



# F O C U S

## PRSSA Sweeps over Chicago

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“Ba da da dah da, I’m lovin’ it.” The slogan of McDonalds, about everyone can recognize it as well as sing along; what many may not know is who crafted that message. Golin Harris, a leading public relations firm has been tending to the image of McDonalds for over 50 years.

The agency was the first stop for members on the agency tour this April 18. Complete with retro black chairs, flat screen televisions, and windows overlooking the windy city, it isn’t hard to believe that The Holmes Report rated Golin Harris “Agency of the Year” in 2007.

Besides McDonalds, Golin Harris is partnered with Nintendo, Texas Instruments, Nestle, Toyota, Yahoo, and Purina. A global firm, their clients are managed by 500 employees around the world.

PRSSA members met with Ashley Houston, the director of recruitment and



learned tips and tricks on how to break into the public relations field.

There was also a panel of three University of Iowa graduates who worked in the consumer brands and healthcare departments of Golin Harris. Members were able to ask the young professionals questions, one piece of advice given was to be persistent. The ladies also emphasized being professional and personal while interviewing.

Houston gave advice about how to stand out in the competitive industry of

public relations. She said the key to being noticed is finding your niche and networking with others.

“Education and experience meets enthusiasm and aptitude,” Houston said. She emphasized the importance of being a communicator and always being polished and prepared for whatever you may encounter.

“Be that enthusiastic team leader,” said Houston. By the end of the tour, PRSSA members were ba da dad ah da lovin’ Golin Harris.

Best of luck this summer!

-Your PRSSA Newsletter Editor,

Gloria Hurtado

## Meet your executive board member: Caroline Jones

By Tina Larson

**"They want you to succeed, they don't want to filter you out."**

**-Caroline Jones, discussing the UI entrepreneurship program**

Caroline Jones is a junior from Des Moines, Iowa majoring in communications studies and minoring in art history and journalism, while receiving an entrepreneurship certificate. She has been a member of PRSSA since the second semester of her freshman year and has been secretary of The University of Iowa's PRSSA chapter since spring of 2007.

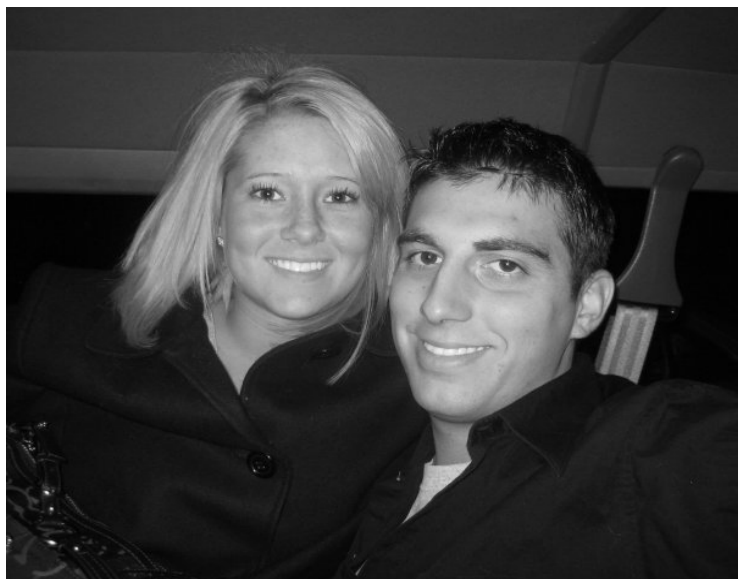
Jones says that she particularly enjoyed the entrepreneurship program at UI because "the teachers are wonderful and they encourage you to think and initiate your

ideas. They want you to succeed, they don't want to filter you out. I learned how to write a business plan, marketing plan, financial plan, and even did marketing consulting for a real business!" She continues by suggesting that, "It would be a great addition to anybody's major, especially journalism and communication studies students."

In addition to her work with PRSSA, Jones is currently working as a special projects and outreach intern at The UI Trademark Licensing office. She explains it as, "mainly business to business PR, but-

none the less has been a great stepping stone to get experience and learn hands on how businesses operate." Jones is also part of the Career Leadership Academy.

