



A report from the Montgomery Chapter of the Public Relations Council of Alabama

## PRCA-MONTGOMERY NAMES 2003 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

“ I have chosen the field of Public Relations because I know that in this field I can make a difference. I’m not seeking a typical office job, I’m searching for a career where I know that I can leave my mark and know deep down that things are different because of the job that I do.”

—Stacey W. Little

The PRCA-Montgomery board recently named Auburn University Montgomery’s (AUM) Stacey Little as its 2003 Scholarship recipient. Little will receive a \$500 scholarship to help his public relations education. A formal presentation of this scholarship will take place during the April chapter meeting scheduled Monday, April 14, 2003.

Little, a Prattville native, is currently a junior at AUM and has declared his major in communications studies with a minor in mass communications. He explains that he chose Public Relations because he “under-

stands the impact Public Relations can have.”

His interest in this field came as a sophomore in high school when he was elected as the Public Relations Coordinator for the Alabama - West Florida District of the international Junior Civitan organization. His fascination for PR grew over time and he now serves as the vice president of the AUM’s Public Relations Council of Alabama student chapter.

Recipients for the annual scholarship are required to submit a one page essay on why they chose to study Public Relations and what they hope to accomplish through this career. In addition, they also were required to include a current resume, transcripts and written recommendations. The board makes its selection based on the quality of their essay, their involvement in public relations, and grades.

**SPRF**

**DEADLINE!**

**Annual Lantern Awards  
Thursday, June 5, 2003**



As agents of change, you are encouraged to showcase your talents and energies by entering this year’s awards competition. The entry booklet is now available on the SPRF Web site, [www.sprf.org](http://www.sprf.org). Deadline for this year’s awards competition is Thursday, June 5, so don’t delay in downloading the booklet, which includes general information about the awards, deadlines, how to enter and costs. Judging by last year’s record-breaking entries, the 2003 competition will recognize the most significant PR programs and publications in our four-state region. The award ceremony will take place during the SPRF|PRCA Annual State Conference October 23 - 24, 2003 in Auburn, Alabama.



**JAMMED UP IN PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAFFIC?  
WHY NOT TOOT YOUR HORN!**

The call for entries has gone out for the Southern Public Relations Federation's Lantern Awards. Now is the time to get it in gear for the award season. Before you know it, you'll also be racing to meet the deadline for our local Starr Awards and the statewide Medallions.

At our April meeting, Derek Brown and I will attempt to explain what can make you a winner with the judges. What makes us experts? We served as bodyguards for all of the Public Relations Council of Alabama Medallion entries during judging last year in Atlanta. We blended into the woodwork and listened closely for 10 hours as nine judges reviewed 167 entries. Experts?, probably not, but we certainly learned a few secrets.

Our chapter can claim some of the most talented public relations professionals anywhere, but no one will know it unless we enter our best work in these upcoming competitions.

If you are one of those who always wins something, please be at the meeting this month to share your insights. If you've been cheated out of glory at every turn, come so you can outsmart the judges and the competition this year.

We'll also recognize excellence in one of our student chapter members as we award our student scholarship for 2003.

We're all winners; let's make sure everyone knows it.

*Nancy King Dennis*

**PRCA Board Directory**

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**CHAPTER MEETING  
APRIL 14, 2003**

**UNLOCKING THE MYSTERIES OF THE  
MEDALLION AWARDS**

Guest Speakers:  
Nancy Dennis & Derek Brown

11:45 a.m. | RSA Plaza Terrace  
\$12 | member  
\$15 | non-member  
RSVP: Thursday, April 10  
[pcollins@tourism.state.al.us]



Ladies and Gentlemen! Join PRCA-Montgomery on April 14 as we unlock the Mysteries of the Ancient Medallions!

Our own Nancy Dennis and Derek Brown co-chaired the 2002 PRCA Medallion Awards competition, and will share their insiders' knowledge. From selecting appropriate entry materials to filling out forms, Nancy and Derek have their own award-winning experiences to relate.

But beyond that, Nancy and Derek both spent quality time with the judges themselves, sequestered away in a smoke-filled room in Atlanta. They will reveal secrets and tricks that have bedazzled Medallion entrants for centuries! If you've ever wondered how a Medallion-winning entry is pulled from hundreds, you won't want to miss this magical meeting!

## MEETING NEWS



### ALL "L" BREAKS LOOSE AT MARCH MEETING

Jenny Nolen knows what the "L" she's talking about, and proved it at the March meeting of PRCA -Montgomery. "L" stands for Living, and using her own brand of Southern Fried humor Jenny gave us some

keen insights into how to get the most out of life.

Nolen is a trainer for Prattville-based Knowledge Management Solutions, Inc., and she is a member of the Alabama Speakers Association and the National Speakers Association. She was selected as a Showcase Speaker for the '96 NSA Convention. Now we know why!

During the "L" fest, Nolen entertained and inspired all with storytelling and a celebration of humor called "The Seven L's of Living." For those of you who L-ected not to join us, here are the basic L-ements:

- **Look:** The good things in life are always there, but sometimes you have to look hard for them.
- **Listen:** You'll be surprised at what you might hear.
- **Learn:** You're never too old for this.
- **Laugh:** It really is good medicine, especially when you direct it at yourself.
- **Lean:** No one is an island. You've got to depend on others.
- **Let Go:** Lose your old, worn-out emotional baggage.
- **Love:** It may not be all you need, but it's pretty darn close!

