

BLUE RIDGE

PRSA Public Relations Society of America



views

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June 11th Luncheon
sponsored by:

Your name could have been here!

Online Tools and Technologies

A Helping Hand in Challenging Times

PRSA June 2009

Program Preview

The number of Web applications to connect and communicate with audiences has exploded over the past few years. Several of these applications are more efficient and less expensive than tools you may have used before.

For the next Blue Ridge Chapter luncheon on June 11, Christopher Finley will introduce a variety of these applications that you can implement immediately. You'll not only get exposed to these new applications and technologies but gain ideas on how to leverage them in your workplace.

Christopher is the Director of Marketing and Communications for The Willard Companies at Smith Mountain Lake. He is responsible for developing and overseeing all marketing programs, public relations and customer communications for The Willard Companies and its subsidiaries, including Prudential Waterfront Properties, The Waterfront, The Water's Edge and The Westlake Golf & Country Clubs as well as Smith Mountain Building Supply, Westlake Cinema, Westlake Towne Center and future Southlake Towne Center.

Christopher also is a Certified



Christopher Finley, The Willard Companies

Career Development Specialist with Prudential Financial and teaches accredited training courses to sales professionals throughout the Prudential Real Estate Network. In addition, Christopher works as a part-time adjunct instructor for the School of Communication at Radford University, teaching the "Writing for Public Relations" course.

Finley's career experience includes working for The Roanoke Times as Business Development Manager for roanoke.com. There, Finley oversaw the site development

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Blue Ridge PRSA

Officers

President	Beth Kolnok
President-Elect	Thomas Becher, APR
Immediate	
Past President	Amy Whittaker
Treasurer	Laura Neff-Henderson, APR
Secretary	Nancy Simmons
Assembly Delegate	Michelle Brauns, APR

Directors-At-Large

Mary Clemons
 Jennifer Faulkner
 Shelly Whitaker, APR
 Melinda Mayo

Committees

Accreditation	Ray Atkinson, APR Heidi Ketter, APR Don Egle, APR
Awards	Tiffany Woods Traci Crockett Amanda Melniczek
Diversity	Vacant
Ethics	Chris Finley
Hospitality	Alison Drennan
Membership	Melinda Mayo
Nominating	Amy Whittaker
Professional Development	Rachel Spencer Ernest DelBuono, APR
Programs	Thomas Becher, APR
Publications	Will Carter
Public Relations	Dr. Melissa Bogacik
Public Service	Beth Kolnok
Web Site	Chris Finley

PRSSA Advisors

Radford University	Lisa B. Webster, Ph.D. Shelly Whitaker, APR
Virginia Tech	Dr. Rachel Holloway Linda Burcham
Liberty University	Deborah Huff Don Egle, APR
JMU	Dr. Frank Kalupa Don Egle, APR
Lynchburg	Heidi Ketter, APR Dr. Melissa Bogacik

PRSSA Presidents

Radford University	Christine Johnston
Virginia Tech	Kelly Simons
Liberty University	Kristen Riordan
JMU	Aimee Bateas
Lynchburg College	Sarah Ridgeway

Message from the President

- Beth Kolnok

Greetings Blue Ridge Chapter members! We are closing in on the halfway mark of 2009 and still moving full speed ahead. Your committee chairs continue to meet and plan for programs and events throughout the year. With the Summit Awards Program quickly approaching, you may want to start thinking about what achievements you will want to enter into the competition this year. Also, our Professional Development chairs are planning a great event for this fall. We'll keep you posted on both of these programs as the details emerge.



Beth Kolnok, BRC-PRSA 2009
President

New Committee Leaders

I would like to thank both Dr. Melissa Bogacik and Melinda Mayo for volunteering to take on two of our committees. Melissa will not only continue to support the new Lynchburg PRSSA chapter as Academic Adviser but she will also be the Blue Ridge Chapter's Public Relations Chair. In addition, Melinda will now be both our Director-at-large and Membership Chair. Thank you ladies for contributing additional time to help support our chapter!

There's still time to join a committee and become more involved in PRSA. If you are interested, please feel free to either contact me or each committee chair directly.

