



**2020**

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# Annual Review

**PRSA**

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A LETTER FROM

# T. Garland Stansell, Chair



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Atquia volorem,

T. Garland Stansell, Chair  
PRSA



A LETTER FROM

# Michelle Olson, Chair-Elect



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Atquia volorem,

Michelle Olson, Chair-Elect  
PRSA

# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

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## JANUARY

**Leadership:** PRSA launches its 2020-2022 Strategic Plan, which outlines the steps we need to take to improve our value proposition — steps that include continuing to develop our content, improving our distribution channels, strengthening our advocacy efforts and redesigning our membership model.

**Leadership:** Dr. Aerial Ellis, Ed.D., and Brian Price are selected to serve as Senior Counsel to 2020 PRSA Board of Directors.

**PRSSA:** Michael Cherenon, APR, Fellow PRSA, is elected as PRSSA 2020-2022 National Professional Adviser.

## FEBRUARY

**PRSSA:** PRSSA adds New Jersey City University to roster of Chapters across the globe, marking the 10th school in New Jersey to be affiliated with PRSSA.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA announces Fall 2019 nationally affiliated student-run firms.

**Leadership:** Maureen Walsh is named Chief Marketing and Sales Officer at PRSA.

**Partnership:** PRSA teams up with the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management in support of Global Ethics Month in February.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA celebrates Black History Month with a post by D&I Committee Co-Chair Felicia Blow, APR.

## MARCH

**Marketing:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, PRSA creates a special resources section on PRSA.org, including recordings of crisis communication courses, informative articles and editorial content, blog posts and more.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA expands global reach with addition of Universidad Ana G. Méndez Chapter in Puerto Rico.

**Advocacy:** To address the communications challenges of the coronavirus crisis, PRSA and the PRSA Health Academy create an “infodemic” infographic, which outlines simple tips for staying informed and how to decipher fact from fiction.



# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

## APRIL

**Leadership:** In celebration of National Volunteer Month in April, PRSA and PRSSA recognize volunteer leaders and advisers for their commitment to the organizations.

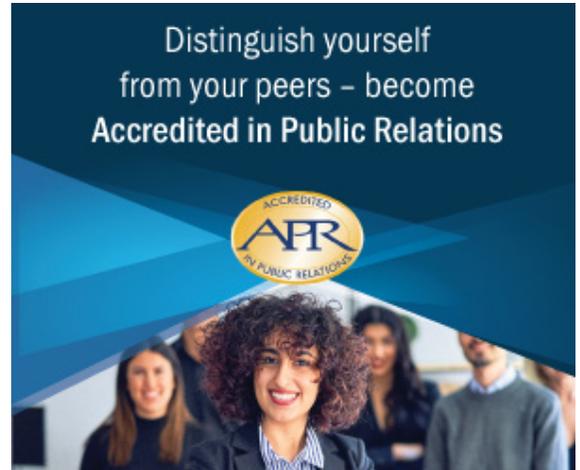
**APR Month:** PRSA celebrates APR Month, which promotes the value of the APR and APR+M credentials.

**PRSSA:** Due to the coronavirus pandemic, PRSSA pivots its Leadership Assembly, which was supposed to be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, to a successful virtual event.

**PRSSA:** The PRSSA 2020-2021 National Committee is elected during its virtual Leadership Assembly. Carolyn Lok was elected as President.

**Awards:** PRSA announces the finalists for the 2020 Silver Anvil Awards, which honor outstanding strategic public relations programs that meet the highest standards of performance in the profession. More than 110 campaigns across 18 categories and subcategories were named as finalists, including submissions from leading brands, agencies, non-profit organizations, government agencies and universities.

**Leadership:** PRSA Chair T. Garland Stansell, APR, writes a message to his fellow communicators about their responsibility to lead during the coronavirus pandemic.



## MAY



**PRSA**

### Leading the Conversation

Connect with your peers, build your brand and raise your industry profile.

Act now – join the leading organization for professional communicators.

**Marketing:** PRSA launches new digital advertising campaigns to retarget PRSA.org visitors with ads promoting PRSA membership, professional development, and online events. Engagement with ads indicated significant reach in awareness building and an uptick in event registrations when digital advertising campaigns were initiated.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA announces Spring 2020 nationally affiliated student-run firms.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** The PRSA Diversity & Inclusion Committee launches its D&I Strategic Plan.

**Programming:** PRSA launches the PRSA Storytellers Series, a free series of engaging conversations focused on relevant and timely topics, emerging issues and developments in the profession. These sessions deliver thought leadership and keep members up to date on the current and future business environment.

