

PRSSA

Situation Analysis
2025

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INTRODUCTION

This document, established by the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) National Committee, sets goals for the future that will lead successive National Committee members toward a vision and ensure the Society's growth, advancement, and achievement. This document will remain a work in progress and be updated annually by the current National Committee.

Included is in-depth information on current National initiatives as well as goals and objectives for future National Committees to support their platforms and programming, and a timeline of major responsibilities. In addition, there is an overall view of the future of the Society from PRSSA 2024–2025 National President Milagros Orcoyen located in the “Future of the Society” section.

The Situation Analysis should be viewed as a guiding document that has two roles. First, future National Committee members should build their platforms from this document and add their creative problem-solving and strategic skills to help advance the Society. Second, Chapter leaders should use this document when setting goals and initiatives. By working together on the local and national level, PRSSA can connect and advance.

History

In 1968, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) founded PRSSA to cultivate relationships between students and public relations professionals. PRSSA aims to foster understanding of current public relations theories and practices, encourage the highest ideals and principles, instill a professional attitude, and encourage PRSA Associate Membership and eventual Accreditation in Public Relations.

PRSSA Organization

On April 4, 1968, the PRSA Board of Directors created the first PRSSA Chapters at nine schools that met the charter requirements; these are the Alpha Chapters. Those charter Chapters were University of Florida, University of Houston, University of Maryland, The Ohio State University, San Jose State College, University of Southern California, University of Texas at Austin, Utica College, and West Virginia University. Three additional Chapters were approved on June 28: Central Missouri University, North Dakota University, and Syracuse University. Kent State University received its charter on Sept. 13 and Northern Illinois University on Nov. 17.

PRSSA Management and Leadership

The National Committee leads PRSSA and includes the following 14 members:

National President	Vice President of Events and Fundraising
Immediate Past President	Vice President of Member Services
Vice President of Belonging, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	Vice President of Professional Development
Vice President of Brand Engagement	National Faculty Adviser
Vice President of Career Services	National Professional Adviser
Vice President of Chapter Development	PRSA Board Liaison
Vice President of Digital Communications	PRSA Senior Vice President of Programs

Students on the National Committee serve a one-year term, June 1 to May 31, and are elected at the annual PRSSA Leadership Assembly. Officers must maintain full-time enrollment in school through the fall semester of their term. The National Committee manages PRSSA while serving as a resource to members and Chapters.

Note: The National President position is a two-year commitment. The person elected spends the first year as National President and transitions into the advisory role of Immediate Past President for the second year.

Annual Report

If the National Committee develops an annual report, this falls under the vice president of brand engagement responsibilities. This document summarizes the accomplishments of the National Committee and previews the next year. This document should be published each year before the end of May.

Press Releases

PRSSA National Headquarters may work with the vice president of brand engagement to write most press releases. The vice president of brand engagement should monitor PRSSA activities to determine when such releases are necessary.

Membership Dues and Online Registration

We will continue to encourage all Chapters to allow their students to pay individually online. This will help with collecting accurate contact information for all members across the board.

National Committee Monthly Reports

To keep the other National Committee members updated on their projects and events, each National Committee member submits a report via email on the first day of each month. The report describes each Committee member's activities. These reports help the National President oversee the National Committee and assist the Committee in collaborating virtually.

PRSSA Vision and Mission Statements (Established in 2016)

Vision

PRSSA aspires to advance the public relations profession by developing ethically responsible pre-professionals who champion diversity, strive for an outstanding education and advocate for the profession.

Mission

To provide exceptional service to our members by enhancing their education, broadening their professional network and helping launch their careers after graduation.

Strategic Plan

Membership

Build a more robust and engaged community of public relations pre-professionals. Grow the Society in numbers and in areas such as diversity, creativity and level of involvement. Recruit new universities and reinvigorate existing Chapters. Maintain PRSSA's reputation as the foremost organization for pre-professional students interested in public relations and related fields. Encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning.

Leadership

Provide superior leadership training to all members and enhance professional growth with meaningful experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. Act as thought leaders for the education and future of the profession. Keep pace with the quickly evolving nature of the profession and be innovative in advancing the Society. Lead the industry in ethics and diversity initiatives.

Service

Give back to local communities and professional organizations. Engage in pro-bono work through Student-run Firms and Chapters. Be an asset to members throughout their educational journey and beyond. Be approachable, honest and fair. Provide members with national, regional and local opportunities to network, share ideas and grow professionally.

Running for a Position on the National Committee

National Committee Election Applications

Those applying for a PRSSA National Committee position must submit a Candidate Nomination Form, a letter of recommendation from their Adviser, a speech/presentation video, and an essay. Candidates are expected to review the PRSSA Situation Analysis, speak with the Committee member currently serving in the desired position, clearly understand how PRSSA functions, and review the job description and responsibilities of each National Committee position.

National Election Procedures

The PRSSA Leadership Assembly is an annual meeting of Chapter representatives to elect national officers and vote on Bylaw amendments. Each PRSSA Chapter sends one official delegate to the event to represent the Chapter in the election proceedings. Any delegate wishing to amend the PRSSA Bylaws during Leadership Assembly must submit a written request to the National President by the established deadline.

Chapter Election Procedures

Each year, PRSSA Chapters elect a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer (or the combined office of secretary/treasurer), public relations director, historian, Assembly delegate and alternate delegate, and Professional and Faculty Advisers. To ensure uniformity among PRSSA Chapters, elections must be completed by March 27 so new officers may assume their responsibilities on June 1.

PRSSA recommends using the following simple, uniform election procedures from year to year:

At least one month before elections, announce the open offices, present the job descriptions and invite nominations from the floor at a general meeting. After a nomination is seconded, the candidate must accept. (Students may nominate themselves.) Nominations are closed when no further nominations are received from the floor.

Candidates have three days to return a completed nomination form to the Chapter secretary. The forms allow candidates to campaign for a position and the general membership to review all candidates' qualifications. The secretary should provide copies of the forms to each Chapter member at the next general meeting.

At this meeting, candidates present and then answer questions. Immediately after all presentations are done, a closed-ballot vote should happen. The secretary and other non-candidates on the current executive board should collect the ballots, count them in another room and then return to report the results to the membership and candidates. Old and new officers meet to discuss their expectations and goals for the next year. The new executive board assumes its responsibilities at the next general meeting.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

The National President is the principal administrative officer of the PRSSA National Committee and liaison to the PRSSA Advisers, PRSA Senior Vice President of Programs and PRSA Board of Directors. The president organizes agendas and programs for National Committee and PRSSA Leadership Assembly meetings. The National President supervises the PRSSA International Conference (ICON), regulates Chapter probation and charter revocation, advises and instructs National Committee members on policies and procedures of PRSSA and administers PRSSA Chapter and member award programs. The National President has the responsibility to initiate a platform, as do all officers of the National Committee when elected, and to maintain progress toward achieving the platform throughout the term to the best of his or her ability.

Current Programs

PRSA Associate Membership

The National President and Immediate Past President work in tandem to oversee and promote PRSA Associate Membership. PRSSA members are eligible to join PRSA as Associate Members up to five months before or two years after they graduate. Associate Member dues are \$67, which represents a savings of \$200 per year. PRSSA currently works with the PRSA New Professionals Section and PRSA as a whole to effectively communicate the benefits of Associate Membership and track progress from year to year. PRSSA works closely with the PRSA New Professionals Section to advocate for Associate Membership and active involvement upon graduation. The National President also should work to educate members about the transition from student to professional and include this in Associate Membership promotion.

Challenges of Promoting PRSA Associate Membership

- Students may be unaware of the benefits of joining PRSA as an Associate Member, and therefore do not join at all.
- PRSA Associate Membership is not perceived as relevant to students who are not graduating, and awareness of the value proposition differs from Chapter to Chapter and student to student, making this a subject that will need to be continually reinforced.
- Many graduates take post-graduate internships rather than obtaining immediate full-time employment, and face tight budgets, thereby delaying their interest in joining PRSA.

The future of promoting PRSA Associate Membership includes continuing to work with the PRSA New Professionals Section and providing structure to the program to close the transitional gap between the Societies and help members successfully move forward in professional development outside of school and the workplace.

PRSSA and the PRSA New Professionals Section should work together on programming and communication to give graduates the tools they need to be successful in their careers. In addition, the New Professionals Section can help orient its audience on a career path that involves active PRSA membership.

PRSSA General Meetings

Implemented in 2023, these meetings are similar to Chapter general meetings but are hosted by the National Committee via Zoom and open to all PRSSA members. The goal of these meetings is to help members connect with peers across the Society, strengthening our sense of belonging and maintaining ongoing conversations throughout the year.

In 2024, the format of the General Meetings was updated to include a 10-minute segment for National updates, followed by a panel, workshop, or presentation on a specific topic, such as ethics, the importance of BEDI, entering the workforce, and more. The vice presidents assist in planning and hosting meetings related to their respective positions.

The National President is responsible for developing the yearly calendar of General Meetings and ensuring their successful planning and execution.

PRSSA Situation Analysis

The National President oversees additions and edits to the Situation Analysis. Each year, the National President should collect and review job descriptions from National Committee members. The National President also completes the 'Future of the Society' section, giving the Society a vision for the future.

Research and Surveys

Based on his or her platform presented at Leadership Assembly, the incoming National President must release the annual PRSSA membership survey in May before the beginning of the new term. The survey was first conducted in 2004 and continues to measure the effectiveness of national programming and composition of membership. The National President should work in tandem with PRSSA National Headquarters and the Immediate Past President to ensure a timely execution for this initiative.

Counsel

The National President counsels National Committee members throughout their terms. The National President should respond to the Committee's monthly reports if necessary and hold monthly one-on-one meetings with each Committee member. The National President will hold a transition meeting with the Immediate Past President and PRSSA National Headquarters in May before the term begins.

The National President plays a key role in keeping the team on track, ensuring each vice president successfully executes their platform for the year. While the president has flexibility in how to track progress, maintaining a goal-oriented and encouraging approach is essential to fostering success and momentum within the team.

Handbook Updates

The National President is responsible for updating the national handbooks at the start of his or her term while collaborating with the National Committee to incorporate best practices from the previous year, making the handbooks a more relevant tool for new Chapter leaders to use.

If needed, the National President can also collaborate with the National Committee to develop new handbooks and resources that meet the changing needs of Chapters and members, ensuring that the Society remains responsive and supportive.

National Events

The National President works closely with the ICON Conference Committee and PRSSA National Headquarters to plan and host a successful Conference. The National President is expected to attend Conference Committee meetings, offering assistance wherever needed. Additionally, they are responsible for connecting the National Committee with the Conference Committee to explore potential collaborations. For example, this could include linking the vice president of events and fundraising to contribute content related to fundraising for the Conference, or the vice president of digital communications to assist with promotions before, during, and after the event.

During the Conference, the National President serves as a key spokesperson, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all attendees, speakers, and sponsors. They host various sessions and provide support for onsite tasks, ensuring everything runs smoothly.

Additionally, the National President is responsible for preparing the National Committee roll call and assisting the vice presidents as they prepare to lead their respective sessions.

The National President takes the lead in planning and hosting the Leadership Assembly. In collaboration with PRSSA National Headquarters, they help develop the event agenda, confirm speakers and sponsors, and develop a program that is centered around empowering members with leadership tools and skills to help them succeed in leading their Chapters.

Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations is committed to empowering and advancing the next generation of emerging leaders in the profession through mentorship, programming, education, and fostering meaningful connections. The Center ensures future leaders possess the knowledge, skills, history, ethics, and empathy to foster strong relationships between institutions, organizations, and the public they serve for mutual benefit.

The Board of Advisors of The Plank Center consists of world-class academics and practitioners who provide counsel, direction, and oversight to the Center regarding strategic plans and programs to support its leadership mission. The PRSSA National President serves as an ex-officio member of the Board, representing the student voice and facilitating the connection between PRSSA and the Plank Center.

The National President represents PRSSA at key Plank Center events, including Board meetings and the Summit and Milestones in Mentoring Gala.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Promote Associate Membership and the New Professionals Section via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with vice president of digital communication to promote PRSSA via social media channels.
- Support members of the National Committee with responsibilities.
- Regularly communicate with PRSSA National Headquarters and Society members.

March–April (before term begins)

- Co-host PRSSA Leadership Assembly with Immediate Past President

May (before term begins)

- Attend transition meeting with current National President.
- Work with incoming National Committee to develop yearlong, achievable platforms; conduct phone or video calls to go over platforms.
- Establish a method for tracking platform progress.

June

- Host National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Assist National Committee in revising platforms for the upcoming year.
- Create a yearly calendar for the PRSSA General Meetings.
- Schedule National Committee meetings for the year.

July

- Represent PRSSA at the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations board meeting.

August–September

- Draft letter to PRSA Chapters to encourage outreach and communication to PRSSA Chapters.
- Assist in promotions for ICON.

October

- Serve as spokesperson for the Society at PRSSA ICON and the PRSA Leadership Assembly.

November–December

- Work with National Committee to develop goals for the future.
- Edit the Situation Analysis.
- Begin preparations for Leadership Assembly.
- Begin outreach for potential National Committee candidates.
- Begin planning for upcoming ICON by participating in Conference update phone calls.
- Represent PRSSA at the Plank Center Summit and Milestones in Mentoring Gala.

January

- Represent PRSSA at the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations board meeting.

February

- Assist National Committee candidates as they prepare to run at Assembly.

March–April

- Host Leadership Assembly.