If you are currently volunteering your PR services for an organization, or have volunteered your time during 2003, Kathy Midgley asks that you eMail her with this information.

## PRCA TAKES ACTION

To-date, PRCA - Montgomery has completed or has worked on five projects in six months; Brantwood Children's Home Christmas party, Brantwood's Valentines Day Surprise, Bedtime Stories for Children, *Montgomery Bus Boycott 50th Anniversary*, and the *Share the Road* project. Not bad says our VP of Projects, Kathy Midgley. Below is an update on the active projects. If you are interested in volunteering for any or all, just eMail Kathy Midgley and she will more than happy to add you to the list.

([kmidgley@bellsouth.net](mailto:kmidgley@bellsouth.net))

### BEDTIME STORIES FOR CHILDREN - UPDATE

A special thank you goes out to the 10 volunteers who donated their time for the *Bedtime Stories for Children* at Tutwiler. The next scheduled date for this project is April 26. Kathy Midgley, VP

of Projects will be out-of-town for this one but don't let that stop you from going.

Please eMail Kathy and let her know if you are interested in participating.

### SHARE THE ROAD

Montgomery chapter members Darryl Gates and Linda Lee still welcome volunteers for the *Share the Road* project. This effort

both honors the memory of Montgomery physician Jim Glassner, who was killed by a motorist while cycling in late 2001, and to help make Montgomery more of a "bicycle friendly" city. Gates and Lee would like to thank the four volunteers that have stepped up and donated their time for this project.

## F.Y.I

### FIRST EDITION OF NEWSPAPER DISTRIBUTED

Montgomery's midtown communities now have their own newspaper, thanks to Realtor Sandra Nickel. Nickel has distributed 4,000 copies of the first edition of *Midtown Living* this month through the Garden District and Cloverdale communities.

The newspaper features news of interest to midtown residents,

recipes, columns from syndicated writers and crossword puzzles. "I did this because of a combination of things. First, I wanted to promote the quality of life in the middle of town, and I wanted to do something different from what other people are doing," Nickel said. More issues are planned.

## [ CRISIS MANAGEMENT ] THE BOTCHED TRANSPLANT

by Joan Stewart, *The Publicity Hound*\*

During the tragic story about the botched transplant and the resulting death of Jessica Santillan, I paid particular attention to the way doctors at Duke University Medical Center handled the crisis.

So did Jonathan Bernstein, one of the foremost crisis communications counselors in the U.S. I asked Jonathan to share his thoughts on how the hospital reacted to this crisis. His comments:

"I think the hospital has done a good job. It's a horrible situation and while fault has not been fully assigned to any one person or organization yet, no one disputes that a horrible error occurred. The hospital's response followed many of the basic tenets of effective crisis communications:

- **Promptness.** Minimizing damage from rumors and from delay-related perceptions that they don't care.
- **Compassion.** Repeated expressions of compassion for Jessica and her family, with personal breast-beating over the mistake.
- **Information.** There have been several hospital press releases, all on their website using the Internet's news publishing capabilities for crisis management, and any number of press conferences/briefings. They now have a chronology of events on their website, something I always recommend to clients.
- **Honesty.** They have, at least, acknowledged that they screwed up, somehow. No denials or obfuscating. Whether there was or will be full honesty will only be determined by what's revealed over time.
- **Being solution-oriented.** They said "let's focus on helping Jessica, first, and making sure this can't happen again."

CNN.COM TODAY reported that Jessica's family says Duke told them immediately about the mistake but didn't discuss it publicly for 10 days. That was costly because media attention about the botched surgery would have helped the hospital find another set of organs sooner. A family spokesperson was quoted as saying "To me, if the little girl dies...they murdered her."

"I would add one bit of advice to the hospital going forward," Jonathan said. "They need to explain their request for the family to stay quiet if they in fact gave such advice. Or else they'll be accused of trying to cover it up and only going public when there was no choice--which will undermine any credibility and sympathy they've gained in the interim."

*\*Reprinted from "The Publicity Hound's Tips of the Week," a free ezine featuring tips, tricks and tools for generating free publicity.*

## APRIL STORY IDEAS

by Joan Stewart, *The Publicity Hound*\*

- **Daylight Savings Time** begins April 6. If this affects how you do business, let reporters know.
- April is **National Child Abuse Prevention Month**. Non-profits and hospitals can write tip sheets on the right way for parents to deal with children who misbehave.
- **Administrative Professionals Day** is celebrated April 23. Pitch stories on the changing role of administrative professionals, what they REALLY want as gifts on their special day, or a tip sheet on how they can handle stress while multi-tasking.
- **Passover** begins at sundown on April 16. Any organization celebrating with a seder can offer recipes, discuss customs and offer background information.
- **Easter** is on April 20. Churches should let print and broadcast media know about unusual services being held during Holy Week, such as the washing of the feet.
- Accountants, CPAs and consumer agencies who have tips for last-minute **income tax** filers should let the media know. It's also a good time to remind people where they can find tax forms.
- **National Arbor Day** is April 25. Many states observe Arbor Day on different dates according to their best tree-planting times. Check this list to see when your state or territory observes Arbor Day.  
<http://www.arboday.org/arboday/arbodayDates.html>

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