

# TRENDING TOPICS

The official Chapter newsletter of Waynesburg University PRSSA

November 2018



CHAPTER ATTENDS PR  
SUMMIT IN PITTSBURGH

CHAPTER'S INAUGURAL  
'PR DAY' A SUCCESS

+ 3 WAYS TO STAND OUT  
WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY  
**PRSSA** Public Relations  
Student Society  
of America

DR. F. H. TEAHAN  
2015  
OUTSTANDING  
NEWSLETTER  
AWARD

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Nicole Tobias**  
Chapter President

November is a month where many of us

reflect on what we are thankful for; and from a Public Relations Student Society of America viewpoint, I am thankful for a plethora of happenings.

I am thankful for the hard work our Chapter produces in everything they do. Our members see the true value in their membership in PRSSA, and they take full advantage of every opportunity given to them.

On a personal note, I am thankful for the members of Red Brick Communications and their serving hearts. In November, many members of Red Brick Communications served as the work crew at Laurelville, a youth Christian outreach retreat in

Mt. Pleasant. Their service here especially excited me, considering Laurelville is a camp I have been involved with since 2009. Members who served on the work crew made a significant impact on the 400 high school students and leaders they served. Laurelville holds an incredibly special place in my heart, and I am beyond

glad I had the chance to share such a special place with Waynesburg PRSSA.

Lastly, I am thankful for every moment, opportunity and person PRSSA has given me. Whenever I first joined the Chapter my freshman year, I thought I would play a small role and maybe try to aspire to greater things later in my college career. As always, life had other plans, and I became submerged in the Chapter and Red Brick Communications immediately. I am thankful for those alumni, advisors, and peers for seeing something in me from the very beginning that I did not know I possessed and for encouraging me to go further than I ever thought I could.

I am honored to serve and work alongside some of the finest individuals aspiring to make a difference in the public relations industry, and I look forward to every moment I will be thankful for next.

Sincerely,



Chapter President

*Nicole Tobias 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*

## RED BRICK COMMUNICATIONS APPLYING FOR NATIONAL AFFILIATION

**Teghan Simonton**  
Public Relations  
Director

Every three years, student-run public relations firms like Red Brick Communications have the opportunity to apply for National Affiliation, a special designation for firms that are grounded in their connection with the Public Relations Student Society of America, possess a high level of professionalism and an effective structure.

Red Brick Communications achieved National Affiliation status for the first time three years ago, under then-firm director Jordan Mitrik. This semester, Vice President and Firm Director Gabrielle Coy has dedicated herself to completing the extensive application, so the firm can continue its pattern of excellence.

“Having the recognition of a student-run firm benefits not only Red Brick Communications and Waynesburg University, but also the firm’s members,” said Coy. “Members can say that they worked for one of the top firms across the world. Having the National Affiliation status is also a testament to how hard firm members have worked, without them, Red Brick Communications would not be successful.”

Coy said the application process was extensive and “daunting” considering she is new to the role of firm director. When she began the process at the beginning of the semester, Coy said she simply wanted to renew the firm’s National Affiliation status. As she moved forward, however, she found there was more she wanted to

achieve.

“After digging into the process, I shifted my goals to update things within the firm structurally and administratively to most effectively serve our clients and create opportunities for our members,” Coy said. “Specifically, I wanted to update our website, which we are still in the process of working on, and create a service initiative opportunity.”

With a team of Chapter members, including Chapter President and Assistant Firm Director Nicole Tobias, Account Executives Ty McEliece and Tanner McKnight and former Firm Director Amanda Troncone, Coy wrote the firm’s application and edited it meticulously.

Coy said applying for National Affiliation allowed her to take notice of the growth in professionalism and quality of work that the firm has experienced since 2015.

“It allowed me to see how much the firm has grown and evolved since it was founded, and since we were last awarded National Affiliation in 2015, and gave me ideas on how to continually facilitate that growth,” she said.

Coy is expecting to hear back from PRSSA about the firm’s National Affiliation application in mid-December.