May

- Update and release PRSSA survey to national membership.
- Collaborate with the vice president of brand engagement to release an Annual Report, if applicable.
- Assist incoming National President and National Committee with transition.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Current Programs

The Immediate Past President advises the National President and works on special projects. The Immediate Past President shall perform all duties of the National President if the National President is unable to do so. The Immediate Past President also will help the National President promote PRSA Associate Membership, work with the PRSA New Professionals Section to assist members making the transition from student to professional and manage PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month.

PRSSA Situation Analysis

The Immediate Past President helps the National President revise the Situation Analysis, including the “Where To Go” section and the next national survey.

PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month

The Immediate Past President provides Chapters with support in strengthening their relationship with their PRSA sponsor Chapters. This support should include promoting PRSA Associate Membership for graduating PRSSA members, PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month in November, the PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Manual and other useful incentives throughout the year to encourage maintaining the relationship.

During Relationship Month, PRSSA strives for Chapters to host events with their local PRSA Chapters. The Immediate Past President must maintain Relationship Month’s success by:

- Making it relevant to diverse Chapters within the Society and promoting participation.
- Encouraging PRSSA members to continue to reach out to PRSA (despite possible past challenges).
- Encouraging Chapters to plan an event during October.
- Encouraging PRSA/PRSSA mentor relationships.

Past promotions for Relationship Month included Instagram chats, social media mini-campaigns, e-blasts and a series of posts on Progressions with relationship tips and Chapter best practices. Establishing more programs will solidify this program in Chapters’ routines.

PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Manual

The PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Manual was designed to help Chapters understand the benefit of their relationships with local PRSA members and vice versa. It is an important tool for helping members form stronger relationships with local professionals and engaging potential mentors. The Relationship Manual was revamped in 2011. The Immediate Past President must continue to expand the current document to include more examples and case studies as well as ensuring content is up-to-date.

Challenges of PRSSA/PRSA Relationships

- Helping PRSSA Chapters find methods to connect with PRSA Chapters.
- Maintaining Chapter interest in PRSSA/PRSA relationships throughout the year.

Future of PRSSA/PRSA Relationships

- Plan a joint PRSSA/PRSA networking event at ICON.
- Incorporate more education about PRSA, what it is and why members should join.
- Increase the number of Chapters and Student-run Firms engaged in consistent mentorship programs with their sponsor Chapters.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Promote Associate Membership via existing PRSSA channels.
- Contribute to communication efforts, as needed.
- Serve as resource to Chapters in designated region.
- Promote the PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Manual.

May (before term begins)

- Attend transition meeting with next National President.
- Review National Committee platforms with incoming National President.

June

- Assist with National Committee Leadership Retreat, as needed.

August–September

- Plan programming and content for PRSSA/PRSA Relationship Month.

October

- Serve as spokesperson for the Society at the PRSSA ICON when the National President is unavailable.

November

- Execute Relationship Month, including a Instagram chat.

January

- Revise the Situation Analysis with National President.
- Promote PRSA Associate Membership to December/January graduates.

March–April

- Attend Leadership Assembly and assist with programming, as needed.
- Promote PRSA Associate Membership to graduating seniors.
- Assist in releasing PRSSA membership survey.

May

- Assist incoming National President and National Committee with transition.
- Continue to promote PRSA Associate Membership.

VICE PRESIDENT OF BELONGING, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

The vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion strategically advocates for the Society and profession on the Society's behalf, building relationships with historically black colleges and universities (HBCU)/Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and global Chapters. That person will oversee diversity and inclusion programming, events, and material on the national level.

The vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion acts as a day-to-day resource for members executing Chapter diversity initiatives. He or she also oversees globalization efforts and builds relationships with the Society's international Chapters.

Delegates to the PRSSA 2019 National Assembly voted to extract the diversity and inclusion responsibilities out of the vice president of external affairs role, creating the vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion position, which is elected solely by the National Assembly.

Belonging, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (BEDI)

PRSSA embraces all individuals regardless of ethnicity, culture, education, major, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation. PRSSA recognizes the importance of different experiences, perspectives, and voices in making a viable Society that aids the profession. In recent years this has included those with physical handicaps, veteran status and nontraditional or returning students who seek to change professions.

The vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion should work to advocate for diversity and inclusion and its relevance to the profession. This includes writing blog posts, recording podcasts, assisting Chapters with on- campus or virtual diversity initiatives, planning Diversity Month and other historical months, and helping the Society understand the importance of incorporating diversity and inclusion into the public relations practice. They should take a special interest in executing the Society's Diversity Initiative (est. 2006, updated 2017) and should work closely with HBCU and HACU schools with PRSSA Chapters. When planning Diversity Month, the vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion works closely with the PRSA Diversity and Inclusion Committee. In addition, the vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion must focus on how the National Committee can better connect with the international Chapters and HBCU/HACU schools and serves as a member of the PRSA D&I Sub-committee.

Diversity Initiative

The vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion facilitates the PRSSA Diversity Initiative, which clarifies and enforces PRSSA's stance on diversity in the profession. PRSSA supports the Diversity Initiative of PRSA and encourages Chapters to recruit and retain a diverse membership and leadership representing the demographics at their school. Each PRSSA Chapter should evaluate how it will support the PRSSA Diversity and Inclusion initiative tasked by the Chapter's diversity and inclusion officer and use the Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit as a guide to help support and promote diversity and inclusion on their campus. In 2018, the vice president of external affairs updated the Diversity Initiative for the third time since its creation in 2005.

Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit Content Expansion

- In 2020, the Toolkit was expanded further to include an official diversity and inclusion statement, do's and don'ts of Chapter D&I officers, recommendations for engaging with students and Faculty Advisers at HBCU and HACU institutions, an enhanced ideas and events section called, "Thinking Outside the Box," the current vice president's strategic plan and core objectives, and the names and universities of each Proud Council member and International Ambassador for the one-year term.

Objectives of the Diversity Initiative

- Promote the Diversity Toolkit and help Chapters apply its principles; expand the Toolkit as necessary.
- Incorporate diversity into District Conferences, local Chapter programs and national events.
- Teach members how to effectively incorporate diversity into a public relations campaign.
- Promote diversity through PRSSA publications and other channels.

Challenges of the Diversity Initiative

- Ensuring that Chapters maintain and promote diversity and understand diversity's broad definition.

- Measuring which Chapters are utilizing the Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit.
- Helping Chapters understand elements of a diversity campaign.
- Staying adaptable to current diversity and inclusion trends.
- Keeping the Initiative and Toolkit updated and relevant.

Future of the Diversity Initiative

Objective

- Continue to promote diversity to PRSSA members in new and creative ways.
- Promote inclusivity in its truest form on a national and local level.
- Continue to educate, frame, and broaden underrepresented perspectives for members.

Possible Tactics

- Promote the continued diversification among members.
- Encourage members to include students with disabilities in the definition of diversity.
- Encourage Chapters to participate in campus-related diversity events or weeks as well as use the Diversity and Inclusion office and staff on campus to support this mission.
- Host virtual get-togethers for Chapter D&I officers to connect and share resources.
- Conduct an annual review to update the Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit

PRSSA x FINN Partners Diversity Program/ Partners for Diversity

- PRSSA partners with FINN Partners, a leading global independent marketing and communications agency, to provide students from underrepresented backgrounds with opportunities to explore the operations of a global communications agency and gain insight into the critical role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in public relations.

Past Programs

Educate Yourself Campaign

The 2020–2021 National Committee entered their term experiencing the massive social uproar followed by the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. To help the Society’s members become equipped with the tools and knowledge to educate themselves on diversity and anti-racism, the vice president of diversity and inclusion, vice president of digital communications, and the national president created a campaign series called, “Educate Yourself,” featuring PRSSA-curated lists of books, TV shows/films, and podcasts.

PRSSA Advocacy in Action

Issue: The public relations profession does not reflect the diversity of society at large, which deprives the profession of the creativity, sensitivity and innovation that varied perspectives can provide.

Action: PRSSA implemented the Diversity Initiative and created the Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit to help Chapter leaders increase diversity among their Chapter membership.

Issue: The news cycle is accelerating, confusion over ethics is widespread and the attention given to the public relations profession is increasing.

Action: PRSSA added the vice president of advocacy (now vice president of diversity and inclusion) as an officer on its National Committee to address issues of importance to the profession and public relations students.

Vice President of External Affairs

The 2016–2017 National Committee proposed a bylaw amendment to realign this position to include external affairs. At the 2017 National Assembly, the delegation voted to change the title of the position from vice president of advocacy to vice president of external affairs.

At the 2019 National Assembly, the Delegates voted to move the external affairs responsibilities of this position to the newly created vice president of diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging, while the media outreach responsibilities now belong to the vice president of brand engagement.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Daily monitoring of trade publications and major news publications for advocacy issues.
- Supervise Chapter use of the Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit
- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with the vice president of digital communication to promote the BEDI on social media channels and with the vice president of brand engagement through Progressions and podcasts.
- Contribute to communication efforts, as needed.
- Serve as resource to Chapters in designated district.
- Participate in monthly PRSA Diversity and Inclusion Committee phone call.

June

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives (as determined by vice presidents).
- Begin planning for PRSSA Diversity Month.

July–August

- Finalize plans for PRSSA Diversity Month.
- Update Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit, as needed.

September

- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.

October

- Attend ICON.
- Pitch ICON to various outlets.
- Execute PRSSA Diversity Month.

November–December

- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.

January–April

- Communicate with members interested in running for the next National Committee.
- Attend District Conference.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.

April–May

- Transition the incoming National Committee member.
- Encourage Chapters to apply for the Teahan Chapter Diversity Award.

VICE PRESIDENT OF BRAND ENGAGEMENT

The vice president of brand engagement oversees the operation and publication of PRSSA's blog, Progressions, as well as its podcast series, PRSSA Podcasts. Additional responsibilities for this position may include recording the minutes at all National Committee meetings, creating recaps of every Instagram chat, creating the Annual Report, managing an editorial team, and assisting with other brand engagement efforts, such as the PRSSA website. The vice president of brand engagement is responsible for monitoring analytic reports for the blog and podcast series and providing suggestions to increase readers and listeners.

The vice president of brand engagement strategically advocates for the Society and profession on the Society's behalf, building relationships with key audiences and developing opportunities for PRSSA media relations. The position also works with Headquarters to curate national news about PRSSA National initiatives and announcements.

Delegates to the PRSSA 2019 National Assembly voted to merge the publications editor in chief role with the media relations aspect of the vice president of external affairs role, creating the vice president of brand engagement position, which is elected solely by the National Assembly.

Current Programs

Progressions

Content

Progressions is an outlet to provide commentary on behalf of the organization on recent trends and issues facing students and the profession. By engaging with members and potential members online, the blog provides an extension of the PRSSA social network with career advice, opinion pieces, industry news and Chapter development in formats longer than other social media platforms. Blog posts are written by Chapter members, National Committee members, PRSA representatives and industry professionals. Posts are frequently coordinated to correspond to PRSSA or PRSA initiatives (e.g., Diversity Month and Ethics Month). Readership has increased significantly by incorporating various formats of multimedia content in the blog, such as photos, infographics, podcasts, quizzes, videos and how-tos. The vice president of brand engagement can use member research, conversation on social media pages and blog analytics to discern what topics and formats should be addressed on the blog. Another important aspect of the blog is utilizing relevant search engine optimization (SEO) tactics with each post and for the site overall to ensure the blog is highly ranked in search engines. The ultimate goal is to have two or more posts each week to ensure consistent traffic to the blog. The vice president of brand engagement works very closely with the vice president of digital communications to promote articles on at least one social media platform.

Editing

The vice president of brand engagement should monitor analytic reports for Progressions and the podcast series. It is encouraged to set goals that will increase visitors, page views and comments each year. The vice president of brand engagement also teaches student contributors about AP Style, journalistic-style writing, and story-telling tactics, while holding contributors to the highest levels of journalistic integrity. While optional, having a subcommittee serving as an editorial team greatly assists with assuring frequent availability of content and with sourcing new contributors to the publications.

Redesign

The blog's brand was refreshed in 2021 with a new logo and website redesign. The purpose of the brand refresh is set to coincide with the PRSSA website refresh and to allow for a future-proof, multimedia-embracing platform going into the future.

Challenges of Progressions:

- Ensuring journalistic best practices are observed by contributors who may be unfamiliar with journalistic writing.
- Developing consistent content that interests members, covers a new topic or explores a new perspective of a previously covered topic.
- Incorporating multimedia posts on a regular basis.
 - Encouraging comments on the blog versus social media.

- Continually growing readership and encouraging exploring of previously published content.
- Ensuring contributors treat their contributions to the blog as professional development.

PRSSA Podcasts

PRSSA Podcasts encompasses the multiple podcast offerings of the Society. Podcast production and editing is overseen by the vice president of brand engagement and episodes may be hosted by members of the National Committee or the Society's various subcommittees. All podcasts are free and available on most major podcasting platforms. PRSSA Podcasts are distributed via the Podbean platform. A brief history of PRSSA's various podcast offerings can be found below.

In 2017, PRSSA launched two podcasts produced on a monthly basis. The first program, "Podcast With the Pros," focuses on sharing the perspective of an exemplary professional with PRSSA members. The second program, "Hidden Gems," highlights lesser-known benefits of PRSSA and allows members to enhance their membership experience. Podcast episode interviews were conducted by the Publications Editor in Chief, subcommittee members and members of the National Committee. Episodes were published to Progressions and promoted via PRSSA social media channels. In 2018, both podcasts became available on iTunes as a way to improve accessibility. In 2019, both podcast series were made available on Spotify to further expand their accessibility. Currently only "Podcast With the Pros," is being produced.

