

imPRessions

A monthly MSU PRSSA newsletter

March 2009

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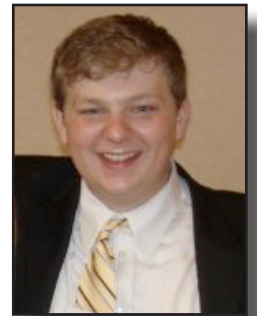
Coming Up This Month

- March 3: General Meeting
- March 24: General Meeting
- March 26-29: PRSSA National Assembly

All general meetings are held at 7 p.m. in
115 International Center.



President's Letter



Greetings members,

Can you believe it's already March? Our Chapter has been keeping busy with Hubbell Connections, our student-run firm, attending national and regional events, and providing some stellar programming:

First, I want to thank some outstanding members: Alexandria Verady, Scott Pepper, Lisa Thompson, Melissa Hackett, Emily Tschirhart, Julia Wendzinski, Paula Zeedyk, Evan Davies, Jordan Burroughs, Monica Fineis and Tony Willis. They spent three hours cleaning up the Breslin and helping our Chapter earn some extra cash. You guys rock!

In March, we'll be sending three members to the National Assembly – one delegate, one National Committee candidate and another attendee. Also, there are many more Regional Activities to attend. If you're graduating and looking for a job in another state, consider attending to start networking. Visit prssa.org for details.

I want to make a plug about a class I'm currently taking, the New Media Drivers License. It has been one of the best classes I've ever taken at MSU; not only does it teach you how to use social media, it gives you a strategic approach to running an online campaign. Spots in the class fill fast, so make sure you look now to add ADV 492 on your class schedule for next year.

As the year begins to wrap up, have you considered running for an executive board position? We're looking for leaders interested in making our Chapter better for our members. Details on the positions will be available later in the month. Feel free to talk to a current executive board member and get their perspective.

Keep up the great work!

Sincerely,

Nick Lucido

Stay Connected

Visit our Web site: www.msuprssa.org

E-mail us: prssa@msu.edu

Follow us on Twitter: MSUPRSSA

Join our Facebook group: PRSSA... it's a mouthful!

The **KEY** to Finding a Summer Internship

Finding an internship is hard enough, but with the economy continuing the way it is, finding an internship for the summer will be even more challenging for university students. With fewer jobs, the competition is getting steeper by the second, and no matter how many things you have on your resume, it seems there is always someone else with more.

So what is it going to take to find an internship? It is going to take a lot more work, more searching, more applying, and more following up. However, I recently read in a blog post “the way to succeed in a recession is *opportunity recognition*.” This is the key to finding a summer internship, or a job.

The first part to recognizing opportunity is to remember that nothing is below you. Don't shy away from a non profit internship because it isn't paid. My mentor, Lauren

Vargas, gave me this advice and also pointed out that the non-profit sector is growing due to the increase of need and positions need to be filled.

Second, don't take no for an answer. Granted, this won't always work, but it is worth a try. In fact, it is how I obtained my current internship. When I initially interviewed for the paid position last fall, I was turned down. The interviewer complimented my work but for chose someone else. So, I offered to come in anyway as a volunteer. After about of month of volunteering on my own time, the employer readily filled out the paperwork for my volunteer job to become an internship for credit the following semester (and half way through the semester I was asked to take on extra paid hours!).

Finally, don't give up. A few weeks ago we had a speaker come to our meeting who graduated as a communication major and took a job as a forest ranger. If you remember, she found a

way to incorporate her public relations skills on her own time to benefit the company. Everyone “needs PR” so even if you have a “non-PR” job, make it one. The company you are working for and your portfolio will benefit from the added experience, which will only progress you towards the end goal.

While applying for internships and taking interviews only to get turned down, don't feel defeated. Something will come along eventually. It may not be your dream internship or dream job, but it will lead you one step closer to where you want to be.

With that, keep your eyes open. It may be cliché, but opportunities come knocking when you least expect it, and I have a feeling your summer internship is right around the corner.

