



**CMU PRSSA
ANNUAL REPORT
2015-2016**

*“Be a leader,
be an innovator,
be great.”*

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The President's Address – how formal. I'm going to scale it back a little bit and take this paragraph of space I have to simply thank the members of PRSSA for an amazing year. Our chapter has accomplished a lot this year, but what I'm most proud of isn't a tangible outcome. I'm proud of the familial atmosphere our members have created this year. While we can't boast impressive statistics about our culture, I hope it's something all of our members can feel. I'm leaving PRSSA with an amazing support system. I feel so lucky to have been a part of an organization that not only gave me the skills to be successful, but also the resources. So I'll end this with one more sincere thank you to our members for making this an amazing year for CMU PRSSA, but also with a piece of advice. Don't forget how much PRSSA can provide you. Yes, you get to put your skillset to the test in committees and you get the opportunity to network with speakers at general meetings, but don't forget one of the most valuable aspects of PRSSA that is right under your nose – the relationships you have with other members. We will all be in the field together some day, and I really can't wait to cross paths with you all again.

Until then,
Elise Pelletier

PRC CEO ADDRESS

Wow, it's already the end of the year. I want to give a big thank you to my executive board and all of my members. It has been a big honor to see you all grow. This year, one of my biggest goals for the firm was to become more nationally recognized with PRSSA Nationals. After a lot of hard work, I'm happy to say that PR Central became the third firm in Michigan to achieve National Affiliation. Another way we connected with national chapter happened in October when I was asked to speak at PRSSA National Conference during the student-firm workshop on behalf of PR Central. Since then, my executive board has helped three schools across the country begin a student-firm and four other schools apply for National Affiliation. On a local level, PR Central members worked with ten clients from across the state to help promote their business or organization. We also worked hard to break the fundraising goal of PR Central's big fundraiser, the Fourth Annual Rubber Ducky Derby. I could not be more proud of how far PR Central has come over the years, especially this year. It has been remarkable to see students grow and become confident in themselves and their PR skills.

- Rachel Quinn

EXECUTIVE BOARD



**ELISE
PELLETIER**

Position: President
Year: Senior



**RACHEL
QUINN**

Position: CEO of
PR Central
Year: Senior



**ALEX
HAYMAKER**

Position: Vice
President
Year: Senior



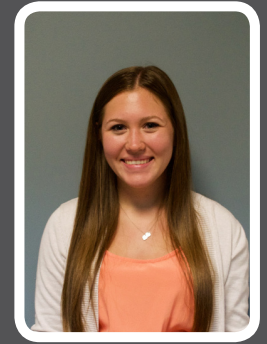
**BRE
MOORE**

Position: Director
of Professional
Development
Year: Senior



**HALLE
SOBCZAK**

Position: Director
of Internal
Communications
Year: Senior



**DREW
THOMASSON**

Position: Director
of Finance
Year: Junior



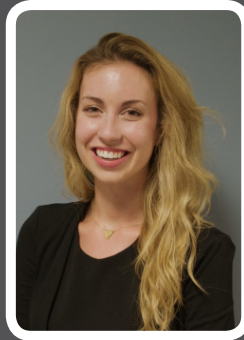
**DANA
BLANKENSHIP**

Position: Director
of Member
Services
Year: Junior



**NICOLE
ROBERTS**

Position: Director
of Public Relations
Year: Junior



**MADISON
HUTTON**

Position: Director
of Social Media
Year: Senior



**LUCY
CIARAMITARO**

Position: Director
of Recruitment
Year: Senior



**KIMBERLY
SAMPSON**

Position: Director
of Leadership
Year: Junior

INTERNSHIP FAIR

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2015

Integrative Public Relations, advertising, journalism, marketing and communications majors gathered in the University Rotunda Wednesday, Nov. 11 for the internship fair. All were dressed to impress and prepared with resumes, business cards and portfolios. Students had the opportunity to network and begin their internship hunt. Professionals from corporate companies, agencies and nonprofit organizations were available to answer questions about internship application processes. Students were also able to get a professional headshot for LinkedIn and their other networking platforms as a part of a chapter fundraiser. We extend a cordial thank you to the organizations and students that made the event a success. Twenty-two organizations and 81 students attended.



ALL-ACCESS DIGITAL

Spring Conference



**JENNY
HEINRICH**

Jenny Heinrich was one of our keynote speakers. She is the VP of digital strategy at Edelman, and explained how in an increasingly digital world, having digital strategy is vital.



