

2023

# YEAR IN REVIEW

PRSA

# From the 2023 Chair

*We are a community of ethical communications professionals building for tomorrow, today.*

This North Star, defined in our 2023–2025 Strategic Plan, conveys the essence of PRSA.

I have viewed PRSA's many innovations, achievements and collective strengths through the lens of this guidepost. As you read through the 2023 Year in Review, I'm sure you'll agree the passion and dedication of our members and staff shines through on every page.

Getting the chance to travel across the country meeting with members has been a joy and a privilege. I continue to learn so much from you; your enthusiasm and can-do attitude are an inspiration and reminder of the great things we can accomplish together as a community.

For example, since the release of ChatGPT, the use of generative AI tools has grown exponentially. To help our members and the wider communications community understand the challenges and opportunities these technologies represent, PRSA created several resources, including an AI Insights webpage, providing best practices, recommendations, on-demand webinars and articles.



Chapters, Districts and Professional Interest Sections also hosted informative programs and AI-related events. The centerpiece of PRSA's efforts was the release of "Promise & Pitfalls: The Ethical Use of AI for Public Relations Practitioners," guidance created by PRSA's Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS).

## Other 2023 highlights include:

- ICON 2023 was a tremendous success with nearly 2,000 attendees. The renowned gathering brought together students and practitioners from all corners of the globe to learn, grow and create a stronger communications profession.
- PRSA launched three new certificate programs to address executive leadership, internal communications and digital communications.
- PRSSA added four new Chapters.
- Through six Diverse Dialogues programs, leaders and experts in DEI shared insights and best practices on a host of timely issues and topics.
- PRSA certified 15 undergraduate and postgraduate programs, the most ever in a single year.

In January, I will move onto my next role as Immediate Past Chair, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with my colleagues on the Board of Directors who have done so much to support the organization. I'm also delighted to pass the gavel to 2024 Chair, Joseph Abreu, APR. Joseph is deeply committed to PRSA and our members, as demonstrated through his many years of leadership in Chapter, District and Committee Chair roles, and on the Board and Executive Committee. There are great things ahead for PRSA!

Thank you again for all you do for PRSA, and I wish you all a happy, healthy and peaceful holiday season.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Egan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" and "E".

**Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA**  
2023 PRSA Chair

# From the Chief Executive Officer

I can't help but look at the "Year in Review" title and think this has been a "Year in Whirlwind." PRSA is such a robust community, and across our national activities, more than 400 professional and student Chapters, 10 Districts and 14 Professional Interest Sections, PRSA is in constant motion!

During 2023, we focused on harnessing the power of all the PRSA constituencies. We built additional tools in our reporting portal, so Chapters and Districts have insight into more timely data. We also added to our library of on-demand professional development programming, allowing members to access the learning and information they need, whenever they need it. And we provided more learning opportunities on trending topics, including a session with experts on purpose-driven communications and numerous sessions on AI.

That focus on member benefits has translated into member growth and increased engagement. Our professional membership number is at a two-year high, and over half of our Chapters have strengthened their membership rosters.



Our ICON gathering was a hallmark of the year. Nearly 2,000 attendees joined us in Nashville, and survey feedback revealed they left with powerful knowledge, connections and energy. The speakers, sessions and unique content are a big part of the ICON experience, but so is the opportunity for our attendees to network, share stories, and be part of the close-knit PRSA community.

Additionally, members could attend 10 Section conferences, six District conferences, and innumerable Chapter events in 2023. There are more chances each year for our members to gather together!

Looking ahead to 2024, I know there will be more opportunities for growth at PRSA and increased relevance for the communications profession. My promise to you is that our member-centric solutions approach will remain our guiding principle, and we are ready to embark on new initiatives that will further elevate the value we provide to our members.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every member of our organization, whether you are new to us this year or a longtime member. You are the driving force behind our success. Together, we have proven that when we unite with a common purpose, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Thomas Brooks". The script is fluid and cursive.