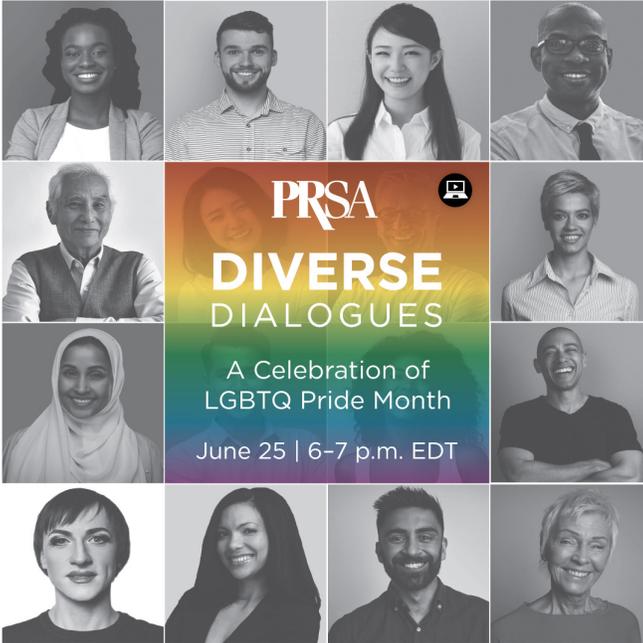
**PRSSA:** DePaul University's "The 'A' Team" wins PRSSA's 2020 Bateman Case Study Competition. The University of Florida earned the second-place spot, while High Point University finished in third. This year's competition

challenged students to research, plan, implement and evaluate a public relations campaign centered on increasing participation in the 2020 Census.

**Awards:** PRSA announces winners of 2020 Bronze Anvil Awards, which recognize the best of the best in public relations tactics – the use of social media, video, blogs, podcasts, annual reports, digital newsletters, websites – that contribute to the success of overall programs or campaigns. This year's results include 37 Bronze Anvil Award winners and 67 Award of Commendation winners across 33 categories.

# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

## JUNE



**PRSA:** PRSA Chair T. Garland Stansell, APR, writes note to members about racial injustice and the communicator's role in promoting a healthy dialogue.

**PRSA MBA Program:** New Jersey City University School of Business joins PRSA MBA/Business School Program. Grounded in reputation management fundamentals, the course helps students gain an understanding of corporate communications, integrated marketing communications, investor relations, corporate social responsibility, government relations and crisis communications.

**Programming:** PRSA launches Diverse Dialogues, a series of conversations with leaders in the profession about diversity and inclusion and the way forward.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA celebrates PRIDE month with a series of webinars, panel discussions and LGBTQ pride-related articles/editorial pieces for Strategies & Tactics and PRsay.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA earns Honorable Mention in PR Daily's Digital Marketing & Social Media Awards for its 2019 membership campaign.

## JULY

**Leadership:** PRSA Leadership commits to improvements in diversity, equity and inclusion.

**Marketing:** PRSA launches campaign for first-ever virtual conference, ICON 2020. Broadened multichannel marketing campaign included digital advertising and retargeting campaigns, reaching more than 400,000 individuals with 51,500 individuals clicking through to marketing material, increasing brand awareness for signature event.

**Programming:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PRSA announces ICON 2020 as first fully digital gathering for professional communicators and students of the profession. Jon Meacham, presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author,Carolynn Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, DiversityInc Media LLC and Lata Nott, Freedom Forum Fellow for the First Amendment are announced as featured speakers.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA establishes new Chapter at Adrian College, marking the 10th school in the state of Michigan to be affiliated with PRSSA.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA launches a new audio series called "The Process," featuring professionals from the communications industry and beyond. CCOs, D&I executives, agency pros and seasoned communicators share the stories, strategies and processes that helped them grow from college students and new pros into the best in the business.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** Strategies & Tactics features a two-page spread highlighting Chapter D&I liaisons with actionable insights on promoting racial equity.



# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

## AUGUST

**Leadership:** PRSA announces 2021 Officer and Board of Directors nominees. Felicia Blow, APR, is nominated as PRSA 2021 Chair-elect. Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA, is nominated as Treasurer, and Joseph Abreu, APR, is nominated as Secretary.

**Programming:** Laurie Garrett, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and journalist, and Nina Jankowicz, author and disinformation expert, are added to ICON 2020 speaker lineup.

**PRSSA:** The University of Nebraska at Omaha wins the National Organ Awareness Competition. Drexel University came in second place followed by Oral Roberts University and Tulsa University in third place. Honorable Mentions included Samford University and the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

**College of Fellows:** PRSA welcomes 15 new members into its College of Fellows.

**Awards:** Ellen Greene, RWJBarnabas Health executive, is honored by the PRSA Health Academy as the recipient of the 2020 Excellence in Public Relations Award for being a strategic counselor and mentor in health care communications.

