

# PR Success:

## Fall 2016 Recap



*Opening Up Innovation With Coca-Cola  
Summit November 2016*

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# Highlight of Events from Fall Semester

Back to School Game Night

Mentor/Mentee Ice Cream Social

PR Bootcamp

National Conference

Annual Pumpkin Carving

Opening Up Innovation with  
Coca-Cola Summit

Two Halves One Whole  
Twitter Chat

Thanksgiving Dinner





# An Open Letter to Our Alumni

Sammie Fisher // @sammiefisher3

Dearest Alumni,

This year, our executive board for the Hugh M. Culbertson Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America, affectionately known as Scripps PRSSA, consists of nine senior members and two juniors. I am one of those juniors that fear what will happen when those nine incredible leaders join you all in the real world. In my eyes, it seems impossible for this organization to function without them. Then I realized that you all took your talents to the real world, and somehow we are still going strong. You were once the person younger members associated with PRSSA's success.



The Chapter thanks you for paving the way to where we are today. Whether you graduated last year, five years ago, 10 years ago or 50 years ago, your time in this organization helped us land where we are today.

The bonds we form in this organization come from the foundation you built.

This Chapter goes beyond giving members mentors to further their careers; this Chapter gives members friends that will last a lifetime. We hope you continue to find time to catch up with the people that improved your college experience, and we hope you will find time to stay connected with Scripps PRSSA too.

We strive to be better every year and make you proud. Our goal is to match what you all do in the real world. We strive to learn, adapt and improve to better reflect the ever-changing industry.

Your talents are still observed by younger members today, as they were when you attended weekly meetings during your college career. While we can't see your face every week like we once did, you are still a vital part of this Chapter. We still seek your leadership, your support and strive to match your success.

Know your wisdom is always welcome, and we are only an email away. If you miss us too much, you can watch us streaming live every Monday at 6 p.m. EST on Periscope. Hey, even feel free to order our spirit wear and rock the laptop stickers we sell.



You are the reason some traditions are still going strong, like our annual Thanksgiving dinner. Those foundations allow us to build new traditions, like celebrating birthdays at our weekly meetings with handwritten cards and candy.

Our student-run PR firm, ImPReSSions, is striving to better match the real world and become a more integrated agency. We are working to become the people you would want to hire.

As I continue in my college career, I realize more and more that I will one day have to join you and leave this magical place.

However, I find comfort in knowing that I will always be welcomed back, and my work will live on through PRSSA. I truly believe the PRSSA organization lasts longer than four years. I aim to give back to this Chapter like you all do.

You helped form the leaders that I admire, and I know that tradition will never end. We have incredibly bright members and incredibly bright alumni that work together to keep this organization strong. For that, and for so much more, we thank you.



# Late to the PRSSA Party

Kaitlin Webb // @kakewebb1

As a junior in college, you've pretty much got everything established; you know how to get around campus, you know the best places to eat uptown and you know who your friends are. Joining a new club as a junior isn't common because, as I said, you pretty much have college life figured out by then. Although I was worried about joining PRSSA my junior year, I'm so glad I did. Over the summer, before the start of fall semester, I began looking at the big picture of where I would like to intern and what I would do after graduation. As I started putting together my resume, I began to realize that I didn't have much experience and that made me nervous. How would I gain experience in the field before getting an internship?

“How would I gain experience in the field before getting an internship?”

A friend of mine, and previous member of PRSSA, suggested I join the organization. I thought it couldn't hurt to check out the club, so I went to the involvement fair feeling very much like a nervous and excited freshman again, and signed up to get more information about PRSSA.

One of the reasons I was so anxious about going, and almost didn't go to the first meeting, was because I didn't know anyone, a problem I remember well from freshman year. But after the first meeting I knew PRSSA was exactly what I was looking for.

During one of the meetings I signed up for the mentor/mentee program, which was a great way to combat that fear of not knowing anyone. After receiving my mentor, it gave me the courage to go to activities planned outside the weekly meetings and knowing one person bridged the gap into meeting other people. My mentor also gave great advice on my resume and future involvement in PRSSA. Along with the mentor/mentee program, I signed up for the professional mentor/mentee program. My professional mentor was actually someone who had spoken during a Monday night meeting. I admired her ambition during her time at Ohio University and she was living my dream career. She gave me a lot of counsel on how to gain experience outside of PRSSA and calmed my fears about not having a lot of experience as a junior.