**Linda Thomas Brooks**  
PRSA CEO

# Balance Sheet

CURRENT ASSETS	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 666,083	\$ 577,205
Investments	4,752,668	4,866,925
Accounts Receivable	424,389	161,375
Amounts Due From Related Organizations, Net		280,035
Prepaid Expenses	322,758	240,050
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 6,165,898</b>	<b>\$ 6,125,590</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
ROU Assets (Leases)	2,770,160	
Fixed Assets	514,264	544,160
Depreciation Reserve	(348,898)	(333,435)
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,935,526</b>	<b>\$ 210,725</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,101,424</b>	<b>\$ 6,336,315</b>

CURRENT LIABILITIES	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities*	\$ 1,101,150	\$ 759,940
Amounts Due to Related Organizations, Net	32,938	4,866,925
Deferred Dues	1,940,298	2,174,423
Unearned Revenue	249,066	230,772
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 3,323,452</b>	<b>\$ 3,165,135</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Deferred Rent Liability		247,575
ROU Liability (Leases)	2,984,574	544,160
Grant Payable	25,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 3,009,574</b>	<b>\$ 297,575</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 6,333,026</b>	<b>\$ 3,462,710</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,768,398</b>	<b>\$ 2,873,605</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 9,101,424</b>	<b>\$ 6,336,315</b>



# Statement of Cash Flows

CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Increase in net assets	\$ 510,366	\$ (460,290)
Adjustments to reconcile increase (decrease) in net assets to net cash (used in) provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	54,336	53,049
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(520,164)	894,024
Changes in certain assets and liabilities:		
Decrease (increase) in assets:		
Accounts receivable	(119,217)	340,609
Due to related organizations	32,938	
Amount due from related organizations	296,014	(122,498)
Prepaid expenses	(86,442)	14,099
Other assets		1,816
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities*	67,397	(956,597)
Deferred rent liability		(63,198)
Deferred dues	(259,286)	56,417
Unearned income	(57,246)	(154,815)
Grant payable	(25,000)	(25,000)
	(616,670)	37,906
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$ (106,304)</b>	<b>\$ (422,384)</b>

CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Purchase of investments	\$ (960,895)	\$ (833,868)
Proceeds from sale of Investments	1,315,050	1,256,880
Net Cash provided by (used in) investing activities	354,155	423,012
Net (decrease) increase in cash & cash equivalents	247,851	628
Cash & cash equivalents, beginning of the period	418,232	576,577
<b>CASH &amp; CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF THE PERIOD</b>	<b>\$ 666,083</b>	<b>\$ 577,205</b>

# Consolidated Income Statement by Revenue & Expenses Line Item

INCOME	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Dues	\$ 4,943,398	\$ 4,738,456
Registration	3,673,501	3,160,318
Advertising	250,688	399,636
Examinations & Fees	543,359	506,100
Sponsorship	927,505	777,285
Miscellaneous	217,228	307,661
Merchandise	22,960	19,711
Subscriptions	2,730	4,402
Interest Income	53,465	
Publications	1,335	565
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 10,636,169</b>	<b>\$ 9,914,134</b>

EXPENSES	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
Salaries & Fringes	\$ 5,567,852	\$ 5,314,850
Rent, Utilities & Maint.	1,233,857	1,191,471
Depreciation & Equipment Rental	570,676	546,997
Postage & Shipping	154,220	110,243
Printing	122,175	114,540
Professional Fees	1,128,248	1,080,335
Catering	1,027,929	746,858
Supplies	110,168	94,682
Telephone	11,322	12,962
Travel	317,658	216,373
Marketing	233,405	283,994
General Office	112,931	87,010
Credit Card Processing Fee	220,453	233,163
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 10,810,894</b>	<b>\$ 10,033,478</b>

## Consolidated Income Statement by Revenue & Expenses Line Item

	Jan.–Nov. 2023	Jan.–Nov. 2022
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 10,636,169	\$ 9,914,134
TOTAL EXPENSES	10,810,894	10,033,478
NET INCOME/(LOSS) FROM OPERATIONS	(174,725)	(119,344)
NET INCOME/(LOSS) FROM INVESTMENTS	520,164	(894,024)
NET INCOME FROM PPP LOAN FORGIVENESS		919,503
<b>NET INCOME/(LOSS) AFTER INVESTMENTS/OTHER</b>	<b>\$ 345,439</b>	<b>\$ (93,865)</b>

**18,731** PRSA  
Members\*

**390** Group  
Memberships\*

## Guiding Principles

PRSA launched a new Strategic Plan in 2023 that drives the organization's priorities through the lens of its North Star: We are a community of ethical communications professionals building for tomorrow, today.

The plan is the culmination of extensive member outreach, discussions with focus groups and sessions with non-member industry leaders, and charts PRSA's operational journey from 2023-2025. Our efforts are focused on three priority pillars that address member needs and prizes PRSA's thought leadership position in the profession:

### **BUILD**

We invest in establishing the next generation of ethical, diverse and highly skilled communications professionals.

### **INFLUENCE**

We publicly champion ethical practices and professional standards in communications.

### **EVOLVE**

We provide modern tools, content and opportunities to advance the mission of PRSA into the future.

Over the next two years, the Strategic Plan will continue to provide a roadmap for organizational growth, leadership and capabilities.