By Nick Lucido

Greetings from the **Bl**ogosphere

I attended a PRSSA Regional Activity in Chicago. It was a great event with a lot of useful information, no matter your level in college. I also will disclose that I'm a bit of a conference junkie and hop any conference I can fit in my schedule. This was particularly well planned and the programming was fantastic. I give my props to the planning committee from Valpraiso and DePaul.

I found the interviewing workshop to be the most useful for me. Below I've recapped some of the tips I got from the event:

- Prepare your toolbox. Have a strong handshake (not too strong), bring extra copies of your resume and cover letter, have your portfolio in hard copy and on CD (or online if possible), prepare your elevator pitch and have business cards.
- Research your prospective companies. In public relations, finding an internship can be extremely challenging, so many of my colleagues tend to

apply for 10+ internships each summer. That's fine, but it usually works out that you get the interview with the company you know the least about. Make sure you do your research and set up Google Alerts on each company to keep in the know about news and developments.

- The core elements to a successful interview are as follows: 40 percent attitude, 25 percent image, 25 percent communication and 10 percent job qualifications. Note: your job qualifications are the least important. While this may not be true for every company, the take-away here is that if you get the interview, you can sell yourself on your attitude, image and communication skills. Basically, come in there with a smile, think beforehand about some questions that might come up and answer clearly.

- When answering questions, use the PARK model: problem, action, results, knowledge gained. In situational questions, keep this in mind. Also remember that it's OK to admit you've made mistakes; if you have learned since and

corrected the problem, that demonstrates maturity and skill.

- Utilize grouping answers in threes. When the interviewer asks about your strengths or weaknesses, give three each time. One isn't enough and four or more just sounds too much.
- If you're asked to start with “a little about yourself,” use this format: education background, what you're passionate for and why you're applying. Skip the “well, I'm...” and “uh.” This is one that you can easily prepare beforehand.
- The last thing I learned was something that I think is timeless. I went to lunch with some friends that I see at PRSSA events and one of the things that came up was how knowing fellow students eventually turns into professional relationships. It's hard to think that all of the people going to these conferences with you will soon be your colleagues, but it's imperative to build your network with them, too. Don't cut them off in line at the career fair and don't ignore them.

Professional Profile

Molly Fletcher

As told to Aubrey Zimmerman

Molly Fletcher is a senior executive involved in corporate growth strategy while managing direction, strategy and daily operation of the client representation division of Career Sports & Entertainment, Inc. Molly negotiates appearances, endorsements and sponsorship relationships and handles/oversees contract negotiations for clients' teams and/or organizations. She is the #1 Female Sports Agent in the United States representing athletes, coaches and media faces such as Boston Red Sox's John Smoltz, Michigan State's Men's Basketball Coach Tom Izzo and ESPN's Erin Andrews. She is a graduate of Michigan State University and is from East Lansing. Molly currently lives in Atlanta with her husband and three daughters.



Q. Where do you work and what do you do?

A. President of Client Representation at Career Sports & Entertainment

Q. How did you get into PR?

A. Not in PR, but utilized my experience of hiring employees over the past 15 years to gather the content for my book.

Q. What's the best part of your job?

A. Our clients; we represent great athletes, coaches and broadcasters but most importantly they are great people who value and appreciate what we do for them. There is tremendous mutual respect.

Q. The worst?

A. Days aren't long enough.

Q. Where did you go to school and what did you major in?

A. Michigan State, Communication Arts & Sciences.

If you are interested in contacting Molly, visit www.mollyfletcher.com for more information, or follow her on Twitter, @MollyFletcher.

Q. Since entering the professional field, what's the most important thing you've learned? (That a textbook could never teach you)

A. The world is built around relationships. Utilize them well and carefully. You have one chance to build an impeccable reputation so be sensitive to that fact with who you work for and associate with along your career.