Upon graduation, Jones plans to start out working in an agency and move somewhere warm. She also wants to continue to build her skills by receiving her event planning certificate and real estate license and someday start her own business, where she can finally "put all these minors and certificates to use!"



Left: Caroline at The bean, right: Caroline and her boyfriend, Ross.

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## Recap: Comedy Night at The Summit brings laughs

**By Kelly Warren**

Comedy night at The Summit provided some much needed laughter for the members of PRSSA who attended one of the spring social events. Even though Wednesday proves to be very busy for most college students, members took a break from studying to gather at The Summit. They gathered to socialize and enjoy the entertainment provided by three comedians.

The first two acts were pretty interesting, connecting with the group of college students and getting the show going. The last comedian provided amusing jokes with crowd involvement, and was even upstaged by a gentlemen picked out of the crowd for a skit.

All-in-all, members had a good time getting out and taking a break from the stresses of the week.

For PRSSA members, social events are a great way to meet other PRSSA members, network, and take a break from studying. Members can look forward to more socials that will take place next fall.

If you have any ideas for social events, tours, or activities please contact a member of the PRSSA executive board in Fall 2008.

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Want more comedy?

Check out these upcoming shows

**May 7th**– Colin Moulton, Tracey Tedesco

**May 14th**– Rocky Whatule, Mike Whatule

**May 28th**- Cal Verduchi, Mike Brody

# PRSSA alums visit from the Twin Cities

By **Brittany Korb**

Casual and outspoken, Alison Baker and Rebecca Wright visited PRSSA members on Wednesday, March 27 from Weber Shandwick in Minneapolis, Minn. Using mottos such as, “work hard, play hard” and “network or no work”, Baker and Wright stressed the importance of knowing Associated Press style and strong writing skills, knowledge of press releases and the “bread and butter” of public relations, media relations. Baker restated that, “the hardest part of what we do is media pitching and also the most rewarding.”

As an account executive, Baker, who is also an Iowa alumna and former PRSSA President, currently works in the consumer practice division at the Weber Shandwick office on a teen smart driving campaign for The Allstate Foundation.

Wright, who is also an Iowa alumna and former PRSSA member, is an assistant account executive in the healthcare practice. Baker works on several accounts with particular focus on the American College of Surgeons (ACS), Army Medical (AMEED) and the Society for Cardiovascular



**Left:** Secretary Caroline Jones speaks with Alison and Rebecca, two speakers from PR firm Weber-Shandwick,

Angiography and Interventions (SCAI).

Learning more about the role of a public relations professional in an agency atmosphere, Baker and Wright left us with several tips to get your foot in the [agency] door. As we search for jobs and put ourselves out there, the young professionals encouraged us to recognize that, “you are your own PR agency when searching for a job.” If you have what it takes to succeed in public relations, take the time to carefully promote yourself. This means having countless people review your resume, cover letters and writing samples. In addition, connect your skills and knowledge to the work you would be doing in

the public relations field by positioning your skills to be of value to the agency.

Many of us struggle and wonder how to get the dream job or interview we’ve always wanted. Always take advantage of internship or volunteer opportunities that will later showcase your skills in public relations. The more you get involved the easier it is to network. Ultimately, getting the interview or someone to simply look at your resume comes down to networking. The more you network, the easier it will be to find opportunities and the chance to get your foot in the door. Baker and Wright exemplified how networking and hard work can pay off in the end.

# A spin on Spring Break

## LAURA & JOSH'S PUBLIC RELATIONS TIPS

### Perfect your writing skills

Practice with editorials, press releases and articles

### Make quick turn-around time

When a client has bad press on Tuesday, you must be able to have a press release drafted and approved by Wednesday

### Time management

### Break out of PR

Become well-rounded with a variety of areas in communication

### Research!

*Educate yourself on the issues and the company to avoid looking ignorant*

## By Genevieve Krier

The past few months of my sophomore year have been challenging, rewarding, and way too much fun. That's why I decided to take my spring break away from the typical warm beaches and cold margaritas, to a more refined location. This year, I ventured out to Washington, D.C. to job shadow my cousin, Liz, at Chlopak, Leonard, Schechter (CLS) and Associates, a very well respected public relations firm. Some of their clients include: Amtrak, Verizon, ABC and NBC, Harvard University, and many of the governments of Central and South America. I was on a mission to find out what the field of public relations had to offer this farm girl from Iowa.