\*As of Dec. 5, 2023





# PEOPLE







BUILD

# Professional Development

PRSA's extensive professional development programs offer communications professionals at all career stages a wide variety of learning opportunities, including live workshops, certificate programs and on-demand webinars.

Whether you want to attend an in-person workshop or online class, PRSA has the course for you.

The world of communications continues to evolve, and PRSA is leading the charge with the hands-on training that you need to succeed.





# New Certificate Programs

As part of its unwavering commitment to timely and practicable professional development, PRSA introduced three new Certificate Programs in 2023:

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

This program covers the key components needed to become a highly effective communications executive. Participants learn to lead with authenticity, emotional intelligence, inclusivity and strong ethics, as well as become familiar with budgeting, forecasting, resource management and how to effectively engage with financial experts, skills that are often elusive to communicators.

## DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Led by David Grossman, APR, Fellow PRSA, the course teaches participants strategies, behaviors and best practices, providing them with real takeaways so they can be on the road to building a best-in-class internal communications function, and increasing their impact and influence within their organization.

## MODERN DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

This program focuses on social and digital media as the intersection of art and science for the senior digital communicators. It also takes a deeper look at audiences, publishers and platforms and the roles they play as targets and tools of a modern PR and communications professional.







# Member Satisfaction



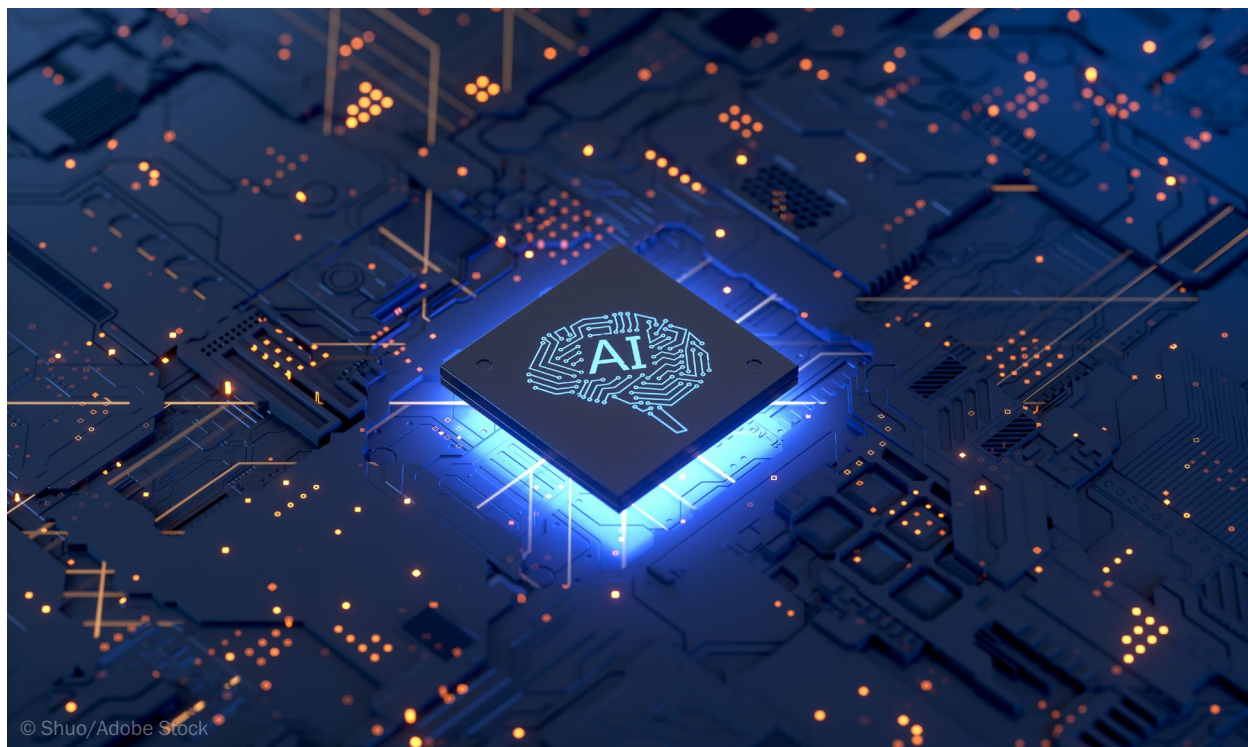
PRSA provided a wide range of webinars that attracted more than 450 registrants and averaged over 90% satisfaction from survey results. These webinars covered topics such as emerging trends, writing techniques and tactics, and media relations. Among the most popular webinars included:

- “The White Whale of Thought Leadership: How to Write an Op-Ed Editors Can’t Ignore” (661 registrants; 94% overall satisfaction)
- “Best Practices for Headline Writing: Reach Nonreaders With Words” (626 registrants; 93% overall satisfaction)
- “Best Practices for Writing Soundbites” (517 registrants; 93% overall satisfaction)
- “The Roaring ‘20s: Key Trends to Watch Over the Next 10 Years” (458 registrants; 93% overall satisfaction)
- “What’s New in AP Style” (675 registrants; 91% overall satisfaction)





# AI Resources



AI and its myriad ramifications are top of mind (or should be) for all public relations professionals.

