

THE PROGRESS REPORT

A Public Relations Student Society of America at Louisiana State University Publication



Did You Know?

PRSSA at LSU has its own job and internship [database](#).

LSU Career Services offer services such as mock interviews and [résumé reviews](#).

Manship Networking Neight is [Thursday, March 10](#).

Stay Connected with your Executive Board:

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[@jolena_ann](#)

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[@darlanguyen_](#)

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A Letter from the President

Can you believe it's already March? I firmly believe this season is one of the best times to be in Louisiana – beautiful weather, crawfish... need I say more?

It's also prime time to begin your search for a summer internship or post-grad job, and we want to help you be successful. Master the interview process with help from our interview workshop, build your portfolio on one of our committees and zero in on your perfect fit in PR with the upcoming "Pick Your Place" panel. When you secure that dream position, let us know – we want to celebrate the success of all of our members.

Looking for another great way to put yourself ahead of the pack? Have you considered running for PRSSA executive office? Any active member can apply, as long as you have five points by the application deadline, March 17. Just ask one of the current e-board members about the value in a PRSSA leadership position. I promise I'm not making this up! Get the

application on our website at [prssalsu.com](#).

So, I know what you're thinking – you have SO much work to do that you're actually barely keeping up right now. I feel you. That's why we are working hard to end the semester with some great events that will help you stretch your creative muscles and celebrate a great spring semester.

Save the date now for an event planning competition with Chase Lyons of City Pork on April 21 and our Spring Social on April 28. You don't want to miss these great events!

As we power through the last two months of the year, remember that your e-board is here to serve you, our members. We look forward to chatting about any questions or ideas you have to share.

Tara Hebert
President
Manship Senior
[@THbear94](#)







Editor's Note:

The newsletter is interactive! Click on blue hyperlinks and graphics to visit another website or to read more of an article.

Mark Your Calendar: Spring 2016

March

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3 	4 	5 
6 	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29 	30	31		

-  - PRSSA National Assembly in Austin, Tx.
-  - Meetings/Gatherings/Workshops
-  - ImPRint Firm Meetings
-  - Officer applications deadline

April

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 	15	16 
17	18	19	20	21 	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 	29	30

-  - Spring Social & Awards
-  - Service Events

Dine Like a Professional Banquet Recap

The Professional Development Committee hosted Dine Like a Professional, an annual etiquette dinner, on Thursday, Feb. 26. Members and friends clad in business casual attire enjoyed catered food from Bistro Byronz while listening to etiquette expert, Jill Rigby Garner.

“Manners is the attitude of the heart that is self-giving, not self-serving,” Garner said, emphasizing that to succeed in proper etiquette, one must remember basic kindness and selflessness.

Garner addressed a wide variety of etiquette-related topics such as entering a room, table setting placement, and business dinner protocol. After speaking, she encouraged questions from members.

Members then applied newly gained information while eating and socializing. Provided reflection questions encouraged them to make new friends and network.

Remember to mind your manners. Here are some important takeaways from Jill Rigby Garner’s presentation:

1. Keep your napkin on your lap from the moment

you sit down until the moment you leave.

2. Remember the number rule. The word “right” has five letters, just like the words “knife,” “spoon” and “glass.” These utensils go on the right side of the plate. “Left” has four letters like “fork,” so forks go on the left side.
3. Pass items around the table to the right and do not take some for yourself first. Be self-giving.
4. If you are invited to a business luncheon, follow the example of your host. Do not order extra courses or go too high above the price range established by the host’s order.
5. Never order an alcoholic beverage at a business lunch if your host has not also ordered one, and do not drink more than two alcoholic beverages.

Malori Bezet
Manship Junior
[@Maloribee](#)



PRSSA at LSU Guest Speaker In-Depth

Author and Speaker Sara Horn shared her experiences and insights Thursday, Feb. 4 on what it takes to build a personal brand that wins over future employers. Her advice for building a personal brand ranged from checking one's social media presence and profile pictures to showcasing one's uniqueness and knowing how to own it.

She also suggested for members to be willing to work for free in order to get the most experience. At the end of the day, experience is more valuable than money and grades.

"Personal branding is important in public relations because everything you do for a company or for a cause you represent reflects on that company or cause," said Horn. "[Also] personal branding is important as a communications professional because you want to identify and emphasize the strengths you have that makes you uniquely you because this is what people who follow you or connect with you will see."