**Advocacy:** PRSA responds to reports of PR staffing changes at FDA.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA launches Mentor Connect pilot program, which seeks to support new professionals and students from underrepresented backgrounds by connecting them with experienced specialists who will coach, lead and advise this rising talent.



## SEPTEMBER

**Ethics Month:** PRSA celebrates Ethics Month. Programming this year included webinars, Twitter Chats, blogs, articles in Strategies & Tactics, among other initiatives.

**Marketing:** PRSA launches an APR awareness digital advertising campaign to retarget APR site visitors, bolstered by email mapping. In the first 60 days of the campaign, ads were seen by more than 96,000 viewers.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA launches fundraising campaign for Multicultural Endowed Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships to educate and empower rising diverse talent in the public relations and communication fields.

**PRSSA:** The topic of the 2021 Bateman Case Study Competition is announced. The competition will focus on reversing the corrosion of civility in American life and fostering more constructive and inclusive public discourse in all corners of society.

**Membership:** Leadership Rally is held as a virtual event. 244 Chapter, Section and District leaders participated in the five-hour program.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA welcomes newest Chapter at Fairfield University, marking the sixth school in Connecticut to be affiliated with PRSSA.



# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

## OCTOBER

**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA celebrates Diversity & Inclusion Month. Programming included Twitter Chats, the Diversity & Inclusion “Transforming the Landscape” celebration at ICON 2020, bylined articles in PR trade publications, and a four-page centerspread with articles written by the D&I Committee in Strategies & Tactics.

**Advocacy:** PRSA responds to reports that Tesla eliminated its PR department.

**PRSSA:** The PRSSA Ethics Competition is created to engage students and teach them about ethics in a fun, competitive manner.

**PRSSA/PRSA Foundation:** Each year PRSSA and the PRSA Foundation present more than \$30,000 in scholarships and awards to members and Chapters who exhibit outstanding merit in public relations. Scholarships and awards were presented during the international conference this year.

**Awards:** PRSA and the PRSA Foundation present seven individual awards during ICON 2020, honoring members who have served the organization with distinction and made a difference in the public relations profession.

**Advocacy:** The PRSA Civility Task Force releases White Paper, “Modeling Civility: How Public Relations Professionals Can Restore Quality, Integrity and Inclusiveness to Civil Discourse.” Created by PRSA’s Civility Task Force, the paper is intended to help the organization and the communications profession promote a broader public dialogue about the corrosion of public discourse, and implement achievable solutions to change the national conversation.

**Awards:** PRSA presents 53 Silver Anvil Awards and 58 Awards of Excellence at a virtual ceremony held during ICON 2020. Winning campaigns spanned those from leading brands, agencies, non-profit organizations, government agencies and universities. The Best of Silver Anvil Award was presented to the Houston First Corporation for its “Space City: Moon Landing 50th Anniversary” integrated marketing campaign with TURNER Public Relations.

**PRSSA:** PRSSA establishes new Chapter at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, marking the 20th HBCU to join PRSSA.

**Awards:** The PRSA Chapter Diversity & Inclusion award winners are announced. The PRSA Minnesota Chapter earned first place followed by the Orange County Chapter in second place. The Central Ohio Chapter earned honorable mention.



**Diversity & Inclusion:** PRSA surpasses its \$50,000 goal needed to establish the PRSA Multicultural Scholarship Endowment following a successful fundraising concert event sponsored by PepsiCo at ICON 2020. The scholarship assists and recognizes diverse talent from underrepresented backgrounds for outstanding academic achievement and their commitment to the practice of public relations.

**Awards:** The PRSA Educators Academy presents Kim L. Hunter, CEO of LAGRANT COMMUNICATIONS and founder of the LAGRANT Foundation, with its 2020 David Ferguson Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the advancement of public relations education on the part of public relations professionals.

**Programming:** More than 1,600 individuals attend ICON 2020, featuring 102 speakers and 51 breakout sessions.

# MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

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NOVEMBER



# PRSA MEMBERSHIP

OCTOBER  
**2020**



OCTOBER  
**2019**



OCTOBER  
**2018**

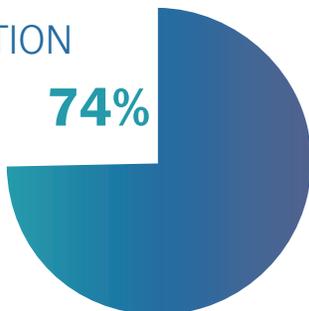


## NEW MEMBERS

*Group Members (as of Nov. 4)*

- Adelphi University
- American Heart Association – Eastern Seaboard team
- American Heart Association – National Headquarters
- Illinois Lottery Commission
- CarMax
- Cherokee National. Film and Business Unit
- City of Hope Research Hospital
- City of Philadelphia Airport
- Council for Responsible Nutrition
- Crisp Thinking (Leeds, England)
- Dept of Homeland Security. TSA
- Fahlgren Mortine
- Fannie Mae
- Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco
- FedEx Express
- Flagler College
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Kane Communications
- Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission
- Mattress Recycling Council
- Robert Wood Johnson/Barnabas Healthcare
- Rollins College
- Shift Communications
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
- Swire Coca-Cola
- 360+ PR Communications
- University of Colorado
- Veterans Health Association (VHA) of Community Care