To help our members as well as the wider communications community, PRSA created an [AI Insights](#) webpage, which provides best practices, recommendations and tips for navigating the twists and turns inherent in the continued evolution of this technology.

A central and essential resource is “Promise & Pitfalls: The Ethical Use of AI for Public Relations Practitioners,” guidance created by PRSA’s Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS). Specifically, “Promise & Pitfalls” focuses on five provisions found in the Code: Free Flow of Information, Disclosure of Information, Competition, Safeguarding Confidences, and Enhancing the Profession, with each defined and examined in terms of how they relate to generative AI tools, coupled with examples of proper and improper use.

AI Insights’ wide range of resources also includes articles from *Strategies & Tactics* and the PRsay blog, on-demand webinars and LinkedIn Live conversations, among others.



BUILD



## Faculty Advisory Council

PRSSA Faculty Advisers are an integral component for PRSSA's success, and in 2023 PRSA established an Advisory Council to provide them with more information, onboarding support and additional guidance regarding the changing needs of our student members and best practices for maintaining their Chapter.

Each member of the Council works directly with a specific cohort of Chapters to help improve operations, recruiting and member engagement.



## Virtual Career Fair

The second-annual PRSSA Virtual Career/Internship Fair took place in March. This year, it was co-hosted by the Hispanic Public Relations Student Association (HPRSA).

Students and recent graduates had the opportunity to search for their next job or internship and grow their professional networks. The internship providers and employers were eager to meet potential candidates via the video portal, review résumés and share more about their companies.

There were 24 exhibitor booths where students could chat with representatives from various organizations. There were 155 students registered for the career fair and a total of 225 chats between students and organizations.



BUILD

# PRSSA

## Key Moments



### 2023–2024 NATIONAL PRESIDENT

In April, PRSSA's Leadership Assembly elected Sacramento State University's Sankalp Sharma as president of the 2023-24 National Committee.



### F.H. TEAHAN OUTSTANDING CHAPTER WINNER

The award was presented to DePaul University.



### BATEMAN CASE STUDY WINNERS

The University of Florida was the winner of the 2023 Bateman Case Study Competition, followed by the University of Colorado Boulder in second place and Louisiana State University in third place.

This year PRSSA teamed up with the News Literacy Project, the nation's leading provider of news literacy education, to challenge students to research, plan, implement and evaluate a PR campaign centered on raising awareness around the importance of knowing how to separate fact from fiction and creating better informed, engaged and empowered individuals.

PRSSA received 49 entries for this year's competition. Of these submissions, 12 entries received honorable mentions.





BUILD



## Supporting Members

**5,772** PRSSA Members\*

**101** Champions for PRSSA

### ICON 2023

PRSSA's annual conference offered expanded opportunities for students to engage with professionals and chances to attend educational workshops and breakout sessions hosted by subject matter experts.

Many students took advantage of the additional professional development programs, and also grew their professional and social networks that will help to advance their careers.



### CHAMPIONS FOR PRSSA

Founded in 1981 by Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA, Champions for PRSSA brings together members who have an ongoing interest in PRSSA, its student members and public relations education. The Champions act as mentors to PRSSA members and support their transition to PRSA after graduation. They also sponsor several award programs that honor exceptional Chapters, advisers and students.

### WELCOME NEW CHAPTERS

PRSSA announced new charters at: Niagara University, Nevada State College, University of Connecticut and University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst.





BUILD

# PRSA FOUNDATION

The PRSA Foundation invests in the next generation of PR practitioners by awarding scholarships and grants to students active in PRSSA campus Chapters, as well as other deserving undergraduate and graduate students in the United States and around the world.

In 2023, the PRSA Foundation announced that it was expanding its partnership with Mission North and bringing in three additional partner agencies, AGEAN Public Relations, LaunchSquad, and Method Communications, to create fellowships that will focus on public relations/communications college students of color.