Horn started her writing career 16 years ago as a news director for a private university and later as a media relations specialist for a large publisher in Nashville, Tn. In addition to her work as a ghostwriter and collaborator, she has published seven books of her own in the last 10 years and has made numerous appearances on radio and television including the Today Show with Kathie Lee and Hoda, Focus on the Family and Family Life Today.



Sara Horn

Author and
Speaker

[@sarahorn](#)



Stafford Wood

Professional Adviser
Co-Founder and
Principal of Covalent
Logic

[@staffordlogic](#)

Stafford Wood, PRSSA at LSU's professional adviser and co-founder of Covalent Logic, held a LinkedIn Workshop on Thursday, Feb. 18. At the workshop, Wood shared her insight of how to effectively utilize LinkedIn. She advised members to think of the "other side" of social media and gave the following tips:

- Craft your profile with key words that will stand out to a reader.
- Use wordcounter.net to track the number of words that have been used on your profile.
- Consolidate multiple positions into one listing to avoid the perception of a "job hopper."
- Itemize what you achieved and what you brought to the company, not what you were asked to do.
- Use consistency in language and format.
- Place key words on the left side of the page—people read in an F-style.
- Constantly update your profile—you are never finished with it!

Stafford Wood works at the intersection of technology, graphic design and public relations. As co-founder and principal of Covalent Logic, an adaptive communications firm, her work recently won 17 awards from the American Advertising Federation including three Best In Show awards for Copywriting, Integrated Campaign and Interactive. She has been personally chosen as Junior Achievement and Business Report's Young Businessperson of the Year. Stafford is a graduate of LSU 1995 in Political Science with a minor in Eastern European, Soviet and Russian Area Studies.

Alumni Panel: Where Are They Now?



Emily Beck
Performing Arts
Center Marketing
and Booking
Coordinator
Class of 2014



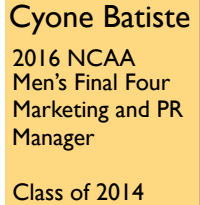
Mallory Richardson
Tupelo Honey
Cafe Digital
Marketing
Coordinator
Class of 2014



Lexi Verret
LSU First Year
Experience
Marketing and
Communications
Assistant
Class of 2015



Hailey Vincent
BBR Creative
PR Associate
Class of 2013



Cyone Batiste
2016 NCAA
Men's Final Four
Marketing and PR
Manager
Class of 2014



Erin Kenna
Visit Mississippi
Gulf Coast
PR and Media
Manager
Class of 2014



Megan Talley
NRG Energy, Inc.
Communications
Specialist
Class of 2014



What is your favorite part of being in the PR field?

Richardson: I would have to say that the versatility of public relations is my favorite part of the job. The fast-paced nature of the industry and today's ever-changing technology is what keeps me on my toes and hungry to keep learning— I don't think I've ever been bored at a job!

Talley: As a public relations professional, I really enjoy the opportunity the field provides. If I have an idea for a new, compelling way or fresh approach to deliver our messages, I have the opportunity to explore that option. I also have the opportunity to meet amazing people, advance my skills, visit new places and learn about various topics or industries.

Batiste: I love that I'm a story teller. I get to tell the story of every department, every project-of everything we do. Nothing makes me more excited than to see a story picked up that means so much to our organization and our clients. Many people don't get to see the behind-the-scenes action or the people involved in sporting events, outside of the court or off the field. Lucky for me, I get to tell that story and give people an affinity for sports that goes beyond just athletics.

Vincent: I love that no two days look the same — we're working on multiple projects at any given time, each with their own unique challenges.

How has PRSSA at LSU helped you find a job and/or succeed in the public relations industry?

Verret: PRSSA at LSU has helped me tremendously. I actually got my current job through a connection I made with a fellow member. While I learned about the job opportunity because of someone I knew, it was the skills that I acquired from my involvement in PRSSA at LSU that actually got me the job and prepared me to do my job well. If I had not pursued the leadership positions and professional development opportunities PRSSA at LSU offers its members, I don't think I would have been nearly as prepared for the "real-world of PR."

Richardson: To put it bluntly, I would not have known a thing about internship/job hunting or how to succeed in the PR field if it wasn't for PRSSA. PRSSA has truly helped me in everyway I could have imagined — connecting with the industry's brightest minds, making great friends, and even obtaining my first job (with help from a Twitter connection!)

Talley: My experiences with PRSSA at LSU helped shape and mold me into the PR professional I am today. I learned so much about the industry, explored my strengths and gained valuable connections and experience throughout my time as both a member of PRSSA and co-director of ImPRint Communications.

How has PRSSA at LSU helped you find a job and/or succeed in the public relations industry? (cont.)

