

# PRSA*notes*

*An electronic newsletter by and for the 200+ members of the Central Iowa Chapter*  
**January, 2003**

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## **'Branding and PR' is Spiekerman's January topic**

Jill Spiekerman, APR, public relations manager for Maytag Appliances, will provide the program for Central Iowa Chapter's Jan. 16 luncheon meeting at the Holiday Inn Downtown. Her topic: "Branding and Public Relations."

Spiekerman believes brand management is a key component of public relations. So those who attend the meeting can expect to learn about Maytag Appliance's efforts to target consumers with specific brands from Amana to Jenn-Air to Maytag to help boost sales and position Maytag as a leader in the home and commercial appliance business. In her presentation, Spiekerman will highlight three case studies involving successful corporate branding and public relations efforts.

Maytag has more than 100 years in the appliance business and today is a \$4.8 billion home and commercial appliance company focused in North America and in targeted international markets.

The meeting is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$18 for PRSA members, \$23 for non-members and \$13 for students. Luncheon reservations may be made [on line at www.prsaciowa.org](#). Click on "Upcoming Meetings" and complete the on-line form. Reservations must be received no later than Monday, Jan. 13.

*By Aaron Putze, APR*

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## **Kroeschell describes athletic media relations**

The world of athletic media relations at the major collegiate level is fast-paced, ever-changing and, at times, resembles the frantic pace of a political campaign. That was the job description offered by Tom Kroeschell, assistant athletic director and media relations director, Iowa State University, speaking at the Central Iowa PRSA luncheon Nov. 21 at the Downtown Holiday Inn.

The Park Ridge, Ill., native, who also serves as the voice of the Drake Relays, must balance the needs of athletes with the expectations of the news media. This includes managing the publicity storm that erupts when an athlete is labeled a Heisman Trophy candidate.

"The Heisman race is like a political campaign, as was the case when (Cyclone quarterback) Seneca Wallace was putting up incredible numbers earlier this season," said Kroeschell, who serves as the media's primary contact for ISU football, wrestling and track. "In the end, it's a balancing act. The success of our football team and Seneca is good for the university. On the other hand, it also leads to complete chaos."

As proof, Kroeschell shared several stories of the media's unrelenting coverage of Wallace's early-season exploits from MTV and Fox Sports Channel to ESPN's "philosopher" profile. "No one wants to do the same old story, so they all dream of something different," he said. "However, one poor showing on behalf of Seneca resembles the day after an election. Media interest can dissipate quickly."

Managing the reputation of a Heisman hopeful is just one of Kroeschell's many duties. He must also handle day-to-day media interest, which, for a central Iowa school like ISU, can be quite intense.

"Iowa State athletics is a main entertainment venue for this part of the state. The athletes are the leading player in that venue," he said. "That's why I remind athletes at the beginning of the year that they are public figures." "I tell them, 'If your name is on the roster, you're a public figure and it has its upside and downside.' Just as this designation elevates their exploits on the field of competition, so it will in all other areas of their life."

Kroeschell is a 1982 Drake graduate with a bachelor's degree in journalism. Before coming to ISU in August of 1985, Kroeschell worked one year at Northwestern University, where he assisted with football and men's basketball operations, in addition to primary work with the women's basketball and volleyball teams.

*By Aaron Putze, APR*

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## **Strategic America success spans local, international awards competitions**

Strategic America has been recognized by international and local communications professionals for its marketing expertise.

The International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) awarded the Des Moines Arts Festival a Gold Pinnacle for Best Newspaper Supplement. The festival's insert, which appeared in June in The Des Moines Register, was written by Strategic America. The Pinnacle Awards are presented to organizations worldwide for excellence in festival and event promotions throughout the year. The Pinnacle Awards contest attracted more than 1,300 total entries from across the globe in 45 different categories.

Locally, Strategic America made an impressive showing at the Central Iowans in Radio and Television (CIRT) 2002 awards in Des Moines, including the Best of Show award for the radio ad "Milk" for Kum & Go convenience stores.

Strategic America is based in Des Moines. The integrated marketing communications firm, founded in 1980, employs 60 communications professionals.

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## **Central Iowa Chapter's 2003 book drive aims to promote reading**

Murray Williams, PR officer, reminds Central Iowa Chapter members of the book drive that got underway this month. As announced earlier, in order to strengthen literacy in the Greater Des Moines community, the chapter is sponsoring its first "PRSA Promotes Reading" book drive. The book drive will benefit the Child Development Center, a program of the nonprofit Children and Families of Iowa.

The Child Development Center, located in Des Moines, provides quality childcare for approximately 200 local children aged two to 12 years old. As part of the program, each child receives a book to take home to encourage family literacy. Children and Families of Iowa is a United Way affiliate and has received national accreditation for excellence in childcare. (Visit [www.cf Iowa.org](http://www.cf Iowa.org) for more information.)