**NIKKI
LITTLE**

Nikki Little was our lunch keynote speaker. She is the account director on the social media team at Identity PR. She explained how her team used media/ blogger relations and social media strategies to promote the opening of SEA LIFE Michigan.



**JON
BEEBE**

Jon Beebe is the director of integrated data and analytics for General Motors. He spoke about why digital analytics are essential in public relations and advertising strategy.



**EMILY
SANDBERG**

Emily Sandberg is a senior copywriter at Cars.com. She gave tips on how to write in a way that communicates your message both simply and engagingly.



**TOM
WICKHAM**

Tom Wickham is the manager of communications of GM's North America Manufacturing and Labor Relations Organizations. He spoke about how GM responded to the Flint water crisis.



**BOB
RINDERLE**

Bob Rinderle is the director of digital marketing and communication at the Dow Chemical Company. This session focused on the role of content across the customer journey and how it can attract customers.



NATIONAL EVENTS

National Conference

National Conference was hosted in Atlanta, beginning on Nov. 5 and ending on Nov. 8. The conference centered on “Rethink, Rebuild, Renew,” navigating both professional and personal brands in a real-world setting. National Conference offered eight CMU students the opportunity to learn, grow and develop professional skills from industry professionals. Scott Williamson, vice president of public affairs and communications for Coca-Cola North America, was the keynote speaker, focusing on audience involvement. Dana Blankenship, Jennifer Eskridge, Rachel Felice Alex Haymaker, Bre Moore, Briana Lamar, Rachel Quinn and Amy Vos all attended the conference on behalf of CMU PRSSA.



National Assembly

National Assembly took place in Austin, starting on March 3 and ending on March 6 for a week of networking and development. At National Assembly, PRSSA leaders from across the nation learn how to grow and enhance their chapters while garnering feedback from their peers. Our members were able to network and share ideas with other chapters throughout the nation. David Grossman, founder and CEO of The Grossman Group, keynoted the event and addressed student leadership in PRSSA chapters.

The new PRSSA National Committee was elected at National Assembly. Drew Forrest served as CMU PRSSA’s delegate to vote and Dana Blankenship attended as a non-delegate.

NATIONAL EVENTS

Regional Conference

Regional conference took place at Wayne State University this year. Michigan State University and Wayne State University paired up to host The Tale of Our City: PR's Role in Detroit's Revitalization. The goal of this conference was to educate people on how you can change the image of a place as big as Detroit. It also focused on showing everything the city has to offer. Speakers included professionals from Truscott Rossman, Finn Partner, Franco Public Relations, Crain's Detroit Business, Blue Cross Blue Shield and many more. Dana Blankenship, Nicole Roberts and Rachel Quinn attended the conference.



GENERAL MEETINGS

Sept. 15 – General Meeting: Young Professionals Panel

The first PRSSA meeting of the year kicked off with three guests speakers; Jory Little, Mary Klenk and Mel Purdy for our first networking panel. Our young professionals gave us a taste of the PR life discussing the different aspects of PR and communications in their companies. They shared what skills are important to improve on in preparation for a job in the profession after college.

Sept. 29 – General Meeting: Mock Interviews and Better Interview Answers

A representative from Dow Chemical, Alicia Harpham, came to speak about their internship program and give valuable resume and interview tips. Some highlights of her advice include, “It’s always better to overdress for an interview than underdress,” and “show company knowledge in an introductory email or cover letter.” Harpham left the members with a better idea of how to master an interview and land the internship of their dreams. Dow Chemical is very keen on professionalism and gave essential tips every college student should focus on.

Oct. 13 – General Meeting-Mentor/Mentee Mixer

Members were introduced to pitching. Students found it extremely helpful and enjoyed the techniques and tips that were shared. After the meeting, the mentor/mentee mixer took place. This gave new members the chance to get more comfortable in the organization and reach out to e-board members for advice.

Oct. 27 – General Meeting: Pitching 101

This general meeting was all about media relations, and how to give your best elevator pitch when networking. Members learned how to professionally pitch to journalists through some examples and a group activity. E-Board members, Alex Haymaker and Dana Blankenship led the activity splitting everyone up into four groups and giving each group a food item to create an elevator pitch about. From there, the groups competed to see who could present the product most effectively. Also, the kickstart of our chapter’s t-shirt fundraiser began to raise money for those going to national conference.

