

# TOUCH OF CLASS

News About the Rowan University Graduate Public Relations Program

## Knowledge in Action

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*Gatling puts PR skills to work with Department of Labor and Workforce Development*

Kerri Gatling didn't wait to put her knowledge to work. She's finishing up her master's degree in public relations while spending busy days working for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development in Trenton, where she serves as Public Information Officer.

In that role Gatling works to raise awareness about programs and services the department offers. Other responsibilities include writing background material for state executives talking about the department and preparing briefings for the Commissioner and the Governor's Office. She also manages the department's fast-growing social media outreach programs.

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***"Get comfortable playing a key role behind the scenes."***

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Gatling notes she has learned you have to work hard to succeed in the fast-paced world of government communication. Another success tip: Get comfortable playing a key role behind the scenes supporting the success of others in the spotlight.

Gatling notes the M.A. in P.R. program helped her most by sharpening her writing and presentation skills. Gatling also stated that her study

also helped to hone her strategic planning and thinking skills – especially in handling crisis situations.

Gatling's journey to the master's program started with just a few classes.

After earning a communication degree at attended North Carolina State University -- where she attended on a basketball scholarship – she had first planned to be a newscaster. When her career path moved into public relations she first attended Rowan of expand her knowledge of public relations and help expand her career options.

While Gatling plans to keep building on her success in government communication another goal is to teach at Rowan and help to develop student internship opportunities in the near future.

Gatling stated, "I'm here to finish what I started. It's not about how you start, it's about how you finish."



## Master Class Investigates the PR Role in Start-Up Success

The region has become a hot bed of start-up businesses and this year's master class featured two leaders in that community to get the perspective of CEOs on the public relations role in start-up success.

Cass Bailey, CEO of Slice Communications, a PR and social media agency working with many growing companies in the region stressed the need for developing outstanding writing skills and strong counseling skills are critical when working with CEOs.

Robert Moore, CEO of a fast-growing analytics firm serving online businesses worldwide stressed the vital role PR needs to play in early stages as a new company struggles to gain credibility with customers, potential employees, possible investors and the media.

Bailey stressed that PR plays a critical role in helping start-up companies build brand awareness, thought leadership, sales, recruiting, community relations and market research. Moore added that PR activities need to focus on specific business needs and not be just activities that "generate more noise than signal."

Bailey added efforts need to focus on "actual human beings," adding that "if they become your champions, they'll help you reach your business goals."

Both CEOs stressed that promoting companies successfully means more than just practicing good media relations – success is built on having strong creative ideas and that clearly dramatize the company's value.

Moore, who is routinely quoted by national media on start-up and entrepreneurial issues, said simply, "You've got to have something new to say," warning against relying on old data and stale talking points. "You can't just say our product is great," Bailey added. She encouraged practitioners to demonstrate how it's great as a way to add to the conversation with media.

Noting that her company is hiring, Bailey warned, "You've got to write. You've got to know how to write. You have to know how to communicate in the written word."

Moore added his company expects outstanding writing skills in all of its new hires -- from marketing and PR staff to software engineers. He also seeks "intellectual curiosity" in all new

employees. When asking interviewees what's not on their resume – what do they like to do in their free time – he explained there's a big difference between someone who says "video games" and someone who says "home brewing." The difference, he explained, is "delayed gratification."

He added, "We want people who not only suffer through delayed gratification, but actually seek it out."

A reception, sponsored by the Bagin Education Foundation, was held for students and speakers before the class. The class was moderated by Professor Ed Moore. "These are two of the busiest people I know and we are very grateful to them for taking the time to visit our campus and share their expertise with students," he said.

Dr. Suzanne Fitzgerald, department chair, also expressed thanks to the Bagin Education Foundation for its on-going support for master classes. "The program, thanks to the leadership of our founder, Dr. Don Bagin, has a long tradition of using such events to help students link their studies to PR practice. We're happy, with the help of the Bagin Education Foundation, to keep that vision alive.

More info on RJMetrics can be found at [rjmetrics.com](http://rjmetrics.com).

More info on Slice Communications can be found at [slicecommunications.com](http://slicecommunications.com).

More information on the Bagin Education Foundation can be found at [www.bagin.org](http://www.bagin.org).



**Special Guests: Cass Bailey and Robert Moore**

## Mastering Work and the Classroom

Hannah Lindeblad is a second year graduate student in the MAPR program. Before Lindeblad came to Rowan she received her bachelor of fine arts in graphic design from Montclair State University.

During Lindeblad's junior year at Montclair, she became the Student Supervisor for the recreation marketing department. Through this job she realized how much more there was to the marketing world and discovered simply being a graphic designer was not for her. This job opened up a lot of doors for her and helped her figure out what she wanted to do the rest of her life.

Wanting to better her writing and communication skills, she decided to apply to Rowan University. During her senior year she learned that recreation centers have a national organization called NIRSA. The NIRSA holds conferences and workshops, where Hannah learned that she could possibly obtain a free master's degree by receiving a Graduate Assistant position. She is now the Graduate Coordinator of Marketing and Membership Services at the Rowan University Recreational Center.

Lindeblad shortly learned being a 'GA' isn't the easiest thing. She is required to work 20-30 hours a week on top of being a full time student, but she feels it is worth it.

The MAPR program has helped Lindeblad learn all about the field of public relations and improve her writing skills.

Lindeblad stated, "most of the classes I have taken have been very profitable and the professors truly care."

In a few short months Lindeblad will finish up her thesis and graduate with her master's.

Ashley Sanders is another second year student in the MAPR program. Sanders completed her undergraduate degree in Speech Communication at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in Edwardsville, Illinois. Sanders was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and never thought she would live in New Jersey.

