

BLUESTONE COMMUNICATIONS

The Nationally Affiliated Student-Run Public Relations Firm at JMU



p.3 **MEET OUR TEAM**



p.4 **SMALL TOWN PR**

Caroline Rice explores the different stakes of public relations campaigns in her small hometown and in Harrisonburg.

p.5 **PRSSA 2019: ICONIC**

Amanda Christian attended the PRSSA International Conference in San Diego and came back with valuable insights from the event's impressive speakers.

p.6 **AFTER JMU...MEET HANNAH ROBINSON**

Hannah Robinson is a media relations coordinator for JMU's College of Arts and Letters and The College of Education. Hannah received her undergraduate degree in 2018. While at JMU, she majored in Communication Studies and minored in English.



p.2 Account Updates

p.3 Meet Our Team

p.4 Small Town PR

p.5 PRSSA: ICONic

p.6 After JMU

ACCOUNT UPDATES



1 for All

The 1 for All team is currently working on several strategies to raise awareness of the First Amendment on campus. The team produced a video featuring James Madison quizzing students on the quad about their First Amendment rights which can be found on their Instagram (@oneforalljmu). Their Instagram account is the primary source for information about the campaign, event details, and giveaways! They are also planning a special event on campus which will simulate what life would be like without First Amendment rights. Lastly, they are excited to see the progress of their campaign!



Bluestone Communications

The Bluestone Communications account team has taken on two tactic-based clients this semester: Project GROWS and Alpha Pitt Smokers. The team is creating social media audits and helping create digital marketing materials for each client. Continuing the strategic plan for the firm, they have disseminated recruitment messages to attract new employees for the Spring 2020 semester. The team is also bolstering alumni relationships as it is “generation two” of Bluestone Communications and everyone is so proud of past employees’ success! The team's goal is to continue to generate high-quality PR work through student development and experiential learning opportunities.



Matchbox Realty

The Matchbox team is currently working on a social media editorial calendar with the purpose of increasing awareness of the Matchbox brand across platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. The team is also excited to be working on an informational booklet that gives a detailed overview of the company, but more importantly highlights the differentiators between Matchbox and other realty companies in an effort to attract and inform a target audience. The Matchbox team is looking forward to sharing the final results of both projects in the near future!

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative



The Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative team just finished creating the new Operation Round Up logo that will be used on marketing materials for their campaign. Their updated brochure is almost complete and

will hopefully begin printing in the next few weeks. Lastly, they are working to create social media posts and complete their brand guidelines outlining the colors, fonts, logos, and messaging they will use.

MEET OUR TEAM



1 FOR ALL ACCOUNT TEAM



MATCHBOX ACCOUNT TEAM



SVEC ACCOUNT TEAM



BLUESTONE ACCOUNT TEAM

BLUESTONE BY THE NUMBERS

We are...

- 18** Undergraduate Students
- 1** Graduate Assistant
- 2** Faculty Advisors
- 1** Graphic Design Intern
- 7** Clients
- 11** Senior Students
- 7** Junior Students

Connect with Bluestone Communications

 @bluestonecommunications

 @bluestonecom

 bluestonecommva.com

THE STAKES OF PR CAMPAIGNS IN SMALL TOWNS VERSUS BIG CITIES

By Caroline Rice, Media and Issues Director, 1 for All



Unlike the majority of JMU's student population, I come from a very small town of less than 8,000 (as of 2018): Farmville, Virginia. Yes, like the Facebook game. Yes, there are a lot of farms in Farmville. Throughout my college career, I have heard so many people talking about how small Harrisonburg is. But for me, it's huge, and it presents many challenges for my studies.

In Farmville, being a small town in Southside Virginia and having cute little storefronts on Main Street is its personality. Nothing more, nothing less. Doing some PR work

during my summer vacations proved itself to be very different from PR in Harrisonburg. The small town personality leaves plenty of room for creative strategies and tactics because, odds are, whatever you come up with hasn't yet been attempted in the area. This paves the road for a low-risk and successful campaign. However, if carrying out a campaign was low-risk, how much was there to be learned? Where was the challenge?

Working in PR for Harrisonburg clients is more taxing. The city's personality here is enlaced with such a diverse culture that it's difficult to carry out one campaign that sufficiently reaches out to multiple target audiences.