RETENTION  
RATE



## MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS



# AWARDS

There is no shortage of talent among our members and the communications profession, and throughout 2020 PRSA was busy honoring achievement at the highest level.

In May, we announced the 2020 winners of the Bronze Anvil Awards, which recognize the best of the best in public relations tactics that contribute to the success of overall programs or campaigns. This year's results included 37 Bronze Anvil Award winners and 67 Award of Commendation winners across 33 categories.



Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Silver Anvil Awards Ceremony was postponed from June to a virtual event at ICON 2020, where we presented 53 Silver Anvil Awards and 58 Awards of Excellence for outstanding public relations programs. This year's Best of Silver Anvil Award winner was the Houston First Corporation for its "Space City: Moon Landing 50th Anniversary" integrated marketing campaign with TURNER Public Relations.

Seven individual awards were presented at ICON 2020, honoring members who have served PRSA with distinction and made a difference in the profession:

- **Maria P. Russell, APR, Fellow PRSA** – Gold Anvil Award
- **Dave Poston, Esq.** – Public Relations Professional of the Year
- **Susan Gonders, Ed.D.** – Outstanding Educator Award
- **David C. Rickey, APR** – Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA
- **Staci L. Reidinger, APR+M** – Paul M. Lund Public Service Award
- **Marsha R. Pitts-Phillips** – D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award
- **Jeong-Nam Kim** – Jackson Jackson & Wagner Behavioral Science Prize



Three Chapter Diversity & Inclusion Awards were also presented at ICON 2020:

**1<sup>ST</sup>** Minnesota Chapter

**2<sup>ND</sup>** Orange County Chapter

**3<sup>RD</sup>** Central Ohio Chapter



In August, **Ellen Greene**, a mentor and leader in health care public relations, received the PRSA Health Academy's 2020 Excellence in Public Relations Award. In November, **Kim L. Hunter**, CEO of LAGRANT COMMUNICATIONS, was honored by the PRSA Educators Academy with the 2020 David Ferguson Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the advancement of public relations education.

*Congratulations to everyone!*

# BY THE NUMBERS



## PRSA COMMUNICATIONS



- 125** PRsay Blog Posts
- 225** Strategies & Tactics Articles
- 244** Daily Issues & Trends E-Newsletters

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- 35** Free Member Webinars  
(35 hours, 2,100 minutes)
- 3** Live Certificate Programs
- 6** Virtual Workshops
- 2** APR Bootcamps

## MyPRSA



- 65,945** Total Logins
- 14,495** Unique Logins
- 6,568** First Time Logins
- 6,103** Total Discussion Posts

## SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



107.5K



125.4K



51.3K



6K

## WEB TRAFFIC



# VISITS



# Strategic Communications

## Navigating a World Disrupted

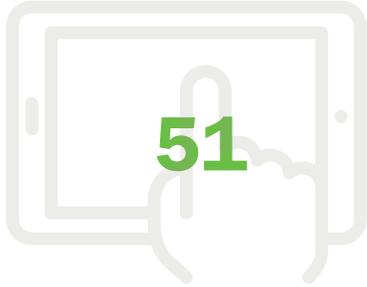
DISINFORMATION. PANDEMIC. SOCIAL INJUSTICE.

OCT. 26-29, 2020

Be there — no matter where you are in the world!



**1,614**  
ICON 2020 Attendees  
(includes speakers, sponsors,  
exhibitors, comps, PRSA and PRSSA)



**51**  
Breakout Sessions



**50 Hours**  
of Total Professional Development  
(3,000 minutes)



**102**  
ICON Speakers

# BY THE NUMBERS



## PRSSA MEMBERSHIP



**##** 2020  
**7,800** 2019  
**9,619** 2018



**2,803**  
NEW  
MEMBERS  
(since Aug. 2019)

## NEW CHAPTERS



New Jersey City University  
Universidad Ana G. Méndez  
Adrian College  
Fairfield University  
Oakwood University