I was relieved to find that CLS was much more laid back than I had anticipated. Attire was business casual and the entire staff was outgoing and friendly. The halls and conference rooms were done in a fun modern flare, with plenty of art and a break room.

After my quick tour, it was time to learn what it's like to work for a public relations firm. Much of what is done at CLS is working with third-party groups that may hold an interest in what's happening with a larger company. It's their job to pitch an idea to these groups so that the

**"The one thing they both stressed is to become well rounded."**

**-Genevieve Krier**

groups can work to influence the larger companies, taking a grassroots approach. To put it all into perspective, Liz gave me a taste of her work by having me research a list of third-party groups that might be negatively affected by the recent Microsoft-Yahoo merger. Though it may sound dull, it was interesting



to find out how much work goes into prepping to make a pitch to any kind of group.

Later that morning, Liz had set me up to visit with a couple of the firm's partners, Laura and Josh. Each one presented me with some great tips for being successful in public relations. The one thing that they both stressed was to become well-rounded. If you are interested in political public relations, get an internship or job at the capitol. If you are interested in business public relations, spend some time working for a company to become better educated. Once you have an understanding of your field of interest, you can more effectively promote your message.

# Members with a lot of heart

**By: Tina Larson**

*For more information on volunteering directly with the Ronald McDonald House, contact Ed Zastrow at 319.356.4678 or [zastrowe@healthcare.uiowa.edu](mailto:zastrowe@healthcare.uiowa.edu)*

Ronald McDonald House of Iowa City is a “Home Away from Home” for families with children with life threatening or life changing illnesses whom are receiving treatment at The University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics. They have 32 guest rooms, which families often refer to as home for weeks and even months.

The House not only provides a place for the families to eat and sleep, it also provides a much needed support system for families during this emotionally exhausting time in their lives.

“Volunteers are the backbone and heart of the Ronald McDonald House” said Ed Zastrow, executive director for the Ronald McDonald House in Iowa City.

He continues, “In addition to providing "heart" to

our mission and families, volunteers are a major factor in permitting us to keep our overhead lower, helping us to keep our requested fee quite low, or, for almost half of our families each year, free of all charges.”

Ten of our compassionate members: Blake Friis, Brittney Wichtendahl, Tina Larson, Diana Kelter, Genevieve Krier, Katie Mulvahill, Megan McIntyre, Christine Heim, Caroline Jones, and Brittany Korb volunteered a few hours of their Saturday on March 29 and April 5.

They participated in everything ranging from cleaning toy rooms to restrooms as well as, “tidying up the outside areas by cleaning the patio furniture, washing the windows, raking leaves and picking up garbage” recalled sophomore Megan McIntyre.

This was a great experience, both in helping others and getting to know one another as well. Vice President Genevieve Krier, who was in charge of planning this community outreach event said, “We have a great group of outgoing people, willing to take on any task. Helping at the Ronald McDonald House reflected our ability to work well as a team, even if it was when cleaning the restrooms.”

Krier has some great news for all of those who missed out on this opportunity, and said “A Community Service Committee is in the works as we speak. It would be great to keep up this kind of exposure for PRSSA through volunteer activities in the community. With a full list of members interested in volunteering, I have no doubt people will see us out and about soon!”



## Wise advice from a seasoned Hawkeye

By Samantha Bosch

Rick Klatt, associate athletic director for external affairs at The University of Iowa, has been working for the university for twenty-five years and still enjoys his work.

Klatt is one of six members on the management team, overseeing a group of individuals responsible for advertising, public relations, and new media that involve the athletics department. He is also the department liaison for the Big Ten Network. Every Friday, Klatt responds personally to complaints from those who do not subscribe to DirectTV and thus do not receive the Big Ten Network. Whenever possible, Klatt prefers to respond to complaints with a phone call rather than an impersonal letter, because he believes in providing quality service.

Having graduated from college with a major in journalism and a minor in business, Klatt enjoys his job because it allows him to experience both worlds — relations and writing. Klatt helps write the newsletter “Hawk Talk” as well, a skill that allows him to utilize his journalistic talents.