## CHAPTER ATTENDS PR SUMMIT IN PITTSBURGH

**Grace Hutchison** Historian The Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America comprised nearly half of all those in attendance at the annual Public Relations Summit, held Nov. 7.

Students and practitioners were hosted at a modern venue named Slate, located near the strip district. The summit, orchestrated by PRSA Pittsburgh, featured networking opportunities between professionals and students as well as speakers presenting on their expertise.

Among the Chapter members who made the hour-long trip to Pittsburgh was Nicole Tobias, Chapter president.

“I think the atmosphere really was a unique part of this year’s PR Summit,” Tobias said. “The event space was a lot simpler than previous years, and I think it really created a relaxing and more inviting environment for professionals and students to connect.”

More than 30 attendees, approximately 15 of which were Waynesburg PRSSA Chapter members, networked while enjoying pizza and refreshments complimentary of PRSA Pittsburgh. Tobias said the Chapter’s dominant presence at these events has added to the university’s notoriety and opened further opportunities for Chapter members.

“Our high attendance helps promote our chapter to potential employers,” she said. “They see many of our Chapter members at PRSA Pittsburgh events and it shows them how dedicated our members are to growing as public relations students.”

The keynote speaker, a representative of Visit Pittsburgh, discussed the brand’s impact on Pittsburgh’s tourism and tactics used by the organization to promote the city. A group of three

experts in the field shared career wisdom during the panel and chatted about the vast updates that have occurred within the field during the previous year.

“The public relations field is constantly changing, and we’re not always going to know what the best move is, and that’s okay,” Tobias said.

Ty McElice, professional development coordinator of Waynesburg PRSSA said the event felt more like a get-together than a networking event.

“I felt this year was a little more laid back,” he said. “The panel and the keynote speaker were all younger and the venue was more relaxed.”

For McElice, the most fulfilling opportunity of the summit was being able to hear from the panelists, all of whom had diverse backgrounds within the public relations field.

“I think it gave a good insight into three different areas of public relations that students can then take and compare and see where they want to go,” McElice said.

McElice worked in his position in the Chapter to promote the event, and is partly responsible for the large turnout of Chapter members. The incentive for students to attend the networking event, said McElice, was straightforward.

“It allows students to ask questions, hear perspectives and learn things you may not get in the classroom,” he said. “It also allows student to exchange contact information with these professionals which will hopefully lead to a job or an internship later in their careers.”

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## KRISPY KREME FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS ONCE MORE

**Ty McElice** Professional Development Coordinator For the third time in as many years, the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America hosted a

Krispy Kreme fundraiser to raise money for the Chapter. It’s a simple fundraiser for the Chapter that comes with a high reward, said Tanner McKnight, fundraising coordinator.

“It was an easy fundraiser that helps us increase our funds,” said McKnight.

In the past, the fundraiser has been done primarily during the spring semester. This is the first time, however, the Chapter has decided to sell doughnuts in the fall. There will also be a spring sale, with a date to be determined later, but the fundraiser has had such great success in the past that Chapter members wanted to try hosting it twice a year.

The fundraiser started out as alumna Taylor Pieper’s idea, and it has developed into a possible annual event.

“It was an idea from Taylor Pieper my freshman year,” said McKnight. “It has done so well that it wouldn’t make sense to just stop doing it.”

This fall, the Chapter sold a total of 46 boxes of glazed, chocolate iced, chocolate iced with sprinkles, glazed cream-filled, glazed lemon-filled and glazed raspberry-filled doughnuts. This year, the Chapter was unable to sell coupons like it has in the past, but the Chapter was still able to accumulate a total of \$258.

The money raised will go toward different Chapter activities and events, like travelling to conferences and hosting PR Week in the spring semester. Chapter President Nicole Tobias said she is proud of the progress the Chapter has made with the fundraiser over the years and is excited to continue bringing in revenue for the professional development of the Chapter.

“The Krispy Kreme fundraiser has brought in a sufficient amount of funds for the Chapter, and I look forward to continuing this as one of our fundraisers,” said Tobias.