I also got involved in the PR and Social Media Committee, which helped me strengthen my writing skills. The committee gave me the opportunity to learn how important blogging is and it gave me the chance to write blogs for the PRSSA website. realized that the more involved I was in the organization, the more comfortable I felt.

I joined ImPRessions as well where I have had the chance to apply the skills I learn in class to real clients. As an account associate on the travel and tourism team, my clients are something I am passionate about. Being able to work with these clients has given me confidence in the work I am producing and my ideas. This opportunity has given me a better idea of what to expect from an internship.

Since joining PRSSA I've learned many things, but I still have much more to learn from my involvement with this organization. **Not only have I gained a deeper knowledge about the PR field and skills that will help me obtain an internship, but I learned that it's important to always experience and take advantage of new opportunities no matter how old you are.**

*“This opportunity has given me a better idea of what to expect from an internship”*

Want to get involved with the PR and Social Media Committee or join ImPRessions? Find out more information by emailing [scrippsprssa@gmail.com](mailto:scrippsprssa@gmail.com) or by following us on Twitter @scrippsprssa!



# Black Friday Branding

*How companies are shaping their images*

Brigitte Meisse // @meisse2spicy

With stomachs stuffed full of turkey and hearts filled with gratitude, millions of families end their Thanksgiving celebrations with a tradition that puts people in a mad dash for the best deals: Black Friday shopping. For years, Black Friday has brought massive amounts of business to companies and is regarded as the official start to the Christmas shopping season. Many reports consider this to be the busiest shopping day of the year.

Black Friday means numerous eyes will be searching for discounts, giveaways and events featuring their favorite brands. This massive need for consumer information provides the perfect opportunity for corporations to continually shape the perception of their brand. Many places chose to do so by offering discounts that create a sense of urgency to spend large sums of money. On the other hand, some companies, like REI and Patagonia, have decided to use this holiday to improve brand perception and emphasize the beliefs that are most important to them. These instances have sparked an alternative Black Friday movement.

In 2015, REI launched the award-winning **#OptOutside** campaign. The purpose of doing so was to encourage shoppers to skip the hustle and bustle of long lines and go outside for the day. Additionally, they closed all of their stores for the day and had a massive presence on social media.



This year **#OptOutside** came back even stronger than before. 2016 brought a heavier push on social media platforms through a higher prevalence of sponsored posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and the creation of a #OptOutside section on REI's website. The website allowed users to pledge to opt outside, upload and post their excursions directly to their personal platforms and have the opportunity to be reposted on REI's Gallery. Users could also use a map on their website to help locate nearby parks and trails. While a large portion of this year's expansions were digital, REI also combined their efforts with 275 government and nonprofit organizations, like the National Park Service and the Buckeye Trail Association, to encourage people to join the movement.



Thus, 475 different parks across the United States agreed to waive their admissions fees on Black Friday. Larger corporations also partnered with REI. Subaru America joined in by offering free shuttle rides to sheltered puppies in New York City so that they could enjoy a day of playing somewhere other than the concrete jungle. All of REI's hard work paid off this year as over six-million people pledged to **#OptOutside** on Black Friday.

REI is an outdoor clothing, gear and footwear retail company that brands themselves as lovers of outdoor adventures. While all of their products reflect the passion of the brand, they strive to reinforce their beliefs by sending teams of volunteers and donating money to build trails, clean up beaches, restore local habitats and reduce our environmental footprint.

These sustainability efforts in addition to REI's **#OptOutdoor** efforts have truly solidified what their brand stands for and built a

sense of trust among fellow adventures, wanderlusts and most importantly.. potential customers. Similar to REI, Patagonia is an outdoor gear company with an even stronger focus in sustainability. In 1993, the company was one of the first to create fleece from recycled plastic bottles and has since exoanded to create a line that is 100 percent recycled wool and 100 percent recycled polyester, as well as 85 percent recycled polyester labels, 80 percent recycled zippers and 50 percent recycled buttons.



Patagonia didn't decide to close like REI on Black Friday, but did take a different approach to the holiday than regular retailers. 100 percent of sales, online and in person, from November 25th were donated to grassroots environmental organizations. While the company only expected to make about \$2 million on Black Friday, they exceeded expectations due to the generosity of customers

and made \$10 million in sales. While the company only expected to make about \$2 million on Black Friday, they exceeded expectations due to the generosity of customers and made \$10 million in sales. Additionally, they provided information in store and online about how to get involved with these local organizations to where the profits would be donated.

