Chapter Name

Inland Empire Chapter

Contact Name

Stephanie Graham, APR, 2024 President

Chapter Size

101-200

How does your Chapter define diversity, equity and inclusion?

We, the board, and members of PRSA IE believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are integral to the evolution and growth of PRSA. PRSA IE is committed to educating and exposing our members to different points of view and pledge to make this organization as diverse, equitable, and inclusive as possible. We honor and respect everyone's unique background and will not discriminate against anyone based on race, color, religion, gender identity, national origin, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, genetic information, or any basis protected by law. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are proactive behaviors. While these may be uncomfortable conversations, we as communication leaders, community influencers and essential contributors must commit to our values across our organizations, including recruitment, programming, and professional development. These values are the fundamental beliefs that guide our behaviors and decision-making process. We believe our professional values are vital to the integrity of the entire profession. For this reason, PRSA IE will continue to work diligently to ensure that the chapter is a welcoming, listening body and relevant resource for all PR practitioners. (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Promise adopted on May 12, 2021)

Does your Chapter include diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in your strategic plan?

Yes

Using the RPIE model, describe your Chapter's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and achievements during the past year. -- RESEARCH: What research did you conduct to identify opportunities to address or promote DEI by and within the Chapter?

The Chapter conducted an internal assessment to identify gaps and opportunities for promoting DEI within its activities. This included reviewing membership demographics, evaluating the diversity of its board, and analyzing the inclusiveness of its events. The Chapter serves over 100 members across Riverside and San Bernardino counties, which make up the Inland Empire. As of 2020, the Inland Empire is predominantly Latino, with 51.6% of the population identifying as Latino. Other racial demographics include 7.4%

African American, 8.7% Asian American, and a large increase in multiracial populations. The share of the White population has decreased in both counties. African Americans accounted for 7.4 percent of the IE's population, while Asian Americans made up 8.7 percent. In Riverside, the share of the Latino population increased from 46 percent in 2010 to 51.6 percent. The Latino demographic in San Bernardino increased from 49 percent in 2010 to 54 percent in 2020. Roughly two in three IE residents are something other than a non-Hispanic white. Perhaps the most intriguing demographic change found in the data is the rise of people in the two-or-more-races category. (The Future of Cities / California's Inland Empire: Harbinger of the New Multiracial Suburb:

https://www.thefutureofcities.org/californias-inland-empire-harbinger-of-the-new-multiracial-

<u>suburb/#:~:text=In%20Riverside%2C%20the%20share%20of,population%20decreased%20in%20both%20counties</u>) Established in 1965, PRSA Inland Empire is the premier public relations organization for Riverside and San Bernardino counties, an area of approximately 27,000 square miles. PRSA-IE is a well-established professional organization serving more than 100 members across a region of 4.7 million people. PRSA-IE members work in agencies/corporations, healthcare, education, nonprofits, government and tourism in the cities of Apple Valley, Chino, Claremont, Colton, Corona, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Indio, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Loma Linda, Menifee, Murrieta, Ontario, Perris, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Riverside, San Bernardino, Temecula, Upland, Victorville, Wildomar, Wrightwood, Yucca Valley and Coachella Valley cities (La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage).

PLANNING -- Goals: What did your Chapter seek to accomplish with your 2023–2024 DEI initiatives?

The Chapter aimed to increase membership by 20%, provide two scholarships to underrepresented students, and host professional development opportunities, including three regional events with a focus on DEI.

PLANNING -- Who was/were the target audience(s)?

The primary target audiences were existing Inland Empire-based PRSA members and prospective members from diverse backgrounds, including PR and communications professionals in education, government, nonprofits, healthcare, and other sectors.

PLANNING -- What were your measurable objectives?

• Achieve a 20% increase in membership by December 2024. Goal met in July. • Identify candidates and award two scholarships to students from underrepresented communities during 2024. Applications received, awards pending. • Conduct three DEI-focused regional

events during 2024. Completed one event each in Palm Springs area, Temecula area and Riverside area; each area has its own concentration of members.

PLANNING -- Budget: What were the monetary, time and human capital investments?