"Student Stories" was launched in 2020 with a goal of providing a platform for members to share their opinions and experiences with the Society. The podcast series "The Process" was also created in 2020 in response to the limited career opportunities students were facing due to the pandemic. It focused on what emerging communications professionals truly need to hit the ground running once they graduate. "PR with the Pros" will continue as a series under the PRSSA Podcasts umbrella as the vice president of brand engagement sees fit.

Annual Report

Each spring, the vice president of brand engagement collaborates with the vice president of digital communications and the National President to create the PRSSA Annual Report. This document should be published before the end of the current National Committee's term (May 31).

Past Programs

FORUM

FORUM provided essential opportunities for the organization to communicate its programs, events and services to all members. The editor in chief was responsible for developing a wide variety of article topics that were written by a diverse body of people including Chapter members, National Committee members, PRSA representatives and industry professionals. To ensure all articles were interesting and relevant to members, the editor in chief would research members' interests, set article word limits of between 300–700 words and develop photo assignments for select articles.

The 2011–2012 National Committee voted to eliminate the print version of FORUM and publish solely online due to:

- Survey results from members saying they were not receiving the print edition.
- The rising increase of e-readership.

The 2018–2019 National Committee chose to discontinue FORUM due to:

- Declining readership.
- Allocation of resources.
- Alternative responsibilities.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Solicit content for Progressions including podcasts; layout and publish accordingly.
- Publish at least two articles per week to Progressions.
- Produce and publish at least one podcast episode per month.
- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with vice president of digital communications to promote Progressions via social media channels.
- Serve as a resource to Chapters in designated District.
- Generate Wakelet recaps for monthly PRSSA National Instagram chats.
- Monitor trade publications and major news publications daily for trends.
- Work with Headquarters and National Committee to determine media relations needs.

June–August

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives.
- Determine if a subcommittee will be in place. If so, send out applications and hold interviews as necessary.

September

- Release applications for students interested in live blogging during ICON.

October

- Attend ICON; manage a reporting team for live blogging and photographers.
- Begin communicating with members interested in running for next National Committee.

November–January

- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.

February–April

- Attend District Conference.
- Attend Leadership Assembly; manage a reporting team for live blogging.
- Continue communicating with members interested in running for the next National Committee.

April–May

- Assist vice president of digital communications with layout and editing of the Annual Report.
- Transition the incoming National Committee member.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.
- Host Instagram Chats, if any.
- Begin transitioning incoming vice president of digital communications.

May

- Compile information and finalize PRSSA Annual Report.
- Transition the incoming National Committee member.
- Host Instagram Chat, if any.
- Heavily promote Certificate in Principles of Public Relations to potential recent or soon to be graduates.

VICE PRESIDENT OF CAREER SERVICES

The vice president of career services' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruiting employers to post internship positions on the Internship Center; managing the Internship Center; communicating Internship Center updates to members; updating and promoting the Career Resources Manual; answering Internship Center inquiries from Faculty Advisers, Chapter presidents, members and employers; share promotional material and conduct outreach; promoting Champions for PRSSA and collaborating with other positions to promote national internship directories and resources; managing the PRSSA LinkedIn group and sharing internship/job opportunities.

Current Programs

Internship Center

In July 2002, the Internship Center was created as a comprehensive, online database of public relations/communication internships and job opportunities for PRSSA members.

In June 2013, the new Internship Center was launched and now offers employers and members a streamlined interface for job posting and job searching.

In 2014, the vice president of career services worked with National Headquarters to give Internship Center administrators the ability to personally post positions as an "employer." This internal ability allows the vice president of career services to post positions without having each employer create an account.

In 2015, the vice president of career services took an active role in the PRSSA website redesign task force, which, among other sections, included an analysis of all possible areas of improvement to the Internship Center.

In 2023, discussions of changing the Internship Center platform began and the 2025–2026 vice president of career services will play a key role in helping implement a new site.

Members can log in using a MyPRSA username and password. All current PRSSA members have a MyPRSA account. To obtain MyPRSA login information, members must go to the Internship Center homepage and click "Retrieve your login or password." Members and employers can manage their accounts independently, with assistance from the vice president of career services, if needed. Members may post their résumés online for registered employers to view. Only signed-in employers can view résumés, preventing third parties from accessing members' information. Registered employers can search résumés by date, last name and keywords.

Each Internship Center posting includes the company's name, address, website and contact person. Postings also show the date posted, the position available, a job description, qualifications, compensation and instructions on how to apply. The Internship Center lists opportunities in all aspects of public relations and communications including firms, corporations and nonprofits.

Internship Center promotion occurs through the PRSSA Newsletter, Progressions, the PRSSA National X handle, PRSSA National Facebook and LinkedIn pages, PRSSA Instagram chats, Career Development Month and the vice president of career services' personal social media accounts.

Challenges of the Internship Center:

- Lack of awareness of the MyPRSA Internship Center by employers and students.
- Lack of employment opportunities in certain states, regions and internationally.
- Lack of awareness among PRSA membership.
- Low number of active employers compared to new employers.
- Low number of internships in popular geographic areas.
- Lack of students' knowledge about how to access the Center and best ways to utilize it.

Future of the PRSSA Internship Center

- Represent as many dimensions of the profession as possible (i.e., agency, nonprofit, corporate, etc.).
- Represent as many states, regions and countries as possible while continuing to explore international locations.
- Grow the number of users of the Internship Center.
- Create and implement new strategies through the Internship Center communications plan.
- Compile and showcase employer and student testimonials.

Career Resources Manual

The Career Resources Manual began as a collection of webpages with interview tips, a skills inventory and a personal press kit.

Challenges of the Career Resources Manual

- Increasing awareness and usage among members.
- Finding relevant secondary sources to complement current material.
- Identifying necessary new topics to add to existing content.
- Utilizing unique aspects of the Career Resources Manual effectively (ex: Student Activity Planner).

Future of the Career Resources Manual

- Increase promotion of Career Resources Manual material.
- Utilize the Student Activity Planner as a recruitment tool to collaborate with Career Services.

Champions for PRSSA

A new responsibility voted upon by the 2016–2017 National Committee, the vice president of career services will work more directly with Champions for PRSSA. This relationship and promotion will increase awareness and value of mentorship through the Champions to highlight the important role they play in career development. Additionally, the vice president of career services should contact all Champions at the beginning of his/her term to update the online directory with bios, headshots and active Champions.

The vice president of career services works with the Co-Chairs of Champions for PRSSA to develop promotional materials and handouts for the annual Champions Breakfast at ICON.

Chats with Champions Podcast

Implemented in 2024, Chats with Champions is a series for PRSSA Podcasts that connects students with Champions for PRSSA to share insight and advice. Partnering with the vice president of brand engagement, the vice president of career services chooses a Champion to highlight and finds a student to host the episode and develops a storyboard. Both vice presidents work together to produce and publish each episode.

Career Development Month

The 2015–2016 vice president of career services designated January 2016 to be PRSSA's first Career Development Month. This month seeks to inform members of all the National career resources available to them through the Society. In 2023 the vice president of career services changed the Career Development Month from January to November. The vice president of career services oversees all aspects of this month.

Challenges of Career Development Month

- Increase awareness after its first year.
- Prove its value to members to justify future Career Development Months.
- Develop new and original content for members.

Future of Career Development Month

- Increase career-related initiatives throughout the month.
- Create theme and content for the entire month by working closely with vice president of digital communications for social media posts.

Past Programs

Aspire Higher: Future Fellows Mentorship Program

The 2018–2019 vice president of career services collaborated with the PRSA College of Fellows co-mentorship chair to begin and coordinate the first year of the Aspire Higher: Future Fellows Mentorship Program (AHFFMP). The duties necessary for this program include:

- Updating program application question.
- Accepting PRSSA Star Chapter applications
- Selecting three to five Star Chapters and supervising mutually beneficial and positive mentorships alongside the PRSA College of Fellows mentorship chair and/or co-chair.
 - The number of accepted Star Chapters and PRSSA members is dependent on available PRSA Fellows as mentors

The program has not been active since 2021.

Career Services Subcommittee or Student-run Firm

The Career Services Subcommittee or a Student-run Firm working with the Internship Center as a client, if established by the current vice president of career services, encourages organizations to post employment opportunities on the Internship Center. Members of the subcommittee or firm may contact PRSSA Chapters to promote the Internship Center and career resources or may conduct outreach to organizations to increase employer awareness of the Internship Center. Members gain experience such as:

- Interaction with the National Committee, Chapters and professionals throughout the country.
- Professional experience in a national PRSSA leadership role.
- The opportunity to polish networking skills and strengthen the Society.

The 2013–2014 vice president of career services organized a subcommittee of five members to conduct outreach to employers throughout the country. Each subcommittee member was assigned two PRSSA Districts to focus on for outreach. Capstone Agency of the University of Alabama was selected in 2017 as the current Agency of Record for the Internship Center. Moving forward, the Agency of Record will be selected through an RFP process every two to three years.

Note: Responsibilities of the subcommittee or Student-run Firm differ from year to year at the vice president of career services' discretion.

During 2019–2020, the subcommittee, also known as the Agency of Record, was removed.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Maintain recruitment efforts for employers and encourage members to use the Internship Center.
- Contact new employers to encourage posting of internship opportunities.
- Work with vice president of digital communication and vice president of brand engagement to promote via social media channels and publications.
- Contribute to communication efforts, as needed.
- Serve as resource to Chapters in designated districts.
- Work with the Champions for PRSSA to promote offered resources.

June

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Develop subcommittee, if needed, or send out RFP to Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms.
- Have first contact with Champions for PRSSA co-chair(s).

July

- Finalize any changes to the Career Resources Manual.

August

- Direct subcommittee or Student-run Firm to promote National Initiatives.
- Host kickoff call with Champions for PRSSA co-chairs to discuss the year's goals.
- Begin reviewing AHFFMP applications.

September

- Encourage PRSA Chapters to use Internship Center to post new positions for their members' companies and/or search for candidates.
- Utilize subcommittee or Student-run Firm members to oversee regions.
- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Prepare Career Development Month content to run in November. Coordinate with vice president of digital communications and vice president of brand engagement.

October

- Attend ICON; highlight Internship Center resources to both PRSA and PRSSA members.
- Promote the Champions for PRSSA events at ICON and throughout mentorship month.

November–December

- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.

January–April

- Encourage PRSA members to use Internship Center to post new positions for their companies and/or search for candidates.
- Communicate with members interested in running for next National Committee.
- Attend District Conference.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.

May

- Transition the incoming National Committee member.

VICE PRESIDENT OF CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT

The Vice President of Chapter Development is responsible for supporting the growth and success of PRSSA Chapters and their leaders. This includes mentoring Chapter Presidents, providing resources for recruitment, retention and programming, and helping establish new Chapters. As chair of the Chapter Development Committee, the Vice President of Chapter Development leads a team focused on improving Chapter management and fostering collaboration. The Vice President of Chapter Development also oversees the Community Service Initiative, plans the Chapter Development Session at ICON, coordinates the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree, and organizes quarterly Chapter Development & Leadership Sessions to help train and guide Chapter leaders. Through these efforts, the Vice President of Chapter Development helps Chapters grow into strong communities for professional development and leadership.

Current Programs

Community Service Initiative (CSI)

The vice president of Chapter development coordinates and promotes a community service project at ICON. The story of the initiative also is pitched to journalists for traditional and nontraditional media placements with the vice president of brand engagement. Creating the pitch involves strategic planning led by the vice president of Chapter development in conjunction with PRSSA National Headquarters.

Some Past Community Service Initiative

- 2023-2024 Surfrider Foundation. PRSSA collaborated with the Surfrider Foundation at the 2024 Leadership Assembly to promote environmental sustainability and raise awareness about ocean conservation efforts.
- 2022-2023 PRSSA x AFSP, PRSSA partnered with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and held a Walk out of Darkness at the 2023 Leadership Assembly in Scottsdale, Ariz.
- 2021-2022 #CleantheWorldwithPRSSA. Social media campaign and a website to purchase items benefiting Clean the World.
- 2020 #BooksforPRSSA. Social media campaign for every post 5 books were donated to Kids Need to Read. 650 books were donated in total.
- 2019 Connect Our Kids. Social media campaign where students shared photos and videos to spread the awareness of Connect Our Kids mission.
- 2018 Rosie's Place, Boston. Students brought donations for Rosie's Place, a women's shelter.

Challenges of Community Service Initiative

- Encouraging Chapters and members to participate.
- Promoting the CSI effectively, both through social media and in-person outreach.
- Identifying a suitable organization to partner with for the initiative.

Future of Community Service Initiative

Objective

- Launch a CSI that engages attending and non-attending Chapters at in-person events, making it inclusive and accessible for all members.
- Strengthen the connection between PRSSA and PRSA through the CSI.

Tactics

- Add a social element, like a social media challenge, a virtual meeting or an in-person event at ICON, Leadership Assembly and/or District Conferences.
- Start the search for a service project earlier in the term, ensuring the project is finalized well before the event.

Chapter Development Sessions (CDS)

These sessions occur before or during ICON. Chapter Development Sessions provides the PRSSA National Committee, Headquarters, and PRSA leaders with an opportunity to share valuable information and professional growth strategies with Chapter leaders.

Select presenters, using the following criteria:

- Presentation will pertain to all PRSSA Chapters or members, regardless of size or location.
- Topic is unique but relevant and incorporates a “how to” element (e.g., how to retain members, how to fundraise for ICON, etc.).

Sessions should include a presentation and Q&A.