PRSSA

Our PRSSA chapters are currently filling their new officers for the 2009-2010 year. We wish the best of luck to both the incoming and

outgoing officers of the Liberty University, Radford University, Lynchburg College, James Madison University and Virginia Tech PRSSA chapters.

We are already in the planning mode for our annual PRSSA Leadership Retreat scheduled for September 11. This is a great opportunity for all the new officers from each school as well as their professional and academic advisors to collaborate on ideas for a successful year. Chapter members are always invited to attend. Please let me know if you're interested.

Leadership Rally

Your President-Elect, Thomas Becher, APR, is making his arrangements to attend the 2009 Leadership Rally at PRSA headquarters in New York in June. This two-day seminar is designed to train incoming chapter leaders on how to manage their chapters effectively, discuss best practices and plan for their respective term.

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Speaker...

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and launch of the region's largest employment Web site, jobs.roanoke.com. He's also been Marketing Communications Manager for Hubbell Lighting, a Fortune 500 electrical distribution and specialized lighting company.

Active in civic and community involvement, Christopher is a former President of the Blue Ridge Chapter and is currently serving as the Public Relations Chairman for the Roanoke Regional Homebuilders Association. He is a member of the Roanoke Valley Advertising Federation, and graduate of the Leadership Franklin County program through the Chamber of Commerce.

Finley has been featured in the "Top 20 under 40," a profile of Southwest Virginia's top 20 emerging leaders under the age of 40, prepared by the Blue Ridge Business Journal and has been nominated for "Advertising Person of the Year" by the Roanoke AdFed. Finley is also youth basketball and soccer coach for Salem Parks and Recreation.

Christopher holds a master's degree in Corporate and Professional Communication from Radford University. He received his bachelor's in English with a concentration in Communications from Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, N.C.

Christopher and his wife, Kristen, reside in Salem and have two children, Tyler and John.

Have You Joined the Conversation?

- Ray Atkinson, ABC, APR

The Blue Ridge Chapter PRSA professional group on LinkedIn now has 58 members, and continues to grow. If you haven't had a chance to join, take a minute and just do it. As long as you already have a profile on LinkedIn, all you need to do is [click here](#) and follow the instructions.

For those of us who are already members, this group gives us new opportunities to keep up to date with emerging trends, share best practices in public relations, and build on our existing networking opportunities.

Below are a few ways you can join the conversation. Visit these sections of our [LinkedIn group](#) and let us hear from you:

Discussions: Start a discussion on a topic that interests you and give other group members an opportunity to weigh in. Maybe you're working on something and need a creative spark or a different perspective. Post your question or comment and ask for a response. You can also post a notice about an upcoming event, conference, or seminar.

News: Share a news article that may be of interest to other PR professionals in our network. Many online news sites have a "share" button that allows you to post directly to the LinkedIn group. Otherwise, just copy the link, go to the "news" tab in the LinkedIn group, and click "submit a link." The subject and summary will auto-fill when the link posts. Other group members will be able submit comments on the story, and even post additional links to related content.

The more we use this forum as an exchange of ideas and information, the more valuable it will be, so take a moment and get familiar with the site. It will only be as good as we make it.

There are also several other professional interest groups for LinkedIn members in the public relations/communications field. Check these out the next time you are on LinkedIn:



[Public Relations Society of America \(PRSA National\)](#)

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=49680>



[Public Relations and Communications Professionals](#)

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=82242>



[Public Relations Professionals](#)

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=58031>

Professional Development Tip

In a recent article in Network World magazine, Carolyn Duffy Marson with Network World discusses best practices for integrating social media applications into large organizations. For many, using new media effectively in the workplace is still a mystery. Marson offers the following "Twitter Tips" for getting started:

1. Identify a business problem you are trying to solve. Don't deploy social media tools just to appear cool.
2. Get buy-in from management. Involve all of the key stakeholders: the people who have the information and those who control its distribution.
3. Start small and grow your social media efforts gradually.
4. Keep it simple.
5. Make sure the data you make available on social media applications is relevant.
6. Set aside enough resources for social media efforts. These channels require ongoing monitoring and constant enhancement.
7. Set expectations on the frequency of your updates and how fast you can respond to questions and comments.
8. Don't be afraid to replace a legacy media process with a new social media process.
9. Establish metrics to measure whether your new media approaches are working.
10. Don't forget security.