The Chapter allocated funds for two \$1,000 scholarships, event coordination (though much of the expenses were covered by sponsorships and registration fees), and marketing to reach diverse audiences (minimal cost here as this was achieved through email communication and social media; annual cost for StarChapter= \$1,080; annual cost for MailChimp= \$240). Programming budget for 2024= \$4,550. Human capital investments included volunteer hours from board members, including the DEI Chair (also the Ethics Director), and from other Chapter members and non-members.

IMPLEMENTATION -- Describe the strategies and tactics used.

The Chapter implemented several strategies to achieve its DEI goals, including: > Building a board of diverse individuals with varied contacts throughout our vast region. Three new director-at-large positions were created for key regions. > Reaching the nonprofit sector with our "PRSAIE Gives Back" workshop for nonprofits, which focused on branding and storytelling to help diverse organizations in the region raise awareness. > Offering the opportunity for diverse organizations to learn how to spread the word to various audiences about their organizations and projects through our "Meet the Media" event. > Providing all members and prospective members the opportunity to delve deeper into the region's diversity through events that highlighted the Native American and Hispanic cultures. > Presenting scholarships to Inland Empire students from diverse backgrounds to support their education and professional development in public relations/communications.

IMPLEMENTATION -- Summary: Explain your Chapter's DEI initiatives for July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.*

Aug. 16, 2023– PRSAIE Gives Back- PR Workshop for Nonprofits. Numerous Inland Empire organizations attended a free, two-hour workshop to learn how branding and storytelling can raise awareness for nonprofits. Speakers addressed storytelling, building a brand, digital media, and communication plans. Feb. 21, 2024– Tour and Program at the Riverside Art Museum/The Cheech. The event kicked off with an insightful panel discussion on the significance of community, branding, and the value of art and museums in our region. The panel featured Drew Oberjuerge, Executive Director of Riverside Art Museum, Maria Esther Fernandez, Cheech Artistic Director, and Jen Kanter, Director of Communications and Marketing at Riverside Art Museum. The discussion was moderated by Robert Chevez, Vice President of Westbound Communications. The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture opened in June 2022 as a public-private partnership between RAM, the City of

Riverside, and comedian Cheech Marin—one of the world's foremost collectors of Chicano art. The Cheech stands as the center of Chicano art, not only for painting, but for sculpture, photography, and video arts in the region and acts as a catalyst for inspiring the expansion of the grassroots Riverside arts scene to encourage emerging Latino artists throughout the Inland Empire to share their talent. Drew Oberjuerge has served as the Executive Director of the Riverside Art Museum (RAM) since 2012. A strong proponent of collaboration and community partnerships, Drew together with the RAM board and staff, has led the implementation of innovative arts programs such as the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture of the Riverside Art Museum. María Esther Fernández serves as the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture inaugural artistic director, whose past positions often focused on Chicanx artists. Fernández said that she hopes to make the Cheech into a community-focused center, with spaces like Galería de la Raza in San Francisco's Mission District acting as a model. Fernandez said, "Our community is complex, and Chicanx art is often presented as a monolith that comes out of the Chicano Movement. It has evolved and grown. The Cheech Center should be a place to have this dialogue." March 19, 2024– At the Meet the Media event, attendees had an intimate discussion with local reporters and media. Key takeaways included the importance of knowing the platform that you are pitching to, tailoring pitches for various platforms, timely responses, providing access to interview subjects and staying persistent. An ethnically diverse group of panelists who represent a variety of media provided thoughtful insight for an audience of communications professionals serving education, nonprofits, healthcare, municipalities and more. Panelists were Spectrum News 1 - Bobbie Eng, Producer, "In Focus SoCal"; Black Voice News - Christen Irving, Director of Revenue, Audience Engagement; Southern California News Group - Mark Acosta, Metro Editor; Raincross Gazette - Justin Pardee, Executive Editor; KVCR IE Latino Voices - Yvette Walker, Host. May 16, 2024 - At the "How Public Relations Shaped the Birth of Native American Cultural Tourism in California," participants explored and learned how Agua Caliente Cultural Museum and The Spa at Séc-he (No. 1 spa in America) have become premier destinations for people from all over the world who want to visit and learn about Native American culture. The museum and spa are on the site of the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation, about 31,500 acres here in the Palm Springs area. And the Agua Caliente people have been here since time immemorial, the beginning of time. California alone has 109 federally recognized tribes (the most in the nation; there are 574 in the U.S.), important to our state and region. With our Programs VP Jessica Newton, APR, expertly guiding the discussion, we learned from Kate Anderson, Director of Public Relations for the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. We learned about the history of Agua Caliente and its people (300 generations!) and how the site was the first tourist attraction in Palm Springs (the first bath house was built in the late 1880s). Kate shared details about the creation of the museum and the spa, how a six-month delay