Chapter members are invited to participate in "PRSA Promotes Reading" by donating new and/or used books appropriate for children aged two-12 years old. Children's books and monetary donations will be collected at the January, February and March PRSA luncheons. The Child Development Center has asked participants to avoid religious books and books with violence. Cash donations will be used to purchase additional books.

Books should be brought to the registration table at the January-March luncheons. For every book (or \$5 donated) participants will be entered into a drawing for Barnes & Noble gift certificates. An announcement of the book drive results and gift certificate winners will be made at the April 3 PRSA Institute.

For more information, members are advised to contact Student Liaison Elizabeth Grote at 279- 0387, e-mail [b.grote@lycos.com](mailto:b.grote@lycos.com), or PR Officer Murray Williams at 226-7957, e-mail [murrayw@ia-icul.org](mailto:murrayw@ia-icul.org). Or click on the [PDF file](#) (54 KB).

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## **Iowa Tax Department promotes E-Filing**

Last year, the Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance faced a huge task promoting E-Filing of income taxes with little to no budget. The goal was a 30 percent increase in electronic returns. Thanks in a large part to efforts from the IDRf Communications Unit, comprised of Central Iowa PRSA members Renee Mulvey, David Kemnitz and Lori Mullen, the goal was achieved and surpassed. Iowa is now No. 1 in the nation with 46 percent of filers E-Filing, according to the Federation of Tax Administrators.

The Communications Unit faces the huge goals of increasing E-File returns again this year and educating the public about changes in the tax booklets. The department is setting the bar at 59 percent of returns E-Filed, or about 818,000 of almost 1.4 million returns. Also, only the IA 1040 long form and booklet will be printed and mailed this year. Typically, the department receives fewer than 300,000 short forms, so the decision was made to eliminate printing and mailing of the IA 1040A short form and instructions. The short form is available online at [www.state.ia.us/tax](http://www.state.ia.us/tax). Short-form users can file free using Iowa WebFile or use the long form. A press conference was held Dec. 16 with Interim Director Donald R. Cooper announcing the goal and changes. A newsletter article or ad explaining these changes for employee or public newsletters and/or break rooms is available by contacting David Kemnitz at [david.kemnitz@idrf.state.ia.us](mailto:david.kemnitz@idrf.state.ia.us) or by phone at 515/281-8418.

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## **PRSSA vice president touts new JobCenter**

As part of PRSSA's ongoing initiative to build relationships with PRSA this year, PRSSA has re-launched the Society's web site, reports Brandi Littlejohn, vice president of internship and job services for the Public Relations Student Society of America. Along with new features and enhanced graphics, PRSSA has revamped its online JobCenter, available for PRSA members and other public relations professionals.

JobCenter is a comprehensive, online database of internship and job opportunities accessible to more than 7,000 PRSSA members from 232 chapters nationwide. JobCenter, Littlejohn said, is accessible from the PRSSA homepage, <http://www.prssa.org>, and is the best place for public relations employers to post opportunities and gain interns and enthusiastic employees for their companies.

With its latest renovation, JobCenter allows employers unlimited access to accommodate everyone's hectic schedules. Employers can register and create a login name and

password on the site, and then a company profile is saved. From this point on, employers can simply add, edit or delete their own postings. The postings are then updated within a day of an employer's changes so PRSSA members always have the current job posting information. The service is easy to use and it's free.

"It is important that all PRSA Chapter leaders communicate the importance and value of JobCenter to their members who may be interested in reaching out to the students. Because JobCenter is an exclusive benefit of being a PRSSA member, those viewing the postings are dedicated, developing public relations professionals from the world's preeminent, pre-professional public relations student organization. There is no better place to post public relations internships or entry-level jobs to find young, dedicated and motivated public relations practitioners than PRSSA's JobCenter," Littlejohn said.

For more information on the JobCenter, she may be contacted by e-mail at [Nicole1699@aol.com](mailto:Nicole1699@aol.com) or by phone at 706/227-1599.

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## **Member news . . .**

### **Annette Hacker heads ISU News Service**

John McCarroll, APR, director of university relations at Iowa State University, has announced the appointment of Annette Hacker as manager of the ISU News Service, effective Jan. 6. Hacker most recently served as senior vice president at Hanser & Associates in West Des Moines. She also has worked for Strategic America, the Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and KJY Radio. She is a member of the Public Relations Society of America, Central Iowa Chapter PRSA; the American Marketing Association, and is on the board of directors of the Rotary Club of Des Moines.

ISU News Service is part of the Office of University Relations and serves as Iowa State's primary information unit.

### **Hanser quote makes PR NEWS**

Ronald Hanser, president of Des Moines-based Hanser & Associates, was among the expert sources cited in a Nov. 26 *PR NEWS* article, "In Labor Strike Situations, PR Powers Both Sides of Dispute."