Currently, Klatt is working with others on a public



relations civility campaign for Kinnick Stadium. The athletics department recognizes the recent outbreaks of violence between fans and the considerable amounts of trash left in the stands after games. To remedy this, the athletics department hopes to create a campaign about respect with a tagline such as “Respect: give it, get it” or “Be a hawk.” Klatt wants to revitalize the pride one has in being a hawk, particularly in the younger generation.

For anyone who desires a career in public relations or the athletics field, Klatt’s advice is to write as often as possible.

“The ability to communicate the written word is critical,” Klatt said. He also advises undergraduates to read constantly.

“I was a newspaper boy,” Klatt explained. “I would read the newspapers as I

rolled up papers.”

In addition, Klatt strongly recommends the book “The World is Flat” by Thomas L. Friedman.

“It will explain what is happening in the media world, the convergence of technologies,” he said. “I truly believe that it’s critical for the communications business.”

For any undergraduate considering a career that involves speaking at press conferences, Klatt had this to say, “There is no replacement for honesty and knowledge. Be as knowledgeable as you can and as honest.” He believes it is better to admit you don’t know than to attempt to answer a question you have no answer to.

Klatt also emphasized persistence and passion if one desires to work in public relations. He recalled a

saying on a bumper sticker: “People who have abandoned their dreams sometimes seek to undermine yours.” Albeit a difficult business at times, Klatt persisted and said he now has a successful, rewarding career, one he hopes to hold for a long time.

***Questions for the Associate Athletic Director for External Affairs?***

***Email:***

rick-klatt@hawk  
eyesports.com

## PRSSA advice on writing press releases

By Samantha Bosch

PRSSA held a press release workshop on April 16. With many executive members having had internship and class experience writing press releases, they shared with members important tips on writing a release well.

The most important thing to keep in mind when writing a press release is to keep it short and simple. Press releases are not meant to be long, detailed stories; rather, they should inform your audience of a particular event or company with minimal details pertinent to the subject at hand.

First, start with a heading,

In the upper left-hand corner indicate that your press release is intended for immediate release in all caps. Below that, write the date of release. Include a title centered in the middle of the page.

Next, write the lead. The lead consists of all relevant information regarding the event or company. Answer the five w's: who, what, where, when, and why. If it is an event, make sure to include who is sponsoring the event. The first sentence of your lead should contain the most important information; then you may expand and go into more detail. Following a para-

graph or two of more detail information, you should include at least one quote.

The quote should relate, in some way, to the subject of your press release, and it should support the previous information you have presented. Perhaps you wish to emphasize why this event is unique, or to highlight a specific performer or certain aspect of the event. A benefit to writing press releases is that you are able to modify quotes — with that source's permission, of course — whereas, as a journalist, you must take that source's words verbatim. Following the lead is what is termed the “boiler

plate.” The boiler plate is simply the background information on the company referred to in the lead.

Finally, conclude your press release with the company's contact information and your—i.e. the writer's—contact information. Then add three pound signs or three zeros—whichever you prefer—at the very bottom to indicate the end of the press release. If, however, you have more information to convey which requires more than one page, write “more” at the bottom.

Remember, a press release is most effective when it is kept short and simple

## Farewell Letter from President, Jennifer Ferm

Dear PRSSA,

As we come closer to the end of the year, I look back on all that PRSSA has accomplished. I was blessed to have such a proactive and dedicated executive board. We accomplished goals that one wouldn't even dream to be possible in just a year. We sent three executive board members to the PRSSA National Conference in Philadelphia, more than doubled our membership, and the firm tackled

three clients as opposed to virtually none last year. What amazing accomplishments! I feel that this year has set a high standard for years to come, which is evident through these achievements.

I have high hopes for next year's executive board. Most of the newly elected exec members have been on exec this past year, while the other half is made up of dedicated members who put numerous hours and enthu-

siasm into our PRSSA chapter. There will be many great initiatives next year, and I am proud to call the UI PRSSA my chapter.

I guess this is “farewell,” but if you go on the agency tours next year, you can count on my attendance at the alumni dinner! Thank you to everyone for a great year, and I am truly going to miss you!

PRSSA Love,

**For more information about this publication or the UI PRSSA Chapter, please visit:**

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