The fellowships initiative aims to build a more progressive future for the PR profession by creating pathways for individuals historically excluded from leadership positions. The first class of fellows included a combination of scholarships, stipends, and internships totaling \$61,500.



## **AGEAN PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

Emeline Maile, Brigham Young University



## **LAUNCHSQUAD:**

Ananya Dutta, Emerson College



## **METHOD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mya Osborne, Elon University



## **MISSION NORTH THE FUTURE IS...:**

Ayatullah “Lala” Badaoui, James Madison University



# INFLUENCE







# Ethics

PRSA's official Code of Ethics was introduced in 1950, and continues to set the standard for the professional practice of public relations. The rapid evolution of AI, the steady rise of mis- and disinformation, and upheavals in the cultural and social landscapes are just some of the challenges currently facing PRSA members, and the Code continues to stand the test of time through its ability to provide a flexible framework for uncompromising ethical behavior.

Throughout 2023, PRSA has reiterated and strengthened the importance of the Code in numerous innovative and compelling ways. Among them were:

- The PRSA Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS) hosted a session at ICON 2023 that featured table-top exercises examining hypothetical situations requiring ethical solutions.
- An Ethics Month webinar in September “Shining a Light on Dark Tactics Disinformation, Climate Litigation, and the PRSA Code of Ethics.”
- Affirmation of understanding and adherence of the Code during membership applications and renewals.
- The inclusion of a printed copy of the Code as a special insert in the September issue of *Strategies & Tactics*, which was met with high approval from members as a useful and easily accessible tool.





# PRSA Celebrates PRNEWS Honorees

Nearly 20 PRSA members were named to PRNEWS' 2023 class of Top Women in PR, including PRSA Chair Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA and Jessica Graham, APR, Fellow PRSA, 2024 Treasurer. These industry champions, business entrepreneurs, in-house innovators and change makers were feted for their impact on their organizations, whether that's leading the brand out of crisis, breaking into new markets, engaging a new audience, or mentoring other colleagues.

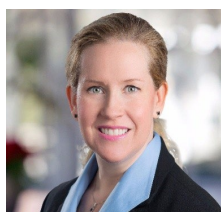
PRSA hosted a reception in their honor at the Chief Clubhouse in New York City.

## TOP WOMEN AWARDS PRESENTED BY PRNEWS



### Industry Champion

Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA  
2023 PRSA Chair



### Business Entrepreneur

Jessica Graham, APR, Fellow PRSA  
2024 PRSA Treasurer





## PRSA Awards

### **GOLD ANVIL AWARD – Gary D. McCormick, APR, Fellow PRSA**

PRSA's highest individual award, which recognizes lifetime achievement in public relations.

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### **PATRICK JACKSON AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO PRSA – Anthony W. D'Angelo, APR, Fellow PRSA**

Named in honor of the late Patrick Jackson, APR, Fellow PRSA, this award recognizes a member who has significantly advanced PRSA by working to support Chapters, Districts and the overall organization, inspiring fellow practitioners, both professionally and personally.

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### **OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD – Alisa Agozzino, Ph.D., APR**

This award recognizes and celebrates those who have made a significant contribution to the advancement of public relations education through college or university teaching.

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### **ATLAS AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS – Rachana Chowdhary**

This award recognizes a public relations practitioner who has made extraordinary contributions to the practice and profession of public relations in an international environment over the span of their career.

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### **D. PARKE GIBSON AWARD – Chuck Wallington, Ph.D.**

This award recognizes a PR professional who has helped increase awareness of PR within multicultural communities and participated in the promotion of issues that meet the special informational and educational needs of diverse communities.

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### **SAGE AWARD – Philip Tate, APR, Fellow PRSA**

Philip Tate, APR, Fellow PRSA, is the 2023 recipient of the College of Fellows Sage Award, which honors a member of the College who has demonstrated a significant impact on the profession through mentoring and personal support of public relations professionals and members of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).



# ANVIL AWARDS

## The 2023 Recipients

The best of the public relations and communications profession was on display as PRSA held its annual Anvil Awards Ceremony. The event celebrated the accomplishments of hundreds of communications practitioners and recognized the best PR tactics, strategies, and campaigns of the year and highest standards of performance for the profession.

Among all winners, tactics and campaigns encompassed a wide breadth of topics, causes and themes. These included a campaign showcasing the need for U.S. support in Ukraine by providing developments on the ground to U.S. media, a documentary following real characters whose struggles with sleep threaten to unravel their waking lives, and a campaign created by and for Washington's Black community to encourage the unvaccinated to reconsider their choice.