Planning a successful campaign in a city like Harrisonburg requires an incredible amount of time, energy and dedication. This is especially true when event-planning is involved. However, when a campaign is successful, it is so much more rewarding, and it helps practitioners learn more valuable lessons for future application

I love Farmville. It's my home, but I'm not studying PR only to end up in another small town for the easy way out. I want to be challenged. If I'm not challenged, then how will I become the best PR practitioner that I can be?



PRSSA 2019: ICONIC

Lessons from the PRSSA International Conference

By Amanda Christian, Creative Director, 1 for All



The PRSSA conference began with an energetic and authentic keynote address from Kaye Sweetser, professor at San Diego State University. She began by saying **"You are a badass. You can achieve anything,"** and that was kind of the theme of the conference. This can be YOU. There will be a new generation of superstars, and that's us.

The slew of speakers scheduled for us were not only superstar PR practitioners, it also included speakers such as the legendary journalist, Bob Woodward, and the former President of Mexico, Vicente Fox.

"The most beneficial thing you can say is "I need your help." -Bob Woodward, Best-selling author and associate editor of The Washington Post.

This is an exciting time to get into public relations. The field is growing and these conferences remind me each and every year that the future is bright.

"Find your happiness and success by helping others." -Vicente Fox, former President of Mexico (2000-2006)

It's only going up from here— and next year we'll be heading to Nashville, Tennessee!

It was another whirlwind PRSSA international conference. This year, members of PRSSA traveled to the west coast to attend workshops, gain insight that will fuel our chapter and learn from the best in the industry. The conference was held in sunny San Diego from October 18-22.

This was the first year PRSSA gave the conference "international" status, as there are now four international student chapters. Reaching this distinction was one of many reasons why this conference was truly iconic.

"Mentorship is a peer sport. You never have to cut someone down to stand tall." -Kaye Sweetser, APR+M, Fellow PRSA, Professor at San Diego State University.





AFTER JMU...

HANNAH ROBINSON

Media Relations Coordinator for The College of Arts and Letters and The College of Education at JMU
JMU Class of 2018

Hannah graduated from JMU in 2018. She was a Communication Studies major with a concentration in cultural communication and an English minor.

Could you describe your career path?

My post-grad experience was pretty unique. I graduated on a Saturday and started work at 9 am the following Monday. I jumped headfirst into adulthood and haven't had a chance to look back since. Apart from taking the required SCOM 260 course as an undergraduate, I never really gave public relations much thought—now I coordinate the media relations for two of the largest colleges at JMU. Career paths have a funny way of choosing you. I think one of the most phenomenal things about Communication Studies is that no matter what you choose to concentrate in, you are fully equipped with the skills and confidence to land any job you go for.

Could you describe your role as a Media Relations Coordinator?

As the media relations coordinator for The College of Arts and Letters and The College of Education, I monitor media coverage and assist in the formation of a positive public narrative surrounding the university. I maintain working

relationships with the media and write and distribute press releases and other articles about JMU. I like to call myself the “matchmaker” between all the amazing research, programs and events in my client areas and local, regional and national reporters who would be interested in the stories.

What is your favorite part of your job?

My favorite part of my job is creating meaningful connections with faculty in my client areas. I have the pleasure of working with award-winning professors who research some of the world's most pressing topics. Nothing makes me happier than leaving a meeting feeling more inspired and motivated than when I walked in.

What is your advice to students preparing to graduate?

Don't compare yourself to your peers. Everyone's post-grad experience looks completely different and measuring your growth to someone else's can become destructive. Some people will get jobs before graduation and some won't hear back from their dream company for a year or

more. Don't let the journey to becoming who you are make you feel small or inadequate. The second thing I'd tell students preparing to graduate is have an open mind. Don't confine yourself to one type of job or one city or one person. Push yourself outside of your comfort zone—become deeply comfortable with the uncomfortable. Feel the fear and do it anyway. It truly is all about perspective. Life post-grad can either be scary and full of uncertainty or exciting and unwritten. The page is fresh and ready to be anything you make it. Lastly, don't put expectations of what you are supposed to be when. The moment you relinquish control, the rest has a beautiful way of falling into place.

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

People skills! Knowing how to gracefully manage different personalities and build meaningful relationships with people from different background than your own is essential. In my experience, it's all about intentional connections.