due to the discovery of artifacts on the site impacted the PR plan and how she and her team lobbied the state of California to create and fund "Visit Native California" to promote Native American cultural heritage tourism to the world (it's the largest and most successful campaign Visit California has done). Anderson detailed what cultural tourism is (people who travel to a destination for a cultural experience) and how the museum and spa have become one of the premier destinations, specifically in the state of California, for Native American cultural heritage tourism. The Agua Caliente PR director shared that for a very long time in American history, the people that were telling the tribal stories were not Native American. There's been a paradigm shift, and now tribes and tribal people are telling their own stories. May 23, 2024 - The Professional Mixer in Riverside was designed to specifically serve members and non-members in that region and to allow networking opportunities. The event drew a diverse group of individuals from nonprofits, agencies, education and foundations. July 24, 2024 – At the regional event in Temecula ("Strategies & Tactics That Have Made Temecula a Tourism Destination"), participants learned about the progress Temecula has made since the pandemic (18-month shut down). Ten years ago there were 36 wineries, now there are at least 50. 10 years ago Temecula welcomed 2.9 million visitors; today, 3.3 million visitors; its travel spending income was \$625 million annually, now it's \$1.1 billion. In the tourism industry, the area supported about 6,500 jobs, now 9,500. Speakers were the Chief Marketing Officer at Visit Temecula Valley, the Director of Communications for Pechanga Resort Casino, and the Senior Marketing Strategist at Europa Village Wineries & Resort. They described how they learned to reinvent themselves and come together as a community (Temecula demographics: White-50%, Hispanic-29%, Asian-11%, Two or more races-6%, African American-4%). July 2024– The Chapter's goals also included reviving its Rising Star scholarship, which had not been awarded since 2011. With fewer college graduates than in most metro areas in California, the Inland Empire needs organizations like PRSA-IE to step up and support area students. Twenty percent of Inland Empire residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, while national and statewide averages are about 37% [Cal Matters]. As in past years, the Chapter sought to recognize outstanding academic achievement among undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a public relations or communications career. In 2024, two scholarships (\$1,000 each) will be awarded to assist local college students majoring in public relations, communications, journalism, or a related field. Students who are PRSSA chapter members were encouraged to apply. Scholarship recipients are introduced to Inland Empire PR professionals at leading organizations who are part of the PRSA-IE network. In addition, recipients' registration fees (student rate) for PRSA-IE professional development events will be waived for one year. The Chapter received 16 applications from students at each of the target, area schools: Cal State San Bernardino, California Baptist University, Riverside City College, UC Riverside and Cal Poly Pomona. Demographics for each of these schools represent the

diverse ethnic backgrounds of the region and strengthen our commitment to serving the next generation of communications professionals.

IMPLEMENTATION -- Describe the elements or components, the techniques used, and the strategies and tactics undertaken, how objectives were met, and how you addressed the audience(s) you targeted.