## SCHOLARSHIPS



PRSSA awarded more than  
**\$35,000**  
in scholarships in 2020

## SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



39.6K



21.3K



10.5K



5.5K

## WEB TRAFFIC

**#**  
VISITS





# PRSA jobcenter

JOBCENTER  
LISTINGS

692

COMPANIES THAT  
POSTED ON  
JOBCENTER LISTINGS

539

RESUMÉS  
UPLOADED

1,500

SPEAKERS BUREAU  
ADDITIONS

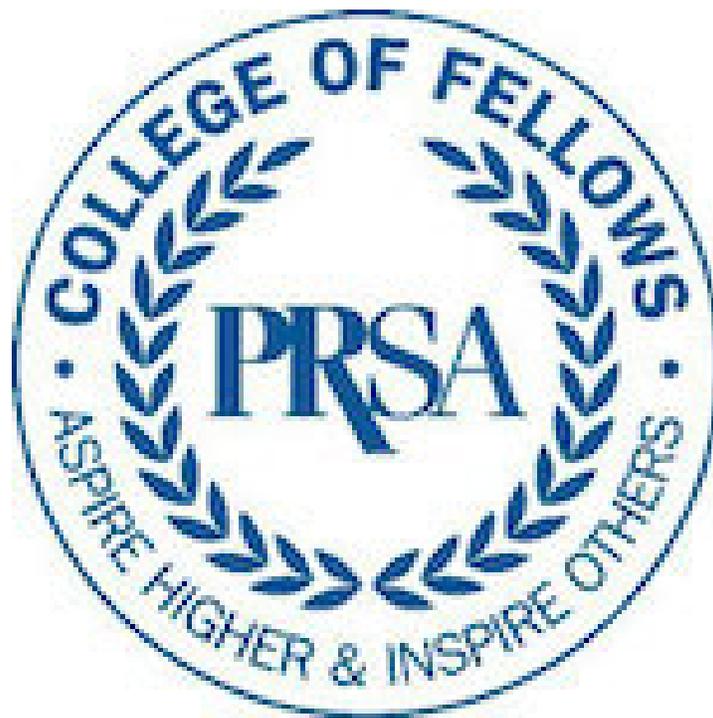
529

# COLLEGE OF FELLOWS

Congratulations to the 15 new members of PRSA's College of Fellows, an honorary organization comprised of more than 350 senior professionals and educators. Reflecting more than 240 months of leadership and service, induction into the College is considered the pinnacle of a professional career.

## The 2020 inductees were:

- Judy Smith Asbury, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Kathy Barbour, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Pam Gutel Campbell, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Kelly Jackson Davis, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Ronele M. Dotson, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Kim Marks Malone, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Marlene S. Neill, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA
- Jo Ann S. LeSage Nelson, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Susan S. Pollard, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Mike Porter, Ed.D., APR, Fellow PRSA
- Christopher E. Vadnais, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Mary Louise VanNatta, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Clare L. Wade, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Kevin M. Waetke, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Brooke Worden, APR, Fellow PRSA



# STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

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# MISSION/VALUES



## CHAMPIONS

We're champions of our diverse members, the businesses they lead and the evolving profession.

## ETHICS

We're committed to telling concise, truthful stories the right way.

## COMMUNITIES

We're building a community of members who support, nurture & learn from one another.

## MASTERY

We're lifelong learners and masters of our craft across our ever-changing profession.

# ETHICS

## ETHICS IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF PRSA'S DNA.



Since its creation in 1950, our Code of Ethics has served as an invaluable guide to help PRSA members navigate the day-to-day practice of public relations, and it is recognized as the gold standard for ethical behavior throughout the communications profession.

PRSA's reputation depends on the reputation of all of its members, and the Code's core values of advocacy, honesty, expertise, independence, loyalty and fairness inform our responsibilities to ourselves as well as to our colleagues.

Locally, nationally, and internationally, our behaviors have real world implications, and in 2020 the Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS) worked with PRSA members and communicators from across the profession to create programs and content that reflect and engage with the turbulence and challenges surrounding all of us.

BEPS webinars, held throughout the year, have taken deep dives into such timely subjects as battling disinformation; social media, censorship and hate speech; LGBTQ and employee communications; ethics in college sports; and the role of ethical principles in health care.

The theme of this year's Ethics Month, held in September to celebrate and reaffirm the centrality of the Code of Ethics to PRSA, was "Doing the Right Thing." Always important, these words took on heightened significance in a year that saw the spread of social unrest, disinformation, and the struggle to vanquish an international pandemic. A webinar entitled "APRs Speak: Black Men Discuss Ethics, Equity & Inclusion," and a Twitter Chat exploring "Ethical Challenges in Today's Global Information World" were among the programs highlighting current events that resonate beyond the present moment.

BEPS also launched a new initiative, the BEPS Position Papers program, created to help make PRSA's Code of Ethics more accessible. These brief documents focus on specific topics of potential ethical concern, and present PRSA's viewpoint on best practices in these areas. Subjects included Pay for Play; Ethics & Social Media; Plagiarism; Paid Spokesperson and Influencers; Representing Front Groups; Overstating Fees or Compensation; and Native Advertising and Sponsored Content.