Q. Any words of advice to college students interested in PR?

A. When you're looking for a job, identify 10 people you know and then identify 10 people you don't know. Utilize the strategies in my book to get in front of those people and ask for advice - when you ask for advice, you get a job and when you ask for a job you get advice.

MSU PRSSA

Now on YouTube

By Angela Minicuci

In an effort to keep up with the changing trends in media, our academic advisor, Russ White, has begun creating videos for our new MSU PRSSA YouTube channel. We currently have videos up from guests speakers discussing topics including:

- What is PRSSA?
- Career fair advice
- PR 101
- Communication plan basics



Why is this helpful for you? When you find that you are unable to attend a PRSSA event that may benefit you, you can see and hear what key points you missed.

Also, if you come across any useful or interesting public relations oriented videos, send them our way and we can post them on our channel for all members to see.

As media keeps evolving, our chapter will too! Check our Web site, msuprssa.org, for the latest videos posted on our home page. To visit our YouTube channel, go to youtube.com/msuprssa. Send any videos you want posted to Angela Minicuci at minicuci1@msu.edu

When I Grow Up...

As told to Courtney Sipperley

Courtney Vaught graduated from MSU in May 2008 with a Bachelor's in Communication and specializations in Public Relations and Dance. She was a member of PRSSA for three years and she held two positions on the Executive Board: Public Relations Chair and Agency Director. Courtney has been working at Eisbrenner Public Relations since fall 2008.



Courtney
Vaught

Q. Please describe your position at Eisbrenner.

A. As an account coordinator, I am in charge of maintaining our clients' daily tasks such as media relations, writing, research, editing, project management and anything else that may come up. Because Eisbrenner is a smaller company, I am lucky enough to get to work with a number of different clients and take part in projects and tasks that I most likely wouldn't be able to do in a larger agency.

Q. Describe your experiences after graduation. How was the transition from college life to the "real world?"

A. I will be honest with this one – it wasn't easy! However, once I finally integrated myself into the "real world" and my company, I found it to be very rewarding to truly be a part of something significant. However, everyone's experiences are different so you can take this for what it's worth, but my advice to you is just be ready for a complete lifestyle change and don't get discouraged if you don't seem to slip into it as easily as you originally expected.

Q. What do you like most about working in your specialty?

A. The main industry my agency works with is automotive and, for obvious reasons, it has been a very fascinating, daunting and exciting specialty at the same time. It is a very uncertain time for the auto industry right now, and communications is going to play a key role in a much needed improved perspective on the industry. On a personal level, I can't say I have a specialty at this point

in my career because I haven't had the chance to experience other areas of PR. But that is what is so great about our industry – its' limitless possibilities and opportunities!

Q. What has been the biggest challenge you have faced thus far in your career field?

A. As an entry-level professional, the largest challenge I have faced is integrating into a real job. It takes a great amount of learning about yourself, the company you work for, the area you live, the people you work with and the industry you and your clients are in. I am really looking forward to getting to the point in my career where I can take part in and share significant challenges that ultimately better my company, career and even the industry.

Q. How did being a member of PRSSA benefit you from a working standpoint?

A. Well, there is the obvious point that a fellow PRSSA member was already employed at Eisbrenner, and was able to put my resume into the right hands to be noticed and for this I am grateful. The not-so-obvious points are the experiences I got from all the projects I took part in which gave me great examples to use in my interviews, as well as the client relations practice I received from the student-run firm and the general understanding of the industry I gained through PRSSA meetings, conferences and workshops.

Q. Any other thoughts?

A. MSU PRSSA offers a lot of great opportunities for students who want to get into the PR field and if you take advantage of these opportunities now, you

will be five steps ahead of everyone else when you begin applying for the same position they are. Also, I'm sure I don't have to say it, but I will anyway – times are hard right now and it is very important for PR students to realize the sense of urgency the economy has brought to the workforce and how it is affecting the PR industry specifically. I say this only because I know it is easy to stay in the "college bubble," as I like to put it, but try to keep up with what's happening even if it is just reading the headlines every other day.