Just like Lindeblad, Sanders never imagined going to graduate school until she began working at the University's Rec Center. During her time there, she met graduate assistants in multiple areas of campus recreation that were not only pursuing master degrees, but also a career they felt passionate about. Today, Sanders is the Graduate Assistant for facilities at Rowan's Recreation Center and spends most of her time at the rec or assisting her students.

Working at the Rec center as an undergrad, Sanders noticed public relations had everything to do with running the facilities, creating newsletters and working with social media to reach a specific audience.

Sanders will graduate in May with hopes to continue her career working with university recreational centers.



Hannah Lindeblad and Ashley Sanders



## Selected 2015 Theses Topics

*Students enrolled in the Seminar course conduct an extensive research report on a topic of their choice. This year's topics include:*

Hannah Lindeblad- Student Recreation Center Reputation and its Affect on College Student Satisfaction

Fabio DiColandrea- Analysis of Anti-Bullying Awareness at Haines Sixth Grade Center in Medford, N.J.

Henna Boby- The Efficacy of Public Relations Promotion of Film Adaptations of Shakespearean Plays

Jamie Lambe- Publicity vs. Punishment: How Athletes Recieve Greater Exposure But Unjust Punishment

Kerri Gatling- Social Media: Connecting Government and Its Publics in the 21st Century

Dana Carroll- The Role of Graphic Layout and Design in the Marketing and Communication Strategies of the Rowan University Alumni Engagement Office

### Touch of Class

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## The Bagin Education Foundation

The Bagin Education Foundation provides enrichment resources to the Graduate Public Relation students and program at Rowan University. Dr. Don Bagin founded The Bagin Education Foundation in 2006. Dr. Bagin was a long-time professor and founder of the Rowan University Public Relations Graduate program. His wife, Carole Bagin leads the foundation today to continue to sponsor events and support students enrolled in the graduate program.

The Bagin Education Foundation has previously purchased books for the resource room, funded students presenting research at the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and International Association Of Online Communicators Conference (IAOC), funded the Don Bagin Graduate Gold Medallion Award and covered expenses for a graduate student's presentation to the International Public Relations Research Council. This year the foundation sponsored the New Student Meet and Greet event, MAPR Mentor Night, the Master Class, and handled the expenses for the comprehensive exam.

In the future, the foundation hopes to assist more students with their thesis research, as well as help with travel expenses and contribute to other resources as needed. The foundation also plans to support more graduate assistants to enable their completion of the PR program.

## 2015 NJSPRA Scholarship Winner

The New Jersey School Public Relations Association awarded Fabio DiColandrea its annual \$1,000 scholarship. The scholarship recognizes a current MAPR student who is working towards a School Public Relations Certificate. Fabio demonstrates the importance of communication and public relations within a school district in his award-winning essay.

Fabio is a substitute teacher in Medford, New Jersey, and plans to continue his career in the school PR field. Fabio focused his essay on clear communication being essential to reach any goal. He emphasized student achievement and school success are the goals for a positive image.

NJSPRA will hold its annual awards luncheon on the Rowan campus in June. School PR practitioners from throughout the state will attend the event. Professor Ed Moore will address the group on the role of PR in student and school success.

## Faculty Update

The Public Relations & Advertising Department plans to move to its new location- 301 High Street in August of this year. The building will house classrooms, faculty offices, conference rooms as well as space for our student organizations- PRSSA and the Ad Club. The Rowan Art Gallery will occupy the first floor of the building along with a café. Come visit us after September 1 in our new location!

### Recent Published Work/Presentations

**Dr. Joe Basso and Dr. Suzanne FitzGerald:**  
Buying Reputation or Earning It: Is Sponsored Content Creative PR, Deceptive Journalism or Traditional Advertising?

Applying Ethical Theories to the Public Relations Decision Making Process  
*Presented at International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, FL, March 2015*

**Dr. Bokyoung Kim and Students:**  
Nicole Hurban, Kelly Plummer, & Olivia Osterberg.  
“Examining the Salience of Issues Surrounding the Scottish Independence Referendum in News Media Coverage and Social Media.”

Hampton, J., Poiesz, M., & Kim, B. “The Real Danger of the JP Morgan’s Data Breach: Examining Situational Factors, Public Opinion, and Reputational Damage.”  
*Presented at International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, FL, March 2015*

### Dr. Sun-Young Park:

Park, S. & Morton, C. (2015). The Role of Regulatory Focus, Social Distance, and Involvement in Anti-High-Risk Drinking Advertising: A Construal-Level Theory Perspective. *Journal of Advertising*, Published online 04 February 2015

### Dr. Marilena Olguta Vilceanu:

FitzGerald, S., Vilceanu, M.O. & Sadovskaya, J. (2015), “Social media strategies: A US/Belarus comparison of for-profit and educational organizations’ use of Twitter, Facebook, and blogs,” Corporate Communication International Conference Proceedings.

### Dr. Kristine Johnson:

Johnson K. & Pontes, M. (2015, March). In-store Use Of Mobile Phones for Point-Of-Purchase Product Information Searches In The US.  
*Presented at the Marketing Theory and Practice Conference, Savannah, GA, March 2015*

### Professor Edward Moore:

The School and Community Relations, 11th edition (2016), published by Pearson Education.

## SUMMER COURSE SCHEDULE

2015	IMC and New Media Diane Holtzman (3cr)	May 5- June 29 Online
	Strategic Public Affairs John Moscatelli (3cr)	May 18-June 5 MW online TR 6-9pm
	Health Care Public Relations Gloria Rosanio (1cr)	June 8- June 11 MTWR 6-9p.m.
	Crisis Public Relations Ray Daiutolo (1cr)	June 15- June 18 MTWR 6-9p.m.
	Internal Communication in Organizations Lenore Uddyback (1cr)	June 22- June 25 MTWR 6-9p.m.