PRSA presented the Best of Silver Anvil Award to the Florida Power & Light Company with rbb Communications for their campaign, "A Sound Response to a Record-Setting Storm: FPL Gets the Lights Back On After Hurricane Ian."

In addition, PRSA showcased overall agency excellence in the Silver Anvil Organizational Awards. The honorees were:

- **Best Boutique Agency:** Firebrand Communications
- **Best Mid-Sized Agency:** Fahlgren Mortine
- **Best Mega Agency:** Ketchum

PRSA bestowed 38 Silver Anvil Awards, 21 Bronze Anvil Awards, 34 Awards of Excellence and 25 Awards of Commendation during the evening.





## PRSA Excellence

**PRSA's anniversary publication, "75 Years of Impact and Influence: People, Places and Moments in Public Relations History"**

**EXCEL Award: Gold**

*Category: Book/General Audience*

**Marcom Award: Platinum**

*Category: Publications/Book/Company History*

**PR Daily Awards: Winner**

*Category: Print Publication*

**TRENDY Award: Gold**

*Category: Book/Manual/Catalog*

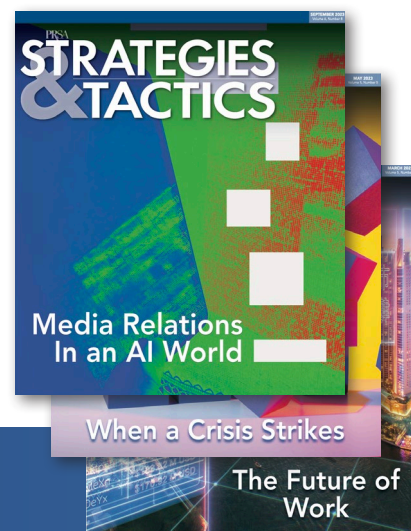
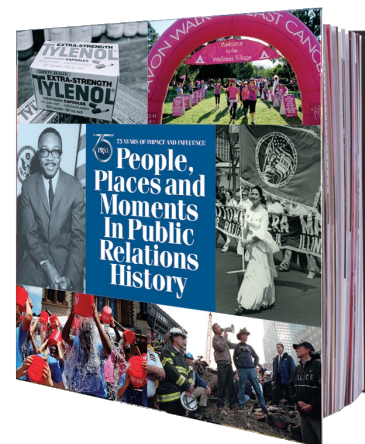
### ***Strategies & Tactics***

**EXCEL Award: Bronze**

*Category: Newspaper/General Excellence*

**Marcom Award: Platinum**

*Category: Publications*



## ***Strategies & Tactics Live***

The second year of *Strategies & Tactics Live* featured an array of thought leaders and top-of-mind topics including AI, DEI, crisis management and storytelling.

Guests on the monthly livestream on LinkedIn this past year included Linda Rutherford, chief administration and communications officer for Southwest Airlines, Linda Thomas Brooks, PRSA CEO, Ray Day, APR, vice chair, Stagwell, Jen Hartmann, global director, strategic public relations and enterprise social media, John Deere, Chris Perry, Chair, Weber Shandwick Futures and the Best of Silver Anvil Award recipients from Florida Power & Light Company and rbb Communications.

Nearly 20,000 people tuned in throughout the year. The August episode featuring Jim Joseph, U.S. CEO, Ketchum, was the year's most watched session.

The episodes are available for playback on PRSA's LinkedIn page in the archived Events section. In addition, starting in March, *S&T Live* added bonus content with the guests exclusively for PRSA members.





# Accreditation



# 106

New APRs



# 8

New  
APR+Ms

The Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) and Accreditation in Public Relations + Military Communication (APR+M) credential certifies a PRSA member's drive, professionalism and principles, setting them apart from their peers and positioning them as a leader and mentor in the competitive communications profession.

Preparing for the APR is an exercise in success, as the process provides an assessment of a member's proficiency and accurately calibrates their craft, contacts and career goals. Earning the APR demonstrates a member's mastery of today's strategic communications practice and their commitment to lifelong learning and ethical standards. APRs report that the process of earning Accreditation also helped make them better PR professionals.

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UAB

In the fall of 1997 delegates of the Leadership Assembly voted to form the Universal Accreditation Board, uniting several certification and examination programs under one program, the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations, or as it's better known today, the APR. Just a few months later the UAB was born.



# Power, Race & Equity in Public Relations

For the first time ever, Black PR professionals representing PRSA, the Diversity Action Alliance and the National Black Public Relations Society, Inc. came together in June to host “Power, Race & Equity in Public Relations,” a one-day, invitation-only summit to help organize a solutions-based approach to moving beyond advocating for diversity as the right thing to do and shifting the focus on how to do diversity right.

