

# BLUESTONE COMMUNICATIONS

The Student-Run Public Relations Firm at JMU

## MEET GEORGINA: OUR SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Georgina is a member of the Harrisonburg Little League account team and the Bridgewater Retirement Community account team. She was voted as our spotlight employee for April by her fellow employees because of her commitment to her team, her dedication to produce deliverables and her readiness to take on new projects. Learn more about her achievement on page 4.



## p.5 A LETTER FROM THE GRADUATING FOUNDERS

Among the seniors preparing to leave JMU and Bluestone Communications are our two remaining founding members. Read their reflection on the past two years of helping the firm grow.



## p.6 SENIOR SUMMARY

Graduation is almost upon us and Bluestone Communications will be saying goodbye to 14 of its employees. Learn about our seniors' favorite dining locations on campus, various majors/minors and post-graduation plans.

## p.8 MEET JMU ALUM GWEN FOUTZ

Gwen Foutz is a SVP and Senior Partner, Managing Director at Methods+Mastery. Gwen graduated from JMU in 2004. While at JMU, she majored in Communication Studies with a concentration in PR and a minor in Marketing.



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# ACCOUNT UPDATES



## Matchbox Realty

Bluestone's Matchbox team ended the semester with a long list of successes. Firstly, over 30 graphics were created for the client's social media pages, and t-shirt designs were submitted for publicly and privately distributed client clothing. Two strategic plans were submitted for potential upcoming events, including Yoga on the Quad and involvement with Madipalooza. Additionally, Earth Day was a success, employing a Snapchat filter designed and created by the Bluestone team. Our showcase presentation was also a success to show others our hard work, and we are excited to welcome Matchbox back as a client again in the fall!



## Harrisonburg Little League Association

The HLLA account team has finished the semester with the release of the last newsletter. They have also finished updating the bulletin board at the HLLA clubhouse. Throughout the semester, they have worked on keeping up with social media and blog posts. Their last blog is now released and they have posted a recap of the Mud Run and Fun Day on Facebook. The team had a lot of fun working with the HLLA this semester!



## Bluestone Communications

The Bluestone account team has had a tremendous semester, full of big accomplishments. In April, they earned a Virginia PR award for our work with HLLA and became a nationally affiliated student-run firm after a lengthy application process. In addition, they put their special event planning skills to the test and hosted a successful End of the Year Showcase. Before the end of the semester, the team will complete media relations work for the Broward Partnership. In the fall, Bluestone will welcome 13 brand new employees into Bluestone Communications.

## Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services



JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

This semester, the IIHHS account team worked to help enhance and unify IIHHS' brand identity. After conducting thorough secondary research, the team developed a strategic plan to help in establishing a clearer connection between IIHHS and its subsequent programs. First, they created a public relations style guide for each department

to adopt into their internal and external communications. Then they created several drafts of social media posts and newsletter designs for IIHHS to use. They also conducted a focus group study to learn desired information from the Honors College, in which the team gained valuable results to aid IIHHS's future campaign.

# ACCOUNT UPDATES



BRIDGEWATER  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

*energy* FOR LIFE

## Special Projects

This semester, the Bridgewater Retirement Community account team worked predominantly on small projects. They created flyers for events, designed logos for BRC's Auxiliary program and even received a placement in the Daily News Record for BRC's Easter themed special event. Additionally they provided BRC with high quality photos of residents, volunteers and the thrift shop for future promotional materials.

The Bluestone account team worked on various projects for Broward Partnership this semester. We created a logo and designed promotional materials for the anniversary gala. We are also preparing to pitch the gala to Florida media as the event draws closer.

The Bluestone account team also continues to work with Eliza Stucker's personal training business. They are currently working on narrowing down her logo decision.

# BLUESTONE NEWS

## National Affiliation

Bluestone Communications demonstrated structure, connections and professionalism in the application to become nationally affiliated. Of the more than 100 student-run firms across the country, we are now among the elite to be nationally affiliated with PRSSA.



## PRSA Virginia PR Student Award for Community Impact

Fall semester and into spring semester, the Bluestone Communications account team promoted, planned and executed Harrisonburg Little League's First Pitch meeting. Our efforts earned us PRSA RVA Award for Community Impact!



# SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE: GEORGINA HANIGAN



**Year:** Senior  
**Hometown:** Fairfax, VA  
**Majors:** Communication Studies  
(concentration in public relations)  
**Minor:** Sports Communications

## What do you enjoy most about the field of public relations?

I like the diversity of public relations and the creativity involved in it. I've been able to work on a variety of projects and it feels like something new with every passing project. Public relations has helped me look at the world in a different way and has allowed me to look at campaigns run by major corporations and understand them. Public Relations tends to be viewed as a negative, but it is essential to get the word out about your company and create beneficial relationships with a variety of publics.