Nov. 17 – General Meeting: Mock Press Conference

In today’s meeting we focused on PR Ethics. Executive board members Nicole Roberts, director of public relations and Dana Blankenship, director of member services, ran the meeting. The Tuesday night general meeting consisted of a PR ethics activity that took up the duration of the time. The activity involved splitting all attendees into four separate groups where each group was given three cases to discuss and conduct a fictional press conference. Each team would then present in front of the other members. The various cases were made up of real life situations within major companies experiencing problems that went public. Each group had to analyze each case and decide whether it was or was not ethical on how the company or person responsible handled the situation.

Dec. 1 – General Meeting: Ethics Game

Guest speaker Matt Friedman, the co-founder of well-known PR Agency Tanner Friedman, came to PRSSA’s general meeting Dec. 1 to share his insight on ethics. Friedman discussed the importance of how ethics represent honesty, integrity and the reputation of a business. It was a great opportunity for members to ask questions and get some advice from such a well-respected employer such as Friedman himself.

GENERAL MEETINGS

Jan. 12 – General Meeting: LinkedIn Workshop

E-Board member and PR Central's CEO, Rachel Quinn, led a workshop on the ins-and-outs of LinkedIn and how to virtually brand yourself. The meeting's main focus was professionalism and how to better your profile through simple adjustments such as a proper headshot as a profile picture to accurately depict who you are. Quinn also gave tips on ways to stand out the first time you meet a professional and how to showcase your experience as a PR practitioner. Quinn delivered a great meeting that kept members engaged through hands-on activities.

Jan. 26 – General Meeting: Internship 101 with Jim Wojcik

Journalism professor and PRSSA advisor, Jim Wojcik, gave advice to members regarding how to get ahead on applying for summer internships and application etiquette. He also went through the requirements for completing an IPR internship and receiving the necessary credit.

Feb. 9 – General Meeting: Advertising

Guest speaker and CMU advertising professor, Johnny Sparks, talked advertising. PR and advertising go hand in hand within the marketing mix and Sparks was helpful cleared up the similarities and differences, along with showing examples of effective advertising. Some key examples came from TV Super Bowl ads throughout the years. As a group we analyzed the advertising objectives and key elements like the specific target market, overall demographic and message behind the ad.

Feb. 23 – General Meeting: Advertising Part 2

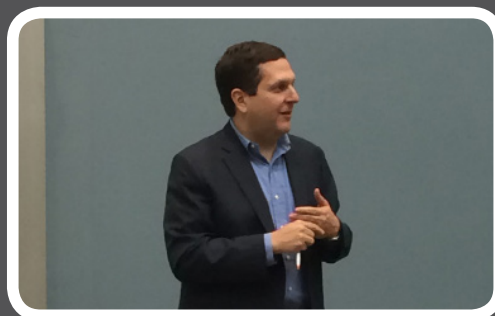
Members watched popular commercials and developed potential advertising campaigns based off of them. One example was Extra's gum campaign, which demonstrated how love and something as simple as gum can bring people together. Groups thought of ideas to further develop the campaign. Ideas from art galleries to spreading happiness on social media were discussed.

March 15 – General Meeting: Leadership Institution Activity

Guest speakers from the CMU Leadership department helped members identify their top three values and leadership style. Afterward, members had a reflective conversation about how values impact professional life. Early registration was announced for the "All-Access Digital" Conference.

March 29 – General Meeting: Leadership Panel

Two CMU alumni, Emily Gerkin Guerrant and Vince Thurman, were guests on the leadership panel. They advised members on building portfolios, professional development and strengthening leadership and interviewing skills.



COMMITTEES



Chapter Events

We have enjoyed hosting six socials during the academic year and an exceptional banquet. Our committee has worked tirelessly to make each chapter event unique for PRSSA members, which was reflected in the attendance at our events. From pajama game nights and coffee dates to pumpkin patch outings, we are pleased to have brought our members closer together. On a larger scale, the implementation and follow through of the newly designed point system has seen an overall increase in attendance. We are looking forward to seeing the point system grow in people and events in future semesters.



Social Media

The social media committee has focused on every aspect of creative thinking throughout the year. By doing activities to learn appropriate social media post format and AP style, we have created engaging content for the Internship Fair, monthly socials and Spring Conference. From September to April we have increased our Facebook likes by 58 bringing us up to 593 page likes. We have reached up to 1,000 people per post and have increased our post engagement to 2,035 for the month of April. We also conducted a competitor audit on the other PRSSA chapters in Michigan, which helped us determine what our successful and unsuccessful tactics were.



