

## A Letter from the President



It has been a busy start of 2009 for the PRSA – Capital Region Chapter and there are no plans to slow down. In the first half of 2009 we have expanded our Wednesday Workshop program to a monthly event, a significant increase from the first year of the program.

The continued success of our Wednesday Workshop series is just one example of how our chapter is providing new programs and supporting our members. The start of 2009 has also been a historical one for our Chapter. For the first time we will host the

North East District Conference in Albany, in 2010. The conference has traditionally been in Rochester and Buffalo, but Albany is good middle ground and this is a great opportunity to prove that our chapter continues to grow and flourish.

Speaking of firsts, this year our local chapter saw the need for a full-time intern. We asked Amanda Ludemann, a recent graduate from SUNY Albany to share her experiences with you in this newsletter, and in speaking for the board of directors, Amanda's dedication and hard work was a great help for our chapter.

In addition, this year the local chapter has established a job bank. This is a new and dedicated service to our members so that they can be informed of job openings in our field in the Capital Region. Members receive an email each time we become aware of an opening and our long-term goal is to be the exclusive source for communications jobs in this area. Our chapter boasts of having more than 90 of the best and brightest communications professionals in the Capital Region.

Also this year we are growing the tradition of the Empire Awards. Entries are now being accepted for the 2009 Empire Awards and there are several new features to this year's awards as well.

In addition to all the educational events and professional growth programs scheduled for this year, the board of directors also realizes that sometimes we just have to kick back and have some fun. So on Thursday, June 25 from 5:30pm – 7:30pm we are holding a Summer BBQ at Zone 5 in downtown Albany. The PR and marketing firm has a rooftop deck which offers a picturesque view of Albany's skyline and is the perfect place to enjoy a fun summer evening.

Looking forward to the remainder of 2009 we have several Wednesday Workshops, the New York Giants training camp and the Empire Awards among other planned programs and events. We hope that you will join us at one or all of these events as the PRSA – Capital Region Chapter continues to grow.

Sincerely,

Eric Wohlleber President, PRSA Capital Region

## Lillian Pierson-Cohen

Joslyn McArdle, Communications Chair



In March I had the opportunity to meet an extraordinary woman who was one of the pioneers of what public relations is today. Her name is Lillian Pierson-Cohen and she is the longest active member of the Public Relations Society of

America, a member of PRSA for 55 years.

Upon arriving at her home, Lillian had folders of PR information to share with me that she had saved over the years. It was interesting to see that she still had some of her original news releases typed out from her word processor, which she still uses today. The information that I was able to read in my short time at her house was vast, items from National PRSA dating back 20 years ago or more. It included head shots, campaign information and articles recognizing this woman for her outstanding contribution to our profession.

Lillian was born in Brooklyn during World War II. To hear this woman's stories is amazing. It's like going back in time and reliving some outstanding events. She started by telling me that by the age of six she was completely literate. Lillian knew that she could write and that she had a gift for writing.

(continued on pg.2)

## WEDNESDAY WORKSHOPS

Held at Professor Java's  
\$10 for members, \$25 for non-members

### June 10

Ken Goldfarb, Catholic Diocese of Albany  
Handling the Crisis of the Catholic Church

### September 9

Sue Siegel, Sunmark Federal Credit Union  
The Importance of Data Mining in Marketing/PR

### October 14 12:00

Amy Mengel <http://amymengel.com>  
Social Media

### December 9

Kyle Kotary, Empire Public Affairs  
Developing a Public Affairs Campaign



## PRSA CAPITAL REGION 2009 **CHAPTER BOARD**

**PRESIDENT**

» Eric Wohlleber

**PRESIDENT ELECT**

» Andrea Colby

**SECRETARY**

» Penny Vavura

**TREASURER**

» Jake Dumesnil

**PAST PRESIDENT**

» Tom Nardacci

**COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR**

» Joslyn McArdle

**PROGRAMMING CHAIR**

» Robin Wood

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

» Megan Baker

**ACCREDITATION CHAIR**

» Mary Bray Gallagher, APR

**DIRECTORS AT LARGE**

» Rob Puglisi

» Kathy Wren

» Ben Marvin

» Glenn Valle

» Rich Meddaugh

**ASSEMBLY DELEGATE**

» Kyle Kotary

GRAMERCY COMMUNICATIONS

Graphic Design Sponsored by:

c/o Eric Wohlleber  
25 Monroe Street  
Suite 300  
Albany, NY 12210

**NEWSLETTER**  
CAPITAL REGION

**PRSA** Public Relations Society of America

# Lillian Pierson Cohen contd.

**Joslyn McArdle**, Communications Chair

Her journey in PR started in 1954 working for the editor of Tide Magazine. As I sat there in her home, she told me of how they were working on a campaign to put tags in garments that said "Please use Ivory Flakes," a laundry soap for washing clothes. She enjoyed her work so much that she decided to leave and join Allied Public Relations, a PR firm in New York City.

Lillian joined PRSA and attended events held in New York City. Back then when women were the minority in the work force, she was spearheading a career in public relations. She would attend events, and people would know who she was just by her hat. It was like she was a legend in the making. She told a story of her boss from Tide Magazine, a woman, also in public relations, who wore the same hat to all events. Lillian wanted to make her own statement by always wearing her red beret to all the events that she attended. Before long, she became known as "the woman in the red beret."

As we sat there and I listened to history, she imparted some words of wisdom: you should always anticipate something before it happens. Also, "Always be focused on an objective. Always have a Plan B in case Plan A doesn't work."

Lillian attended and graduated from Columbia University and decided to start her own public relations firm on Lexington Avenue. She met and married Sam J. Cohen, who was in the newspaper business in New York City. Sam was a world-renowned traveler, whose family was from Upstate NY. When Lillian and Sam decided to slow down and semi-retire, they left New York City and moved to Gloversville. She told me of the wonderful life that she and Sam had together. They had a home in Mexico, and Lillian wrote and published her own book on her adventures in Oaxaca, Mexico, called "Crewel Pieces: A Memoir of Mexico". The family that she had met in Mexico became part of her family.

Lillian still continued to work on assignments such as critiquing the New York City Ballet, Glimmerglass Opera and segments on PBS. In her free time she also wrote for the Leader-Herald in Gloversville.

Before I left, I asked Lillian what she thought was her biggest accomplishment to date. Her answer: for me to travel to Gloversville and interview her and to share her stories with our Chapter. I was honored.

## Agency News



Ray Witkowski has joined Zone 5 as Vice President. Ray brings 20 years of experience in higher education branding communications.

Christopher Urig has been promoted to Account Supervisor. In his new role he will supervise a variety of accounts in the higher education, financial services and hi-tech fields.

Julia Florer has joined Zone 5 as Senior Account Executive. Julia brings five years of production experience along with business-to-business and higher ed projects.

## Q&A With a Journalist

**Mike Hendricks**, Editor of The Business Review



**What are the things that you most enjoy about being a journalist?**

I have always enjoyed working with writers to develop their reporting and writing skills. I enjoy the opportunity journalists have every day to meet and listen to some very impressive and accomplished people.

**During the course of your career, has there been one story that stands out the most or that you recall as your favorite piece?**

There is no single story. I have always believed a measure of a journalist is in their body of work rather than a single story. When I was a sports writer I enjoyed covering two Winter Olympics. I remember the excitement of covering Syracuse University's triple overtime win over Villanova to win its first Big East tournament in 1981. I covered Magic Johnson and Patrick Ewing in their freshmen seasons. As a newspaper reporter I covered some pretty dramatic local news stories in metro Detroit in the late 1960s-early 1970s. As the AP's news editor for upstate New York I had a hand in most every significant story for 18 years in the 1980s and 1990s and at The Business Review I have witnessed the emergence of a new and vibrant private sector economy. But there is no single story that is a favorite. My favorite stories, though, are about people.

**What is the best way for a PR person to contact you? How about any pet peeves about what a PR person should not do?**

Probably email is best with a follow up phone call when it is merited. Please do not have an intern call the editor to ask if we received a press release you sent two weeks ago. I seem to have been fielding that phone call every day for the last 25 years. Please stop.