## FROM THE FIRM DIRECTOR'S DESK



**Gabrielle Coy**  
VP/Firm Director

*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*

As we move into the season of giving, and towards the end of the year, I have been looking back at all that we as a firm have accomplished over the course of the semester. There is a lot that I am extremely thankful for.

First and foremost, I am thankful for my firm members. Without their hard work and dedication, nothing would be possible. We have created a firm environment that welcomes and facilitates growth. Red Brick Communications' firm members have stepped up to the challenge this year to create new and innovative content for our clients, and we have some really exciting projects in the works. Without our members' creativity and time, none of these projects would come to fruition.

Through their hard work, we have had the chance to undertake some unique opportunities, hone new skills and create quality work.

I'm thankful for our amazing clients. Our clients serve the Greene County community in amazing ways, and I am so grateful that

through them, our members have the opportunity to play an integral part in that service. Without Red Brick's clients, the firm would have no way of growing and evolving.

I'm thankful for the experiences. Through Red Brick Communications, I have had the chance to see a holistic view of Greene County and the change nonprofits have the power to create. Through working with clients, meeting community members, completing firm service projects and working one-on-one with firm members, the experiences that I have gained during my time within Red Brick Communications are irreplaceable. I have grown just as much personally as I have as a public relations professional, and I hope that Red Brick members can say the same.

Looking forward to next semester, I am very excited to see the completion of several exciting client projects, along with preparing the next generation of Red Brick Communications leadership. Thank you all for an amazing semester. I look forward to continuing to learn and growing Red Brick with each and every one of you next semester.

Sincerely,

*Gabrielle Coy*

Chapter VP/Firm Director



### CHAPTER PARTICIPATES IN HIPSTER-THEMED 'DUEL IN BUHL'

Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America members helped represent Waynesburg's print media students in the annual Department of Communication Christmas party. Print won the 'Duel in Buhl' with a clean sweep, and the Department gathered more than 1,300 toys for Toys for Tots.

# CHAPTER'S INAUGURAL 'PR DAY' DUBBED A SUCCESS

**Olivia Kelley**  
Content Coordinator

The Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America has taken its High School Initiative to the next level. In the past, Chapter members have traveled to local high schools and shared presentations with students about public relations. But this year, senior Chapter member Amanda Troncone thought Waynesburg PRSSA was capable of taking the initiative further. That's how she thought of the idea for PR Day, hosting high school students on campus for an entire day of public relations exposure.

"The idea for PR Day came from a brainstorming session about our high school initiative program and how we could revitalize it for future use," said Troncone. "We wanted to give students an accurate representation of our school and programming, so we thought inviting students to campus could be a fruitful tactic."

During its inaugural PR Day, the Chapter hosted 14 students from the Introduction to Public Relations class at Thomas Jefferson High School. Students toured the University's Department of Communication, listened to informative sessions that highlighted duties, roles and opportunities within public relations careers and were able to ask questions of Chapter members during a panel session.

Chapter President Nicole Tobias said she was grateful for Troncone's desire to bring new life to the Chapter's initiative through this unique event.

"It is an event that no other PRSSA Chapter we know of has ever done before, so it was an exciting opportunity and challenge to actually execute," said Tobias.

Troncone spearheaded the event, coordinating all programming details. She said one of the greatest challenges that the Chapter will face moving forward with this event is determining which schools to include.

Choosing to invite Thomas Jefferson students to Waynesburg was a no-brainer, as Tobias graduated from the high school and

had been through its public relations course herself. Without having this level of connection or inside knowledge about a high school's communication classes, it will be difficult to know which school is the best reach out to, Troncone said.

"PR Day was particularly challenging because we were unsure of who to invite outside of Thomas Jefferson," said Troncone. "Thomas Jefferson has a PR class, which made them the perfect school, but we cannot always know what classes are established at high schools until we bridge that relationship with schools."

However, the Chapter believes putting forth the effort to host the event again is a challenge worth taking on. Troncone viewed the inaugural PR Day as a great success, considering there were no major hiccups and it was the first time that the Chapter brought high school students to campus.

Tobias said that the Chapter received positive feedback from the students and will continue hosting the event because of the valuable guidance that it can provide students.