Likewise, Patagonia brands itself as an activist company. The company is deeply invested in preserving our environment and every aspect of its business reflects those ideals. The bold move taken by Patagonia on Black Friday was a true testament of its dedication to sustainability. By sacrificing massive amounts of money on the largest shopping day of the year, brand perception improved and customers were able to connect with a meaningful cause.

# Lessons Learned at PRSSANC

Elise Mills // @itseliselove

Last month, 18 of us traveled from Athens to Indianapolis to attend PRSSA National Conference, fondly known as PRSSANC. There we spent four days in sessions, critiques and Starbucks lines. Here are some of the things I learned from National Conference that can be applied to future National Conference visits or any professional events you may attend!

## Always have your resume on hand

Business cards are great, but at conferences everyone is passing out business cards. Connecting really well with the professional? Give them your business card and mention you have your resume if they would like a copy. Often times they will say yes and now a business professional has your resume!

## People actually look at your Twitter account

I didn't believe it at first, but it's true! Live tweeting is very important at National Conference, and can gain a lot of attention! When Twitter was working again after being hacked the day before Conference, my tweet about National Conference had over 2,000 impressions and I had nine new followers immediately after.

## Use mobile ordering for Starbucks when possible

This is less of a PR tip and more of a life hack. Often the times in-between sessions were ten minutes and the line for the only Starbucks kiosk in the hotel was 30+ minutes long! Unfortunately they didn't accept mobile ordering, but something to keep in mind for any future coffee run endeavors!

## Speakers tweet back!

After an amazing session about Corporate Social Responsibility, I decided to add CSR to my must-have list for future jobs and decided to let our speaker know! The speaker replied to my tweet and followed me, which is a bonus when I apply to that company in the spring. This was a great way to communicate how much I loved the session and start a conversation with a speaker when we ran out of time for more questions. Another way to communicate is to tweet questions at them while they are presenting. They most likely won't reply till later, but starting a conversation on social media is a great way to get your foot in the door. They also remember your tweets when you meet them in person later on!



## If you like what the speaker said at the session, talk to them afterwards!

This is the most important piece of advice I can give. Speakers put a lot of work into their topic and they want to know you learned something from it! Speakers are more often than not professionals in your industry or a similar industry and they could be a great asset to your future career. Asking specific questions based off their presentation or advice in a particular situation is a great way to segue into handing out your business card (and then your resume).

Not only will they appreciate the feedback, but you will get great insight to your industry and a potential network connection! I left National Conference with a pocketful of business cards, 15 new followers on Twitter and some great connections for when I graduate in the Spring. These tips should help you make the connections to land the internship to get the job. **Feel free to tweet at me if you have any questions** about this article, I would love to help!



# Authenticity in PR

Annie Robinson // @annierob\_7

Each year, I attend PRSSA National Conference with my notebook in hand, my business cards in my pocket and my resumes on the ready. I am always excited to absorb as much public relations knowledge as I can. I always leave the conference inspired to become the best PR practitioner I can be.

However, this year's conference in Indianapolis left me feeling slightly different. While I still felt like I learned so much about the public relations field, the most important lesson I learned is the importance of being an authentic leader.

On the second day of conference, I sat down for the two o'clock session to listen to David Grossman, a leadership consultant at his own consulting firm, the Grossman Group. I wondered how his message, which I knew wouldn't have much to do with public relations, would affect me. Within two minutes of hearing his story, I realized there was nothing more relevant to my life. Something I wonder about often, and I am sure others do to, is what steps I can take to become a future leader. With graduation looming and an entry-level job in my future, it is a daunting thought to be at the bottom of the food chain for a while.

David Grossman understood his audience would feel this way. He used powerful and authentic storytelling to give the audience three simple pieces of advice to show us we have the power to become leaders simply by being authentic individuals.

I would like to share the three ways I interpreted his advice and how I applied them to my own life. I chose these three because I believe they are the most powerful and moving pieces of advice any PR student can be given.

First it is important to note Grossman defined authenticity as the ability to be true to yourself. He was also quick to point out that being authentic is not a skill a person can obtain, but rather communication is the skill that allows a person to become authentic. As a believer in effective communication, which most PR students are, this idea really stood out to me.