## BEPS MEMBERS

- BJ Whitman, APR, Fellow PRSA (BEPS Chair)
- Heather Morgan, APR (Secretary)
- Mark Dvorak, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Blake Lewis, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Cayce Myers, APR
- Karen Swim, APR
- Michelle Ewing, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Anita Ford Saunders, APR
- Pete Scott, APR
- Paula Pedene, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Jim Lukaszewski, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Tim O'Brien, APR
- Cayce Meyers, APR
- Stacy Smith, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Michele Ewing, APR, Fellow PRSA
- Rachel Kimmel (PRSSA Representative)
- Jane Law, APR
- Karen Mateo (PRSA Liaison)

# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

PRSA's Diversity and Inclusion Committee has had an active year, putting forth a number of milestone initiatives in 2020 to improve representation within PRSA and the profession.

The three-year D&I Strategic Plan, published in the spring, is a transformative guide that will drive improvement in areas where urgent change is needed most, and is the result of a research initiative based on three phases of qualitative data collection, including interviews, focus groups and a survey.

The plan aims to help PRSA achieve targeted milestones and position the society as a model for the communications profession, reflecting exemplary leadership in diversity and inclusion.

**The overarching goal supports four objectives:**

1. Increase awareness and understanding of PRSA as a diverse and inclusive organization among its members and staff.
2. Increase diverse representation among leadership throughout all levels of PRSA.
3. Increase awareness of PRSA as a diverse and inclusive organization among external stakeholders.
4. Increase and retain the number of multicultural students in PRSSA and new multicultural professionals into PRSA.

The plan builds on research and investments by the PRSA Board of Directors that began in 2019 and calls for an expansion of tools and resources across the organization to help build an inclusive community that connects and champions all members no matter their race, gender identity, color, sexual orientation, national origin or any other factor.

Other efforts to date this year have included releasing an updated Diversity & Inclusion Chapter Toolkit, which provides members with diversity-related research, materials, applicable tools and professional-development opportunities.

## A SUMMER OF UNREST

This summer, as community members across the country took part in protests against racial injustice and systemic racism in the aftermath of the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Elijah McClain and others, the D&I Committee launched a Diverse Dialogues webinar series that brought together an array of voices to help communicators find the way forward.

More than 1,600 people signed up for the first two events in June on responding to racial injustice with change and healing.

Other Diverse Dialogues topics this year included an inside look at the lessons learned from the LGBTQ workplace discrimination cases before the Supreme Court and a conversation on helping Americans vote in 2020.

Late in the summer, PRSA unveiled its Mentor Connect pilot program, which links students from underrepresented groups with experienced communicators to help guide their careers.



# TRANSFORMING THE LANDSCAPE

Support the Endowment of PRSA's Multicultural Scholarship!



*Transforming the Landscape*  
Fundraising Concert

ICON 2020

Fisk University's  
**Jubilee Singers®**  
Rising Country Duo  
**Everette**  
Grammy-Nominated Jazz Vocalist  
**Barbara Morrison**

Sponsored by  
**PEPSICO**

## AN ENDOWMENT TO DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION

On Oct. 28, during ICON 2020, PRSA reached the \$50,000 goal needed to establish the PRSA Multicultural Scholarship Endowment following a successful fundraising concert event sponsored by PepsiCo.

The scholarship assists and recognizes young men and women from underrepresented backgrounds for outstanding academic achievement and their commitment to public relations.

“This is only a start and we know there is much more work to be done. We look forward to continuing to implement important new programs and strategies that will help shape the future of the profession and our organization,” said 2020 Chair T. Garland Stansell, APR. “In these uncertain times, it is more important than ever to recognize the importance of inclusive growth and collaboration as we strive to improve the well-being of our colleagues and our communities.”

