

TOUCH OF CLASS

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Class Explores Emerging Career Trends

By Cate Girone

Economic shifts, corporate reorganizations and technological shifts all contribute to big shifts in public relations career landscape.

To help students better understand and cope with these changes Rowan University's M.A. in P.R. Program hosted a Master Class this semester titled "Emerging Public Relations Career Trends."

Professor Edward Moore began the panel by sharing some interesting statistics about the future of PR careers. PR consistently lands a spot on the Bureau of Labor "hot jobs"

list, and appears again in 2012. The Bureau of Labor anticipates growth in the number of PR positions and in PR salaries. Moore then introduced the panel of experts, including PR veterans John Moscatelli, Raymond Daiutolo and David Burgin.

Moscatelli, a public relations counselor, PRSA Fellow, and president of his own consulting firm, currently teaches at Rowan. He spent 20 years on active duty as an Air Force public affairs officer before serving in top positions at various PR agencies, including Chief Operating Officer at Anne Klein Communications.

Daiutolo, the corporate

communications officer for USPS and career USPS employee, provides internal and external communication support for the company's South Jersey, Delaware and central Pennsylvania regions. His extensive PR expertise spans issues from crisis communication to legislative affairs to employee communication.

Burgin, PSEG Nuclear LLC's corporate functional area manager for emergency preparedness, has more than 25 years of experience in the emergency preparedness and

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Experts Address PR Support for Foundations

By Melissa Novak

Using public relations strategies to support education foundations was the topic of a second M.A. in P.R. Master Class this semester.

The event featured a panel of talented public relations and foundation executives, all with extensive experience in running and supporting educational foundations: Kathleen J. Corbalis, from Atlantic Cape Community College; Rich Bagin, from the New Jersey School Public Relations Association; and Tarence Smith,

from the Glassboro Education Foundation.

The session explored how education foundations benefit their communities. First, it is important to identify the need for a foundation. Second, a foundation must have "champions" or key people to act as initiators to raise awareness and attract interest. Third, a foundation needs fundraising and "friend-raising," as Bagin calls it, to grow and gain support.

Bagin pointed out public relation's huge contribution to creating an effective foundation campaign.

"Even when you try to raise money for a good cause, such as supplementing a school budget to provide additional school or community resources, someone will still be unhappy and want to use the foundation for other reasons. It's important to gain trust, support, and make the goals of the foundation known."

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PR Career Trends—continued

public affairs sectors. He oversees the company's Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations, and has served on over 25 advisory boards for professionals in the nuclear energy field.

After the introductions, Moore and the students engaged the professionals in a lively conversation about what employers now look for in new hires and how to stand out during the application process.

One student asked about the classic job-search catch-22: new graduates want to get jobs to gain experience, but all job positions seem to require candidates that already have work experience. The panelists pointed out that Rowan graduate students have more experience than they think. Rowan students complete a series of PR plans, often for real companies or non-profit

organizations, that they can discuss in interviews to show their strategic thinking and planning skills as well as what they learned from the experience.

The panelists then tackled some common resume conundrums, such as employers' desires for applicants to be "entrepreneurial" "team players." With HR departments screening resumes for these "buzz-words," Burgin suggests scanning the company website for words they prefer and using them in a resume.

All three panelists agreed that references still count but often are not as vital as they once were in the hiring process. Virtually every reference letter says something positive about the job candidate, but the letters' credibility is questionable. They admitted to relying on

"unofficial" sources—such as respected peers in the public relations community—for a credible, third-party evaluation of a potential new hire. The panelists advised students to join and actively participate in professional societies to gain a positive reputation in the field. Knowing a member of the company is also valuable.

One student asked what to do when confronted with salary questions. The panelists advised researching to determine an appropriate range, and suggested that applicants note that their salary range is negotiable.

Overall, the panelists recommended developing a broad range of public relations skills with a focus on writing. As Moscatelli said, "Don't be trapped by technology. No matter the medium, strong, clear writing will get your points to your audiences effectively." ■

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Moscatelli, Burgin and Diautolo responding to student questions about job hunting.

Education Foundations—continued

“The image of a foundation and its message matters: what’s going on and why is it there,” added Smith. “Foundations are not a supplier of cut programs, but the creators of resources that will benefit the community. It shouldn’t be seen as a crutch to supplement an ailing budget. By standing up for your foundation and its mission, you can gain respect from the community.”

Corbalis pointed out the critical role that a board of trustees fulfills for a foundation, and for this reason it is important to have strong internal communication.

“There needs to be a relationship between the board and the committee members. They need to respect each other and agree that fulfilling the foundation’s mission remains the ultimate goal.”

“You can not succeed at external relationships until you succeed with your internal

relationships,” said Professor Edward Moore, who moderated the class.

After the panelists discussed their own experiences working with education foundations, students asked questions about facing adversity and dealing with an unresponsive community.

Smith encouraged students to make confident decisions. “Indecisiveness is just as bad as a wrong decision – take action and move forward.”

Bagin discussed the importance of getting organized. “Education foundations can be lucrative if you have researched, planned, and prepared correctly. Get set up and organized.”

Corbalis’ experience in fundraising prompted her to discuss the importance

of alumni to a campaign. “Alumni success stories are important – someone who appreciates and trusts the organization, and has done better because of its influence.” At ACCC, Corbalis was able to use alumni success stories to show off the high quality education a student can receive from the school. This branding campaign helped increase funding for the school and boost its identity profile, a high achievement for the community college.

The panel ended the evening with this advice: have strong writing skills, believe in the organization you work for, stay optimistic, and always keep an open mind. Education foundations are very beneficial to school districts across the nation, and working with them can lead to rewarding careers. ■



Smith, Bagin and Corbalis sharing insight on Education Foundations.

Crawford, Girone Earn Graduate Medallions

By Melissa Novak

Two students earned Donald Bagin Graduate medallions this year. The award recognizes academic excellence in public relations study.

Emel Crawford and Catherine Girone received the recognition as the 2012 medallion winners.

This medallion is in honor of Donald Bagin, founder of the public relations graduate program at Rowan University. The medallion is given to graduate students who earn a superior academic

GPA, show significant work or internship experience, and show potential for substantial contribution to the public relations field.

“I’m so honored to receive this award. It’s always great when your hard work is recognized,” said Girone, who started the program in spring 2011. Girone currently works with the Graduate PR department and has another internship in Philadelphia.

Crawford, who started the program in fall 2010, juggled an internship while writing

her thesis this past year. “Graduate school involves a lot of hard work, discipline, and time management. I am honored to receive this medallion, and couldn’t have done it without my professors, family, and fellow classmates supporting me,” she says.

Crawford and Girone will receive their medallions at the 35th annual PRSSA graduation dinner. The awards will also be announced at graduation. ■

Graeff Named NJSPRA Scholarship Winner

By Cate Girone

Rachel Graeff received this year’s New Jersey School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) scholarship. The scholarship supports members of Rowan University’s College of Communication interested in school public relations.

Graeff’s winning essay detailed methods school foundations can use to fundraise and support school programs. The essay included specific public relations techniques geared toward raising awareness of what

school foundations do and how they contribute to student success.

Her thesis also focuses on education: she explores the public relations techniques used by vocational schools to increase student enrollment and discusses how to enhance these techniques.

“My research involves in-depth interviews with PR practitioners at vocational schools and intercept surveys with students at vocational schools,” says Graeff. “It’s interesting learning more

about vocational schools and how PR can help them achieve their goals.” ■



Rachel Graeff