If you have any questions for Courtney, you can contact her at:

vaughtc20@gmail.com

AP Style Tip

Compose, comprise, constitute

Compose means to create or put together. Used in active and passive voice. She composed a song. The U.S. is composed of 50 states. The zoo is composed of many animals.

Comprise means to contain, to include all or embrace. It is best used only in the active voice, followed by a direct object: The U.S. comprises 50 states. The jury comprises five men and seven women. The zoo comprises many animals.

Bateman2009: A Recap

By Elizabeth Catalano and Melissa Hackett

This year's Bateman Team has been working tirelessly to get kids to be where you are right now: in college! Not only have we enjoyed designing and implementing a grassroots public relations campaign, but we have advocated a "million-dollar" cause.

The Campaign

This year's client was the Consumer Bankers Association and their "Hit the Books Running" initiative. This program advocates accessible and affordable public awareness materials and events on the necessity of a college degree, the importance of financial literacy resources and the numerous other tools that are available for college-bound students and their parents. The program targets a younger audience than most other campaigns of its kind, starting as early as middle school. After all, it's never too early to start thinking about college!



Our Take

The average college graduate earns \$1 million more in their lifetime than those with just a high school diploma. We felt that highlighting this fact would be an effective way to get middle and high school students interested in our campaign. Based on this, we created "college checkbooks" to distribute among the students we targeted. These checkbooks include a blank check for \$1 million for going to college as well as activities and facts geared toward preparing for college. We distributed about 250 checkbooks to Pattengill Middle School, Eastern High School and the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing students. All those who completed the checkbook were put into a raffle for a Leapfrog Crammer!

Events

"What Would You Do With a Million?" - our kick-off event - was held at the Boys and Girls Club of Lansing and Pattengill Middle School. Highlights included Sparty, the MSU Dance Team, rapper Khary "WAE" Frazier, and MSU football players John Masters, Kaleb Thornhill and Ashton Henderson. These guests excited and engaged the students, and we concluded by passing out the checkbooks and encouraging the students to start thinking about college.

On February 21, our team held a "Real World, Real Millions" college and career fair at the Boys and Girls Club. The event featured a motivational speaker, representatives from Lansing Community College, the Lansing Police Department and several MSU student representatives. The MSU representatives talked to students and parents about their majors and what career options those degrees offered. There was also a financial seminar led by a representative of the MSU Office of Financial Aid for parents.

Our last event, "Taste of State" was held on February 28 as our culminating campaign event. High school students from our target groups toured MSU experiencing the sights and sounds of campus life. Stops included the Breslin Center, Spartan Stadium, IM West, Wells Hall, a Holden dorm room and a cafeteria meal.

What to Look for Next

With implementation month ending February 28, it is now time to create our ten-page proposal to submit for judging. Proposals are due on March 30, and the top three teams will be announced on April 20. Keep your fingers crossed for our Chapter!

Reviewed by Aubrey Zimmerman

In a Nutshell

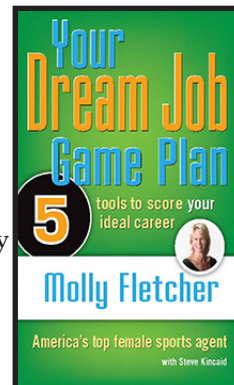
Your Dream Job Game Plan: Five Tools for Becoming Your Own Career Agent
By Molly Fletcher

Former Spartan Molly Fletcher wrote the guide to successfully becoming your own career agent. Her book contains the

ultimate advice for any student looking towards their professional future. *Your Dream Job Game Plan* outlines ways in which you can make the most of your college experience and begin a successful journey in the professional world. Reading real life stories from a successful female from Michigan reminded me that my destiny is in my own hands and I will be the person getting me to where I need to go.