Hanser is quoted regarding effective public relations strategies companies use during labor negotiations, strikes, job actions and lockouts. Hanser emphasized that it's not us vs. them. "It is all about the customer," he said.

The article describes PR strategy used by corporations in strikes by Canadian Auto Workers, Communications Workers of America, nurses and poultry-plant workers. The full story is at [http://www.prandmarketing.com/prn\\_topstory.htm](http://www.prandmarketing.com/prn_topstory.htm).

### **GuideOne promotes Abbas**

Emily Abbas has been promoted from Senior Corporate Communications Specialist to Corporate Communications Manager at GuideOne Insurance.

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## **Professional Development opportunities . . .**

### **Nebraska PRSA welcomes Central Iowans to PD conference Jan. 24**

Nebraska chapter of PRSA has scheduled a professional development conference Jan. 24 and has extended an invitation to Central Iowa chapter members to attend. The conference will be held at the Thompson Alumni Center on the University of Omaha campus.

Theme of the conference is "Sharpen Your Edge," and the program includes skill-building opportunities in developing strategic solutions and carrying out effective interviews. Although the early registration deadline is past, registrations will be accepted until Jan. 15. All-day fee is \$150 for PRSA members, \$160 for non-members and \$40 for students. Half-day fees (morning or afternoon) are \$80 for members and \$90 for non-members.

Further conference details are available from John Sullivan at [johnsullivan@usprojhects.com](mailto:johnsullivan@usprojhects.com) or Kevin Warneke at [kwarneke@rmhohaha.org](mailto:kwarneke@rmhohaha.org).

### **PRSA Fellows lead workplace communication forum**

David Meeker and Davis Young, both APR and Fellows PRSA, are leading a workplace communication forum featuring nationally recognized experts at Kent State University in Ohio Jan. 24. For details and registration form click on [Final Workplace Mailer.pdf](#) (189 KB). (To print: with the file on screen in Acrobat Reader, click "File," then "Page Setup," then under "Paper Size" select "Legal 8½ x 14 in." and click "OK.")

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## **Job Opportunities in Central Iowa . . .**

### **Two Openings at The Integer Group**

*PR Account Executive*

Looking for a self-directed practitioner with three years' experience in PR strategy, planning and implementation. A background in media relations and trade show representation is essential. Experience in the agricultural and manufacturing industries a plus. Must have strong writing skills, be highly-motivated, an original thinker, and a team player.

### ***PR Account Coordinator***

Looking for a motivated self-starter seeking an entry-level position in a fast-paced agency environment. List building and database knowledge required, as well as strong media relations, and oral and written communications skills.

The Integer Group is one of the nation's leading promotion and marketing agencies, serving PR clients in agriculture, home shelter, construction, transportation, health care, and more. Send your r, sum, to Lori Hodges, Director of Human Resources, The Integer Group, 2633 Fleur Drive, Des Moines, IA 50321, or [lhodges@integermidwest.com](mailto:lhodges@integermidwest.com).

### **Communications Specialist**

ChildServe partners with families to help children with special health care needs live a great life! We currently have an opening for a Communications Specialist. This person will provide guidance and advice to the president in the advancement of ChildServe's name and mission in the community as well as manage the internal communication program. Must have a BA/BS in relevant field with 2-3 years of communication experience required.

Must have working knowledge of public relations, marketing, program development, market research and data base management. Must also be computer literate with the ability to use Macintosh and a variety of desktop publishing programs preferred. If interested, please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to ChildServe, P.O. Box 707, Johnston, IA 50131, Attn. Joy Olson, [joyolso@childserve.org](mailto:joyolso@childserve.org), 515/727-1490, 515/727-8757 (fax).

### **Web Writer**

As a Web Writer at The Principal Financial Group , you will be responsible for writing, editing, and coordinating the creation and maintenance of medium to large, detail-intensive web-based communications. Job duties also include providing expertise and direction to business unit contacts on web-based writing, design and presentation techniques.

The successful candidate will have an understanding of web design principles and experience teaming with web designers to enhance usability/functionality of projects.  
Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in public relations, marketing, communications, journalism or advertising is required, plus 2-4 years of related experience.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, along with strong attention to detail and proofreading skills.
- Strong computer skills and knowledge of business unit computer applications required.
- Must be able to handle multiple projects and meet deadlines.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality is essential.

At the Principal Financial Group, we offer a competitive total compensation package and a comprehensive benefits package to meet each of your needs. If you are looking for the opportunity to get ahead in your career...apply today!

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## **PRSA People . . .**

### **On the Job**

**Here's another query to gather incidental information about PRSA people:**

Workdays: On a normal workday (is there such a thing?) about how many hours do you spend on the job, either at your office or elsewhere. One quick reason why. Respond to [wdavis@iastate.edu](mailto:wdavis@iastate.edu) as soon as you read this, please. We'll tabulate and give the results next time.

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