Publications

The publications committee has worked extremely hard to put together the PRofile, which is CMU PRSSA's monthly newsletter. Working on deadlines, each member was able to come up with different themes, feature stories and designs for six issues. Members also helped to increase the amount of blogs that are published on our website. With that, the publications committee also worked to write content and design the first-ever annual report for CMU PRSSA.



Professional Development

The professional development committee has worked meticulously all year round. In the past school year, PDC has gathered every Monday night to accomplish two large-scale events. In the fall, we worked together as a team to plan and execute the annual internship fair. We had more than twenty organizations, with nearly 105 student attendees. The spring semester turned out to be even busier than the fall. Our committee planned the CMU PRSSA/White Pine PRSA All-Access Digital Conference. There were more than 90 attendees who came to hear six different speakers from across the mid-west.

SOCIALS



October Social

October's PRSSA social took a trip to Papa's Pumpkin Patch for some fall festivities on Oct. 25. Members carpoled together from Moore Hall to Papa's Pumpkin Patch to enjoy fresh cider and donuts, a hayride and a search for the perfect pumpkin.

November Social

November PRSSA social was a PJ themed potluck game night members to attend. The event was held on campus in Powers Hall 136 on Nov.19. Most members came dressed for the occasion in pajamas ranging from comfortable clothes to over the top footy pajamas. Members participated in games such as Cards Against Humanity and Heads Up with the chance to interact and connect with others in the organization.

December Social

With exams around the corner, we headed to Kaya for a coffee break on Dec. 6 with our PRSSA friends. This social focused on getting together for a few laughs and good conversation before heading back to the library and hitting the books.

January Social

January kicked off this year's socials with a "bring your own mug" coffee date on Jan. 31. Members were encouraged to bring their own cute, funny or unique mug for an afternoon of conversation. Coffee and snacks were provided as we all formed a circle to reflect on our favorite and least favorite classes and memories here at Central. It was a great chance to share some wisdom and a few laughs as well!

February Social

Inspired by the film "Legally Blonde," we hosted a snap-cup appreciation party. Members were able to write out warm thoughts to each other, which were then read by members for everyone to enjoy.

March Social

Members received some great advice and Mexican food at the La Senorita's social. The social was a part of the PRSSA fundraiser and a portion of each person's bill went back to our chapter. After the general meeting, members were encouraged to attend the social along with Emily Gerkin Guerrant, vice president of marketing, communications and public relations for Pure Michigan.

Cardboard City

On Nov. 15 members braved the cold to raise awareness of homelessness by participating in the campus wide event Cardboard City. Members participated in the candlelight vigil and spent a portion of the evening outside on the lawn of the Park Library in a cardboard house constructed by donated cardboard boxes and duct tape.

Relay for Life

On April 9, our chapter participated in CMU's Relay For Life event for the first time to help raise money for cancer research. This was a philanthropic event for our chapter. Members helped bake goods so participants could pay to be in a cake walk at the event.

PR CENTRAL

FALL 2015 EXECUTIVE BOARD

CEO – Rachel Quinn
VP – Jared Martella
Director of Finance – Amy Vos
Director of Digital Communication – Rachel Felice
Director of Membership – Bri Lamar
Director of Internal Communication – Kayla Collins
Director of Operations – Alex Haymaker



SPRING 2016 EXECUTIVE BOARD

CEO – Rachel Quinn
VP – Rachel Felice
Director of Finance – Amy Vos
Director of Digital Communication – Lauren Peterson
Director of Membership – Kayla Collins
Director of Internal Communication – Kenneth Thompson
Director of Operations – Brandon Merritt



CLIENTS

All Natural Veterinary Care
Fireside Grille
Leadership Camp
MiHIA
Morey Courts

Painted Turtle Pottery Studio
TCD Racing
White Pine PRSA
Journalism Digital Discovery

DUCK DERBY

The Fourth Annual Rubber Ducky Derby

March 30 at 9 p.m. at the Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel

Goal: 1,200 ducks to sell Accomplished 1,300+ ducks sold

PR Central's Fourth Annual Ducky Derby fundraiser took place on March 30 at the Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel and broke records. During the event, hundreds of ducks raced down the waterslide and into the lazy river to the finish line.