For each event, our strategy included several tactics for our Inland Empire target audience: publicity in the monthly newsletter, which goes to 1,000 member and non-member subscribers, multiple emails to members and non-members, and regular posts via our social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram and Linked In). The Chapter managed to meet our objectives and successfully attract and engage the target audience for each activity. • August 2023- PRSA-IE Gives Back: Free PR Workshop for Nonprofits. Registered: 107; Attended: 65 (exceeded 2022 attendance). Two emails, average 33% open rate. • February 2024, Tour and Program at the Riverside Art Museum/The Cheech, Riverside. Registered: 42; Attended: 31 non-members; 11 members. Nine emails, average 48% open rate. Note: Due to a weather-related state of emergency, this event had to be rescheduled. However, no one dropped off from the initial registrations, and all adjusted to the rescheduled date. • March 2024, Meet the Media. Registered: 45; Attended: 28 non-members; 17 members (we had to limit registration due to room size; at capacity). Four emails, average 55% open rate. • PRSA-IE Professional Mixer in Riverside. Registered: 17; Attended: 9 non-members; 8 members. Three emails, average 50% open rate. • May 2024, "How Public Relations Shaped the Birth of Native American Cultural Tourism in California." Registered: 9; Attended: 5 non-members; 6 members. Six emails, average 56% open rate. • July 2024, "Strategies and Tactics That Have Made Temecula a Tourism Destination." Registered: 34; Attended: 24 non-members; 10 members. • Rising Star Scholarship (deadline June 20, 2024). The scholarship was advertised to Inland Empire colleges with communicationsrelated programs, through PRSSA chapters (if applicable), communications departments, professors and department staff. Emails were sent to all members and to our non-member list (1,000 individuals), and the scholarship was heavily promoted via the Chapter's social media and via PRSA board members' and Chapter volunteers' social media feeds.

EVALUATION -- What were your results? Explain how the program met or exceeded its original measurement methods when available or appropriate. What worked? What was accomplished? What would you do differently?

The Chapter successfully met its membership growth target in July and is set to award two scholarships to students from underrepresented communities at its annual awards gala in November. Each of the events was well-attended, attracting a diverse audience and fostering meaningful discussions that included DEI topics. • PRSA-IE Gives Back: Free PR

Workshop for Nonprofits. Registered: 107; Attended: 65 (exceeded 2022 attendance). Free event. Venue sponsor; refreshments sponsored. Revenue: \$130 (fee was only for those who were not from a nonprofit). Survey: 86% "very satisfied" with event. For 2024, we will send more reminders to encourage those who register to actually attend. • Tour and Program at the Riverside Art Museum/The Cheech. Registered: 42; Attended: 31 nonmembers; 11 members. Venue sponsor; refreshments sponsored. Revenue: \$1,500+. Expenses: \$133. Survey: 100% "Excellent" rating from all respondents. After the event in an email, museum staff praised the group and the conversation. We intend to repeat this event and attract a larger audience. • Meet the Media. Registered: 45; Attended: 28 nonmembers; 17 members (we had to limit registration due to room size; at capacity). Venue sponsor; Lunch, \$800; Revenue: \$1,600. Survey: In response to the question "Was there something you learned today that will improve how you work with the media?" 86% of respondents said "Yes." This is always a popular event/topic, and we'll probably choose a larger venue in 2025. • PRSA-IE Professional Mixer in Riverside. Registered: 17; Attended: 9 non-members; 8 members. Venue sponsor. Snacks and one free drink: \$400; Revenue: \$215. We offered an incentive of first 10 to sign up get a free drink, and we kept the member cost low, \$10 (non-members, \$15) to encourage participation. Survey: The event met expectations for 100% of respondents. For 2025, we'll seek a sponsor and broaden the audience to our friends in CAPIO and AAF IE chapters, perhaps for the member fee. One attendee shared on social media: "I enjoy the networking events that PRSA sponsors. I always meet individuals who are relevant to my role at RUSD Foundation." • "How Public Relations Shaped the Birth of Native American Cultural Tourism in California." Registered: 9; Attended: 5 non-members; 6 members. Venue sponsor. Lunch, \$163; Revenue \$300. Note: While this number may seem low, it was actually a right-sized audience for the cozy venue and for the Spa at Séc-he tour after the talk. We would likely have had more participation but for a conference in the area that involved many of our members and other PR/coms professionals (unavoidable due to availability of our speaker/venue). We'll try this event again, perhaps with a larger event space and avoid conflicts with competing events. • July 2024, "Strategies and Tactics That Have Made Temecula a Tourism Destination." Registered: 34; Attended: 24 non-members; 10 members. Venue sponsor. Lunch, \$1,300; Revenue \$1,500. The enthusiasm for the Chapter being in this region was very high; we will return in 2025 with a workshop or mixer. Survey: 100% of respondents rated the program content "Excellent." Participant comment on LinkedIn: "Learned so much about the incredible region I call home. Absolutely loved everyone's insights, but Ciara Green from Pechanga Resort Casino really spoke to me with her take on Temecula's evolution over the past eight years, our resilience through COVID, and the importance of local support for growth. Feeling inspired!" • Rising Star Scholarship (deadline June 20, 2024). 16 applicants for the Rising Star Scholarship.: 4 graduates, 7 undergrads, 5 seniors. 8 from CSUSB, 3