Challenges of Chapter Development & Leadership Sessions

- Maintaining communication with Chapters during the Summer.
- Coordinating with co-hosts and presenters to ensure smooth sessions.
- Preventing technical issues, especially in virtual or hybrid formats.
- Continue holding engaging, diverse sessions that offer valuable information to members.
- Effectively balancing all responsibilities of presenters.

Future of Chapter Development Sessions

Objective

- Continue to hold sessions that are original, exciting, diverse and provide members with beneficial information.

Tactics

- Ensure Chapters stay engaged during presentations and adapt information for different Chapter sizes.
- Promote the sessions through various communication channels to ensure strong attendance and participation.
- Offer opportunities for Chapter leaders to provide input on session topics and formats before the event.
- Create a networking opportunity within the sessions to foster collaboration and idea-sharing among Chapter leaders.

Leadership Training Sessions at Leadership Assembly

Leadership training sessions allow the PRSSA National Committee, Headquarters and PRSA leaders to provide information and professional development to Chapter leaders. The vice president of Chapter development is responsible for the following:

- Setting themes and outlining three one-hour sessions alongside the National President.
- Providing outlines to National Committee members hosting each session.
- Contacting PRSSA Headquarters with audio/visual requirements.

Challenges of Leadership Training Sessions

- Creating sessions that cater to a diverse range of PRSSA members and Chapter sizes.
- Ensuring that sessions incorporate interactive elements to encourage participation and engagement.

Future of Leadership Training Sessions

Objective

- Continue to hold successful Leadership Training Sessions at Leadership Assembly.

Tactics

- Continue three one-hour sessions.
- Continue with an ethics session.
- Develop back-up plans for sessions if they fail to appeal to the audience on site.

Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree

The Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree is a communication tool used by the National Committee to connect with Chapter presidents. This program was created to streamline communication, reducing the time it takes for the National Committee to reach Chapter leaders and fostering stronger communication between the two groups. It acts as the bridge between the National Committee and Headquarters.

The Vice President of Chapter Development helps coordinate the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree with the National President and specifically ensures that members of the Chapter Development Committee are properly trained to serve as points of contact for their assigned Chapters. The Chapter Development Committee is expected to reach out to their assigned Chapters three to four times during the academic year. This information will be shared with the National President and the Chapter Development Committee.

In 2016, the PRSSA Phone/Email Outreach Tree included a video slideshow component, encouraging Chapter Presidents to share National announcements with their Chapters in a digestible format.

Responsibilities include:

- Updating Chapter Leader's contact information, which includes but is not limited to:
 - Chapter/University
 - PRSSA District
 - President's Name
 - President's Contact Info (Email, LinkedIn, etc.)
 - Advisor's Name
 - Advisor's Contact Info (Email, LinkedIn, etc.)
 - Additional Info
- Distributing the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree to the Chapter Development Committee, which includes:
 - Link to the PRSSA Leadership Outreach Tree
 - Talking points for LinkedIn or email outreach.
 - A list of the Chapters they will be overseeing.
 - Various sample email and LinkedIn message templates.
- Tracking outreach progress and following up with the Chapter Development Committee to ensure timely communication.
- Maintaining records of communication with Chapter presidents for future reference.

Challenges of the Phone/Email Outreach Tree

- Ensuring Chapters provide updated contact information and managing outreach across different time zones.
- Coordinating timely LinkedIn messages or emails while maintaining consistent communication for varying levels of Chapter engagement.
- Support all Chapter leaders, including those from smaller or newer Chapters, while avoiding outreach fatigue from multiple sources.
- Reaching out to inactive Chapters and assisting the Chapter Development Committee in re-establishing contact with their leadership.

Tactics

- Encourage Chapters to visit the PRSSA website annually to provide up-to-date contact information.
- Rotate outreach responsibilities each quarter to ensure fresh engagement with Chapters, or keep them consistent throughout the year for continuity! Choose what works best for your team.
- Track communication progress and follow up as necessary to maintain consistent outreach and connection with all Chapters.

Past Programs

Chapter Presidents' Leadership Workshop

The Chapter Presidents' Leadership Workshop is a development tool for Chapter Presidents who attend ICON. The vice president of Chapter development sets the theme, secures pro bono speaker(s) with National Headquarters' and the National President's approval, works with speakers to determine an agenda and contacts Headquarters with audio/visual requirements.

District Ambassador

In line with the objective of growing the Society's involvement while also developing students as future leaders, the 2017–2018 National Committee developed a new tier of leadership known as Regional Ambassadors. The 2019–2020 National Committee reorganized the PRSSA map to match PRSA and renamed the group District Ambassadors. The District Ambassadors' mission is to engage each Chapter within PRSSA while strategically building regional communities within the Society and promoting National events and initiatives. This is done principally through the Phone Email Outreach Tree (PEOT) initiative managed by the vice president of Chapter development. District Ambassadors are District leaders that play an important role in reaching Chapters that show signs of decreased activity or membership and may be in need of specific attention or assistance. District Ambassadors also may be utilized to assist in promoting National Committee's programs and initiatives.

District Ambassador positions were discontinued in 2023. Each member of the national committee was responsible for carrying out District Ambassador duties. It was the District Ambassador's role to update the PEOT tracker with their assigned PRSSA Chapters' contact information. Other commitments included in this position are:

- Monthly District Ambassador meetings
- Monthly update emails to District Chapters
- At least two calls with each Chapter at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters to establish the Chapter's needs.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Support Chapter growth through mentoring and resource provision on recruitment, retention, and programming.
- Lead the Chapter Development Committee to improve Chapter management and collaboration.
- Regularly communicate with Chapter Leaders to offer guidance and support.

June

- Attend the Leadership Retreat and share ideas for the Community Service Initiative, Chapter Development Committee and Chapter Development Session.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives (as determined by the vice president).
- Meet with Headquarters to ensure a time slot for the Chapter Development Session at ICON.
- Continue outreach to Chapters via the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree

July–August

- Coordinate first outreach to Chapters via the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree.
- Organize the Community Service Initiative and develop the proposal with the National President.
- Meet with National Headquarters in July to finalize the proposal by the end of August.
- Prepare documents and ideas for the Chapter Development Committee.

September

- Send Chapter Development Session audio visual needs to National Headquarters and plan rehearsals with presenters/panelists.
- Select the Chapter Development Committee based on their applications, interviews and experience.
- Continue outreach to Chapters via the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree.

October

- Attend ICON.
- Execute and monitor the Chapter Development Session at ICON.
- Execute the Community Service Initiative.
- Attend and host a table at the Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Promote membership dues with the National President.

November

- Promote transition toolkits for mid-year leadership transitions.
- Continue outreach to Chapters via the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree.

December

- Plan Community Service Initiative Event(s) for the spring semester with the National President.
- Send Community Service Initiative Event proposal to National Headquarters

January

- Revise the Situation Analysis.
- Execute the Community Service Initiative.

February–March

- Continue outreach to Chapters via the Chapter Leadership Outreach Tree.
- Attend District Conferences.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.
- Host Community Service Initiative Event(s).

April

- Begin transitioning the incoming Vice President of Chapter Development.
- Promote transition toolkits for year-end leadership transitions.

May

- Continue transitioning the incoming Vice President of Chapter Development.

VICE PRESIDENT OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

The vice president of digital communications manages the PRSSA social media accounts (Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube). Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following: promoting and adhering to the PRSSA Style Guide and PRSSA Brand Identity Guidelines; planning and hosting monthly Instagram chats, analyzing social media analytics and capturing live content at National events. The vice president of digital communications also leads their own social media subcommittee.

Current Programs

PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines

The [PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines](#) contains the official guidelines for PRSA and PRSSA. The guidelines should be used in addition to AP Style for reference when communicating to PRSA and PRSSA Chapters and members. The document contains PRSA and PRSSA terminology, information on logo usage, PRSSA capitalization and more. Following the PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines is important to maintain brand consistency when communicating to PRSSA Chapters and members. These guidelines are revised annually and promoted by this position. The vice president of digital communications should consistently monitor Chapter usage of the PRSSA logo and style across all platforms and encourage changes if necessary.

PRSA Style Guide

The [PRSA Style Guide](#) explains the proper way to use PRSA and PRSSA colors and typefaces approved for HTML, as well as email and other electronic copy.

Future of the PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines and PRSA Style Guide

- Adapting to industry trends and changes.
- Promoting official writing guidelines without causing confusion regarding AP Style among members.
- Increasing awareness of the guidelines.
- Increasing awareness and proper use of PRSSA-related terminology (i.e. capitalization of Chapter).
- Creating stronger PRSSA National brand consistency while allowing specific exceptions for local Chapter logos.
- Fostering relationships with newly chartered Chapters to ensure understanding of Guidelines and proper use of logo.

Challenges of the PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines and PRSA Style Guide

- Enforcing PRSSA National branding while simultaneously allowing Chapters to adapt logos to industry trends and changes.
- Allowing Chapters to reflect creativity in creating Chapter logos while avoiding redesign of the official PRSSA logo.

PRSSA Social Media

The 2009–2010 National Committee moved management of PRSSA social media to the vice president of digital communications. The vice president of digital communications is responsible for the strategy behind all PRSSA social media usage and responsible for streamlining social media updates to official PRSSA accounts.

All PRSSA information and updates should be sent through the official PRSSA social media accounts before individual National Committee handles so that members and Chapters know to reference and source the PRSSA accounts for information and updates.

The vice president of digital communications should create social media calendars to strategically map out key messages to effectively communicate via social media channels to be approved by National Headquarters.

This content should be created weekly, biweekly or monthly for best results and maximum organization. This should be discussed with Headquarters to determine what best works for the individual in this role as well as submitting content for approval.

It is required to utilize social media scheduling tools or the social channel's native tools to measure and track monthly and annual analytics. The 2019–2020 vice president of digital communications determined Sprout Social as the official PRSSA social media management tool. Its easy-to-use, visually appealing interface and variety of tools provide the best

use for content scheduling and analytical reports. The preceding vice president must train the incoming individual on Sprout's features for continuity purposes. A monthly analytic report must be included in the vice president of digital communications' monthly reports to Headquarters. The continuation of Sprout Social may be reevaluated depending on changing technology and research.

The vice president of digital communications must maintain open communication with Headquarters and all National Committee members to guarantee timely receipt of all social content. In order to create content calendars in advance, the vice president of digital communications is encouraged to request content from other Committee members prior to the start of the coming month. This allows enough time to receive, review and edit content in order to formulate a joint content calendar for submission to Headquarters for final approval. It also is highly suggested that interested candidates have knowledge in social media and visual design prior to assuming the role. This will allow for the highest level of professionalism, continuity and precision in management of the PRSSA National social platforms.

Overall Strategy

- Inform audiences of relevant industry topics.
- Explore best practices.
- Promote Progressions content.
- Prepare students and pre-professionals to launch as new professionals through use of social channels to reach larger following.
- Share PRSSA benefits (Instagram chats, webinars, National events, etc.) on social accounts.
- Build brand solidarity through proper use of PRSSA logo, reference to Chapters and overall mastery of the PRSSA National voice across all social platforms.
- Encourage two-way communication and engagement.
- Showcase membership and Chapters through social media spotlights.
- Showcase the diversity within PRSSA in partnership with the vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion.
- Build relevancy through relatable content and media trends.

Tactics

- Keep messaging consistent.
- Maintain PRSSA National voice in all social posts at all times without swaying to personal tone.
- Follow the PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines and PRSA Style Guide.
- Utilize specific hashtags for PRSSA National content (#prssanational, #prssa)
- Regularly review PRSA Brand Identity Guidelines and PRSA Style Guide to ensure compliance.
- Follow social media trends to determine if PRSSA should maintain a presence in that platform/trend.
- Engage members by asking questions, offering advice and responding frequently.
- Engage members through generating creative content.
- Appoint a subcommittee of members to create PRSSA graphics and videos, if needed (not required).

PRSSA National Facebook Page

The vice president of digital communications develops content for and manages the [PRSSA Facebook page](#) to distribute news, reference posts from Progressions, promote events and answer general questions about PRSSA. Any questions presented via social media should be answered directly by the vice president of digital communications after consultation with National Headquarters and other National Committee members, if needed.

National Committee members should contact the vice president of digital communications with information on initiatives and updates that need to be posted to the PRSSA Facebook page.

Facebook is a popular channel for PRSSA to reach a more traditional audience on a larger scale. The PRSSA Facebook page provides a way to find news about the Society, join groups, watch videos, read notes and find links to other social media sites and websites created by PRSSA.

Although PRSSA ICON is promoted on the National account, the PRSSA ICON Committee manages social media for the Conference.

Future of Facebook Account

- Use as means of maintaining traditional audience.
- Generate content to post on Facebook that has been posted on other social platforms rather than creating original content for Facebook due to declining audience.

PRSSA National X Account

The [@PRSSANational](#) X account is used to deliver messages and reminders about deadlines, events and news, and used to promote posts from Progressions, and other PRSA or PRSSA related events and initiatives. The [@PRSSANational](#) account is an effective platform to connect with students and professionals to increase engagement, answer questions and connect members and Chapters to each other. Blog posts, articles, internship/job postings and scholarship deadlines are all disseminated through the [@PRSSANational](#) X account.

In 2023 Twitter Chats were moved to Instagram chats.

Future of X Account

- Continue to use as main social platform.
- Maintain posting at least 2-3 times a week.
- Relate more with members through use of relevant memes and relatable graphics.

PRSSA National YouTube Account

In 2009, PRSSA created a YouTube account, [YouTube.com/prssanational](https://www.youtube.com/prssanational), to serve as a multimedia database of video information for members to reference PRSSA local and national events, interviews from industry professionals and PRSA, as well as PRSSA leaders. The vice president of digital communications manages this account. The YouTube channel also is used for National Committee, Conference Committee and District Conference updates. Unlike the other social channels, YouTube is not used on a regular basis, rather to post important content in a manner that will always be easily accessible to members.