"PR Day is important because not too many high schoolers even know what public relations is, and at that age, you're just trying to figure out what your next step is," said Tobias. "Showing them public relations gives them an opportunity to consider it as something they may want to pursue in their lives."



*Photo courtesy of the Chapter*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### 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

### February

**Feb. 7:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.

**Feb. 7:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.

**Feb. 14:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.

**Feb. 21:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.

**Feb. 21:** General Body Meeting at 9 p.m.

**Feb. 28:** Red Brick Communications at 11 a.m.

# RED BRICK COMMUNICATIONS SERVES GREENE COUNTY UNITED WAY

**Amanda Tronccone**  
Chapter member

public relations and communications services to local organizations. By serving nonprofit organizations in the community, the firm aligns with Waynesburg University's mission of faith, learning and service. Red Brick services three clients this year, including the Greene County United Way.

The Greene County United Way is an organization that helps fund other organizations in the community to allow them to continue to serve with programming and other means. The United Way website states that "The United Way changes lives throughout Greene County by identifying community needs, supporting the services that meet those needs and providing results to our residents."

Ty McEliece, the professional development coordinator, acts as the account executive for the Greene County United Way and works with MaChal Forbes, executive director of the United Way, to increase awareness of the organization in the community.

"This upcoming year is the 40th anniversary of the Greene County United Way and we are helping to make promotional materials for that," said McEliece.

Red Brick Communications strives to serve the town of Waynesburg by providing

McEliece, along with Account Coordinators Olivia Kelley and Clay Carper, have been creating a video that highlights the United Way's role in the community and are assisting in a logo redesign and event planning. Additionally, the team is beginning an Instagram account to promote the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization.

Last year, the team, under the direction of current Firm Director Gabrielle Coy, developed a new website that launched in the spring of 2018.

"Everybody loves the website," said McEliece speaking to his experience at a local luncheon where he represented Red Brick Communications.

The Greene County United Way remains a valuable client for Red Brick Communications because it is actively involved with helping the community and its current programs.

"The United Way is a great client because they share the same values and mission as Red Brick does," said McEliece.

This is the second year that the United Way has been a client for Red Brick Communications and the firm is excited to continue to grow the client relationship in upcoming years.

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## 3 WAYS TO STAND OUT WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

**Tanner McKnight**  
Fundraising Coordinator

connections with potential employers before you've even met.

If utilized properly, social media can help you stand out from other applicants and convey your unique attributes. There are many ways to use social media to stand out to employers.

### **Tell your story.**

Use social media to share events and milestones in your life. Let people know your interests, activities and strengths. Whatever your story on your social media is, keep it consistent with your other posts and establish a personal brand.

You can convey personality, humor and wit, as long as you remain professional and appropriate. Your personal brand will help you stand out to current employers and future employers.

### **Create quality content.**

Using social media is a sure-fire way to communicate your personal brand and establish

Everything you post on social media should be well-worded and strongly-edited. Make sure your posts are thought-provoking and representative of who you are.

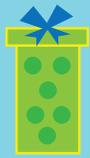
Producing quality content can show an employer that you understand what they would want. Employers want to see that you aren't just posting every day to be seen; you are posting to be heard.

### **Engage with topics in your field.**

Find people in your field on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and follow them. This is how you can spark up a conversation and make connections. It can also help you stay up to date on trending topics in public relations, which will increase your breadth of knowledge when speaking to employers.

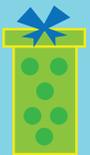
These three tips are just a few ways to utilize social media to stand out to employers. Remember: being popular on social media is not what is most important. It is better to produce quality content to convey your personal brand and story, and make as many relevant connections as possible.

