



2017-2018 FPRA Gainesville

Chapter Management Report

Respectfully submitted by:
Allison Downey, APR, CPRC
FPRA Gainesville Chapter President



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

For decades, the Gainesville Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association has boasted a strong membership, unsurpassed leadership and some of the best professional development in the state. But as a college town, we've struggled for years with a continuous turnover in membership. And as budgets tighten and time becomes less of a luxury, finding new and creative ways to keep our membership engaged is of utmost importance. As our new board entered the 2017-2018 term, and as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our great chapter, we set out to find new and innovative ways to capture the attention of public relations professionals around the community while providing the top notch professional development and programming opportunities that our members have come to expect from FPRA Gainesville.

One of our proudest accomplishments this year is, hands down, our **certification efforts**. As FPRA's VP of Accreditation and Certification Ginger Broslat, APR, CPRC set out to find 10 new Certified Public Relations Counselors this year, our chapter was ready to deliver. By the end of May, the Gainesville Chapter welcomed four new CPRCs with four more having taken all or a portion of the exam and awaiting their results. By Annual Conference, we hope to recognize eight new CPRCs – 80 percent of Ginger's goal for the entire state. Of course, none of this could have been possible without the constant support and encouragement of Ginger. She hosted over-the-phone study sessions throughout the year and was always available to answer questions for our members going through the process. I am also eternally grateful to Amelia Bell, APR, CPRC, who graciously took on the challenge of helping our members throughout their preparation, as our chapter's Director of Accreditation was going through the process herself. Prior to this year, our chapter hadn't recognized a new CPRC since 2015. We'd also never, in our chapter's history, recognized more than two new CPRCs in the same year.

In addition to our certification efforts, I couldn't be more proud of our chapter's **leadership** this year. As our nominating committee set out to create this year's board slate, they put a lot of effort into successfully targeting and cultivating young and upcoming leaders. Five of our chapter's 14 board members served for the first time this year, and their fresh perspective and bright ideas brought new life to our chapter's initiatives. We hosted two half-day board retreats throughout the year to ensure that we were on target with our goals and meeting the needs of our membership. Director of Communications, Patricia Vernon, was even honored as our 2018 Member of the Year, and Director of Education Services, Joey Martinez, was awarded our 2018 Rising Star of the Year award – a true testament to the caliber of individuals leading our chapter. Each and every member of this year's board stepped up to the plate to go above and beyond in their respective positions.

Finally, our Director of Programs, Jon Thomas, brought some truly **top-notch programming** to our monthly membership meetings this year. Responses to every month's post-luncheon surveys were overwhelmingly positive, not only in regard to the speaker's presentation but also to the menu (which is where we've had quite a bit of color commentary over the years!). From hosting a panel on the communications efforts behind white supremacist Richard Spencer's controversial visit to Gainesville, to former Gator football player turned entrepreneur James Bates, to inspirational speaker John Rivers of Four Rivers Smokehouse, this year's programming was some of the best we've ever had. And our membership agrees!

As we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of our chapter, we capitalized on our theme of "History in the Making" by honoring the last five decades of success within our chapter and paving the way for decades to come.

ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

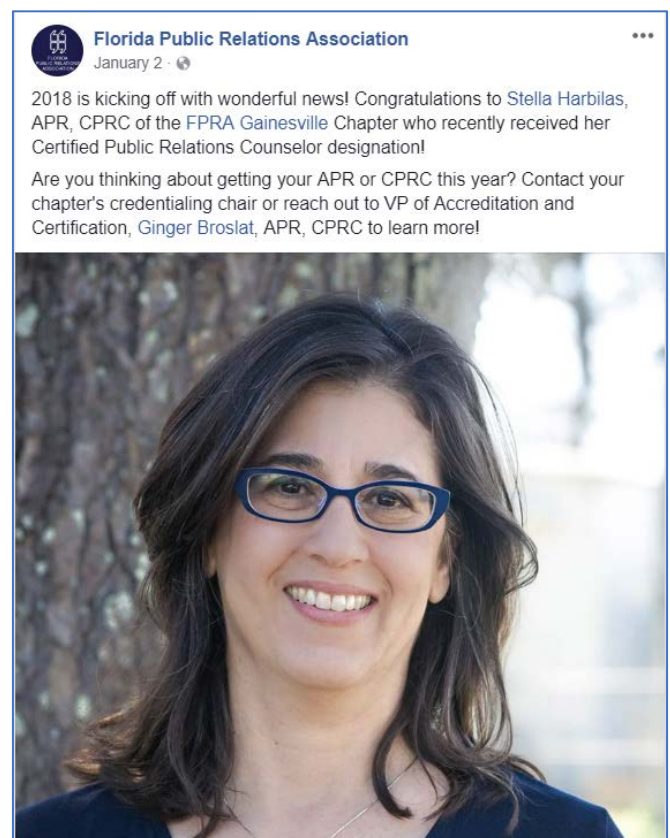


Throughout the year, the APR and CPRC was top of mind and mentioned regularly at our monthly membership meetings and in our eNewsletter.

In addition to our outstanding accomplishments in the CPRC realm, we also had several members begin the process to achieve their Accreditation in Public Relations (APR). Leading the charge was our Director of Accreditation, Diane Choate, APR.

Throughout the Fall, APR candidates participated in four 2-hour study sessions, preparing their questionnaires and panel presentations. Beginning in June, they'll participate in six 1-hour study sessions focused on the computerized exam. One candidate is currently preparing to sit for her Readiness Review in late June.

The Gainesville Chapter strives to heighten awareness of the credentialing process and recognize members who have achieved this honor.



For new APRs or CPRCs, we:

- hold a pinning ceremony at a monthly luncheon
- include an announcement and a photograph in our weekly eNews
- include an announcement and photograph on our chapter's website
- include an announcement on our chapter Facebook page

We always include members' designations (APR or CPRC) following his/her name in all of our publications, as well as verbally at chapter functions.

At this time, I'm proud to report that 41 percent of our membership hold their APR, and 18 percent hold their CPRC – some of the highest percentages in the state.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT





2017-2018 FPRA Gainesville Board of Directors

President	Allison Downey, APR, CPRC
Immediate Past President	Erin Morton, APR, CPRC
President-Elect	Lindsey Robertson, APR
VP/Member Services	Joey Mazzaferro
Secretary	Amelia Bell, APR, CPRC
Treasurer	Sarah Coulson
Director, Accreditation	Diane Choate, APR
Director, Communications	Patricia Vernon
Director, Community Relations	Amy Azoulay
Director, Education Services	Joey Martinez
Director, Electronic Media	Leah Harms
Director, Image Awards	Marbella Miller
Director, Professional Development	Colleen Raccioppi, APR
Director, Programs	Jon Thomas

Last summer, our incoming board hit the ground running. We started by scheduling 2-on-1 meetings with the outgoing and incoming chairs of each position and myself to transition and game plan for the coming year. This strategy made a huge difference from our traditional 1-on-1 meetings, as it was a great opportunity to bring everyone to the table at once.

We held our joint board meeting at the end of August where our incoming board was invited to attend our final board meeting of the 2016 -2017 term to shadow their predecessors and experience a meeting for those new to the board.

Our year began with the installation of our board during our August luncheon program, featuring FPRA State President Ryan Gerds, APR, CPRC, as he shared his vision for the coming year. Shortly after installations, we held our Board Retreat, kicking off the year with goal development, a review of the Past Presidents' Council report and a little teambuilding fun. For years, we've distributed board binders that are passed down from year to year. This year, we made the executive decision to go digital! All board members were provided flash drives during the retreat filled with all the resources they'd need throughout the year. In keeping with the FPRA Balance theme, each board member was asked to come up with two professional goals as they relate to their respective positions and one personal goal. Personal goals included traveling more, experiencing new things with their children and doing more yoga.