To read the complete article, visit:

www.networkworld.com/news/2009/040909-feds-twitter-tips.html

Message...

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This event is also a great opportunity for Thomas to ask questions specific to our chapter's needs. Please let him know if you have questions or concerns that you would like Thomas to address.

You can see that we are continuing our efforts to increase the benefits of being a member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of PRSA. As always, we welcome ideas and suggestions for improvements.

I look forward to seeing you all at the June 11th luncheon.

Sincerely,
Beth Kolnok
Blue Ridge Chapter PRSA President



PR QuickStart: a free Web-based training program developed by the Council of Public Relations Firms and PRSA Counselors Academy.

PR QuickStart provides a basic overview of public relations and the public relations agency business.

www.prquickstart.org

VT PRSSA — Tying the Knots

On February 21, the Virginia Tech PRSSA chapter hosted Comm Connections 2009 “Tying the Knots,” an educational conference designed to help students learn about the diverse field of communication. The PRSSA Special Events Committee organized the event and worked hard to promote it, which resulted in a successful conference.

There were about 40 students in attendance, who were able to acquire knowledge and advice from PRSA speakers Amy Whittaker, Thomas Becher, APR, Stephen Grieco, and Michelle Brauns, APR.

Amy Whitaker discussed non-profit public relations; Thomas Becher provided insight into the field of advertising; Stephen Grieco highlighted aspects of marketing and broadcasting, and Michelle Brauns gave advice in the upcoming field of health public relations.

Tunch Ilkin, a sports analyst and talk show host for the Pittsburgh Steelers, traveled from Pennsylvania and discussed his experience in sports broadcasting. The Virginia Tech students benefited from personal accounts, career world advice, and a catered lunch from Quiznos.

The VT PRSSA chapter hopes that Comm Connections 2010 is just as successful!

PRSSA SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

In celebration of the 41st Anniversary of PRSSA, the Blue Ridge Chapter of PRSA would like to continue last year's Special Membership Promotion.

The Blue Ridge Chapter will waive its Local Chapter dues for PRSSA Members who join PRSA National (Associate Member, PRSSA Graduate \$60 per year).

PRSSA Members can join PRSA up to five months before their graduation. The membership promotion will be offered to the first ten PRSSA Members who join PRSA National.

To join PRSA & our Blue Ridge Chapter, just go to www.prsa.org, and click on membership.

The Blue Ridge Chapter will reimburse the Local Chapter dues to the first ten PRSSA Members who join.

If you have any questions, please contact Melinda Mayo:
melinda.mayo@roanokeva.gov



Sponsorship opportunities for programs and professional development (PD) seminars are still available for 2009!

With current attendance of luncheon programs and PD seminars at approximately 60 participants including members, guests and students, the cost of only \$250 is worth every penny to have the exclusive opportunity to speak to the area's finest public relations professionals.

Mark your calendars for
our next 2009 meeting:

noon
June 11
Hotel Roanoke

Upcoming Luncheon Dates:

August 13
October 8
December 10

If you are interested in sponsoring a BRPRSA program, please contact Thomas Becher, APR:
TBecher@tbtheagency.com

Why do **accredited**
professionals earn nearly
20% MORE than
their colleagues?*



* 2005 PR Week-Korn/Ferry International Salary Survey.

It's spring! Time to rejuvenate and fortify!

At the time of this writing, I'm feeling professionally rejuvenated after a whirlwind of accreditation activity during Accreditation Month.

Throughout April, the Public Relations Society of America offered several open houses as an introduction to the process for accreditation in public relations. These open houses also are hosted periodically throughout the year, so stay tuned.

The Blue Ridge Chapter APR Committee also hosted a special meeting that brought together members interested in earning their APR and current APRs Thomas Becher and Don Egle. What followed was an enlightening question-and-answer session. Thanks to all who participated!



Chuck Lionberger

The Blue Ridge 6, the current group of members pursuing accreditation, is as immersed in their studies as time permits.

A frequent question is how much time should one commit each week to APR study. In addition to the one-hour online study group, I suggest at least two to three hours of recommended reading and review.

A great motivation for study is that it can be applied to what we do as PR professionals in our work right now, everyday.