# ADVOCACY

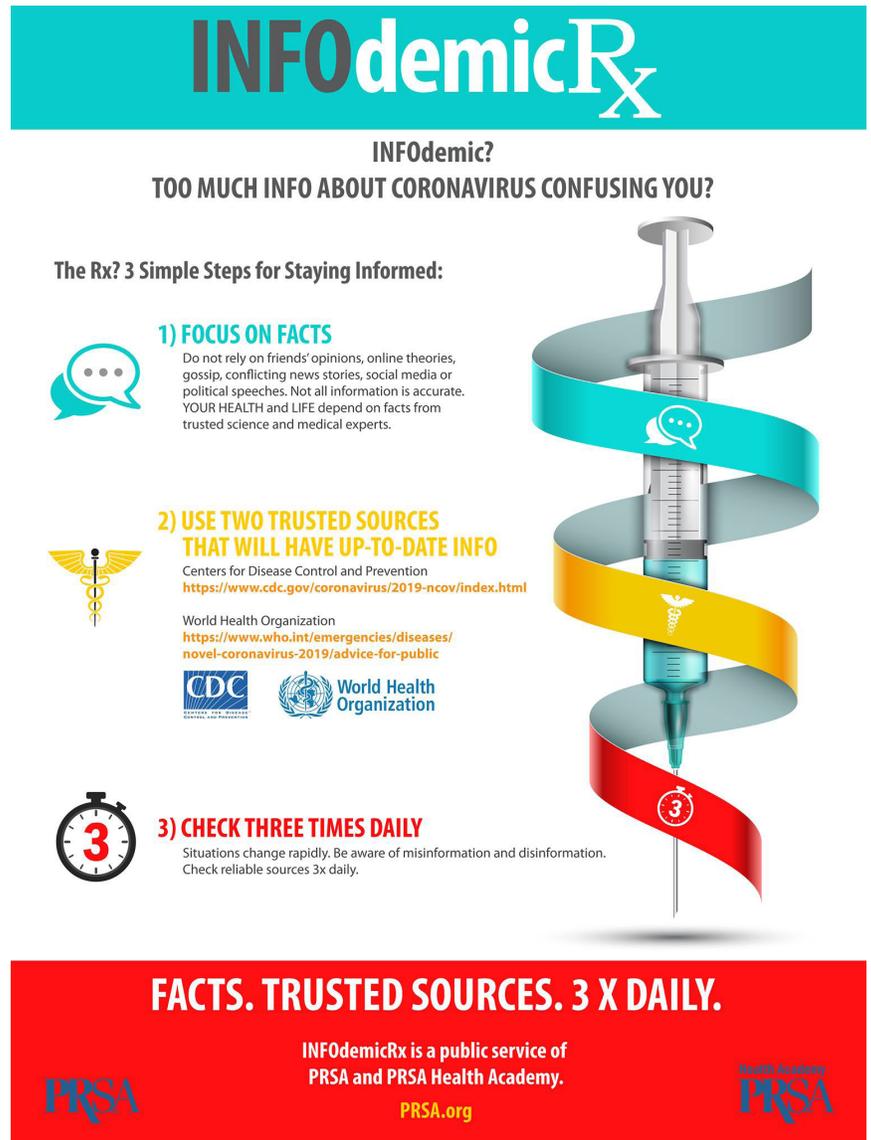
As the principal advocate for industry excellence and ethical conduct, PRSA's advocacy work identifies emerging issues that may require support from or comment on behalf of PRSA. The goal is to maintain a consistent voice on public policy issues that strengthen the perceived value of the communications profession and position our members as industry thought leaders. The cornerstones of PRSA's commitment to advocacy are:

- Supporting the ethical practice of public relations.
- Speaking out against the willful misrepresentation of, or confusion about, the communications profession.
- Proactively addressing other issues that may have an impact on the profession and members.

At the beginning of March, PRSA and the PRSA Health Academy emphasized that communications professionals are uniquely qualified to help combat the misinformation/disinformation being spread in relation to the worsening coronavirus pandemic. They created an "InfodemicRx" infographic, outlining steps for staying informed.

In August, PRSA responded to news reports associated with the termination of an FDA spokesperson and public relations consultant related to misinformation addressing convalescent plasma therapy.

In October, following news reports indicating that Tesla had eliminated its public relations department, PRSA responded saying the move set an extraordinarily dangerous precedent for blocking the continued free flow of information, as well as impacting the media's ability to responsibly cover an organization's activities.



**INFOdemicRx**

**INFOdemic?**  
**TOO MUCH INFO ABOUT CORONAVIRUS CONFUSING YOU?**

**The Rx? 3 Simple Steps for Staying Informed:**

- 1) FOCUS ON FACTS**  
Do not rely on friends' opinions, online theories, gossip, conflicting news stories, social media or political speeches. Not all information is accurate. YOUR HEALTH and LIFE depend on facts from trusted science and medical experts.
- 2) USE TWO TRUSTED SOURCES THAT WILL HAVE UP-TO-DATE INFO**  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>  
World Health Organization  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- 3) CHECK THREE TIMES DAILY**  
Situations change rapidly. Be aware of misinformation and disinformation. Check reliable sources 3x daily.