CBU, 1 UCR, 1 RCC, 3 Cal Poly Pomona (total applications exceeded 2013 applications). Board members reviewed and selected two winners (\$1,000 each) to be highlighted at the 2024 Polaris Awards and Annual Meeting, Nov 8. For 2025, we will have two new ambassadors for the scholarship (the 2024 recipients!) and will consult with them to get feedback on how to strengthen this program.

EVALUATION -- How have your Chapter's DEI initiatives impacted attitudes, beliefs or behaviors?

The Chapter's DEI initiatives have positively influenced attitudes and behaviors among our members and other communicators within the region leading to a more inclusive environment. The initiatives have also strengthened the Chapter's reputation as a leader in promoting diversity within the region and the communications industry.

EVALUATION -- How have your Chapter's DEI initiatives led the communications industry in your market?

Our Chapter's DEI initiatives have positioned us as a leader in advancing diversity and inclusion within the communications industry and in our region. By implementing targeted strategies, we have effectively addressed the diverse needs of our region and set a standard for how organizations can foster inclusivity. 1. Empowering Diverse Organizations: Through our "PRSAIE Gives Back" workshop, we directly engaged with the nonprofit sector, focusing on branding and storytelling to help diverse organizations raise awareness for their causes. This initiative has equipped a broad range of organizations with the tools needed to amplify their voices in the community, reflecting our commitment to supporting diversity in communication efforts. 2. Inclusive Media Outreach: Our "Meet the Media" event provided an invaluable opportunity for diverse organizations to learn how to effectively communicate their projects to various audiences. By facilitating interactions between local media and organizations serving different communities, we have enhanced the visibility of diverse narratives and stories within the region. 3. Cultural Awareness and Engagement: Our Chapter hosted events that highlighted Native American and Hispanic cultures, allowing members and prospective members to delve deeper into the region's rich diversity. These events not only celebrated cultural heritage but also encouraged a broader understanding and appreciation of the diverse communities we serve. 4. Supporting Future Diverse Leaders: We have made a tangible impact on the future of the communications industry by presenting scholarships to Inland Empire students from diverse backgrounds. These scholarships, along with waived registration fees for professional development events, underscore our commitment to nurturing the next generation of public relations professionals from underrepresented communities. 5. Comprehensive DEI Commitment: Serving a region as vast and diverse as the Inland Empire, our Chapter's 2024 Board

recommitted to reaching and serving more members, and connecting with potential members, through DEI-related efforts. This holistic approach ensures that our initiatives are not only inclusive but also far-reaching, benefiting a region known for its dynamic population and diverse economy. Through these efforts, our Chapter has not only led the communications industry in our region but has also set a benchmark for how DEI initiatives can be integrated into an organization's strategy.

EVALUATION -- How have your Chapter's DEI initiatives influenced membership?

Our Chapter's DEI initiatives have had a significant and positive impact on membership growth. By strategically organizing and completing three DEI-focused regional events in key areas—Palm Springs, Temecula, and Riverside—we successfully attracted and engaged a diverse audience. Each event was not only well-attended but also exceeded expectations, with several being over-subscribed. These events provided a platform for meaningful discussions on DEI topics, resonating with both existing and potential members who value diversity and inclusion within the public relations profession. In addition to the successful events, our Chapter is set to award two scholarships to students from underrepresented communities at our annual awards gala in November. This initiative underscores our commitment to supporting diversity within the next generation of PR professionals. The combination of these efforts has helped us achieve our membership growth target by creating an inclusive environment that appeals to a broader audience and emphasizes our dedication to advancing DEI in the profession.