Our Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. Each board member reports on their ongoing efforts, and issues and opportunities are talked through with the group.

In February, we held our mid-year board retreat to check in on goals, as well as discuss wins and challenges from the first half of the year. I asked board members to submit their baby picture, keeping in theme with “History in the Making.” We played a fun game with the board, asking them to identify their fellow boardies based on their baby pictures. We’re now sharing those baby pictures in the slideshow at our monthly programs.

As our board term comes to a close, our nominating committee for the 2018-2019 term is in place, chaired by our Immediate Past President Erin Morton, APR, CPRC. President-Elect Lindsey Robertson, APR, hosted a Leadership Social in May, encouraging anyone interested in serving on next year’s board to join us for some brews and board development. It was an opportunity to talk through each open position and ask questions about what’s expected.



MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Our membership is the heart of our association, and with that comes a great responsibility. Armed with the results from our Past President's Council focus group and our annual membership survey, our board set out to provide the best events and programming possible for our esteemed members.

Each year, we proudly offer an array of scholarships to our members to support their growth and development within our chapter. First and foremost, we offered two full membership scholarships -- one for a recent graduate of the University of Florida and one for someone working in public relations at a non-profit organization. Both scholarships were awarded to current members who would have been unable to renew otherwise.

In addition to the membership scholarships, we are proud to once again be offering a partial scholarship to one lucky member for the upcoming LeadershipFPRA class. And finally, in July we'll be dolling out two full Annual Conference scholarships to two professional members, and one full conference student scholarship.

Our chapter honors three very special individuals each Spring, and I'm happy to announce the following recipients of our annual awards:

Rising Star of the Year

Joey Martinez

Member of the Year

Patricia Vernon

John S. Detweiler, Ed.D, APR, CPRC
Professional of the Year

Steve Shepherd

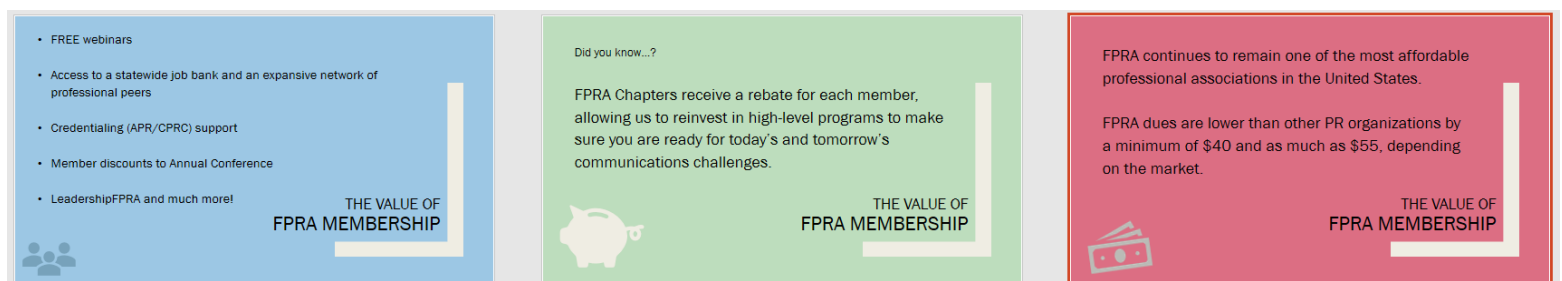
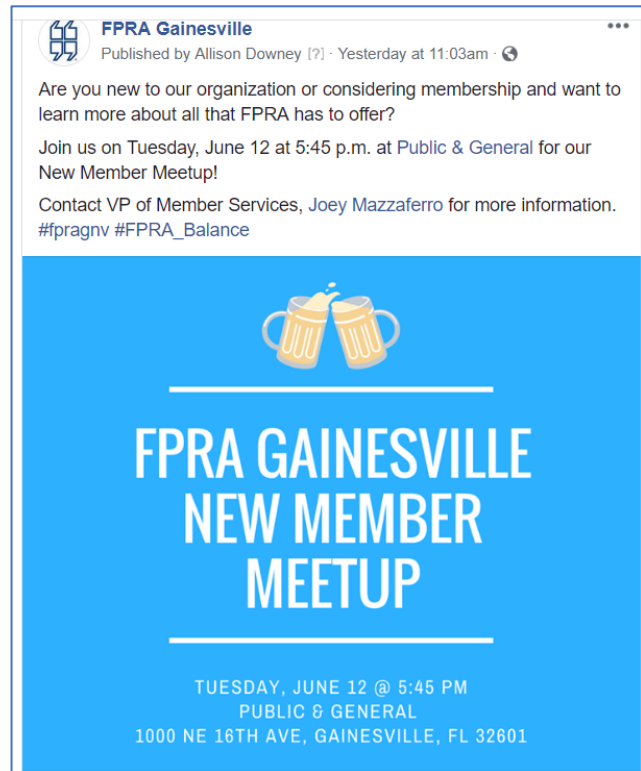