Future of YouTube Account

- Continue to use for promotion of content that is ideal for continual access.
- Determining what materials are appropriate for posting on the YouTube page.

PRSSA LinkedIn Account

Since LinkedIn is a social media platform dedicated to professional and career development, the 2016–2017 vice president of digital communications and National President opened an official [LinkedIn Company Page for PRSSA](#) in the fall of 2016 to accompany the [PRSSA LinkedIn group](#). The LinkedIn company page will share Progressions content, internship postings from the Internship Center and industry news, along with occasional organization updates and event announcements.

The PRSSA LinkedIn group is one of the Society’s top social media resources for professional development. It is used to stimulate industry-related discussions and to complement other social media vehicles. The LinkedIn group also can be used for occasional LinkedIn announcements and a place for continued dialogue between Chapter members and professionals in the workplace.

Future of the PRSSA LinkedIn Account

- Consistently share Progressions content to increase visibility and discussion about PRSSA National articles and news.
- Consistently share internship postings from the Internship Center to show available opportunities and increase visibility of the Internship Center.
- Expand popularity of the LinkedIn company page.
- Strategically craft content specifically for LinkedIn that varies from more informal tones used on other platforms.
- Thoughtfully promote industry-related news to engage with PRSSA members.

PRSSA National Instagram Account

In 2012, PRSSA created an Instagram account, [@PRSSANational](#). This account creates a place for visual content from the PRSSA National Committee and general members to collaborate and engage with. It is used to visually showcase National Committee initiatives, National event documentation and recaps; highlight Chapters and engage membership through interactive features.

In 2023 Twitter Chats were moved to Instagram chats. Chats are held during PRSSA-themed months in addition to special topics as needed. This content is determined at the start of the term for purposes of posting on the National website. All chats are managed from the prssanational Instagram [@PRSSANational](#) account as the official PRSSA account should be used and seen as the official source of information and communication.

Future of Instagram Account

- Continue to increase usage and adapt to new features.
- Maintain at least 1–2 posts on Instagram weekly.
- Regularly update LinkTree URLs in bio.
- Continue Instagram chats
- Increase usage of Instagram Story, IGTV and Reels.
- Great means of engaging with members in a quick and visual way.

PRSSA National LinkTree Account

As much of PRSSA National content requires directing followers to specific links and forms, the [PRSSA National LinkTree Account](#) allows for a hub of direct links that correspond to PRSSA National content and current ongoing events. As some social media platforms are unable to embed clickable links (i.e. Instagram, etc.) it is imperative to host URLs in an effective manner that does not live in the captions of posts and graphics on the PRSSA National social media platforms.

Future of LinkTree Account

- Continue to include URLs to permanent pages (i.e. Become a Member, Code of Ethics, Meet the National Committee, etc.).
- Maintaining links as content requires new URLs to be included and others need to be removed.
- Explore paid branding options for buttons and background of the [linktr.ee/prssanational](#) profile.

Challenges of PRSSA National Social Media

- Consistent and organized content creation.
- Diversity of content according to each platform's needs, features and audiences.
- Collaboration with other National Committee members to generate content in an efficient, timely manner.
- Providing valuable information about PRSSA events and programs as quickly as possible.
- Developing an effective strategy to reach PRSSA members while streamlining communication.
- Maintaining the voice of PRSSA across all platforms.
- Increasing members' overall engagement through likes, replies and sharing of content.
- Managing all platforms at the same level of efficiency.
 - Posting on all platforms regularly, rather than using certain platforms too much.
- Flexibility and responsiveness to quick content turnarounds.

Future of PRSSA National Social Media Objectives

- Increase number of followers across all channels.
- Generate useful, effective, and relatable information to members, via social channels.
- Create a dialogue among the PRSSA National Committee, Chapters and members.
- Increase the amount of PRSSA original content: graphics, videos, photos and podcasts.
- Promote big events like ICON and Leadership Assembly.

- Stay up to date with trends, news, features, and designs that resonate with students.
- Maintain relationships with all National Committee members.
- Maintain contact and deadlines for monthly content submission to be posted.
- Improve the efficiency of acquiring and scheduling social media content through a clear, well-defined process.

Past Programs

Past Social Media

In 2016, the PRSSA 2016–2017 National Committee voted to eliminate two social media channels on which PRSSA had accounts: Pinterest and Google+. This decision was made based on the lack of content and length of time between content posted to these channels. It was decided that these channels weren't a necessity for PRSSA and that time was better spent creating content for other channels with stronger followings.

In 2019, the 2019–2020 vice president of digital communications decided to eliminate the use of Snapchat due to lack of engagement, usage and exposure to the rest of the Society. Instagram stories and IGTV have replaced the previous purpose of Snapchat. The use of this platform may be reevaluated in the future.

Chapter News

Effective the start of the 2019–2020 term, Chapter News will no longer be a responsibility that falls under the role of the vice president of digital communications and fall under the role of the vice president of Chapter development. This feature is no longer being populated.

PRSSA National TikTok Account

The 2020–2021 vice president of digital communications created an official TikTok page for PRSSA. The account is a place for video content from the PRSSA National Committee and general members to collaborate and engage with. It is used to showcase National Committee initiatives, National event documentation and recaps; highlight Chapters and engage membership through interactive features and music.

Future of TikTok Account

- Continue to increase usage and adapt to new features and trends.
- Expand following and awareness.
- Strategically craft content specifically for TikTok that varies from postings on other platforms.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Create social media calendar in conjunction with National Headquarters and National Committee to plan social media outreach.
- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with National Committee to promote platforms via social media channels.
- Regularly work with National Committee on communication efforts.
- Promote content from partnering organizations (i.e. The Plank Center, PRSA Diversity, Content Connection, UAB, etc.)
- Serve as resource to Chapters in designated District.
- Coordinate and execute PRSSA National Instagram chats.

June–August

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Plan the Instagram chat schedule for the full term.
 - Identify potential Instagram chat co-hosts
- Identify themed or holiday content for the year.
- Post daily content such as professional advice and tips since Committee initiatives may not be available yet.
- Communication with predecessor as needed to ensure fulfillment and understanding of role.
- Promote early registration and benefits of ICON.
- Collaborate with ICON Committee.
- Collaborate with National Committee in the promotion of subcommittee member announcements.

September

- Post daily content.
- Coordinate outreach with vice president of Chapter development for Community Service Initiative.
- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Work with vice president of professional development for Ethics Month.
- Heavily promote ICON across all social channels.
- Collaborate with ICON Committee.

October

- Host either a Diversity Month Instagram chat or ICON Instagram chat.
- If applicable, coordinate with Headquarters and social media subcommittee to create plan of action for live content gathering at ICON.
- Attend ICON.
- Collaborate with vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion for Diversity Month.

November

- Heavily promote Certificate in Principles of Public Relations to potential recent or soon to be graduates.
- Host Instagram chats, if any.
- Promote and create content for Relationship Month.

December

- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.
- Heavily promote Certificate in Principles of Public Relations to potential recent or soon to be graduates.
- Host Instagram chats, if any.

January–April

- Work with vice president of career services for Career Development Month in January.
- Work with vice president of professional development for Professional Development Month in April.
- Continue to curate monthly calendars and post daily content.
- Communicate with members interested in running for next National Committee.
- Attend District Conference(s) based on assignment.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.
- Host Instagram chats, if any.
- Begin transitioning incoming vice president of digital communications.

May

- Compile information and finalize PRSSA Annual Report.
- Transition the incoming National Committee member.
- Host Instagram chat, if any.
- Heavily promote Certificate in Principles of Public Relations to potential recent or soon to be graduates.

VICE PRESIDENT OF EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

The vice president of events and fundraising manages the promotion of interest forms, selection, planning, hosting and assessment of District Conferences. Other responsibilities include updating the District Conference Information Handbook, the District Conference Execution Guide, and the FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide, as well as connecting Chapters with different resources and serving as an advisory resource in regard to events, fundraising and sponsorship opportunities. This position requires profound organizational, managerial and problem-solving skills in order to effectively provide counsel to Chapters and District Conference committees throughout the Society.

Current Programs

District Conferences

District Conferences are planned, staffed and hosted by Chapters every year between February and April. A traditional District Conference consists of 1–3 days of speaker sessions and networking events, with growing opportunities to include but not be limited to company tours, career fairs and other activities that contribute to the advancement of the profession and the future professional. Since 2021, the District Conference planners have also been given the ability to host virtual and hybrid conferences.

Chapters interested in hosting a District Conference have the option to submit a District Conference Interest Form on or before the date chosen by the vice president of events and fundraising. This non-binding, optional form allows Chapters to show their interest in hosting a conference, ask any questions they may have, schedule a meeting with the vice president of events and fundraising if desired, and receive more information on District Conferences and the application, selection, planning, and hosting process. In 2022, the interest form was converted into a Google Form.

Chapters looking to host a Conference must submit a District Conference Hosting Application on or before the selected deadline. Chapters who submit an application will be invited to conduct a virtual video call interview with the vice president of events and fundraising. During this interview, Chapters will answer a series of questions established by the vice president of events and fundraising to evaluate Chapter fitness for hosting a successful event. This is a binding form, which means that selected Chapters must host a District Conference. In 2022, the hosting application was converted into a Google Form.

The vice president of events and fundraising will take notes and assess each Chapter during their interview to recommend Chapters to host a District Conference for that year. Ideally, only one Chapter will be able to host per District. However, multiple Conferences can be held in a District as long as there is no overlapping dates or topics and there is some distance in the Conference locations. If no Chapters express interest in a District, no conference will be held in that District. International Chapters will not be counted as within a specific District and selection will be based on interview performance and the evaluation and discussion conducted by the National Committee. Once Chapters have been notified they are hosting, they are required to submit updates to the vice president of events and fundraising and have regular check-in meetings.

Hosting Chapters are required to send a representative to ICON. Hosting Chapters will be notified before ICON that they will be hosting, the Society at large will be told before or during ICON. The vice president of events and fundraising will encourage hosting Chapters to promote their event at the Career Development Exhibition during ICON.

The role of the vice president of events and fundraising is to address concerns as Chapters prepare to attend and/or host District Conferences. Specific duties include:

- Promote the benefits of hosting a District Conference.
- Promote the District Conference Interest Form and the District Conference Hosting Application.
- Solicit and target Chapters with high fitness in diverse areas to host a District Conference.
- Create and encourage open dialogue about hosting a District Conference.
- Review and select the current year's District Conference host Chapters.
- Update and distribute District Conference Information Handbook, the District Conference Execution Guide, and the FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide.
- Act as a resource and adviser to the District Conference committees.

- Provide District Conference committees with opportunities to refine planning, programming and promotion of each conference.
- Serve as the liaison between PRSSA National Committee and the District Conference committees.
- Manage National Committee assignments for each District Conference.
- Encourage group communication and problem solving.
 - If a proposed District Conference is to be co-hosted among 2 or more Chapters, additional assessment for the group's fitness and ability to work together and communicate effectively will be determined by a conference call with the vice president of events and fundraising and, if deemed necessary, the National President and PRSSA Headquarters.
- Establish and maintain a relationship with each Chapter hosting a District Conference.
- Create a standardized reporting strategy that outlines the effectiveness of each District Conference regardless of varying differences in format, location, attendance or expenditure.
- Reinforce the distinction of the District Conference as a nationally endorsed and standardized platform to increase accessibility to and cohesion among the dynamic and changing regions within the Society without confining them to particular geographic boundaries.
- Manage and continually standardize processes to promote structural objectivity and to encourage regional growth. Materials will be passed along to vice presidents of events and fundraising.
- Incorporate PRSSA National Initiatives into each District Conference. To include, but not be limited to:
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - High School Outreach
 - Community Involvement
- Promote the use of District Conferences as a recruitment opportunity for the Society at large.
- Promote the current year's District Conferences via PRSSA social media channels.
- Promote the benefits of attending a District Conference.

District Conference Information Handbook

This handbook provides a step-by-step guide to hosting a District Conference that is successful and unique. It includes information about submitting the interest form and hosting application, planning, implementing the event, and evaluating its success.

District Conference Execution Guide

This concise guide is a tool for any Chapter interested in hosting a District Conference. It carefully walks Chapters through the process of hosting a District Conference and provides templates for Chapters to use in their planning and management efforts.

Future of District Conference Information Handbook and the District Conference Execution Guide

- Work early on in each term to update the handbook and execution guide prior to applications being submitted. This should be one of the first priorities and projects of the term.
- Update the handbook and execution guide to include examples from previous District Conferences, including 2023.

District Conference Interest Forms

In 2021, the application was updated to include virtual and hybrid options for hosting a District Conference, as well as the addition of BEDI, community service and high school outreach initiatives to the conferences.

District Conference Virtual Interviews

After submitting the application, Chapters have a virtual interview with the vice president of events and fundraising and other National Committee members that are willing and able to attend. Interview questions assess the Chapter's ability to hold a successful District Conference and provide an opportunity for Chapters to explain and sell their unique plan. It lasts anywhere between 15–60 minutes, and the coordinator is required to participate. Additional planning committee members may join in. Detailed notes will be taken by the vice president of events and fundraising to share with the National

Committee along with a short description about why or why not the Chapter should be granted permission to host. In 2022 and 2024, the vice president of events and fundraising also recorded the meetings (after asking Chapters for permission).