**FACTS. TRUSTED SOURCES. 3 X DAILY.**

INFOdemicRx is a public service of PRSA and PRSA Health Academy.  
[PRSA.org](https://PRSA.org)

# FINANCES

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# EMPLOYEES

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Based in New York City, PRSA is made up of 41 employees. Working alongside many of our volunteer members, the staff at PRSA works tremendously hard to meet all of our members' professional needs. Throughout the year – despite working virtually since the end of March – staff found ways to adapt and quickly respond to the coronavirus crisis, remote work and racial injustice. Instilling a virtual-first mindset, PRSA swiftly pivoted to ensure the same high level of learning and networking opportunities that members have come to expect. Get to know some of PRSA's veterans and newcomers...

## VETERANS

### JOHN ELSASSER, DIRECTOR, PUBLICATIONS

“Here's an all-time favorite PRSA memory: In 1995, my boss asked me to attend the International Conference in Seattle. I was filling in for a co-worker who was injured in a car accident shortly before the start of the Conference. Before leaving, a colleague in New York suggested that I contact a former college friend who lived in Seattle. We played phone tag and ended up meeting out for dinner on my last night in town. Seven months later, Jennifer moved to New York. On Nov. 1 this year, we celebrated our 25th anniversary.”

### JENEEN GARCIA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PRSSA

“Serving as an employee of PRSA for almost three decades has truly been a blessing. I have enjoyed many aspects of this job, but if I had to point to one specific aspect, it would be by far the people I have encountered. I am thankful for the staff – many of whom I consider my friends and family now – and the bosses I have worked with and for throughout my career. I am proud of the student leaders that I have seen grow from PRSSA to leaders within their own right. And I am appreciative of the thousands of volunteers and members that serve this organization day in and day out. Not everyone can say they have worked at the same place for almost 30 years and I'm grateful to work somewhere that I still enjoy and where I continue to learn every day. Communications professionals have an impact on every aspect of our lives and this association has forever changed my life.”

### ALEX ORTIZ, VICE PRESIDENT, IT

“QUOTE



## NEWCOMERS

### ANDREA LONGINOTT, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

“I am proud to have joined PRSA during such a turning point in the communications field. It has been very gratifying to assist in promoting programs that are helping educate not only communication professionals, but professionals in every industry who are committed to doing better. The PRSA team has been extremely welcoming and inspiring, and I am looking forward to what we will bring to the table in 2021.”

### MAUREEN WALSH, CHIEF MARKETING & SALES OFFICER

“QUOTE



# IN MEMORIAM – PAST CHAIRS

## REMEMBERING PR LEADERS WE LOST IN 2020



**HAROLD BURSON, APR, FELLOW PRSA**

Harold Burson, APR, Fellow PRSA, the distinguished founder of one of the world's largest PR agencies, died on Jan. 10. He was 98. Burson, once described by PRWeek as "the

century's most influential PR figure," was a PRSA member for more than 70 years, joining in November 1949. He started Burson-Marsteller in 1953 with Bill Marsteller. Under their leadership, the agency became a global powerhouse with 2,500 employees in 50 offices.



**JAMES J. ROOP, APR, FELLOW PRSA**

James J. Roop, APR, Fellow PRSA, who was involved with PRSA leadership for more than 45 years, died on June 10. He was 70. Before founding the Cleveland-based Roop

& Co. in 1996, he served as chief operating officer of Watt, Roop & Co. (now Fleishman-Hillard) for 15 years, which was then one of the Midwest's largest independent PR firms. He served as the longtime chair of PRSA's Honors and Awards Committee.



**H. J. (JERRY) DALTON JR., APR, FELLOW PRSA**

Retired Brig. Gen. H. J. (Jerry) Dalton Jr., APR, Fellow PRSA, the first communications professional to head the U.S. Air Force's Pentagon-based public affairs operation, died

on Nov. 1. He was 93. Dalton was a longtime PRSA volunteer and leader, serving as national president in 1990. In 2007, PRSA presented Dalton with its highest individual honor – the Gold Anvil Award. His peers have referred to him as "a true pioneer in public relations."



**FERNANDO VALVERDE, APR, FELLOW PRSA**

Fernando Valverde, APR, Fellow PRSA, who many consider to be the father of public relations in Puerto Rico, died on Oct. 10. He was 85. He served as president of the Puerto

Rico Association of Professional Relations from 1979-1980. Valverde was also the first PR professional to obtain the Universal Accreditation (APR) in Puerto Rico. Valverde's dedication, sense of ethics and encouragement made him a role model for his peers.



**ISOBEL PARKE, APR, FELLOW PRSA**

Isobel Parke, APR, Fellow PRSA, a longtime PRSA member and leader, died on Feb. 4. She was 93. Parke's distinguished PRSA service included her role as secretary on

the Board of Directors. In 1965, Parke joined the behavioral public relations and management consulting firm of Jackson Jackson & Wagner in New Hampshire, where she provided invaluable counsel to clients in a wide variety of industries for more than five decades.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# PRSA

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