# DAY OF GIVING STATS 2018



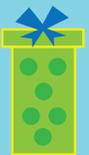
**230**

**DONORS** FROM THE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION



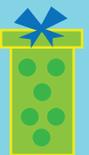
**1,450**

**DONORS** TOTAL



**SIX**

**CHAPTER MEMBERS**  
COLLECTING DONATIONS



**COUNTLESS**

**ALUMNI, STUDENTS & SUPPORTERS**  
MAKING A SUCCESSFUL DAY OF GIVING!

## 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, Gabrielle Coy, for more information.

## FIRM MEMBERS SERVE AT LAURELVILLE CAMP

**Teghan Simonton** This November, members of Public Relations Director Waynesburg University's

student run public relations firm, Red Brick Communications, served at the Laurelville Mud Weekend in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania, a camp initiative of the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation aimed at sharing Christ with middle and high school students. Chapter and firm members traveled to Mt. Pleasant to work at the Christian camp in several capacities.

Gabrielle Coy, firm director and vice president of the Waynesburg University Public Relations Student Society of America, said participating in the Laurelville Mud Weekend was the perfect way to fulfill Waynesburg's purpose of faith, learning and service.

"I think that we all have the responsibility to lend a hand where we can and I wanted to incorporate that into Red Brick Communications," said Coy. "Service initiatives like these reinforce the mission of Waynesburg



*Photo courtesy of the Chapter*



*Photo courtesy of the Chapter*

and the principles upon which Red Brick was founded."

At the camp, firm members served meals to students and helped set up a few of the games. A few of the Red Brick members were referees for the mud-football games, some had the responsibility of power washing mud off of the students and others ran the snack bar. Mainly, Coy said, firm members were there to support the Laurelville staff in any way they needed.

Coy said she hopes Red Brick Communications will continue to work with the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation in the future. The service activity had the additional benefit of strengthening relationships among firm members.

"Events like these also help firm members bond," Coy said. "It's important to have strong relationships within the firm, because we are one firm working towards one goal, creating the best quality work for our clients. Working at Laurelville helped to reinforce that teamwork and collaboration that is essential in a firm setting."

### Connect With Us!

Contact Teghan Simonton by emailing [sim6628@student.waynesburg.edu](mailto:sim6628@student.waynesburg.edu) if you would like to write for Trending Topics!

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[www.redbrick1849.com](http://www.redbrick1849.com)



# SUMMER SPOTLIGHT: NICOLE TOBIAS

**Adrian Barnhart**  
Secretary

After attending a Pittsburgh Kids Foundation Camp as a sixth grader, Chapter President Nicole Tobias fell in

love with the program and continued her involvement.

Tobias attended camps for years, but never thought she would work for PKF. Then in 2016, Tobias was offered a job as an administrative team member. She has since worked as a tech team member and, currently works as social media coordinator. During the past two years, Tobias has worked six camps and has been able to enhance her public relation skills in the process.

PKF is a non-profit organization that hosts Christian outreach camps such as Surf City, where Tobias spent part of her summer. Surf City takes place in Michigan for one week, where middle school students participate in activities such as ziplining, obstacle courses, and lip sync battles. The kids also attend Bible study every morning and listen to a speaker during the club segment.

As social media coordinator, Tobias' main focus was the camp's Instagram account. She created content for stories, coordinated with other tech members for photos and videos and interacted with the account's audience.



Photo courtesy of Nicole Tobias

Tobias is excited to apply the social media experience to her future career as a public relations practitioner. Before her position at Surf City, she said she did not fully understand the importance of branding and keeping a consistent voice.

Tobias said while working for PKF, the most applicable lesson from the classroom was the importance of building relationships.

“That’s a key part of what our goal is at PKF Camps, and while I may not get to interact with every camper on a deep level, I try to make relationships with them as much as possible,” she said.



Now, however, Tobias has a firm understanding of tools used in the public relations field. Being in this position has also helped Tobias enhance other key skills such as communicating, team work and the previously mentioned relationship building.

Tobias admits to sometimes discrediting herself, but after some discussion with her boss, she realized her posts were being projected to campers who are being influenced by every post. Tobias said she tries to be the type of role model for the campers that her middle school self would have looked up to.



Photos courtesy of Nicole Tobias

While Tobias learned a lot from the experience, her most important lesson was that, “I play a bigger role than I think”.

After working for Pittsburgh Kids Foundation, Tobias has expanded her knowledge in branding and further enhanced her skills in relationship building.

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