In keeping with State President Ryan Gerds, APR, CPRC's theme of finding balance, we hosted several events throughout the year that were family-friendly. This included our October membership mixer, complete with pumpkin carving, and a kid-friendly holiday party.

We've found that the greatest turnover in our membership is that of members who join for one year and do not reinvest in their

membership during the subsequent renewal period. With that said, our VP of Membership, Joey Mazzaferro, has made an extra effort to keep new members engaged, including personalized emails inviting them to all chapter events. We're even hosting a New Member Meetup on June 14 -- a casual focus group where we'll meet with our new members and get feedback about how their first year of membership is going.

We also found ways throughout the year to regularly remind our members of the benefits of their membership, including slides at our monthly membership programs and special notes in eNews.



Our shining moment this year was the celebration of our chapter's 50th anniversary. Coupled with our Image Awards ceremony, our Director of Image Awards, Marbella Miller, threw the party of the year.



The committee set a goal of 30 attendees, which was a stretch goal compared to the 12 we had in attendance at our Image Awards presentation last year. We ended up exceeding our attendance goal by 26 percent, welcoming a large group of members who don't traditionally attend our regularly scheduled events.

The event was hosted at the Exactech Arena at the Stephen C. O'Connell Center (home of Florida basketball) in the Center Court Club. The venue usually costs upwards of \$1100 to rent, but it was generously donated to us by Exactech, whose communications team boasts four past FPRA Gainesville Chapter presidents.

Throughout the evening, behind-the-scenes tours of the Arena were offered. We promoted the Golden Image program by playing a promotional video and handing out fliers. Communicators from the UF University Athletic Association and Exactech spoke briefly to share some of the internal and external communications efforts around the re-branding of the Arena. Awards were given out, and the evening concluded with a champagne toast to our 50th anniversary. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive.

2018 Membership Events At-A-Glance

Aug 17	<p>Monthly Program: Board Installations <i>Ryan Gerds, APR, CPRC, FPRA State President</i></p>
Sept 21	<p>Monthly Program: The Impact of Philanthropic Involvement <i>Donna Cress, Signature Brands</i></p>
Oct 13	<p>Friday the 13th Membership Mixer – Where it's only bad luck if you don't renew your FPRA membership</p>
Oct 19	<p>Monthly Program + Bosses Day Celebration: Rebranding a Team <i>Marco LaNave, Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp</i></p>
Nov 6-9	<p>Student Shadow Day</p>
Nov 14	<p>PR Masters (for members with 10+ years of experience) <i>Home of Kathy Giery, APR, CPRC</i></p>
Nov 16	<p>Monthly Program: Online Reputation Management <i>John David, David PR Group</i></p>
Dec 13	<p>Margaritas & Mistletoe Holiday Party</p>
Dec 18	<p>Community Service event: United Way of North Central Florida's United for the Holidays Gift Wrapping</p>
Jan 18	<p>Monthly Program: GNV United – Communications Panel on the Richard Spencer Visit <i>Ben Tobias, Gainesville Police Department; Margot Winick, UF Communications; Melissa Lutz Blouin, UF Health Communications</i></p>
Jan 23	<p>Pop Up PR at Blackadder Brewing Company</p>