The Five Tools:

1. **Your Passionate Style:** You must have energy and drive to get through the difficult times in order for your dreams to happen. Passion separates those that will make it happen from those that hope it happens.
2. **Your fearlessness:** It can be physical or emotional. It is the way your passion is brought to life in your behavior. You need fearlessness to be able to overcome challenges that may otherwise get in your way to success.
3. **Your game plan:** This is your step-to-step guide to pursue your dream job. Proper and thorough preparation through time and research will give you an edge on knowing what an interviewer is going to ask or throw your way.
4. **Your flawless execution:** How you put it all together and bring your style, fearlessness and game plan to life. Making it all real and bringing it to the table is the only way you will be successful in "wowing" your interview and securing your opportunities.
5. **Your great management of choices:** The first four tools are opening doors and choosing which ones to walk through. Choices are products of hard work, executing your plan and making opportunities a reality. Manage them effectively.



Member of the Month *February*

Congrats to our February Member of the Month:

Nate Erickson!

Nate's willingness to help on projects such as the Hubbell Connection logo and print material for Bateman has made him a standout member. An advertising senior from Muskegon, Mich., Nate is looking into entertainment/sports PR and hopes to work in a (warm) major city after graduation.



Keep up the great work Nate and good luck after graduation!

Spring 2009 Executive Board Members

President: Nick Lucido
 Vice President: Christina Capoferi
 Agency Director: Courtney Curran
 Public Relations Director: Jenni Lewis
 Secretary: Aubrey Zimmerman
 Finance/Fundraising Chair: Tony Willis
 Publication Director: Julia Wendzinski
 Alumni Relations Director: Courtney Sipperley
 Bateman Chair: Monica Fineis
 Webmaster: Angela Minicuci
 Sophomore Chair: Kristine Kendall

Academic Advisor: Russ White
 Professional Advisor: Jen Holton
 Professional Advisor: Kelly Rossman-McKinney
 Bateman Advisor: Amber Shinn

For E-board member contact information, check out the "Contact Us" tab at msuprssa.org.

Notes from CMU/FSU

Regional Activity: Branding Basics

By Kristine Kendall

Branding is a common topic discussed in advertising and public relations classes, but it is not often elaborated on. Don Tanner, founding partner of the strategic planning public relations firm Tanner Friedman, gave a presentation at the CMU/FSU regional activity which gave attendees a better insight into the process of branding.

He defined a brand as the main message of a company or what the company stands for. It's not just a logo, color scheme or slogan. While all of those do make up a brand, branding goes much deeper than what a consumer sees. A good brand elicits an emotional response. When you think of brands such as North Face, Starbucks and Apple, what words come to mind? Those companies have strived to attach specific feelings with their brands to give them a certain image.



Here are some important elements a brand should convey:

- Consistency in messaging (McDonald's "I'm Lovin' It")
- Tradition within the brand
- Fills a void, meets a demand (Subway's Jared Campaign met the demand for healthier fast food)
- New/evolutionary (all Apple products)
- "I gotta have" factor (Apple iPhone)
- Brands should have a "value proposition", or key beneficial message.
- The people working at your company should reflect the message of the brand.

The strategy to establish a brand is:

- Create a vision
- Create a mission
- Create key messages

Brands sometimes choose to rebrand themselves as a way of "reinventing" the brand, or are essentially forced to do this due to some crisis the company experiences.

Rebranding gone good: Tylenol in early 1982 after seven consumers died from consuming poisoned doses.

Rebranding gone bad: Coca Cola's new recipe that was rejected by consumers and eventually taken off the market.

Starting up a blog? Working on an interesting project at your internship? Tell us about it!

Writing an article for *imPReSSIONS* is a great way to get published and have some material for your portfolio. Articles can be up to 400 words and the deadline for the April issue is **Sunday, March 29**. If you're interested or have any questions, feel free to contact Publication Director Julia Wendzinski at wendzins@msu.edu or talk to her after a meeting. Don't have any ideas for an article but still interested in writing? No problem, Julia can help you brainstorm and give you topics to write about.