Representatives from BCW, Comcast, FleishmanHillard, FINN Partners, Foote Communications, Livewire, M Booth and PepsiCo, among others, discussed best practices for recruiting top Black talent, how to establish a mentorship model that works for Black PR and communications students, and a sponsorship and partnership strategy that positions senior practitioners for leadership roles.

Conversations have continued in the months since the summit with action plans expected to be implemented in 2024.

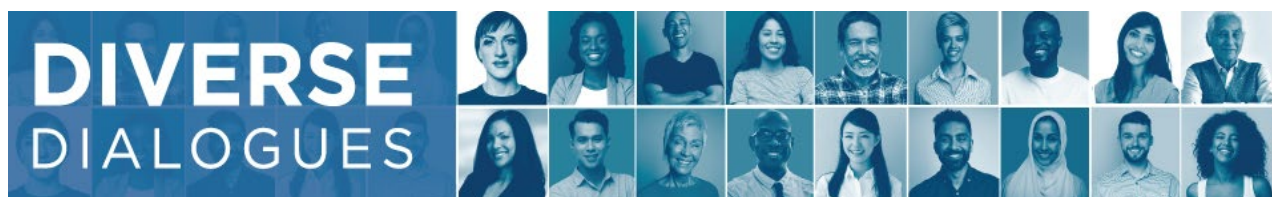


## PRSA Influencer Series

In November, PRSA launched an influencer series, which brings together top PR/communications leaders, journalists, academic researchers and other thought leaders to address pressing issues facing the profession and society.

Attendees at the first session engaged in a conversation on mis- and disinformation and its impact on society. Key insights and shareable learnings from the discussion will be made available to help guide and advance the communications professional.





PRSA continues to bring together leaders and experts in DEI to share insights and best practices to guide communications professionals in having critical conversations to enable real change.

During 2023, PRSA's Diverse Dialogues, which launched in 2020, addressed some of the most pressing issues facing organizations and businesses of all sizes today as well as provided thought leadership on the importance of equality and representation:

- **Fireside Chat with NAACP**

During Black History Month, in partnership with the PRSA DEI Committee and the PRSA Black Voices Affinity Group, Aba Blankson, chief marketing & communications officer, joined PRSA from the Baltimore headquarters of the NAACP to discuss her career journey.

- **AI in Communications: Covering Bias, Ethics and Other Challenges**

PRSA Chair Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA, moderated this discussion on bias in AI and other challenges that communicators face with this ever-changing technology.

- **Bridging Equality: Communicating Post-U.S. Supreme Court Decisions**

In light of Supreme Court decisions during the summer of 2023, this session provided PR professionals with the tools, methods, and approaches to effectively communicate the implications of these rulings.

- **What's DEI Got to Do With Me?**

This webinar provided a brief history of past initiatives and campaigns and highlighted successful programs and tactics that PRSA members and Chapters have implemented that others can apply to their own work and communities.

- **Purpose-driven Communications: Whether, When, How and Why**

As organizations continue to come under pressure to stand a stand or release statements on high-profile political and social issues, communications professionals are weighing how to address these challenges.

- **What's Next: DEI and the Intersection With Higher Education**

This session examined the further impact of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Affirmative Action and college admissions.



# EVOLVE







The strength of PRSA is built on the foundation of our Chapters, Districts and Professional Interest Sections. Throughout 2023, PRSA reinforced the support structure for these entities, providing community and opportunity for our members.



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## Chapter Health Report

Throughout the first half of the year, PRSA undertook a comprehensive assessment to better understand Chapter dynamics and recommend effective strategies for future success. Chapter leaders weighed in on key criteria including succession planning, financial stability, membership growth, programming, APR, PRSSA collaboration, and overall Chapter health.

Common areas of strength include:

- Increased DEI initiatives, including more diverse presenters and speakers.
- Enhanced programming and event offerings.
- Stronger collaboration with PRSSA Chapters.
- Successful transition to virtual event formats.

### Top 5 Chapters with double-digit increase in members:

- Northwest Arkansas
- San Antonio
- Phoenix
- Colorado
- North Carolina

## Leadership Rally

Members representing Chapters, Districts and Professional Interest Sections gathered in Nashville, Tennessee for the 2023 Leadership Rally. PRSA annually hosts the meeting of incoming volunteer leaders with the day's programming directed by the incoming Chair.

This year's program leaned into fortifying the building blocks of a strong organization and included guidance and training on Board and member engagement, recruitment and best practices, as well as succession planning and ways to build additional sponsorships and revenue.



