

# PRSAnotes

*A newsletter by and for the members of Central Iowa Chapter, Public Relations Society of America*

(Deadline for the next PRSAnotes is Friday, Dec. 26, since there will be no December meeting. Send your comments to [wdavis@iastate.edu](mailto:wdavis@iastate.edu).)

## **November 2003**

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## **November chapter meeting will focus on Iowa Caucus event**

The Iowa Caucus is a unique event in the national political landscape that gives presidential candidates the real opportunity to put their campaigns to the test. It also provides tremendous exposure for the state of Iowa since it represents the start of the presidential political season, which has drawn a jealous ire from other states wishing to cash in on the "first in the nation status."

There are a number of communication challenges surrounding the Iowa Caucuses including:

- How do candidates differentiate themselves so early in the political process?
- How is communicating in Iowa different than other states?
- How is a caucus different than a primary?
- Also, how does the state of Iowa work to maintain its unique political status?

Learn about all this and more at the November Central Iowa PRSA meeting Thursday, Nov. 20, at the Hotel Des Moines. Meeting time is 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Communications managers from the top presidential campaigns will discuss communication techniques, strategies and philosophies during the Iowa Caucus.

In addition, Gordon Fischer, the chair of the Iowa Democratic Party, will facilitate the panel discussion which is providing insights into the state's challenges in hosting, and maintaining, the Iowa Caucus.

To register for the luncheon on line, click on this link: <http://www.prsaciowa.org/registration.htm>.

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## **Crisis communication was October chapter meeting theme**

At Central Iowa Chapter's Oct. 16 meeting, a panel of experts discussed the topic of crisis communications. Cyndi Harmeyer Fisher, public relations supervisor at Flynn Wright, spoke about general best practices in times of crises and also gave some insight into ones that she has worked on in the past.

"You need to be very transparent," she explained, "and you need to prepare way in advance." She gave three tips for PR practitioners. First, "you must have a reservoir of goodwill" in order to successfully survive a crisis. This is where the long-term planning is important. Second, when you experience a crisis, be honest. This can go a long way in accomplishing Fisher's third tip: *move on*.

A different perspective on crises was presented by Bob Hagener, the deputy aviation director in operations and maintenance at the Des Moines International Airport. Hagener walked PRSA members through Sept. 11 at the airport, explaining how the staff responded to announcements from federal agencies and how they have since modified their public communication efforts. One of the ways they did this is by developing a comprehensive directory for media. The directory included direct phone numbers for key staff as well as details on all of the aircraft that use the airport, saving time for reporters and airport employees in times of crises.

The panel was rounded-out by long-time *Des Moines Register* reporter Perry Beeman. Perry expressed his appreciation for Fisher's advice on dealing with the media during times of crises, with an emphasis on the need for PR practitioners to be open and honest. Beeman spoke about situations he's covered, including the crash of United Flight 232 in Sioux City, and the pros and cons of how the company or agency had handled the situations.

(Sarah Rasmussen, program chair, who reported this meeting, extended thanks to the panelists for their participation.)

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## **2004 PRSA Institute is set for April 1**

The Central Iowa Chapter's annual Institute will be held Thursday, April 1, 2004, at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines. The theme will be "**PR—Leading the Charge**" and the event will feature speakers from organizations that have chosen to allocate more of their advertising budgets to public relations activities.

"Please look for upcoming articles in this newsletter, which will include the agenda for the day as well as important registration information," says Emily Abbas, APR, president-elect and institute chair. "We look forward to seeing you there, so be sure to save the day on your 2004 planning calendar."

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## **Hackbart gives dues reminder**

Tim Hackbart, treasurer, reminds Central Iowa Chapter members that it's time to pay local dues. "If you di

receive an invoice for some reason, please contact me," he said. Hackbart can be reached at [hackbatl@ihs.com](mailto:hackbatl@ihs.com)

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## **Sankey, Downs attend PRSA International Conference**

Kelly Sankey, APR, and Erin Downs, APR, attended the PRSA Delegate Assembly in New Orleans Oct. 20-21 as representatives from Central Iowa Chapter. They will give a report on the assembly at the chapter's Nov. 2 luncheon meeting. (PRSAnotes has learned that a proposal by the PRSA board to "decouple" accredited status from a requirement for delegates to the international conference failed to pass the assembly this year. Predictions are that the issue will be brought up again next year, proposing that delegates must either be accredited or have at least five years of membership in PRSA.)

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## **Hanser article cites Coalition role in restoring trust**

Ronald C. Hanser, APR, president of Hanser & Associates, has written an article discussing the importance of The Public Relations Coalition's white paper for restoring trust. The coalition has issued a new guide for Iowa organizations to rebuild trust.

The link to his opinion/editorial entitled "Transparency: Key to Rebuilding Corporate Trust" is:  
<http://www.hanser.com/100203.htm>

The link to "Restoring Trust in Business: Models for Action" by The Public Relations Coalition is:  
<http://www.prfirms.org/docs/2003/PRCoalitionPaper%20Final.pdf>.

Hanser & Associates is the only Iowa-based member of Council of Public Relations Firms, one of the member organizations of the Coalition.

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## **Robert F. Bonomi, APR, dies in Memphis at 84**

Robert F. Bonomi, APR, died Oct. 13 in Memphis, Tenn., his home since 1973. He had been hospitalized for several years following heart surgery. He was 84. Bonomi was a charter member of Central Iowa Chapter PRSA which was formed in 1968. In Memphis he established and directed a public relations program for the American Contract Bridge League for 10 years before retiring.

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## **Job opportunities . . .**

### **Communications Consultant**

As a Communications Consultant with the Principal Financial Group, you will be responsible for consulting clients to meet their communication needs, with the goal of helping the company meet its objectives. This includes planning and developing communication strategies to further the understanding and perception of policies, procedures, programs, and/or issues. You will determine the communication objectives and may evaluate them against plan, which includes conceptualizing, gathering information, writing, editing and designing print, audio and audiovisual materials. This position also focuses on meeting the client's web communication needs.

Qualifications: College degree or equivalent, plus 4-6 years related work experience required. Must have excellent organizational, problem-solving, presentation, issues management and oral and written communication skills along with strong basic analytical skills. Ability to take an integrated communications approach to solve complex communications issues required. Must be committed to dedicating the time needed to get the job done and consistently meet deadlines. PC skills are required with the ability to maintain a high degree of accuracy and strict attention to detail. Must have HTML experience. Knowledge of Dreamweaver, Knowledgebase, Fireworks, Photoshop or other graphics programs preferred. Must be able to consult with clients and maintain a high degree of confidentiality.

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!

Please send your resume and cover letter to: Principal Financial Group, HR-Employment W\*\*21379, Des Moines, IA 50392-0550. AA/EEO.

### **Iowa Telecom: Media Relations Manager**

Candidate will implement communication strategies and maintain favorable media and public image for company with media stakeholders by communicating company's programs, products, accomplishments, and/or point of view via news releases, fact sheets, scripts, ect. Looking for a creative thinker with strong organizational skills to help develop and manage media relationships with key mediums, announcements, editorial placement and speaking opportunities. Will implement crisis communications efforts and spokesperson duties as needed. Excellent writing skills, strong presentation skills and attention to detail will make you a great candidate.

Requires a bachelor's degree in public relations, communications, journalism, marketing or related field, and 7 years experience in developing and maintaining media relationships with reporters in various mediums in a corporate communications or agency environment. Must have working knowledge of ACT, Word, Access, PowerPoint for IBM.

Interested parties should fax their resumes to Kevin Stittsworth, Iowa Telecom, at 641-787-2001.

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