Feb 15	Monthly Program: Storytelling in the Business World <i>Taylor Williams, Guts & Glory GNV</i>
Feb 28	Quiz for a Cause trivia night
March 7	Community Service event: Weekend Hunger Backpack Program
March 15	Monthly Program: Mobile & Content Marketing <i>Kenneth Cossin, Full Sail University</i>
Apr 19	Monthly Program: How to Craft a Winning Public Affairs Campaign <i>Drew Piers, Sachs Media Group</i>
May 17	Monthly Program + American Advertising Federation Joint Luncheon: Building Your Brand <i>John Rivers, 4 Rivers Smokehouse</i>
May 23	Brews & Board Development Leadership Mixer
June 14	New Member Meetup
June 21	Monthly Program: Blending PR & Marketing: Easy as Pie <i>Freddie Wehbe, Former Gator Dominos Franchise Owner</i>
June 22	Professional Development Seminar
July 19	Monthly Program + FREE member headshots: Rebranding the City of Gainesville <i>Chad Paris, ParisLeaf</i>



2018 Quiz for Cause
Proceeds benefiting educational scholarships



Student Shadow Day



Pumpkin Carving at our Friday the 13th Membership Mixer

MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS



FPRA Gainesville relies heavily on electronic communications to reach its members, and this year's efforts were spearheaded by our Director of Electronic Communications, Leah Harms. With so much going on in our chapter, Leah provides daily updates to our platforms to disburse information in a timely manner.

Our eNewsletter is sent to our entire membership every other Monday. In the eNewsletter, we share information and links to our upcoming monthly programs and events, committee information, messages from the president and messages from State. We also share congratulations to our newly accredited or certified members. We've made significant changes to the layout of the eNewsletter this year to engage our members more. We've experimented with A/B testing on our subject lines to gauge the impact on engagement and moved our weekly eNewsletter to biweekly, based on feedback from our membership. Check out our most recent eNewsletter [here](#).

We have a variety of social media platforms we share information on. The majority of our chapter engagement occurs on [our Facebook page](#), as we try to post 2-3 times per week. On Facebook, we create events on our page for all of our chapter's happenings and share photos from these events in real time. We also utilize [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). For these platforms we typically share information we put on Facebook, in abbreviated form. For Twitter, we try to use unique hashtags (e.g. #FPRAGNV) and share short snippets of what we have going on. For Instagram, we obviously



partake in a lot of photo sharing and editing. We also utilize Canva to help us create unique graphics for use on social media.

We also run a [WordPress website](#) which houses information about all of our events, as well as recaps on our monthly programs and other notable events. It's meant to be a resource for our members, includes contact information for our board, jobs available in our market and State resources. We work on keeping our message consistent across all platforms and use this site to house the majority of our information.

We once again instituted our “board buddies” system where board members are assigned a group of members that they are tasked with reaching out to prior to upcoming events.

And certainly, the best method of communication with our membership is in person at our monthly luncheon programs where we spend the first 15 minutes of each meeting sharing pertinent and timely announcements.



EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS



BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Local video production company Two-Head Video was presented with a Florida Public Relations Association Golden Image Award at the association's annual banquet and state conference held in Orlando. The company received the award in the digital tools category for its Sea Turtle License Plate video campaign.
- The Gainesville Chapter of The Florida Public Relations Association recently installed the following 14 members to its board: Allison Downey, of Exactech Inc., president; Erin Morton, of RTI Surgical Inc., immediate past president; Lindsey Robertson, of RTI Surgical Inc., president-elect; Joey Mazzaferro, of UF's College of Design, Construction and Planning, vice president; Sarah Coulson, of CPAmerica International, treasurer; MaryBeth Head, of Two-Head Video Inc., secretary; Diane Choate, of MAPEI Corporation; director of accreditation and certification; Patricia Vernon, of Haven Hospice; director of communications; Amy Azoulay, of United Way of North Central Florida, director of community relations; Joey Martinez, of Haven Hospice; director of educational services; Leah Harms, of University of Florida Communications, director of electronic media; Marbella Miller, of Exactech Inc., Image Awards director; Colleen Raccioppi, of Exactech Inc., director of professional development; and Jon Thomas, of Forest Meadows Funeral Home & Cemeteries, director of programs.

**Gainesville Sun
Alachua County
Daily 45,660
August 28, 2017
Value: \$535.50**

Spearheaded by our Director of Communications Patricia Vernon, we had another fantastic year in the realm of external communications. For several years and through our relationship with the Business Report of North Central Florida, FPRA Gainesville provides monthly columns for publication in the Business Report on a variety of topics. This year's columns included articles on what was learned at our monthly programs, a story on Awards season featuring our Image Awards program and much more. Check them all out [here](#). The columns were featured in the Business Report's print and online publication and shared through our Facebook page.

In August, a press release was distributed announcing our new Board of Directors which was covered in The Gainesville Sun. Throughout the year, Patricia sent calendar listings into local media outlets announcing some of our larger upcoming events.

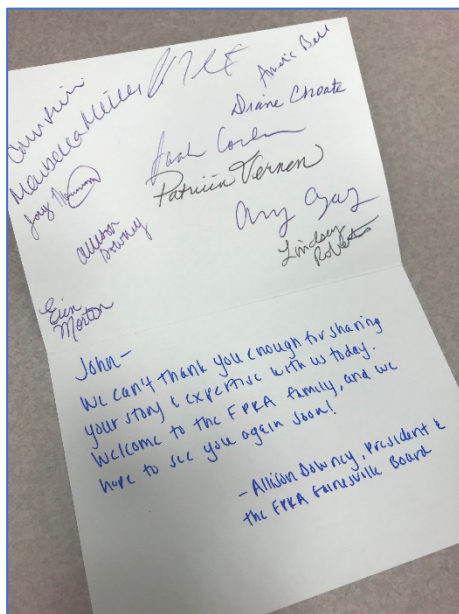
The screenshot shows the Business Report website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like ABOUT, NEWS, ADVICE, TECH, PROFILES, MARKETING, REAL ESTATE, SUBSCRIBE, CALENDAR, and CONTACT. Below this is a search bar with the text "Search results for 'patricia vernon'". The search results are displayed in a grid format. The first result is titled "Community Needs Come First in Considering PR Campaign" and features a photo of a group of people. The second result is titled "Communication Key to Leading Through Crisis" and features a photo of a person speaking. The third result is titled "Is Your Company Red-Carpet Ready? Using award season to market your company" and features a photo of an Oscar statue. Each result includes a brief description and a date.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Thanks to our awesome Programs Director, Jon Thomas, we offered 10 fantastic professional development programs to members and non-members alike this year. Post-luncheon survey results were overwhelmingly positive, and we attracted more non-members to our programs than ever before. All guest speakers were given an FPRA Tervis tumbler and thank you note signed by our board.