## What do you enjoy most about Bluestone Communications?

I enjoy the ability to work with a variety of clients and with such an incredible team. My team has been my favorite part of Bluestone because of how supportive they are and how we make sure that everyone is successful. They helped me when I needed inspiration and were great sounding boards. It has been a great learning experience in terms of collaborating as a team to achieve a common goal, which will be incredibly useful in jobs going forward.

## What skills of your own have you been able to strengthen throughout your time at Bluestone Communications?

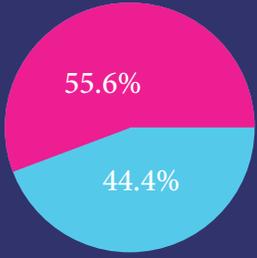
I have been able to strengthen my leadership skills, my collaborative skills and my graphic design skills. I have also been able to learn about how to work with a variety of clients and how to ensure that the working relationship is beneficial to both parties.

## What is your dream job?

My dream job is to run campaigns for a non-profit.

## Here are what others said about Georgina:

- “She has been the key to much of our success as an account team. All of our deliverables have gone through her. With several instances of people being tough on her, she pushed through to produce great work.”
- “Georgina quietly does a fantastic job with all of her tasks. She never complains when she has more work to do and is always first to offer assistance. Georgina has made an incredible impact as a new member.”
- “She does so much for the team, and is always willing to lend a hand.”



## Employee Poll: Are allergies getting to you?

Yes, I can't breathe

No, but my car wasn't yellow when I bought it

# A LETTER FROM THE GRADUATING FOUNDERS

*By Julia Smith, Founder and Assistant Director, Jenna Scull, Founder and Director*

Generally, progress is a slow process. But, as Dr. Fife pointed out at our end of year showcase, it hasn't applied to Bluestone Communications.

If you walked into a Bluestone meeting in the fall of 2017, you'd find six students and one professor sitting in a conference room writing the handbook, choosing a name and designing the logo. If you came to a meeting now, you'd find 20 students working in four account teams with a total of six clients. My, how things have changed.

We were fortunate enough to be two of those six founding members. We have both led the firm as assistant director and director throughout the past three

semesters. And, we have seen Bluestone Communications morph and grow into what it is today. As we prepare to graduate, we can't help but reflect on all the best experiences we have had over the years with Bluestone.

Bluestone was our springboard into the real world experience.

While keeping up with a full academic course load, we learned how to manage our time between different client accounts. We planned events, obtained media placements, designed logos and so much more.

In addition to our client work, we also strived to create the best environment for our fellow employees. Bluestone is full of the most passionate and hard-working students you can imagine. We always felt motivated to cultivate each student's different perspectives, ideas and talents.

Throughout each semester, we ran new employee orientation, planned firm bonding activities and organized workshops. Each student continuously set the bar high and pushed us to grow as teammates, budding public relations practitioners and as lifelong learners.

It has been extremely fulfilling to see an idea grow into an experience that has benefitted so many students and clients. We have become nationally affiliated, an impressive feat for such a young firm. If this is how far Bluestone Communications has come in two years, we can't wait to see what happens next. We're so sad to leave, but the firm is in great hands and we have faith in the future of Bluestone.

We are nationally affiliated. We are award-winning. We are Bluestone Communications.



# BLUESTONE COMMUNICATIONS SENIORS 2019

14

Graduating Seniors

2

Founding Members

3

Seniors spent 3 semesters with Bluestone

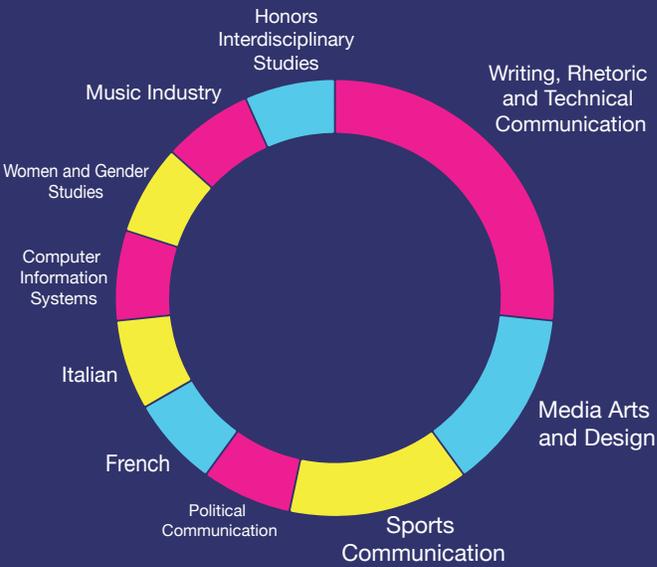
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Seniors spent 2 semesters with Bluestone

