



Welcome, IPA Members and Prospective Members!

I am privileged to serve as 2021 chair of the IPA section. I owe a debt of gratitude to Immediate Past Chair Gina Milani for her mentorship, friendship and commitment to IPA leadership succession planning.

“Hindsight is 2020.” This once-in-a-lifetime variation on the popular expression has headlined lots of blogs and stories over the past few months, epitomizing its traditional meaning. But from an IPA perspective, and thanks to committed volunteer leadership and member support, we accomplished a great deal in that largely pandemic year. Those accomplishments included:

- Record attendance at our 4th Annual VirtuCon including two paid sponsorships; planning will soon be underway for our 5th Annual so stay tuned!
- Top marks within PRSA in terms of Section member satisfaction
- Consistent, well-attended monthly programming including the ever popular, “So, you want to go independent?” to close out the year; this was followed by a “COVID Edition” in this year’s Q1 to support the In-Between-Jobs Program (more on that below)
- Solid membership retention and growth
- Insightful COVID-specific results from the annual National State of the Indie Business Survey
- Founding by J.W. Arnold, APR, Fellow PRSA of the twice weekly IndieCHATs which continues to grow in popularity

All credit to past chairs, a dedicated volunteer leadership team, an amazing section liaison (Thank you, Danielle Robinson!) and members like you, we’ve made great strides in growing and developing the IPA Section. It is critically important to build upon that momentum in 2021 and beyond. Our keys to success include continued effective communication, compelling and relevant programming, access to timely business support and networking opportunities and, where appropriate, collaboration with other sections. The desired outcome is to provide you with even greater value from your relationship with, and dues paid to, IPA.

While the emerging opportunities for our sector are exciting, 2020 presented (and 2021 continues to present) its share of challenges for PR professionals — not least among them, layoffs, furloughs and hiring freezes in agencies, private companies and public entities across all industries. To help address these challenges, the IPA worked with PRSA National to roll out their “In-Between-Jobs Program” which helps PR practitioners who have been forced to make tough choices regarding how to best invest in finding their next opportunity – which just might be as an “indie.” As part of this program, PRSA is providing **discounted PRSA membership dues and a complimentary IPA Section membership for**

one year. The IPA is a notably strong community with a wealth of resources and information so was the natural choice to support this program.

I appreciate the returning and new leaders serving on the 2021 IPA Executive Committee...your stepping up and signing up (or perhaps, in some cases, being “voluntold”) to serve our small but growing and mighty section of the society. And to our loyal section members, thank you for your continued support and participation. Your engagement and feedback are so very important to our success!

Sincerely,

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