SEPT	Monthly Program: The Impact of Philanthropic Involvement <i>Donna Cress, Signature Brands</i>
OCT	Monthly Program + Bosses Day Celebration: Rebranding a Team <i>Marco LaNave, Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp</i>
NOV	Monthly Program + American Advertising Federation Joint Luncheon: Online Reputation Management <i>John David, David PR Group</i>
JAN	Monthly Program: GNV United – Communications Panel on the Richard Spencer Visit <i>Ben Tobias, Gainesville Police Department; Margot Winick, UF Communications; Melissa Lutz Blouin, UF Health Communications</i>
FEB	Monthly Program: Storytelling in the Business World <i>Taylor Williams, Guts & Glory GNV</i>
MAR	Monthly Program: Mobile & Content Marketing <i>Kenneth Cossin, Full Sail University</i>
APR	Monthly Program: How to Craft a Winning Public Affairs Campaign <i>Drew Piers, Sachs Media Group</i>
MAY	Monthly Program + American Advertising Federation Joint Luncheon: Building Your Brand <i>John Rivers, 4 Rivers Smokehouse</i>
JUNE	Monthly Program: Blending PR & Marketing: Easy as Pie <i>Freddie Wehbe, Former Gator Dominos Franchise Owner</i>
JULY	Monthly Program + FREE member headshots: Rebranding the City of Gainesville <i>Chad Paris, ParisLeaf</i>



FPRA Gainesville

September Monthly Program Survey


What did you think?

We hope you enjoyed today's program. Thanks for joining us, and big thanks to our speaker, Donna Cress, from Signature Brands!


Let us know what you thought and share ideas for future program topics and presenters.

Check out our [Facebook page](#) for photos!


[Take our quick survey!](#)




Facebook




Twitter



Website



Instagram



Email

In January, we introduced the [Chomp and Learn Luncheon Bundle](#) which allowed our members to prepay for our next eight regularly scheduled monthly programs (January through August) in one bulk payment. We received feedback from our members that it's sometimes difficult and tedious to expense their luncheons each month when their employers cover the cost. This program allowed them to pay a one-time price of \$126 with the option to transfer their luncheon ticket to another individual if they are unable to attend a luncheon between January and August.

At the end of June, we'll host FPRA Gainesville's 2018 Professional Development Seminar led by our Director of Professional Development, Colleen Raccioppi, APR. The theme is *Better Together: Balancing PR and Marketing*, and the agenda will focus on one of the PR trends to watch in 2018: communication crossover. Eight engaging speakers will present on topics such as Storytelling and the Science of Social Change, Compelling PR Writing and Email Marketing. The event also will feature a lunchtime panel covering advertising, behaviors and content in the rapidly changing social media landscape.

FPRA Gainesville's 2018
Professional Development Seminar

better
TOGETHER
balancing marketing and public relations

With approximately four weeks to go before the event, the number of registered attendees is already equal to the number of attendees at this event last year. So far, we have sourced sponsorships to provide

door prizes and branded notepads for the attendees, reduced catering expenses by \$2.50/person and secured the venue and the parking for free. It's going to be a great event!



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT




Thanks to our very committed and diligent treasurer, Sarah Coulson, I am confident in saying that our finances are in the best order they have been in years.

In August we held a financial audit with our outgoing president, incoming president, incoming president-elect and incoming treasurer. At the meeting, we began the process of closing out our 2016-2017 budget and discussed our financial needs for the coming year.

We established a very conservative budget at the beginning of our board term. Monthly cover sheets were reviewed and approved at each month's Board of Directors meeting to ensure that we were on track and within our anticipated income and expenses. Every board member is held responsible for their own respective budget.

Finally, we made the decision to move our chapter's bank account and CD. After careful review of our chapter's finances, we found that we were incurring fees on our account that other banks wouldn't necessarily charge. We elected to take our accounts to the Florida Credit Union who offer competitive rates on their CDs and no monthly fees on their checking account.