Kenna: More than anything, PRSSA at LSU gave me confidence in my abilities and allowed me opportunities to flex my PR muscles and learn more about the industry. As I alluded to earlier, PRSSA at LSU and Jensen Moore can be credited with me landing my first full-time job at the largest public relations firm in the world. Get to know your professors, gain more experience through internships in a variety of industries and network with professionals who present at each meeting and event. Put as much time and energy into classes and this organization as you can, and you'll reap benefits for years to come.

Vincent: Gain experience through multiple internships. Polish your professional skills and be comfortable working in an office before you start applying for jobs.

Beck: Being involved in an organization such as PRSSA gives you an upper hand when entering the professional world but only if you take advantage of the presented opportunities. If there is an open seat on the board, go for it. Be the one to sign up for events, positions, conferences, etc. Get your name out there, work with others, and broaden your knowledge of public relations. Leadership and the ability to work with others are key factors that employers want to see when you apply for a position within their company. I learned firsthand that involving yourself with the rest of the organization can only help you improve, and it was by far the best choice I made during my years at LSU.

What is the most important thing we (as students) should do before entering the workforce?

Kenna: I know as a soon-to-be graduate, you've heard that internships and networking are critical. PRSSA is invaluable for both, as you've got a leg up on the competition and you have access to resources many aren't even aware of. On a whim, I applied for the Ruth Edelman/PRSSA Award, leading to my internship at Edelman PR in Chicago. Set some time aside each week to apply for awards, internships and search for local and regional networking opportunities. Even an hour a week can help you map out your next venture.

Verret: I think the most important thing that a student should do before entering the workforce is to leave their comfort zone. Challenge yourself! I joined PRSSA at LSU as a freshman and was scared to get more involved than just attending meetings. I didn't truly start pursuing opportunities within the Chapter until my junior year, and my biggest regret is that I didn't start sooner. If students open their minds, step out of their comfort zones and take on new challenges, I truly believe the opportunities will follow.

Batiste: Get an internship! I know, I sound like an echo from your professors but it's honestly the only way to get experience and get your foot in the door. During my senior year, I had two unpaid internships, one on campus and one in New Orleans. I drove back and forth everyday between classes and meetings, sometimes for only a few hours at a time. It was definitely a struggle at times but turned into my first full-time position out of college and was the base of my career.

Beck: You've heard it before, but I'll say it again – gain experience! There's no reason why you shouldn't obtain 2-3+ internships during your time in college. Internships not only help you grow as a future professional, but they will also help you discover what you like and don't like. There are so many avenues to take with your PR degree, but taking advantage of multiple internship opportunities will help narrow your vision of where you want to be and what you want to be doing.

Thank You PRSSA for the Opportunity

The importance of an internship experience cannot be overstated. In the Manship School of Mass Communication, this is stressed so much that it is part of our curriculum. There is a lot of learning that takes place in the classroom, but it is what you learn while working in the field that can't be taught.

I give a lot of credit to PRSSA for helping me launch my future in public relations. Prior to arriving at LSU, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my major. At my first PRSSA meeting, everything changed for me. PRSSA's guest speaker talked about corporate communications, and I was so fascinated with everything she had to say. She described the job that I wanted to eventually hold--little did I know that I would get the opportunity to shadow her. I followed the speaker for an entire day. I had the chance to experience the field first-hand, ask questions, network and receive advice about my future.

Months later, I went on another job shadow. Both of my job shadows were in manufacturing plants. The two days I spent with these PR professionals allowed me to understand the industry and come to love the corporate setting.

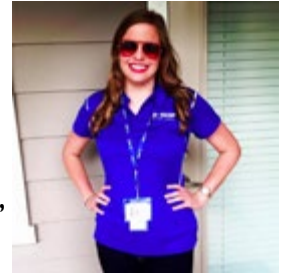
From there, I interviewed with the chemical company BASF in Geismar, La., and now I currently work as a communications intern. My world and outlook on school has completely changed. Working in the corporate sector has reassured that it is the right career choice for me. By placing myself in a real life professional work situation, I

have a better understanding about what a public relations job encompasses.

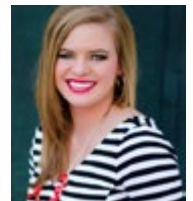
At BASF, I write public relations materials such as press releases, website copies and newsletter articles. I also proofread written materials for style, grammar and AP style. I coordinate and assist with on and off-site events, work on social media outreach and community volunteer efforts, take pictures of events, work with departments to improve site communication efforts, and assist with employee and community event planning.