## DEI

In 2023, PRSA deepened its commitment to DEI and took a more targeted approach to expanding access and opportunity for members and the next generation of communications professionals. We built programming for everyone, our speakers better reflected the diversity of our membership and we championed diversity, equity and inclusion across the entire organization.

### PROGRAMMING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We updated our DEI Toolkit and also published a Spanish language version of the document which provides members with diversity-related research, material, applicable tools and learning opportunities. For our Diverse Dialogues series, we provided an ASL interpreter for our hearing-impaired attendees, and we created resource rich hubs on our website for Women's History Month and Black History Month, among others.

### MEMBERSHIP

Following the launch of our Affinity Groups in 2022, we saw continued growth in these communities centered on Black and Hispanic-Latino voices, adding new members and increasing outreach and resources. We also celebrated members who support the LGBTQ+ community during Pride Month, showcasing communicators working as allies and giving voice to those who otherwise may be voiceless.

### SOCIETY

In 2023, the PRSA Foundation awarded more than \$130k in scholarships and fellowships for students at colleges and universities across the country. This investment in students, with a focus on students from historically marginalized backgrounds, represents more than double the awards provided in 2022.

An additional \$35k+ was put toward PRSSA membership grants, as well as grants for travel to ICON 2023 and the PRSSA Leadership Assembly.



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EVOLVE

# Expanded Conference Opportunities

For the first time in 2023, PRSA offered three industry specific conferences in concert with ICON. The co-located events at Nashville's Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center catered to practitioners with an interest in education and healthcare, and who also value the experience of participating in PRSA's premier annual event.

While maximizing their time away from the office, attendees also had access to a broader network of members and exhibits from sponsors and leading vendors.

## HEALTH ACADEMY CONFERENCE



## COUNSELORS TO HIGHER EDUCATION (CHE) SENIOR SUMMIT



## EDUCATORS ACADEMY SUMMIT





## From the 2023 Chair-elect

As we step into a new year, it brings me immense joy to extend a warm welcome to each of you as valued members.

It was an honor to serve as Chair-elect this year, and I'm looking forward to being your 2024 Chair and working alongside my fellow Board of Directors and volunteer leaders. Our forward-thinking, visionary leadership sets PRSA apart and makes me incredibly proud to be a member.

In the upcoming year, our focus remains steadfast on advancing the successes that allowed us to achieve growth across the organization, aligning with the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan to bolster the overall well-being of our PRSA communities.



With the knowledge gained from recent years and the incorporation of best practices, we are in a great position to further enhance the tools available for volunteer leaders that will benefit all of PRSA. Success over the next 12 months involves expanding our exclusive member resources and reinforcing our organizational foundation. The true heart of PRSA lies with our members and everything we do is with you in mind.

As a past Chapter president and District chair, I understand many of the challenges and opportunities facing our profession. And as an executive communicator, I've witnessed the profession's evolution from group faxes to the AI age. Diversification in communications and the increasing responsibility for creating ethical content underscores the need for targeted professional development and learning opportunities.

I encourage you to embark on this exciting journey with your fellow members as we elevate the public relations profession to new heights and prepare the next generation of practitioners and leaders.

Thank you for being an integral part of PRSA. Your passion and dedication are the driving forces behind our shared vision. Together, let's make 2024 another year of growth, collaboration and collective success.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

**Joseph Abreu, APR**  
2023 PRSA Chair-elect

# 2023 Board of Directors

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Fellow PRSA, Chair



**Joseph Abreu, APR,**  
Chair-elect



**Sam Sims, APR,**  
Fellow PRSA, Treasurer



**Heide Harrell, APR,**  
Secretary



**Felicia Blow, Ph.D., APR,**  
Immediate Past Chair

## DIRECTORS



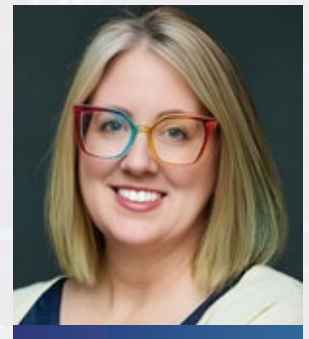
**Monica Ackerson,**  
CAE, APR



**Thomas Bennett**



**Jacqueline Clark,**  
MPA, APR, Fellow PRSA



**Karen "KC" Crabtree,**  
APR



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**Angela Walters Eveillard,**  
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Alvarenga Smith,**  
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## SENIOR COUNSEL



**Errol Cockfield**



**Juan Carlos Molleda**





**PRSA**

Public Relations Society of America  
120 Wall Street, 21st Fl., New York, NY 10005  
212.460.1400 | [prsa.org](http://prsa.org)