**What stories are of interest to you and the Business Review?**

News stories.

## NY Giants to Host PRSA

Pat Hanlon, the longtime Vice President of Communications for the New York Giants, will once again host PRSA Capital Region during August Training Camp at UAlbany. Stay tuned for event details and RSVP info. Space is very limited for this popular program.



# Blogging and PR

Rich Meddaugh, Sunmark Federal Credit Union

## CONTROLLING THE MESSAGING WHILE LETTING IT FLY

Today's media constraints are a day of the past. With the rollout of social media tools and web interaction devices, generations used to traditional media outreach means are adjusting to a whole new ballgame. We are receiving and distributing information faster than ever and creating an appetite for news, sports and current events that has yet to be satisfied.

The convenience and speed of today's news gathering is training us to streamline operations to fit today's technological push. Customers, clients and the general public want the story and they want it now!

*"Customers, clients and the general public want the story and they want it now!"*

With the advent of these new communication tools comes the question of message control. In a recent article in the New York Times, blogging is becoming a leader of the pack in distributing news. But, get this. Not from the traditional newsroom or the freelance reporter, but internally, from the CEO. The news isn't always the best kind. In today's economy, layoffs and news related to items we wouldn't want to necessarily have out there are the topic du jour.

Imagine being a PR representative at a major Fortune 500 firm and in your daily research or competitive analysis research, you find your CEO spouting off about various topics ranging from profits and politics to layoffs? It's ok; take your time getting your things in order. This has become the new order in direct communication with everyone from shareholders to reporters.

With so much exposure to new tech gadgets and distribution mediums, there can only be one question: Who's controlling the message? With a nod to the Wizard of Oz, who's behind the curtain? As PR professionals, it's our responsibility to embrace technologies that can assist us in everyday media outreach and spread our messaging to different audiences. Blogging gives us this option and allows for a free-flowing dialogue with an honest consistent message.

Distribution is changing. News formats are being altered at such a pace; it seems difficult to see where the change is leading us. When 135 people aboard US Airways flight 1549 landed in the Hudson River, it wasn't reported in the conventional sense. The first article or coverage was posted by a ferry rider who posted the event on Twitter. The first photos were not posted by CNN or MSNBC, but by an on-site commuter.

How can we better manage this new technology to benefit our profession? If you'd like to share those ideas or concepts, feel free to contact PRSA and share those thoughts. We're always looking for insight on various topics and maybe your insight could assist us in programming.

Like Bob Dylan said 'The Times They are a-Changin.' Can we make the adjustment to new mediums and create opportunities for our profession? Only time can tell.

# Internship Experience

Amanda Ludemann, SUNY Albany Graduate 2009



As a senior at the University at Albany majoring in communications I expected to be ready to enter into the workforce when I graduated in May. I was planning on finishing up my last semester with classes but then heard about the full-time internship program that the university offers. I thought that an internship would be a great opportunity to gain some real-world experience before I graduated. I pursued an internship with the

Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)-Capital Region Chapter. I soon found that having first-hand experience in the workplace is much more beneficial than sitting in a classroom. This internship has given me many opportunities to learn more about the public relations field.

*"This internship has given me many opportunities to learn more about the public relations field."*

I became interested in public relations after learning about it in one of my classes. I enjoy the variety of different current issues that the public relations field covers. I also enjoy working hands-on helping plan and execute events. Through my internship with the PRSA I have been given a chance to help with event planning. One of the events that I helped plan was March's Wednesday Workshop at the Victory Café. I helped plan the new location as well as the food for the event. I never realized how much went into planning an event. It gave me satisfaction to be involved in one of our events that achieved that much success.

I also learned how to do things such as write articles and press releases. Learning these skills and having first-hand experience has given me an advantage over other recent graduates. Through the internship I have also been able to network with people in the public relations and communications field. This is very important and valuable to me when starting my job search.

I am very happy that I chose to do an internship with the PRSA-Capital Region Chapter. It has been a good starting point to a future career in the public relations and communications field. As I start my job search I know that I do not have years of experience but I am confident that this internship will help get me started in the career path that I want to take.