The opportunity that I have now surpasses anything that I have even imagined of doing during this time of my college career. I'm so thankful that I am getting the opportunity to spend so much time in my field.

My advice to you is that it's never too early for an internship. Experience in the field is what it takes to succeed in our profession. If you can't fit an internship in your schedule, take some time to go on job shadows so that you can find what you're really passionate about.



Brenna Vial
Manship Sophomore
[@brenna_vial](#)



NOTES:



PRSSA at LSU



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A Little More about Cyone Batiste



Cyone Batiste is originally from New Iberia, La and is currently working in Houston, Tx. Cyone graduated from LSU in May 2014 with a bachelor's degree in mass communication with a concentration in public relations. After graduating, Cyone moved to New Orleans to work as the public and media relations manager for the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation. In May, she moved to Houston to work as the marketing and PR manager for the 2016 NCAA Men's Final Four. Cyone enjoys Scandal, 90s TV shows and cheering on her Tigers!

How Batiste describes her typical day at work:

Working in the sports realm, there is no typical day. Every day brings new challenges and high points. Thankfully, that keeps life and work exciting. Typically for me, my days consist of working with our client on various marketing initiatives, meeting with local partners and working with local media to cover our stories and my favorite, social media management.

Batiste's coolest experience she's had at work:

My job as a whole is probably the coolest thing I've ever done. I'm so blessed to be working on the biggest event in college basketball. So far, everything that I've been working on is fun and challenging which is "cool" to me—but I think in a month, when the teams arrive and everything falls into place, the real culmination of everything I've been working on for the past year, that will be the coolest experience.

A Little More about Emily Beck



Emily Beck graduated from the Manship School of Mass Communication in May 2014 with a focus in public relations and a minor in business administration. Her internship and professional experience in media buying and planning, advertising, customer service, sales, marketing and public relations landed her positions with industry-leading companies such as Marucci Sports and SMG, where she is now employed as the Marketing & Booking Coordinator of the Jefferson Performing Arts Center, an SMG Managed Facility.

How Beck describes her typical day at work:

You'll quickly learn that there is never a "typical day" in this industry, and that's the beauty of it. My days can consist of client meetings, building or adjusting client contracts, contacting future clients for bookings, creating and analyzing social media content, etc., and I love the inconsistency of my days.

Beck's coolest experience she's had at work:

For Christmas Eve, we were the host venue for a church service whose guest speaker was NFL Quarterback Drew Brees of the New Orleans Saints. Leading up to the event, Brees tweeted and posted on Facebook about his upcoming event at our theater. On Christmas Eve, he spoke on our stage to an audience of roughly 500 people about his faith and family. As theaters often do, we asked Drew Brees to sign our wall so that we can always remember his time at our venue. I was onsite for the event, took photos of the service as well as his speech, and was able to speak to him afterward. Not only was it a fantastic evening for the attendees, but our theater also gained a tremendous amount of attention through his social media posts about the event.

A Little More about Erin Kenna



Erin Kenna serves as PR/media manager for [Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast](#), a regional tourism entity representing the three coastal counties in Mississippi. She recently moved back to the Coast after more than a year in Chicago, a true survivor of Midwest winters. Kenna graduated from the Manship School of Mass Communication in May 2014. Connect on [Twitter](#) or send her a quick [note](#).

How Kenna describes her typical day at work:

This is always a tough one. My days change constantly, but I'll do my best! I start my day by monitoring media coverage of both Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast and coverage about the region, which is all included in a Daily Media Report shared with the staff. We always need to have a finger on the pulse of what's being said about the area and our organization to ensure we're addressing issues appropriately and have a proactive approach to media coverage.

From there, I'm usually vetting potential media opportunities, building out an itinerary for a writer who plans to visit and highlight the Mississippi Gulf Coast as a destination in a future story, or even hosting a media representative and accompanying them on activities we've planned with our partners. I'm typically sharing images, information and quotes with various reporters who are building out stories as well.

I am constantly writing for various mediums, ranging from emails to press releases to pitches to advertorials in one day. Sprinkle a few meetings with colleagues in discussing upcoming deliverables and deadlines, and you've got a pretty average day!

Kenna's coolest experience she's had at work:

The coolest experience I've had thus far has been working with the [Google Trekker](#) program. We were approached by Google to put the Mississippi Gulf Coast on the map and – of course – said yes. We borrowed the company's Trekker equipment for a few months and took the massive (40 pound) apparatus to various locations where cars can't go. We brought it to our barrier islands, through nature trails, in lighthouses and more. We can't wait to see the live footage later this year!