With that information, he proceeded to give us three components that assist people in becoming authentic leaders. The three components are to know yourself, be your best self and have quiet courage.

## Know Yourself

Grossman advised the audience pay attention to what you already know about yourself, get a better sense of your own personal leadership style and to enlist in a truth teller. Since I heard him speak, I have engaged in self-reflection when I am speaking to others. I ask myself questions in my head such as, "am I really being myself?" I have made a list of times I was being inauthentic. I have attempted to mock the behaviors of role models. I have even taken personality quizzes to try and get a sense of who I am.

What I've found is the more I know myself and understand my values and the way I am, the easier it is for me to make decisions, deal with conflict and cope with stress. In words a PR student can understand, your personal brand is the most important brand to truly understand because you live it everyday.

## Be Your Best Self

To Grossman, this means not changing yourself based on the people you are around. He made the point that people tend to act in a certain way depending on the crowd of people around them. He compared us to chameleons attempting to blend in with their environment.

After hearing this, I realized my own chameleon like tendencies. The way I hold back my beliefs around certain people I am worried won't like me if they hear my Christian values. The way I change my demeanor around certain adults who I want to think of me as mature. Considering I am most definitely a people-pleaser, I like to change the way I act to make others happy. I realized after this point, that I am doing myself a disservice and losing my sense of self when I change who I am around certain people. I continue to work on being proud of myself and being the best possible version of me.

## Have Quiet Courage

Quiet courage is all about respecting everyone else's right to be themselves without judgment. It's also important to be respectful and sensitive to whom others are trying to be. When I listened to this point, I thought about the importance of becoming a leader who listens to her audience. The best leaders I have experienced show they care by listening with a sensitive and understanding mind. No one likes being lead by someone who is bossy, overpowering and insensitive. The ultimate leader knows that they have to put others before themselves. My biggest takeaway from this point is to listen more and speak less.

The most amazing part of this session was realizing that taking care of myself and making sure that I feel good in my role is the best way to become a future leader. Even though I look forward to National Conference each year in hopes for new knowledge about public relations, this year I found something new. The power of being the most authentic me is the most important aspect of becoming a future leader and young professional.

# Opening Up Innovation With Coca-Cola

Rosie Haren // @rosieharen

The Scripps Public Relations Student Society of America and Scripps College of Communication recently held their annual summit on November 4th at the Central Venue in Athens, OH. The Opening Up Innovation with Coca Cola Summit, focusing on innovation in communication kicked off with a keynote speech from Kent Landers, Group Director of Media Relations for The Coca Cola Company.

Before Coca Cola, Landers served as the General Manager for Corporate Communication, as well as Director of External Communications for Delta Air Lines. Landers' speech was packed with a variety of great advice specifically involving innovation in communication, which he has acquired throughout his career.

"I thought that Kent did a great job of providing real PR challenges that we could learn from and then put into practice in the competition," Trent Vickers, a senior studying strategic communication, said.

After the keynote speaker, the event broke for a lunch break from OMG! Rotisserie. Following lunch, attendees broke into teams while receiving a real world case study, presented by Landers. The teams were given about 45 minutes to come up with a plan of action to address the case.

After time was up to solve the case study, each team presented their findings to selected panelists. Panelists at the event included, Kent Landers, Professor Julie Agnone of Scripps School of Journalism, Chief of Staff to President McDavis, Jennifer Kirksey, Professor Dan Farkas of Scripps School of Journalism and Assistant Professor Parul Jain of Scripps School of Journalism.





Choosing a winning team was an extremely difficult decision to make after hearing the various presentations from four different teams. "I know they always say it was a really close one, but this time that was absolutely the case," Professor Dan Farkas explained. "It took us way longer than it should've to decide on a winner." The panelists eventually came to a decision and awarded Danielle McCarthy, Anna Gibbs, Alex Corsi, McKennah Robinson and Ellie Halter winners of best case study solution.



The event was a huge success. Kent Landers, Scripps PRSSA and Scripps College of Communication were able to spread knowledge, experience and great food to everyone in the room. "We owe the success of this event to PRSSA National for having the Champions for PRSSA list and to the hard work that our executive board and events team put in," said Gentry Bennett, Scripps PRSSA Chapter President.

# Thanks for Reading!