Questions from the 2024–2025 interviews included:

- University/College name
- Chapter members in attendance
- Conference committee structure
- Past major events
- Conference overview, goals, and theme
- Proposed conference dates and length
- Conference format (in-person, hybrid, or virtual)
- Conference location (this question applies to all conference formats)
- Budget requirements
- For in-person conferences: venue and, if applicable, hotel, transportation, and speakers' lodging
- BEDI initiative
- High School Outreach/Community Involvement component
- Involvement of local PRSA Chapter
- Attendance projection
- Ticket pricing
- Promotion strategy
- Speaker ideas
- Workshops, agency tours, networking opportunities
- Conference website
- Attendance at ICON
- National Committee representative at District Conference

Challenges of the District Conference Virtual Interviews

- Helping Chapters understand how much the interviews impact conference host selections.
- Ensuring answers do not exceed the capabilities of Chapter.
- Retaining communication past the virtual interview.
- Updating Chapters on the timeline for the selection process.

Future of the District Conference Virtual Interviews

- Adding more questions about virtual and hybrid formatting or option if necessary.
- Helping Chapters determine what Conference medium they are best equipped for.

District Conference Interest Form and Application Promotion

To help ensure all interested and well-qualified Chapters are part of the interest pool, it is vital for the vice president of events and fundraising to promote the interest form and application throughout his or her entire term, especially in the months leading up to the beginning of the selection process.

The window of promotion was changed in 2021 with the implementation of a new “interest form” in addition to an “application” rather than an interest form that served as a “bid.”. This arose from conversations with the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 National Committee who felt that only having an application form could turn schools away who have questions about the hosting process and don't want to be locked into a commitment without having their questions answered. This also keeps in mind comments from the 2019 Leadership Rally when there were concerns regarding Chapters who did not receive a bid feeling they exerted maximum planning effort for low return in support from the Society. A brief application combined with a virtual interview allows for Chapter fitness to really stand out in conversation, rather than just on paper, allowing the National Committee to get a better feel for preparedness and eagerness to host such a large event.

Promotion techniques include soliciting and targeting Chapters located in areas with high member representation and previous Conference hosts, opening dialogue among Chapter presidents to encourage future planning and using social and digital platforms to better reach members. A great promotion plan utilizes PRSSA National social media, Progressions, PRSSA Podcasts, and the bi-weekly newsletter.

Promotion extends to all Chapters. In particular:

- Chapters who have previously hosted a District Conference or expressed interest in hosting.
- Chapters in typically underrepresented areas.
- Chapters located in areas with high member representation.
- Chapters who have demonstrated leadership at other national PRSSA events.
- Chapters who have been recognized for leading other successful large-scale events in the past.
- Chapters who have submitted applications to PRSSA awards and Star Chapters.
- Chapters with ample community support, in either rural or urban environments.

Challenges of District Conference Promotion

- Difficulty in reaching Chapter presidents after the spring semester ends.
- Difficulty ensuring the transfer of leadership at the Chapter level is being completed before the spring semester ends.
- Difficulty in determining which Chapters have the bandwidth, resources and commitment to follow-through with a District Conference after expressing interest.
- Difficulty ensuring Chapter's feel comfortable with the financial commitment of hosting without national funding.

Future of District Conference Promotion

- Create a reserve of at least 1–2 interested Chapters in each District for the incoming vice president of events and fundraising. The incoming vice president can reach out to these Chapters, promote the updated interest form and hosting application, and assist them as they prepare to submit their application.
- Better inform members of upcoming District Conferences and how to get involved.
- Utilize PRSSA national channels.
- Create a promotional piece that can be distributed at Leadership Assembly.
- Encourage collaboration between District Conference coordinators.

District Conference Selection

Chapters interested in hosting a District Conference submit the completed District Conference Hosting Application. The vice president of events and fundraising and the National President evaluate and select the following year's conferences after interviewing the coordinators and reviewing the applications. Through a subjective approach based on best judgment of virtual interviews, past Chapter performance and application performance, Chapters will be audited and a written suggestion of hosting Chapters will be submitted to Headquarters and the National Committee for finalization.

Since Chapters will be informed they are hosting prior to ICON, District Conference host Chapters should attend ICON to meet with the vice president of events and fundraising and the other District Conference hosts, and to network with members interested in attending their District Conference. Additionally, host Chapters can promote their conference at the Career Development Exhibition. All District Conference host Chapters will be announced officially to the Society before or during ICON.

Challenges of Selection

- Difficult to evenly spread District Conferences throughout the large regions in the West.
- Accurately assessing expectations and following a clear and fair process for selecting bids.
- Remaining focused on the needs of the Society throughout this process.
- Encouraging Chapters in underrepresented regions to submit an interest form.
- Ensuring that those Chapters will be able to meet attendance goals.

If the goal for the term is to have an even distribution of District Conferences, increase local engagement and interest

in District Conferences through collaboration with vice president of Chapter development. Chapters submitting applications need to know if they are competing against Chapters nationwide or nearby.

Future of District Conference Selection

- Encouraging to host quality conferences by not keeping to one per District, however making sure that any conferences that occur are well-supported.
- Actively encourage involvement and attendance in District Conferences from international Chapters, taking future District Conferences into consideration to eventually be representative of the growing number of Chapters in South America and beyond.

****In 2020, the standard of one District Conference per District was removed, but with the intention to make sure that each District Conference is properly supported and developed to offer experiences to more Chapters to host a conference, particularly during a pandemic. Most of these District Conferences were virtual, giving the ability for students to attend any District Conference regardless of physical location or district alignment.****

District Conference Planning and Implementation

After ICON, the vice president of events and fundraising helps selected Chapters prepare to host high-quality, successful conferences that foster and sustain long-term relationships throughout the Society. Serving as a resource, guide and channel to national promotion, the vice president gauges conference preparations and counsels District Conference committees. The vice president communicates with the District Conference coordinators and conducts multiple check-in phone calls starting in November through the conclusion of each conference to provide open and accessible channels to express concerns and to seek solutions for any challenges or opportunities. Coordinators must submit communication plans or progress reports to the vice president... In 2020, planning sessions occurred via Zoom. These live broadcast group video conferencing services allowed for webinar training sessions to occur in the areas of sponsorship, outreach, promotion, branding, logistics and programming. Also introduced in 2020 were Conference Committee Speaker sessions, in which the vice president of events and fundraising brought in event professionals to speak with the Conference Committees. Additionally, Conference Committees were added into a GroupMe, moderated by the vice presidents of events and fundraising, to encourage connection and collaboration among Conference Coordinators. In 2022, the vice president created a Google Drive folder for each host Chapter. The folder contained multiple documents, such as a calendar with deadlines and important dates, the District Conference handbooks, the FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide, sponsorship packet, social media calendar and run of show templates, and previous District Conference websites. Also, Conference Committee members were added to a Slack group to encourage collaboration among hosting Chapters. Additionally, the vice president moderated virtual networking meetings in which host Chapters were able to ask questions to one another and share advice. In 2024, a Slack group was used again for communication and collaboration and a Notion page was created for host Chapters to easily track deadlines and access various event planning resources.

The vice president assigns a National Committee member to each District Conference. The National Committee member, presents a Leadership Summit, supports the hosting Chapter and has to attend their conference. If the conference is held in person, it is the host Chapter's responsibility to plan and budget the hotel accommodations, registration, and transportation of their National Committee guest for the full duration of their conference. No food is expected to be covered with the exception of any food covered by registration costs. Additionally, hotel accommodations must start at the latest, the night prior to the conference, and extend, at the earliest, until the last day of the conference schedule. Accommodation plans must be approved as adequate by the vice president of events and fundraising. PRSSA National covers the cost of the individual's travel. The assigned National Committee member also provides a report and reflection on the conference following the event.

Challenges of District Conferences

- Creating a system for the vice president and coordinators to keep all information organized.
- Holding coordinators accountable and remembering to send reminders in a manner that is empowering and encouraging.
- Creating a strategic promotional plan to attract attendees and target prospective attendees.
- Empowering District Conference coordinators to take personal responsibility for the promotion and success of the conference their Chapter is hosting.
- Encouraging coordinators to retain the affordability and accessibility of District Conference programming while

providing high-quality conferences.

- Ensuring National Committee members understand their responsibilities as National Committee representatives at District Conferences.

Future of District Conferences

- Continue finding ways to promote District Conferences regionally and internationally.
- Allowing for more virtual and/or hybrid opportunities for District Conferences.
- Continue finding ways to encourage interaction and collaboration between host Chapters.

Co-Hosted District Conferences

Chapters can collaborate to bid, plan and host a District Conference by co-hosting, which may bring together diverse experiences and styles. Co-hosting can work well but comes with challenges. Chapters should know they have the option to co-host.

Challenges of Co-Hosting District Conferences

- Co-hosts face potential power struggles or uneven workloads.
- Co-hosting works best when Chapters have clear reasons for wanting to co-host and already have built a relationship with each other.
- Co-hosting can have financial challenges or financial benefits.
- Co-hosting requires patience, effective communication, empathy and the support of Faculty Advisers to ensure programming is sufficient and planning is effective.

Future of Co-Hosting a District Conference

- Co-hosting District Conferences grants ample opportunity to grow relationships, use resources and offer high-quality programming at a lower cost to each Chapter involved. This opportunity should be promoted as a mentorship opportunity for experienced Chapters to give new Chapters the opportunity to host. There must be extremely clear guidelines and delegation of responsibilities set as well as a firm contract signed by all parties. Past successful co-hosted conferences include:
 - The 2018 STEMulate PR Regional Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina co-hosted by North Carolina State University and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
 - In 2023, the PR Beyond Zoom: Expanding Your Professional Network virtual conference was co-hosted by the University of Georgia and Kennesaw State University.
 - The 2023 PR eLevated District Conference in Chicago, Illinois was co-hosted by DePaul University and Columbia College Chicago.

National Initiatives

Beginning in 2010, National Initiatives became a required part of the District Conference programming. Hosting Chapters can choose to invite high school students to attend their conference, incorporate charitable causes into their conference and/or include international elements into their conference. When the National Committee updated its Diversity Initiative in 2014, District Conference diversity, equity and inclusion became a key focus.

Beginning with the 2016 District Conferences, all host Chapters are required to include a High School Outreach component to their conferences. This was implemented to increase high school students' knowledge of the public relations industry as a future career choice and awareness of PRSSA. Then, for the 2017 conferences, a rubric change allowed for bonus points for National Initiatives, similar to the value-added section. In 2019, all national initiatives were made strong suggestions and were encouraged to be included as they fit into conference programming. It is now a requirement for hosting Chapters to implement diversity and inclusion initiatives, as well as a community service or high school outreach program.

Challenges of National Initiatives

- National Initiatives may change or receive a different priority.
- Chapters must be reminded of the National Initiative focus and purpose.

- Chapters must be reminded of the importance of these initiatives and how to implement them in a genuine, impactful way.

Future of the National Initiatives

- Ensure the focus of the National Initiative selected is discussed leading up to the conference.
- Ensure Chapters include these initiatives at their conference.
- Multiple National Initiatives and opportunities to implement priorities of other National Committee members should be grown and utilized at the beginning of the planning process to ensure ample time for implementation.

National Promotion

ICON is the first major forum for District Conference promotion. Beginning in 2016, two changes occurred to increase national promotion of Conferences. First, the National Committee attendee who was assigned to a District Conference became their designated national promoter. Second, when Chapters were discussing their plans for promotion, it became apparent there were no designated forums for promotion at ICON.

At ICON 2023, host Chapters were given the opportunity to promote their District Conference at the Career Development Exhibition. Each host Chapter was assigned to a booth, and they promoted their conference by giving out flyers, stickers, and other promotional materials, as well as networking with students.

Challenges for National Promotion

- Working with PRSSA Headquarters and ICON hosts to secure time and/or space for District Conference promotion and create said environment in an unbiased fashion.
 - Securing their booths at the Career Development Exhibition.
- Ensuring all host Chapters have promotional materials prepared nearly immediately after accepting their hosting application.
 - Ensuring PRSSA Headquarters reviews these materials before Chapters print them out.

Future of National Promotion

- Continue brand kit submission in District Conference Hosting Application (added as optional in 2024).
- Social media plan development begins with host Chapters, supplying a full media kit for the vice president of digital communications as well as the vice president of brand engagement.

Past Programs

Regional Conferences Workshop

The Regional Conferences Workshop started at the 2000 National Conference. The workshop was discontinued by the 2019–2020 vice president of events and fundraising. Instead, the vice president of events and fundraising met with the team individually and as a group to congratulate them, foster collaboration and inspire a boost in morale.

National FUNdraising Bowl

In 2004, student-submitted fundraising ideas were compiled into “The Playbook,” and the FUNdraising Bowl was created. The program motivates Chapters to raise money for Chapter purposes. It has three parts:

- **Regular Season:** Chapters send fundraising ideas to the vice president of events and fundraising. The ideas are added to The Playbook and posted online. The vice president of events and fundraising chooses one winning Chapter per month during February, March and April.
- **FUNdraising Bowl:** One overall winner (randomly selected from the previous three winners) receives two free registrations to the upcoming ICON.
- **Rest of Year:** Chapters use ideas in The Playbook to raise money for their Chapter.