A Little More about Mallory Richardson



Originally from Mandeville, La., Mallory Richardson graduated from LSU in May 2014, earning a bachelor's degree in mass communication with a concentration in public relations. She served as the publications editor in chief on the 2013-2014 PRSSA National Committee during her senior year, Chapter president her junior year, and Chapter treasurer her sophomore year. She currently lives in Asheville, N.C., and serves as the digital marketing coordinator for a growing Southern restaurant chain, Tupelo Honey Cafe. In her free time, she enjoys reading, playing soccer and planning trips to faraway places.

How Richardson describes her typical day at work:

Everyone will say there is no “typical” day of work in this profession, but my typical day of work in my current position as digital marketing coordinator for Tupelo Honey Cafe looks something like this: Check social media channels throughout the day and engage with users, attend status meetings to go over analytics and/or campaign improvements, creative brainstorming or concepting ideas for our website and social media channels, writing social media, website or blog content, and researching competitors.

Richardson's coolest experience she's had at work:

It's actually upcoming! I've never been a part of or assisted with a photo shoot before, but this month we have been planning for our Mother's Day 2016 promotion photo shoot. I'm really excited to learn more about the process and see how everything will unfold.

A Little More about Megan Talley



[Megan Gibbs Talley](#) is from Bossier City, La. She graduated from the Manship School of Mass Communication in May 2014 with her bachelor's degree in mass communication and a concentration in public relations. After graduating, she moved to Houston, Tx. to begin her career in public relations. She currently serves as communications specialist for [NRG Energy, Inc.](#), where she focuses on external communications for the company's retail brands, including Reliant and Green Mountain Energy. For internship and experience questions or advice, connect with her on [Twitter](#) or through [email](#).

How Talley describes her typical day at work:

Honestly, there is no typical day. And that is what I love about public relations. Yes, most of my days are spent at the office – either fixed to email or attending meetings, however, the content of what those emails or meetings are about is never quite the same. From planning an activation around one of our community efforts and discussing strategy around thought leadership opportunities to crafting company-wide messages and tweeting out relevant content, my job is never static. And that's a good thing.

Talley's coolest experience she's had at work:

I've been able to do some really fun things, so it's hard to narrow it down. I would say the coolest experience would be working with J.J. Watt of the Houston Texans, who is Reliant's "VP of Power Relations," on content for his spoof LinkedIn profile.

A Little More about Lexi Verret



Lexi Verret is the marketing & communication assistant at LSU First Year Experience, a unit of LSU Division of Student Life & Enrollment that provides resources and support to help first year students succeed at LSU. She is from the small town of Lockport, La., but loves living in the Capital City. She recently graduated from the Manship School of Mass Communication in May 2015 with a concentration in public relations and minors in business administration and history. To connect with Lexi, please click [here](#), or follow her on [Twitter](#).

How Verret describes her typical day at work:

The best part of my job is that there is no typical day. There are days when I sit down all day and plan content for our social media platforms, website and articles, and then there are other days when I don't sit down at all. It's not typical, but it's never boring and for me that's the best part.

Verret's coolest experience she's had at work:

One of the coolest experiences that I have had at my job was presenting to representatives from the Petroleum Institute in Abu Dhabi, who were visiting LSU. It was an amazing opportunity to connect with them and to be able to share LSU FYE's marketing and communication efforts with the PI visitors, as well as help provide them with tips to expand their own efforts.

A Little More about Hailey Vincent



Hailey Vincent graduated from LSU in 2013 with a dual degree in French and mass communication with a concentration in public relations. She is currently working as the public relations associate at BBR Creative, a marketing agency with offices in Lafayette and Baton Rouge. She also manages the internship program at BBR. To connect with her about internship opportunities, email interns@bbrcreative.com.

How Vincent describes her typical day at work:

I always check my email and complete any urgent tasks first thing, then I'll move into reading the newspaper and checking our news monitoring system (Cision) to look for any urgent client clips to report to others working on the account. I prefer doing thought-heavy writing tasks in the morning, and completing clipping and reporting in the afternoon. At BBR, we often have company-wide brainstorms or presentations scheduled sporadically throughout the week, too, and it's important to work these into my schedule.

Vincent's coolest experience she's had at work:

I worked on a large, multifaceted campaign to encourage Louisiana expatriates to return home for newly created jobs in our state. I loved that the purpose of the campaign was to inspire positive change — it really made the work that much more enjoyable.