Chuck Lionberger, who is one of the Blue Ridge 6, recently accepted the challenge of tackling a case study, as a way to put into practice the APR study material.

The situation analysis involved a school system with declining enrollment in need of funding. The exercise required identifying goals, objectives, strategies and tactics, as well as key audiences.

Chuck combined accepted PR practice with his experience and creativity to come up with a winning

PR plan. It covered the four essentials: research, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Chuck nailed it! He demonstrated that he is ready to advance to the Readiness Review stage in the journey to accreditation. His Readiness Review is set for June 18.

The Readiness Review is when an APR candidate makes a formal presentation about an actual PR plan he has worked on.

He must demonstrate to a panel of three APRs his understanding of 16 Knowledge, Skills and Abilities. Creative conceptualization, initiative and control analyses are examples of KSAs.

The Readiness Review is a rather informal, friendly forum. The panelists are peers who want the APR candidate to succeed. So during the presentation they will ask questions, offer pointers and share insights.

When the panel is satisfied with the candidates readiness, approval is granted to proceed to the final step – the accreditation examination.

Please remember, you can begin the accreditation process any time! So if you're ready to fortify your professional career with the APR, simply give me a shout! Happy spring!



Heidi Ketler, 2009 APR Chair
hketler@verizon.net or (540) 774-0607

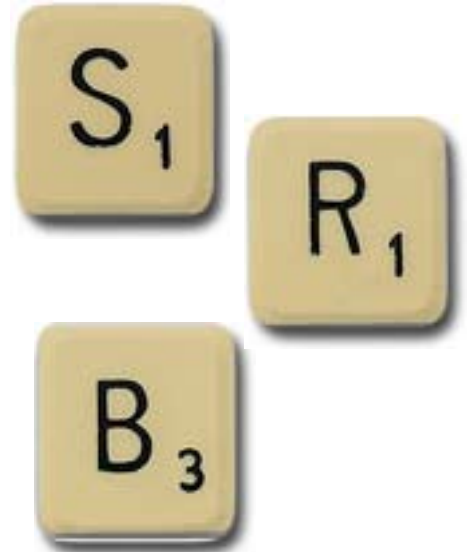
WWW.PRACCREDITATION.ORG

BRPRSA Pushes Lexemic Limits at Scrabble Tournament

Our PRSA Chapter gathered two teams to support the Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley's fourth annual Scrabble tournament. Held in partnership with the Roanoke Public Library Foundation, the event raised over \$11,000 dollars, and according to Amy Hanek's Roanoke Times article, more than 2,000 Scrabble tiles. The tournament was March 19 at the Jefferson Center.



Rachel "R" Spencer, Traci Crockett, and Heidi Ketler, APR, (the one with the "H" on her head) make a move, avoiding the suspicious "zerk."



Jessica Lane, Shelly Whitaker, APR, and Linda Staley, APR, were BRPRSA's flag-waving phoneme phenoms. The red flad is serious business, serving to hail a judge to challenge a word.



The Blue Ridge Chapter
Public Relations Society of America presents

**Christopher Finley, Director of Marketing and Communications,
The Willard Companies,**

on

"Online Tools and Technologies – A Helping Hand in Challenging Times"
June 11th Luncheon, Hotel Roanoke

Fees & Information

Chapter Members: \$22
Students & Interns: \$17
Non-Members: \$30

Note: The luncheon is noon, June 11.
There is a \$5 LATE FEE for reservations made after Monday, June 8.

Parking at the Hotel Roanoke is \$3 for self-parking, \$5 for valet.
Parking on Wells Avenue is free.

Please make check payable to Blue Ridge Chapter - PRSA

Mail reservation form and money to:
Alison Drennan
PR & Special Events Coordinator
Commonwealth Catholic Charities
541 Luck Avenue, Suite 118
Roanoke, VA 24016

Alison_drennan@cccova.org
342-0411

RSVP online at:
www.prsa-blueridge.org

If you require a special meal (e.g. vegetarian) or have a food allergy, please indicate this when making your reservation.

Your Name: _____

Company: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Number of members attending (\$22 ea): _____

Names: _____

Number of students attending (\$17 ea): _____

Names: _____

Number of non-members attending (\$30 ea): _____

Names: _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Please check if this is your first BRC-PRSA meeting.