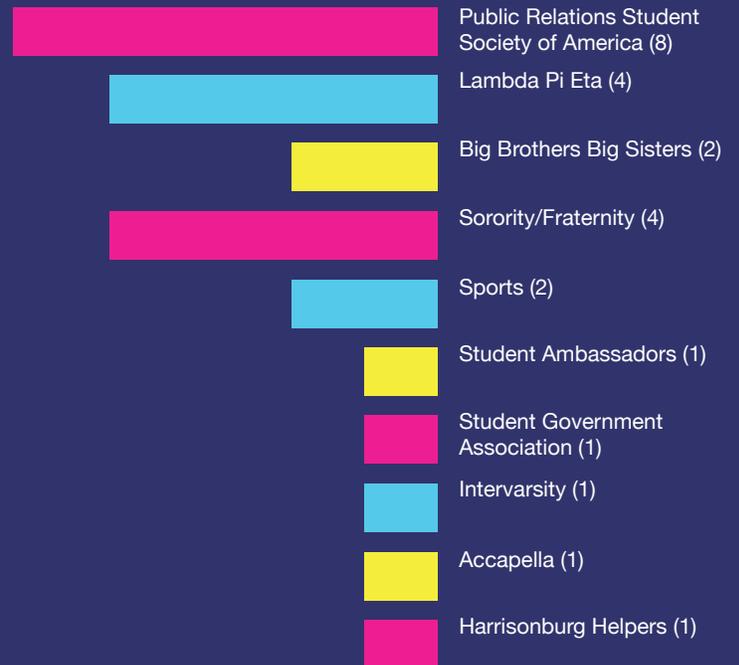
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Seniors spent 1 semester with Bluestone

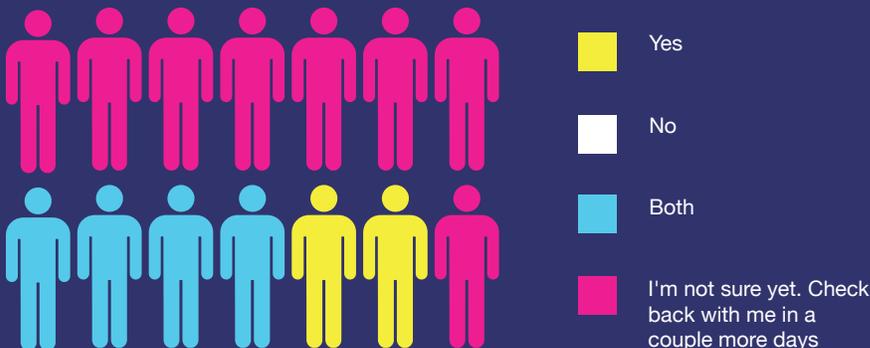
## AREAS OUR SENIORS STUDY



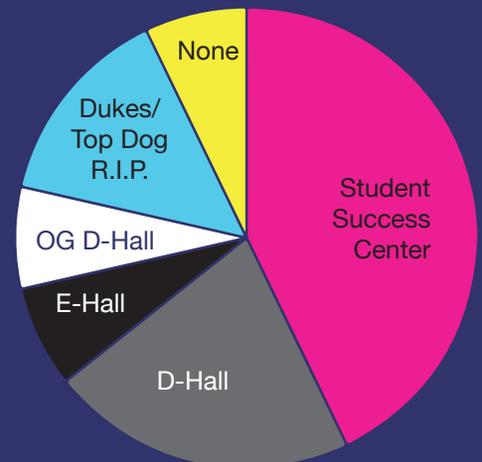
## CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS OUR SENIORS PARTICIPATE IN