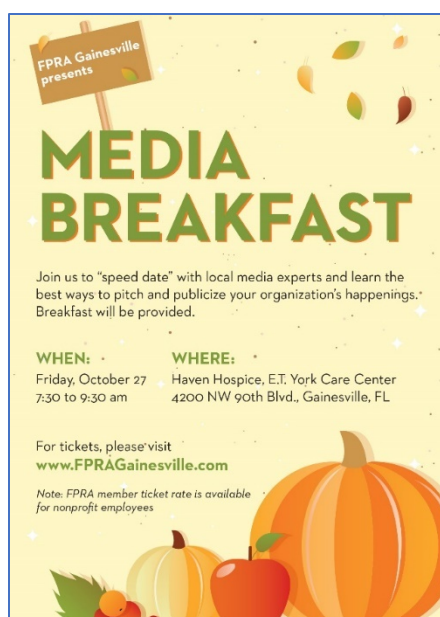
 FPRA Gainesville Chapter April 1-30, 2018 Florida Credit Union Account Summary									
	Balances	Deposits/ Credits	Withdrawal s/ Debits	Budget Line Item					
4/25/18 - 50th Anniversary Celebration		\$1,147.15		Image Awards Income - Image Program					
4/19/18 - April Program		\$404.83		Programs Income - Chapter Luncheons					
4/3/18 - CPRC Pins - FPRA State (ck# 1004)			\$33.12	Accreditation Expenses - Pins					
4/12/18 - Judges Awards - Marbella Miller (ck# 1005)			\$100.88	Educational Services Expenses - Fundraiser Event Miscellaneous Expenses					
4/12/18 - State Board Meeting Lodging - Lindsey Robertson (ck# 1006)			\$123.72	President-Elect Expenses - State Board Meetings: Lodging					
4/19/18 - April Program - Sweetwater Branch Inn (ck# 1007)			\$425.00	Programs Expenses - Chapter Luncheons					
4/25/18 - 50th Anniversary Celebration - Sweetwater Branch Inn/Stellar, LLC (ck# 1008)			\$1,509.40	Image Awards Expenses - Image Program					
TOTAL		\$1,551.98	\$2,192.12						
Ending Balance (in checking)	\$5,986.23								
Outstanding Income (Invoiced & Awaiting Payment)									
NA									
CD & Cash									
CD (matures 3/12/20 @ 1.73%)	\$3,688.67								
Cash on Hand	\$30.00								
	\$3,718.67								
GRAND TOTAL FOR GAINESVILLE CHAPTER	\$9,704.90								
2017 - 2018 Income vs. Expenses									
		YTD	Budgeted	Difference					
Income		\$10,192.54	\$19,590.00	-\$9,397.46					
Expenses		\$5,440.20	\$19,582.80	\$14,142.60					
TOTAL		\$4,752.34	\$7.20						

COMMUNITY SERVICE



Our chapter has always put a strong emphasis on our community relations efforts, not only because many of our members work with not-for-profit organizations, but because we strongly believe in serving the community who serves us. Led by our Director of Community Relations, Amy Azoulay, we had lots of opportunities to give back to those in need this year.

On October 27, we hosted our annual Media Breakfast. This event is designed to give local not-for-profit professionals the opportunity to meet with representatives from local TV, radio, newspaper and magazine outlets and learn more about how to share the positive things their organizations do for our community. The event featured representatives from five local media outlets and was set up in a “speed dating” style, ensuring that all attendees had ample time to speak with each media representative. The event was held at a local not-for-profit organization, and the room was provided to us free of charge. Attendees who work for not-for-profit organizations were invited to register for the event at our discounted, member rate. The event was also featured on the Business in Greater Gainesville’s Facebook page.





In December, we partnered with United Way of North Central Florida's United for the Holidays program to pack bags of toys for needy children in the area. The FPRA team packed bags of toys to be opened on Christmas morning by children attending local not-for-profit organizations. Each child received a large bag filled with at least six toys, depending on their age. The toys were distributed to local organizations such as Boys & Girls Club of Alachua County and Girls Place.

On March 7, the FPRA Gainesville team volunteered with Catholic Charities to pack backpacks for their Weekend Hunger Backpack Program. One in five children currently living in Alachua County is food insecure. More than 140 backpacks were packed for local schoolchildren and their siblings. Each bag is filled with food for the kids to eat over the weekend. Seventeen schools in Alachua County receive backpacks through the Weekend Hunger Backpack Program, and FPRA Gainesville was proud to be a part of this fantastic cause.