****The National FUNdraising Bowl was discontinued at the end of the 2017–2018 term of the vice president of events and fundraising and lives as a fundraising and events resource to Chapters in the District Conference Handbook and the FUNdraising Bowl Playbook. In 2019, the Fundraising Bowl Playbook was turned into the FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide to include sponsorship information. The FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide has to be updated by the vice president of events and fundraising. Edits include replacing some of the old fundraising ideas with new ones, suggesting changes, and adding information.*

Timeline

Ongoing

- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with the vice president of digital communications to promote platform via social media channels and with the vice president of brand engagement to promote it on Progressions and the PRSSA Podcasts.
- Serve as an event planning, fundraising, and sponsorship resource to Chapters.
- Recruit Chapters to submit interest forms, applications and attend District Conferences.
- Work with the vice president of brand engagement and the vice president of digital communications to promote the District Conferences via existing PRSSA channels.
- Maintain open lines of communication with District Conference hosts.
- Recruit members to be successors for the National Committee position.
- Submit Monthly Reports to PRSSA Headquarters and National Committee.

June–August

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives (as determined by vice president of events and fundraising).
- Prepare the interest form and hosting application for District Conferences; Promote to Chapters; Assist with review process.
- Update the District Conference Information Handbook and the District Conference Execution Guide; Promote to Society.
- Collect all interest forms and applications by dates determined by vice president of events and fundraising.
- Update the FUNdraising Playbook and Sponsorship Guide and promote to Society.
- Prepare a list of questions for the virtual interviews.

September

- Schedule and conduct meetings with Chapters who submitted District Conference interest forms.
- Schedule and conduct interviews with Chapters who submitted a hosting application.
- Analyze interview notes and Chapter history, and present recommendations to PRSSA Headquarters and National President.
- Finalize District Conference hosts selections and inform the Chapters in order to allow them to promote at ICON.
- Help host Chapters prepare their promotional materials for the Career Development Exhibition at ICON.
- Prepare for ICON.
- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Continue promotion of fundraising for ICON.

October

- Attend ICON, host District Conference/Event Planning Session at ICON.
- Work with hosting Chapters to create checklists and detailed timelines.
- Provide adequate and frequent training opportunities for District Conference coordinators.
- Provide frequent networking opportunities for hosting Chapters.
- Begin working to pair National Committee Members with District Conferences. Send the pairings to PRSSA Headquarters and the National President.

November

- Begin regular check-in and planning assistance with host Chapters.
- Finalize National Committee – District Conference pairings. Once the pairings are approved, connect the National Committee representative with their assigned hosting Chapter.
- Develop speaking materials and District Conference briefs for National Committee.

December

- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.
- Determine and finalize proposed National Committee assignments to be given feedback from the National President and approved by PRSSA Headquarters.
- Develop District Conference evaluation instrument.
- Determine and finalize proposed National Committee assignments.
- Assist Chapters in preparation for the District Conference hosting season.
- Assist National Committee members in preparation for the Leadership Summit.
- Update all digital resources and materials for accessible dissemination.
- Continue check-in and planning assistance with host Chapters.

January

- Collaborate with the National Committee delegates assigned to each District Conference to strategically promote and drive conference registrations.
- Send reminder email to hosting Chapters to keep a thorough record for Teahan Award submissions and Star Chapter Award.

February–April

- Assist host Chapters with executing District Conferences.
- Gather attendee count from hosting Chapters.
- Collect surveys and data on all District Conferences.
- Collect National Committee members' reports and reflections on their assigned District Conference.
- Gather resources from host Chapters for the District Conference Execution Guide upon conference completion.
- Communicate with members interested in running for the next National Committee.
- Attend assigned District Conferences.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.
- Task National Committee, District Conference coordinators and Chapter Development Committee to encourage the future hosting of District Conferences.
 - This can best be done through displaying the benefits to members by attending and encouraging attendance at District Conferences.

May

- Compile evaluative research and all materials for National Headquarters.
- Send reminder email about Teahan Award and Star Chapter Award to all hosting Chapters.
- Transition the incoming National Committee member.

VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBER SERVICES

The vice president of member services is primarily responsible for understanding and promoting PRSSA's member benefits. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruiting new Chapters, working with current Chapters on recruitment and retention efforts and overseeing and expanding the PRSSA scholarships. This individual also will promote PRSSA to traditional four-year colleges, educate members about the PRSA Associate Membership, and oversee the Affiliate program.

Current Programs

The Affiliate Program

The Affiliate program was created to provide students at four-year schools and community colleges not meeting charter requirements with professional development opportunities and select member benefits, such as PRSA Strategies & Tactics, access to the Internship Center, other educational materials from National Headquarters and contact with a local PRSA Chapter. Originally set for \$82 annually per student, Affiliate membership was lowered to \$65 in 2015, due to lower mailing costs that resulted from moving various communications to online publication. The vice president of member services oversees this program and acts as a liaison between Affiliates and the PRSSA National Committee.

In December 2006, the program opened. In March 2008, the PRSSA Assembly voted to allow international affiliates. The Affiliate Task Force concluded its work in 2010, leaving all Affiliate program responsibilities to the vice president of member services.

In 2021, the vice president of member services started hosting a monthly New Member webinar for all of the students that joined PRSSA within the month. This webinar shared key information about how students can maximize their membership and provides information about how to elevate your relationship with your affiliate program as a student. Since 2021, the vice president of member services has been responsible for creating the content and hosting this webinar.

You can now become a member of the affiliate program through the MyPRSA online portal, making it easier than ever to take advantage of these resources.

Challenges of the Affiliate Program

- Members of PRSSA and PRSA are enthusiastic and want the program to advance quickly in numerous directions. PRSSA must focus on improving it before expanding the program beyond its means.
- Providing a PRSA contact for Affiliates who are too far from a PRSA Chapter.
- Educating PRSSA Chapters about what the Affiliate program is and what it means for them.
- Reaching Affiliate members and establishing an ongoing conversation.
- Helping Affiliates understand and use the benefits available to them.
- With the discontinuation of District Ambassadors in 2023, the vice president of member services must use alternative methods to connect with Affiliate members.

Future of the Affiliate Program

Objective

- Create and implement a plan for Affiliate member retention and outreach to community college students and other colleges and universities without Chapters.

Tactics

- Encourage grassroots outreach to engage Affiliates.
- Use Community College Outreach Session to promote the Affiliate program to potential members.
- Reach out to current Affiliates to assess the program's success and implementation.
- Pair Affiliate members with successful Chapters in their region.

High School Outreach

At the PRSSA 2008 Conference, PRSSA hosted a well-received session for students who attended high schools near the Conference site. This event also was held in 2009, 2010 and 2013. In 2015, 2016 and 2017 the vice president of external affairs and other National Committee members conducted a high school outreach presentation at a high school local to the Conference site.

The vice president of member services should encourage Chapters to conduct their own high school outreach sessions in their communities. The goal of the high school outreach sessions is to further both the profession and the future professional. The sessions were incorporated in the Regional Conferences (now District Conferences) and Star Chapter application in 2015 to incentivize Chapters to engage with the community.

To support these efforts, we have a [High School Outreach Guide](#) that provides strategies and valuable insights to help you conduct your outreach, including examples from PRSSA Chapters.

Objectives of High School Outreach

- Promote the public relations profession to high school students.
- Educate target publics about PRSSA and the opportunities offered through the Society.
- Support Chapters as they facilitate their own high school outreach programs.
- Encourage members of PRSSA to conduct high school outreach programs at the high school from which they graduated, allowing members to be advocates and mentor in their home community.
- Create an opportunity for PRSSA Chapters to partner with their sponsoring PRSA Chapter to conduct high school outreach sessions together so that students see the industry from a professional's point of view.
- Generate updated materials to facilitate the process of conducting a high school outreach session for Chapters.

Challenges of High School Outreach

- Encouraging busy Chapter members to host sessions at high schools close to their own Chapters throughout the school year.
- Effectively getting in contact with high school guidance counselors and encouraging them to share information about PRSSA with their schools' students.

Future of High School Outreach

- Promote and distribute high school outreach resources to help Chapters develop similar sessions and programs locally.
- Guide Chapters in building relationships and mentorship programs with local high school students.
- Annually update the high school outreach tools for members.

Recruitment Package and Membership Guide

The Membership Guide, is a one-stop resource for information about the programs, services and member benefits PRSSA offers. The guide includes the background on the Society; PRSSA's Code of Ethics, mission and vision statement; and information about the Society's organizational structure, communications vehicles, affiliation with PRSA, travel opportunities and scholarships. It also is available for download on the PRSSA website, along with a Member Benefits PowerPoint and fact sheet.

Challenges of Recruitment Package and Membership Guide

- Maintaining up-to-date information in the Membership Guide.
- Making Chapters and members aware of Recruitment Package and Membership Guide.
- Educating Chapter leaders on how to use these resources for member retention and communication.
- Ensuring Chapters are receiving and using the information provided.

Future of Recruitment Package and Membership Guide

Objective

- The Membership Guide receives updates over the summer and is utilized by Chapters to recruit and retain members.
- The Membership Guide is sent to Chapters with less than ten members in the Spring semester to enhance recruitment efforts.
- Maximize recruitment resources available online.
- Connect with new members in a helpful and meaningful way every month.

Tactics

- Include any new or updated materials from all members of the National Committee; review additional materials before adding them to the Recruitment Package.
- Include communication in Progressions and other channels.
- Share current best practices to help Chapter presidents recruit new members.
- Keep the PowerPoint and fact sheet updated with relevant information.
- Host webinar event to educate all members on how to talk about PRSSA.
- Partner with Headquarters to facilitate New Member webinars, new to PRSSA or want a refresher on PRSSA.

Scholarship, Award and Competition Promotion

With the help of the PRSA Foundation, PRSSA offers more than \$31,000 in individual and Chapter scholarships and awards annually. Funding comes primarily from PRSA members and their families, public relations agencies and the Champions for PRSSA.

Challenges of Scholarship, Award and Competition Promotion

- The application process may seem daunting to those unfamiliar with it.
 - Receiving due dates in a timely manner from PRSA Foundation to inform members on when applications are open.
- Many members inaccurately believe they are not qualified for PRSSA scholarships or awards.
- Communicating with the PRSA Foundation; learning the exact dates of response to winners.

Future of Scholarship, Award and Competition Promotion

- Effectively brand and promote the Star Chapter as a status symbol for Chapters to attain each year.
- Educate members about the requirements of PRSSA scholarships and awards.
- Infuse scholarship, award and competition promotion into Chapter programming.
- Promote scholarships and awards as a portfolio and recognition builder.
- Communicate with all scholarship applicants on acceptance and rejection of scholarships.

Tactics

- Create and follow a standard promotion timeline for all scholarships and awards.
- Work with the vice president of digital communication to release scholarship and award information.
- Work with the PRSA Foundations to create an email notifying all applicants on the status of their scholarship application.
- Update and maintain walk-through video showing students how to register for scholarships and awards.

Community College Outreach Session (CCOS)

The Community College Outreach Session targets community college students and increases awareness of PRSSA and the Affiliate program. In partnership with the vice president of belonging, equity, diversity & inclusion, the Community College Outreach Session models the High School Outreach Session. If it happens, this session takes place during the PRSSA Leadership Assembly.

Challenges of the Community College Outreach Session

- Locating an appropriate community college within proximity of the PRSSA Leadership Assembly hotel.
- Handling logistical aspects of the session and establishing a concrete agenda that will benefit the target audience within a specific timeline.
- Establishing rapport with hosting CCOS professor and acquiring an appropriate keynote speaker.
- Finding a way to conduct Community College Outreach Sessions during virtual events and conferences.

Future of the Community College Outreach Session

Objective

- Host a CCOS at Leadership Assembly and promote PRSSA and the Affiliate program.
- Involve PRSSA Chapters in the Leadership Assembly location to co-host/be involved in.

CCOS Tactics

- Consider holding Community College Outreach Session on the Wednesday before the PRSSA Leadership Assembly; must be able to work with hosting professor's class schedule.
- Promote the PRSSA Affiliate program.
- Incorporate elements from the PRSSA Membership Guide into the presentation.
- Establish a working document of all CCOS outlines, agendas and outcomes for future CCOS events.

Current National Scholarship, Award and Competition Opportunities

Visit the [PRSSA website](#) for current list of awards and competitions.

Past Programs

Day-of Competition at Leadership Assembly

Founded at the PRSSA 2003 National Assembly (now the Leadership Assembly), the Day-of Competition gives students hands-on public relations experience and an opportunity to meet and network with a range of public relations students and professionals. It supplements Leadership Training Sessions provided during Assembly. This competition is now managed by the vice president of professional development.

Recruitment Video

In 2016, the vice president of member services created a promotional video that is shareable online. The video highlights the voices and testimonials of PRSSA members, and the membership benefits found within the Society. The video is updated and more relevant than the previous recruitment DVD.

Timeline

Ongoing

- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels. Work with vice president of digital communications to promote platform via social media channels and vice president of brand engagement via Progressions.
- Contribute to the other communication efforts, as needed.
- Connect with Affiliate members.

June

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives.
- Contact all Affiliates to introduce self.
- Revise Membership Guide and Recruitment Package, if necessary.
- Begin contacting Chapters with less than ten members from spring recruitment to establish relationships with incoming Chapter leadership.
- Revise High School Outreach Guide as needed.

July–September

- Publicize fall scholarship deadlines.
- Recruit members for Affiliate program student subcommittee, if necessary.
- Promote recruiting tactics and best practices.
- Encourage new members and Affiliates to attend ICON.
- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Begin plans for High School Outreach Session for ICON.

October

- Attend ICON.
- Execute High School Outreach Session at ICON.
- Begin promoting National Committee position to members.
- Work on final push for dues payments.

November–December

- Contact community colleges in the area of Leadership Assembly to begin working on the Community College Outreach Session.
- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.

January–April

- Work with Chapters to execute high school outreach sessions.
- Finalize spring recruitment promotions with vice president of digital communications.
- Plan and execute Community College Outreach Session.
- Publicize spring scholarship deadlines with strategic promotion plan.
- Communicate with members interested in running for next National Committee.
- Attend District Conference.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.