EVALUATION -- How has your Chapter established sound relationships with diverse publics and/or organizations to gain consensus or help PRSA advance diversity in the profession?

Our PRSA Inland Empire (PRSA-IE) Chapter has taken significant steps to establish and strengthen relationships with diverse publics and organizations, which aligns with PRSA's mission to advance diversity within the profession. Collaborative Initiatives and Events: • PRSA-IE Gives Back - PR Workshop for Nonprofits: This event highlighted our commitment to engaging with various nonprofit organizations in the Inland Empire, helping them understand the power of branding and storytelling to raise awareness for their causes. This event was made possible through collaboration with the IEHP Foundation and featured a diverse group of expert speakers who brought different perspectives and experiences, enhancing the learning experience for all attendees. • Meet the Media Event: This event brought together an ethnically diverse group of media professionals, providing our members with insights into how to effectively engage with various media platforms. The panel included representatives from Black Voice News, KVCR IE Latino Voices, and others, offering perspectives that cater to a broad range of communities, including healthcare, education, and nonprofits. This event was instrumental in enhancing our members'

understanding of the importance of diversity in media engagement. • Exploring Native American Cultural Tourism: In collaboration with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, we explored the intersection of public relations and cultural heritage tourism. This event emphasized the significance of Native American culture and the role of public relations in promoting and preserving it. Our collaboration with Kate Anderson, director of public relations for the Agua Caliente Band, underscored our commitment to highlighting diverse cultural narratives. • The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture: Through our event at the Riverside Art Museum, we engaged with the Chicano community, exploring the impact of art and culture in promoting diversity. The panel discussion featured prominent figures in the Chicano art community, reflecting our chapter's dedication to fostering a deeper understanding of diverse cultural expressions. Networking and Community Building: • Professional Mixer: This event provided a platform for professionals from various sectors, including nonprofits, agencies, and education, to network and exchange ideas. The diversity of attendees helped build stronger, more inclusive professional networks, reinforcing our chapter's role as a connector within the community. Temecula Tourism Event: By focusing on the growth and transformation of Temecula as a tourism destination, we engaged with a community that is culturally diverse. The event emphasized the importance of coming together as a community to overcome challenges and support the local economy, aligning with our chapter's broader goal of fostering inclusive economic growth. Education: Our chapter has effectively established relationships with diverse publics and organizations to help PRSA advance diversity in the profession by focusing on educational support and professional development. Recognizing the Inland Empire's unique demographic challenges—where only 20% of residents hold a bachelor's degree compared to the national and statewide averages of 37%—we revived our student scholarship program. This initiative, dormant since 2011, was reinstated to support local students pursuing careers in public relations, communications, journalism, and related fields. In 2024, we will award two scholarships, each valued at \$1,000, to students from ethnically diverse backgrounds from local institutions. Applicants are from CSUSB, Cal Baptist, RCC, UC Riverside, and Cal Poly Pomona. Two of these students are not only receiving financial support but are also being introduced to a network of PR professionals through PRSA-IE, enhancing their professional development. Furthermore, we waived the registration fees for PRSA-IE professional development events for one year to further integrate them into the PR community. By prioritizing education and mentorship, our chapter is actively contributing to the diversification of the public relations profession, ensuring that emerging professionals from diverse backgrounds have the opportunities and support they need to succeed. These initiatives demonstrate PRSA-IE's commitment to building relationships with diverse publics and organizations. Through our events, we have created platforms for learning, dialogue, and collaboration, contributing to the

advancement of diversity within the public relations profession and the broader community.

EVALUATION -- Next Steps: What are your future plans for DEI initiatives?

The Chapter plans to continue its focus on DEI by appointing a dedicated DEI director, expanding its outreach efforts, increasing scholarship opportunities, and hosting additional events that highlight diverse perspectives in public relations. Chapter membership for women has increased, but has decreased for men; we plan to keep an eye on this as we want all Inland Empire communications professionals to know that the Chapter is an important resource for their professional development.