## ARE OUR SENIORS EXCITED ABOUT GRADUATION?



## FAVORITE PLACE TO EAT ON CAMPUS



# BLUESTONE COMMUNICATIONS SENIORS 2019

## CITIES OUR SENIORS ARE WORKING IN POST-GRADUATION



## BLUESTONE TAKEAWAYS

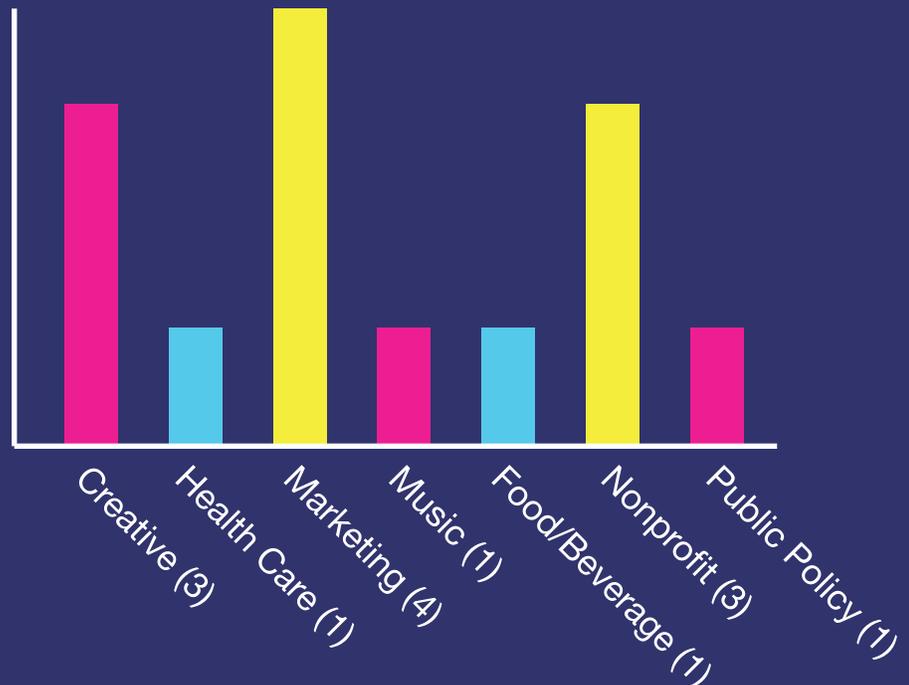
“Things may not go as planned, it’s important to be able to go with the flow and work with the unknown.”

“Understanding the value in working with motivated, driven and hard-working individuals toward a common goal.”

“Besides all the great things I’ve learned about PR, my biggest takeaway is that I know I can rely on my team for help during any kind of situation.”

“Learning how to work on an account team and how to interact with clients.”

## AREAS OUR SENIORS ARE INTERESTED IN POST-GRADUATION



# AFTER JMU...

## GWEN FOUTZ

**SVP and Senior Partner, Managing Director, Methods+Mastery  
JMU Class of 2004**

Gwen graduated from JMU in 2004. She studied Communication Studies with a concentration in PR and a minor in Marketing. While at JMU, she was an officer of Lambda Pi Eta and a member of IABC, the precursor to PRSSA.



### **What is your favorite memory from JMU?**

How do I choose just one? Sunny spring days on the Quad; meeting smart, interesting new people every semester; building new friendships; and the moment when I figured out what I wanted to do for a career

### **Could you describe your career path?**

I started as an intern at FleishmanHillard in the Interactive and Online Communications practice group three weeks after graduation. I focused on website content development, search engine marketing, and serving as a community manager for online ambassador programs. I was hired on full time after my internship. From there I developed expertise across the digital (web), mobile and social media marketing landscape supporting clients while helping to build new capabilities for the firm at the cutting edge of the massive change in communications fueled by technology. With the firm for almost 15 years, I have held every title from intern to Senior Partner to now Managing Director. I have lead accounts and projects focused on website and app design and builds, digital audits and social operations and governance planning,

social campaign activation, social media training, influencer marketing programs, social content strategy, social customer care, paid social, and social media measurement. I've gotten to work with companies large and small in nearly every industry you can think of from tech, consumer packaged goods, health/healthcare, retail, food and beverage, aerospace and defense, government and energy. Clients have included Google, YouTube, Twitter, AbbVie, PwC, Philips, Bosch Tools, Lenovo, AT&T, Gatorade, Lockheed Martin, US Department of Defense, Ross Dress for Less, and multiple P&G brands. I have been able to do multiple "secondment" assignments with FH throughout my tenure, including a stint in London in 2010 and a stint in San Francisco in 2015 embedded with a client in Silicon Valley.

### **How does your experience in a specialty firm compare to your previous experience with FleishmanHillard?**

It's familiar, but new all at the same time. We have a ton of freedom to tinker, test and incubate new ways of working, new capabilities and product offerings, new ways of staff development. We are seen as a "lab" of sorts within the firm where experimentation is not only encouraged, but expected.

### **What is your favorite part of your job?**

Helping clients develop breakthrough strategies and programs that truly drive impact for their business. And the people I work with are pretty great too.

### **What is your advice to students preparing to graduate?**

Say yes. Yes to new opportunities. Raise your hand early and often. Stay curious. Keep learning. Embrace change.

### **What is the number one skill that students entering the public relations field should have?**

Know your audience and always put them first. This requires a foundational knowledge of insights driven strategy development. Every decision you make in communications and marketing should be fueled by an insight derived from meaningful intelligence. Get comfortable with data and analytics. Learn the lingo. Understand the application. Nerd out on the numbers. They are your keys to unlock the next step.