May

- Transition the incoming vice president of member services.

VICE PRESIDENT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The vice president of professional development's responsibilities includes helping new PRSSA Student-run Firms start and improving existing Student-run Firms, with a heavy focus on Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms; coordinating professional development initiatives and promoting ethical principles through Ethics Month.

Current Programs

Student-run Firms

The vice president of professional development works to enhance the network of all Student-run Firms including those in their early stages, those seeking to meet PRSSA's National Affiliation standards and those already Nationally Affiliated. To foster this network, the vice president of professional development must:

- Stay informed on the issues firms face while actively developing solutions with those firms.
- Adequately help firms of different sizes and different stages of the development process.
- Revise the Student-run Firm Handbook as necessary.
- Enforce the Affiliation standards and ensure they are achievable, yet stringent.
- Encourage Student-run Firms that meet the standards to apply for National Affiliation.
- Encourage Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms to apply for PRSSA Student-run Firm Awards.

National Affiliation Program

Currently more than 30 firms have earned National Affiliation. Firms must meet standards in three categories: a solid PRSSA/PRSA connection, a high level of professionalism and an effective structure.

To be considered for National Affiliation, firms must submit the following:

- A cover letter that includes firm name, firm's website and/or social media, mailing address, firm director's name and contact information, firm adviser's name and contact information.
- A client list with a brief description of each organization. The description should include what type of organization the client is, the services provided to the organization and how many staff members are working on the account.
- At least one case study detailing a public relations program implemented by the firm. Case studies should highlight the firm's best work and have four parts: research, planning, execution and results. Two pages or less per case study.
- A letter of support from the Chapter's Faculty or Professional Adviser. Two pages or less.
- A brief history of the firm describing when it was founded, how it has evolved and the mission of the firm. One page or less.
- A letter from the firm director. Four pages or less.

Headquarters does not charge an Affiliation application fee or any sort of commission or fees once a firm is Affiliated. Once approved, Affiliated firms must reapply three years after the initial date to remain Affiliated.

Of the more than 60 Student-run Firms operated by PRSSA Chapters in the United States and South America, those that are Nationally Affiliated are held to high standards and receive specific benefits, which include prestige, access to special awards, listing on the PRSSA website and the opportunity to work with the PRSSA National Committee. These firms have the opportunity to be the first to engage with new PRSSA firm initiatives.

Recently added benefits include:

- Opportunity for Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firm directors to attend the Leadership Assembly alongside Chapter presidents.
- Opportunity to share their ideas and connect with the network of other Nationally Affiliated firms.

The vice president of professional development should constantly seek opportunities and benefits for Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms. Such benefits may include more recognition and providing more tools and tactics for firm development and success on a consistent time frame.

Student-run Firm Awards

While all Student-run Firms are eligible to apply for the Teahan Chapter Award for Outstanding Chapter Firm, the Student-run Firm Award for Best Tactic and Student-run Firm Award for Best Campaign were formally launched in 2010 exclusively for Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms.

Eligible programs must be executed June 1 to May 31. Award categories may be added in the future as more firms earn Affiliation and competition increases. The vice president of professional development should promote the award opportunities through all available channels. These awards will be presented at ICON.

Student-run Firm Handbook

Each year, the vice president of professional development updates and publishes the Student-run Firm Handbook, which is available on the PRSSA website. The handbook contains information and advice on firm structure and best practices. Additionally, sample campaigns and tactics are included based on the best submissions from the Student-run Firm Awards.

Challenges of Student-run Firm Management

- Firms may not be closely connected with Chapters, making it harder to connect.
- Maintaining an accurate list of current firms and firm directors.
- Firms may not have the ability to create digital materials, making it harder to connect.
- Encouraging Affiliated firms beyond the three-year term to reapply for National Affiliation.

Future of Student-run Firm Management

- Increase awareness and recognition of Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms.
- Increase number of Student-run Firms applying for National Affiliation.
- Create valuable benefits for Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms.
- Create a stronger network among Student-run Firm directors across the nation.
- Discuss possibilities for a formalized national Student-run Firm director event.
- Better connect Student-run Firms with their PRSSA Chapters and PRSA sponsor Chapters.
- Better connect Student-run Firms with industry professionals.
- Provide a platform for Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms to share some of their best campaign work.

PRSSA and Ethics

Ethics are systems or sets of moral principles and a branch of philosophy dealing with good, bad, right, wrong and responsible human conduct. The vice president of professional development should work to educate members of the Society about the ethical decision-making process, bringing attention to those issues that could help demonstrate how an ethical approach can be taken to solve a communication problem. The vice president of professional development works with the PRSA Board of Ethics and Professional Standards (BEPS) to provide and receive feedback and resources. In addition, September is PRSA and PRSSA Ethics Month. The vice president of professional development leads PRSSA planning to support this month in collaboration with BEPS.

Past promotion for Ethics Month included Instagram chats, social media mini-campaigns, e-blasts, and series of posts on Progressions. Establishing more programs will solidify this program in Chapters' routines.

The vice president of professional development is an ex-officio member of BEPS.

Professional Development

Throughout the term, the vice president of professional development should work with National Headquarters to offer and promote professional development advice or programs. Past promotion included themed posts on Progressions and the frequent offering of PRSA webinars free to PRSSA members. The vice president of professional development also can promote events and District Conferences as professional development opportunities.

Past Programs

Day-of Competition at Leadership Assembly

Founded at the PRSSA 2003 National Assembly (now the Leadership Assembly), the Day-of Competition gives students hands-on public relations experience and an opportunity to meet and network with a range of public relations students and professionals. It supplements Leadership Training Sessions provided during Assembly. In 2018, the Day-of Competition was shifted as a responsibility from member services to professional development.

The vice president of professional development helps to secure a sponsor and client (typically the same organization) for the Day-of Competition. The client develops a public relations challenge to pose to competition participants. Teams of participants have one hour to develop a public relations plan and present before the client and other public relations professionals. The winning team receives recognition at the welcome reception and on the PRSSA website, and team members receive a personalized plaque and monetary reward.

Challenges of the Day-of Competition

- Finding a sponsor for the event.
- Promoting competition participation to PRSSA Leadership Assembly attendees.
- Maximizing the experience of the 60 participants and sorting them into event teams.

Future of the Day-of Competition

- Will not be offered in the PRSSA 2024 Leadership Assembly.

The Firm Newsletter

The Firm newsletter was created in 2008 to share Student-run Firm best practices achievements. In June 2009, this publication was discontinued as similar information is now included in Progressions.

PRrecision

The PRrecision newsletter was created in 2019 to share industry trends, best practices and technical learning objectives with PRSSA members. The newsletter's focus is to highlight the skills public relations pre-professionals need before entering the workforce. The first edition was published in September on PRSSA ethics.

Ragan's PR Daily Partnership

In partnership with Ragan's PR Daily, the vice president of professional development and the vice president of brand engagement coordinate monthly articles written by PRSSA members. The objective of the partnership is for public relations professionals to learn current trends from young professionals. Past articles can be found on the Ragan's PR Daily website.

Ethics Competition

The vice president of professional development is also in charge carrying out the ethics competition. The ethics competition was put into place once during the fall and once during the spring to get students engaged and learning about ethics in a fun, competitive manner. The competition includes the following:

- Byline
- Analysis of the situation
- Why this is an ethical issue
- Include what part(s) of the code of ethics is(are) being violated
- How it should be solved
- Graphic
- Submissions should be no more than 500 words

Timeline

Ongoing

- Assist Student-run Firm directors, Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms and Chapters starting firms with all needs.
- Seek professional development opportunities in conjunction with PRSA to share with members.
- Assist with Adviser-related questions.
- Promote initiatives via existing PRSSA channels.
- Work with the vice president of digital communications to promote platform via social media channels and vice president of brand engagement via Progressions and the media.
- Participate in monthly teleconferences as an ex-officio member of BEPS.
- Manage the production of professional development content
- Serve as resource to Chapters in designated District.

June

- Attend National Committee Leadership Retreat.
- Finalize yearlong initiatives (as determined by vice president of professional development).
- Begin contacting Nationally Affiliated Student-run Firms to build a relationship with directors.
- Update the Student-run Firm Handbook, as necessary.

July–August

- Contact Student-run Firms and update database with contact information.
- Begin preparation for Student-run Firm Workshop at ICON.
- Begin plans for PRSSA Ethics Month.

September

- Promote Ethics Month via PRSSA channels.
- Prepare information to promote current programs during Career Exhibition at ICON.
- Finalize plans for Student-run Firm Workshop. (If being conducted during ICON)

October

- Attend ICON; execute Student-run Firm Workshop (if applicable); encourage National Affiliation.
- Encourage top-tier Student-run Firms to apply for National Affiliation.

November–December

- Contact Chapters starting new Student-run Firms.
- Review fall National Affiliation Applications and onboard new Nationally Affiliated Firms.
- Generate content for the Situation Analysis.

January–April

- Communicate with members interested in running for next National Committee.
- Attend District Conference.
- Attend Leadership Assembly.
- Encourage top-tier Student-run Firms to apply for National Affiliation.
- Work on promoting professional development opportunities to members.

May

- Transition the incoming National Committee member.
- Thank Student-run Firm directors for their service.
- Finalize remaining National Affiliation applications.

ADDITIONAL NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

National Faculty and Professional Advisers

The National Faculty and Professional Advisers represent the faculty and professional viewpoint to the National Committee. They attend the Leadership Assembly and ICON. Since 2009, the Advisers have been selected via an application process and serve a two-year term, a third year may be added due to extenuating circumstance. Both Advisers hold the following responsibilities:

- Vote on new applications for PRSSA charters.
- Work with Chapter Faculty and Professional Advisers and members.
- Lead an Adviser session during the PRSSA ICON.
- Host multiple informal sessions for Faculty and Professional Advisers throughout the year.

The National Faculty Adviser is an ex-officio member of the Educators Academy board to report on PRSSA matters. Both Advisers must be Accredited members of PRSA.

PRSA Board Liaison

The PRSA Board Liaison maintains open lines of communication between the PRSSA National Committee and the PRSA Board of Directors. Two liaisons may share the position.

PRSA Senior Vice President of Programs

The PRSA Senior Vice President of Programs is a full-time PRSSA administrator. In addition to acting as general adviser to the PRSSA National Committee, this person performs all duties normally incident to the office of secretary. He or she maintains PRSSA national records, conducts general correspondence and coordinates services to the PRSSA membership. The senior vice president of programs' duties frequently expand per request of the National Committee or the PRSA Board of Directors.

THE FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY: WHERE TO GO

Milagros Orcoyen, 2024–2025 National President

The Current State

The 2024–2025 National Committee held strategic planning sessions where we explored how to work together most effectively based on our roles, strengths, and positions. With a focus on collaboration and growth, we adopted the 3Ls: Link, Listen, and Lift as our pillars for the year.

- **Link:** Forge strong connections within our community, facilitating networking opportunities that enable our Chapters and members to collaborate, exchange ideas, and build valuable relationships.
- **Listen:** Actively listen to our Chapters and members to understand their needs and aspirations, ensuring their voices shape our initiatives and offerings.
- **Lift:** Empower our Chapters and members by providing learning opportunities and resources, celebrating their achievements, and embracing their unique stories.

To ensure alignment with these principles, each vice president developed their own goals and tactics for the year. We then crafted a National Committee plan that connected these goals to our core pillars and incorporated sections for collaboration across the Committee.

To maintain focus on our goals throughout the year, we implemented a monthly schedule that helped ensure we stayed on track. Additionally, to measure progress, the vice presidents updated their platforms every two months with the National President using a stoplight system (green for accomplished, yellow for in progress, and red for not started).

A key focus this year was enhancing the sense of community within PRSSA. To facilitate this, we launched a Chapter Presidents Slack, creating a space for presidents to connect, share ideas, and stay informed about National updates. This initiative was part of a broader effort to ensure that communication remained open and that our members were always engaged.

In line with this effort, we also introduced the Chapter Development Committee, led by the vice president of Chapter development. This new subcommittee is dedicated to building a more vibrant and connected PRSSA community by helping Chapters expand membership, improve programming, and foster meaningful connections. Their work directly supports the success and growth of each Chapter.

Further enhancing communication, I introduced “Virtual Coffee Chats with the National President,” providing opportunities for one-on-one conversations with members across the Society. These chats allowed for personalized support and feedback, helping to further strengthen our community.

We also implemented several new and exciting initiatives designed to engage members and provide valuable resources. These initiatives included, but were not limited to:

- A revamped General Meeting format, featuring a 10-minute section for National updates followed by a themed discussion.
- Chapter Development & Leadership Sessions to support and empower Chapters and their leaders.
- A new video format for PRSSA Podcasts, making content more accessible and engaging.
- Spanish-language Progressions articles, PRSSA Podcasts, and social media captions.
- New resources such as the High School Outreach Guide, the updated Career Resources Manual, a Student-run Firms Hub and Slack, and a Sponsorship Pitch Deck.

The vice presidents leveraged their positions and platforms to maximize outreach, resulting in numerous Progressions articles and PRSSA Podcasts, over 500 students attending ICON, a successful set of District Conferences, and four dynamic National Subcommittees. With our primary focus on community and Society, we prioritized communication with our Chapters and members to ensure students were aware of National Committee efforts and all available resources.

Ultimately, our efforts focused on the core principles of Link, Listen, and Lift, and we were able to achieve our goals for the year by fostering stronger connections, amplifying members’ voices, and empowering Chapters and members to succeed.

PRSSA

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