The first duck to cross the finish line won \$500, second duck to cross won a two-night stay at the Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel with waterpark passes and the third duck to cross won a CMU Prize Bundle. Derby results were announced immediately after the race ended and winners did not have to be present to win.

To help meet their goal, PR Central challenged each of their members to sell 50 ducks. Ducks could be bought from a member, the day-of-event at the Soaring Eagle Waterpark or, new this year, online. PR Central also reached out to IPR alumni through social media to create awareness of the Ducky Derby and sell ducks. The executive board created an alumni challenge. Alumni were challenged to purchase one rubber duck for every year that they have been an IPR alumni. This challenge helped sell about 180 ducks.

The firm's goal was 1,250 ducks sold and they broke the goal and previous selling records. Overall, more than 1,300 ducks and five silent auction baskets were sold.

PR Central made about \$2,000 in profits this year. Proceeds support day-to-day functions and expenses of our firm as well as three scholarships that send members to PRSSA National Conference.



GENERAL MEMBERS

Casey Baetens
Alexis Baker
Carly Bjarnesen
Dana Blankenship
Victoria Bowman
Haley Burrill
Monique Bushee
Natalie Campbell
Nicole Campbell
Lucette Ciaramitaro
Kayla Collins
Shannon Cuff
Matthew Curtis-Watkins
McKenzie Doriot
Jennifer Eskridge
Rachel Felice
Amanda Ficher
Kelsea Fitzpatric
Kelly Forrester
Demond Glover
Alex Gonzales
Cassidy Gould
Tucker Hanson
Alexandria Haymaker
Elise Hubel
Madiosn Hutton
Abigail Isham
Desiree Jordan
Tyler Khan
Sarah King
Kristopher Kohler
Chloe Kosinski
Isabella Krolkowski
Melissa Krutsch
Claire Kupris
Spencer Lebel
Patrick Lemanski
Marissa Lesch
Lisa Levandoski
R.J. Lonczkowski
Paige Long
Hannah Malinowski

Jasmine Martinez
Dominick Mastrangelo
Brandon Merritt
Hannah Metevia
Kaylah Metkalf
Samantha Meyer
Bre Moore
Patrick Morgenstern
Amber Morris
Katlyn Moss
Shelby Murphy
Catherine Pace
Elena Panyard
Logan Pellegrom
Elise Pelletier
Lauren Peterson
Gina Pizzimenti
Hadley Platek
Rachel Quinn
Rachel Riehl
Nicole Roberts
Abigail Robinson
Luke Roguska
Elizabeth Rouech
Kimberly Sampson
Natalie Scalabrino
Sarah Scalici
Orrin Shawl
Lauren Sobecki
Ausin Stowe
Jacob Strom
Drew Thomasson
Kenneth Thompson
Megan Timmer
Alyssa Tippens
Catherine Tuch
Amy Vos
Aaron Wittbrodt
Hanming Yang
Amanda Yats
Regina Zebell
Jacquelyn Zeman

NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD



**DANA
BLANKENSHIP**

Position: President
Year: Junior



**KAYLA
COLLINS**

Position: CEO of
PR Central
Year: Junior



**NICOLE
ROBERTS**

Position: Vice
President
Year: Junior



**KIMBERLY
SAMPSON**

Position: Director
of Professional
Development
Year: Junior



**NATALIE
CAMPBELL**

Position: Director
of Internal
Communications
Year: Sophomore



RACHEL RIEHL

Position: Director
of Finance
Year: Sophomore



**ELENA
PANYARD**

Position: Director
of Member
Services
Year: Sophomore



**ISABELLA
KROLIKOWSKI**

Position: Director
of Public Relations
Year: Sophomore



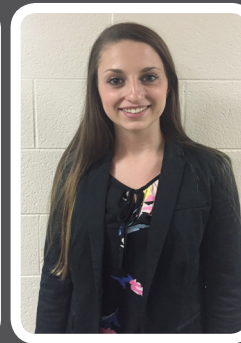
**DREW
THOMASSON**

Position: Director
of Social Media
Year: Junior



**DREW
FORREST**

Position: Director
of Recruitment
Year: Sophomore



GINA ZEBELL

Position: Director
of Leadership
Year: Freshman



**ALEX
GONZALES**

Position: Creative
Director
Year: Junior

THANK YOU

On behalf of CMU PRSSA's executive board, thank you to everyone who supported our chapter this year.