## Member Spotlight Joslyn McArdle

**Communications Chair, PRSA Capital Region**



Communicating with our members is becoming a full-time job, and for the past year and a half Joslyn McArdle has been taken on this role. While adding events and new programs, Joslyn has masterfully helped get the word out on all of the happenings for our local chapter. Being the person behind all of our emails, e-newsletters, print newsletters, etc., we thought that the Member Spotlight would be a fitting opportunity to learn a little more about the person who keeps us informed.

### What are the benefits of being a member of the Board of Directors for the PRSA-Capital Region Chapter?

I can't begin to tell you the benefits of serving on the Board of Directors for PRSA's Capital Region Chapter. This is my second year serving and during both years I have been lucky to work with an outstanding group of professionals. They always put the members first and come up with new programs that people would be interested in. I have been given networking opportunities, as well as career advice from the men and women who serve on this board. I also was able to be part of the inaugural Empire Awards that the Chapter started in 2008.

### As the Co-Chair of the 2010 NorthEast District Conference, what can our members expect in the months ahead?

I was excited to learn that Albany was the site of the 2010 NE District Conference and that I would be co-chairing the event with Jo Ann LeSage Nelson, VP of Pierce Communications. Albany is centrally located for most of the chapters in the NE District and having the conference here will give people the opportunity to see this great area. I think the challenge will be to bring all of the chapters together and for our chapter to match the attendance level of 250 that Buffalo achieved in 2008. This conference will give chapter members throughout the district the opportunity to bring something new back to their chapters just as I did last year. Seeing and hearing about what other chapters are doing is a great way to learn, and the chance to interact with PRSA members throughout the district is invaluable.

### Why did you become a PRSA member?

I have been involved in PRSA since graduating from college in 2001. Prior to that I served on the student level as chapter president of the PRSSA Chapter at Buffalo State College. I have known firsthand the benefits of being a PRSA member. I think the programs that are offered are amazing; they touch on a variety of topics. You also get outstanding networking opportunities and are linked to the national organization and, as a result, have a tremendous amount of resources available to you.

### What would you tell people who are thinking of joining PRSA?

I would tell them to come to an event. See what PRSA is about. It's more than networking; it's an organization that is for PR professionals on every level.

### What is your approach to communicating with PRSA members?

Quite a bit of research goes into putting together the e-news and the newsletters. I try to bring the readers the "pulse" of what is going on in the chapter. We try to find articles and topics of interest and bring members the latest news about what is happening with agencies all over the area.

## Congratulations Rob & Megan!

The month of May was a very productive one for the PRSA – Capital Region Chapter Board of Directors. Two of our directors welcomed three new members of their families this month. First, Rob Puglisi, his wife Barbara and two daughters welcomed their third child, Andrew Thomas Puglisi, to the family on May 6th. Andrew was born at 7:09pm and weighed 7lbs. 11oz.

Membership Chair Megan Baker and her husband Frank also welcomed their second and third children to a rapidly growing family. Megan had twins on May 19th. Giada Marie Lanni was born at 1:52pm, weighing 6lbs. and 9oz., followed by Sofia Anne Lanni who was born at 2:04pm, weighing 6lbs.



Rob & Barbara's son Andrew



Megan & Frank's daughters Giada Marie and Sofia Anne

# SAVE THE DATE



11 · 12 · 09

[WWW.PRSA-CAPITALREGION.COM](http://WWW.PRSA-CAPITALREGION.COM)

The PRSA Capital Region proudly announces the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Empire Awards competition. The Empire Awards recognize public relations programs, projects and professionals for outstanding achievement in the practice and support of public relations in the Capital Region.

Winners will be honored at this year's awards luncheon on Thursday, November 12, at the New York State Museum.

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5PM

07 · 10 · 09

FINAL DEADLINE ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5PM

08 · 14 · 09

Deliver or mail your entries to  
PRSA Capital Region Empire Awards  
c/o Gramercy Communications  
39 North Pearl Street  
Albany NY 12207



PLATINUM SPONSOR

GOLD SPONSORS

SILVER SPONSOR



**ZONE 5**

The College of Saint Rose



SUPPORTERS

BAKER PR

SHOREY PR