARY

Grace Hutchison Adrian Barnhart, Historian sophomore business major, was recently officially inducted as the secretary of the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America.

Since she had just joined the Chapter toward the end of the Spring 2018 semester, she was hesitant to apply for an Executive Board position.

“I was really nervous about getting things wrong, overstepping, causing a huge mess, or all three,” Barnhart said. “But, so far, everything has been really smooth sailing, and everyone has been really great in helping me along the way.”

Barnhart’s main source of encouragement in overcoming her hesitation and applying for the position came from Nicole Tobias, president of Waynesburg’s PRSSA Chapter, Barnhart said.

“After talking to [Tobias] about it for a while, I decided to go for it,” Barnhart said. “I filled out my application when school started back up.”

As Barnhart has had time to somewhat settle into her role, she is now able to reflect upon her past nerves.

“I was nervous about the first meeting. But once I was there, everyone was so nice and welcoming. I know that played a part in why I chose to stay,” Barnhart said.

Barnhart, who “likes everything in order,” said the main goal she aims to accomplish as secretary is to keep the Chapter organized.

Though she is not a public relations major, Barnhart said she finds the skills that PRSSA reinforces applicable to her own career path.

“I feel PRSSA will benefit me in my career because of the professionalism that it enforces,” she said.

“Not only do meetings talk about how to look professional on social media and on résumés, but it offers opportunities to go to events and meet people in a professional setting.”

She hopes to contribute to PRSSA’s “professional, yet relaxed atmosphere.” Barnhart describes herself as a diligent student, but values both hard work and fun.

“I think what I find most enjoyable about PRSSA is that balance of professional organization and student activity,” Barnhart said.

Now, an official member of the 2018-2019 Executive Board, Barnhart said she is proud to be part of a group of such hardworking individuals.

“What has surprised me the most is how much work goes in to PRSSA,” she said. “Having nine executive board members alone is a lot, but the organization would not be as strong without any one of them or the rest of the members who put in extraordinary effort.”

“EVERYONE WAS SO NICE AND WELCOMING. I KNOW THAT PLAYED A PART IN WHY I CHOSE TO STAY.”

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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INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT: NATALIE JOHNSTON

Chad Walker
Treasurer

During the summer of 2018, Natalie Johnston, the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student

Society of America special events coordinator, interned at Fringe University, located in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Johnston said having the opportunity to travel to Scotland for the internship was amazing. While there, she utilized her public relations knowledge and skills to help promote the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, an international event that incorporates arts, performances and music.

“Fringe University is a program that helps different universities from around the country produce their show productions at Edinburgh Fringe Festival, in Scotland,” Johnston said. “My job was marketing and advertising as well as social media.”

Johnston had several duties during the internship with Fringe University, many of which have become applicable to her new Executive Board position with the Waynesburg University PRSSA.

“I designed posters and flyers for the show that I was representing at the Fringe,” said Johnston. “I ran the Fringe University social media pages as well as the Shakespeare social media pages. I also helped with event planning by scheduling events for the college students to do while in Scotland.”

For Johnston, traveling and producing work in the real world was especially rewarding, and she greatly enjoyed connecting public relations to her avocation for fine arts.

“I was able to professionally produce advertisements that I designed,” she said. “I was also able to learn about the PR side to performing arts. I was able to network with professionals within the performing arts and marketing.”

With Johnston’s graduation approaching in May 2019, she has plans to compound her summer internship experience with more public relations work in the local area.

“I plan on working for a private PR branch, locally,” she said. “I have also been looking for marketing work in the Pittsburgh area. I also might be looking at Grad school.”

Johnston feels confident that the Waynesburg University Department of Communication and the Chapter helped prepare her for success at Fringe University.



She hopes younger students will also have faith in their abilities and Waynesburg experiences when applying and selecting internships.

“I would say, when thinking about internships, don’t be afraid to get yourself out there,” she

said. “Be willing to learn new skills and improve the ones that you have. Don’t sell yourself short on your abilities. Also, don’t settle for an internship if they won’t let you have hands-on experience. This is your chance to show professionals that you have the skills to keep up with them, which is valuable.”



Photos courtesy of Natalie Johnston

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