

# OCTOBER 2020

## BLUESTONE COMMUNICATIONS NEWSLETTER

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Count how many spooky emojis are included in this newsletter! Answers at the end. 🕷️



Check out p. 3 to see the results of our ["Which Bluestone Exec Member Are You?" BuzzFeed quiz](#).

By Amanda Christian

Wow, we have been busy this month! Recruitment season at Bluestone Communications is always a serious endeavor because we employ some of the top senior students at JMU—leading to a lot of turnover semester to semester.

This semester, in particular, we approached recruitment from many different angles to reach a wide variety of qualified students replete with diverse skill sets. Especially with the development of Bluestone Creative and the expansion of the firm to 29 students, our services and expertise has to evolve with the firm. Before the semester began, the executive team met several times to revamp and incorporate these new strategies into our long-term and short-term strategic planning. Here, I'll explain some of the various strategies employed, as well as the results of our efforts!

## Social Media

As young, savvy communicators, social media is a creative outlet for us to let our talents shine, demonstrate the environment and culture at Bluestone Communications, as well relay specific information pertinent to the recruitment process. Our Instagram, in particular, is new to us and we already had ideas about how we wanted to move forward with the platform. We wanted it to be fun and colorful, and to really tell the story of Bluestone. The account is engaging, approachable and also professional with carefully curated content.

Specifically, we used videos to capture our firm personality, engaging quizzes and story posts, and direct calls-to-action. Videos included a scroll through our website (including more about us and our employees), the unveiling of Bluestone Creative, a firm introduction video produced with the likeness of The Brady Bunch theme song and an alumni compilation describing the impact Bluestone had on their lives. We produced a BuzzFeed quiz that matched quiz-takers with a current executive team member and we designed fliers advertising the application period in a variety of formats. The key is to stay on brand and let your content do the storytelling for you.

## Word of Mouth

Employees are always the best and most credible spokespeople for your company. We equipped our employees with all of the application information ahead of time, gave them resources to share on their own personal accounts for firm contribution and encouraged them to seek out peers who may be a good fit for our team.

## Personalized Outreach

Similar to the systems strategy, personal outreach involves using our department faculty to recommend and connect students with the firm. Recommendations from faculty, as well as current employees, go a long way in getting applications and ensuring the talent we bring into the firm. Our faculty directors can send personalized emails to promising students which encourages their application and forms a relationship between high-achieving students and Bluestone Communications.

## Informational Sessions

Lastly, it's important to offer opportunities for people to ask questions and get to know the firm in a more direct way. We created a virtual informational session and asked students to register ahead of time. We developed some structure to the session by presenting information for the first half, and then opened it up for questions from the students. We had approximately twenty prospective students either attend or personally reach out with questions after the event. Our attendees ranged from freshmen to seniors and represented four different majors at JMU. We advertised the session through a variety of channels explained above.

## University & College Systems

We have a strong relationship with the College of Arts & Letters and with each respective department within Harrison Hall (SCOM, SMAD & WRTC), so why not use that to our advantage?

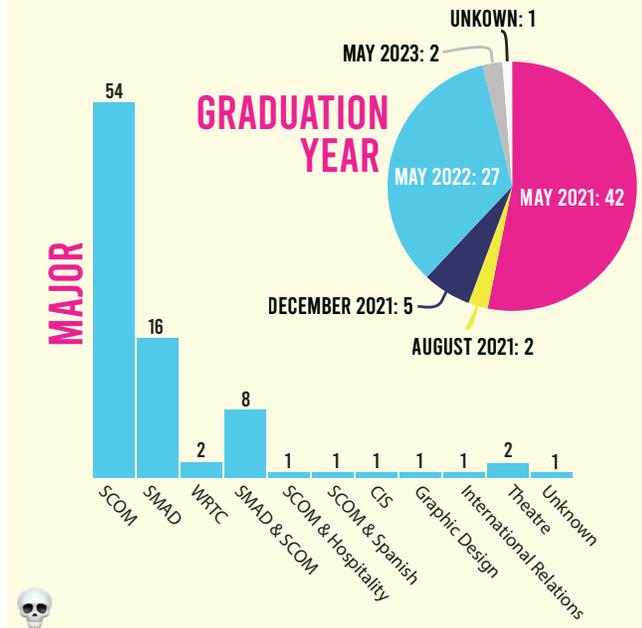
Executive members emailed each department with information and announcements regarding the application period for them to disperse among their students and faculty. We also utilized the JMU Bulk Email system to reach less traditional communication students, outside of the aforementioned majors. Using systems in place not only alleviates some of the work, it also tends to reach students outside of more limited, personal followings.

## RESULTS

79 Total Applications

21 Returning Applications

27 Creative Applications



Recruitment during the spring semester looks different because the circumstances are different. Typically, we graduate anywhere from 10 to 18 students, requiring a more robust effort to replenish the firm's numbers. We also offer an intern class for sophomores and juniors who haven't completed context courses in the major; therefore, we recruit in classes and through professors differently to reach a younger group of applicants. However, each semester's recruitment period is critical in its own right. The exposure and information dispersed through these efforts work to build a stronger reputation, form relationships with rising PR students and create more awareness and support for the firm's endeavors.

As a December 2020 graduate, this will be the last time I get to help recruit the next generation of Bluestone Communications' employees. During my time here, I have seen tremendous growth, and I can't wait to see the firm continue to grow and evolve in the coming years.

# TEAM UPDATES

## 1 FOR ALL/SCOM

We've just finished conducting focus groups for 1 For All and are now transcribing the sessions and distinguishing common themes. Once we've analyzed the data, we'll start on the fun part: Planning a campaign of our own! We've got a lot of ideas moving forward, including hosting a campus dialogue event, doing some media outreach and social media coverage. Over the next few weeks our creativity will really have its moment to shine!

- Taylor DeRossett

## RESTORATIVE MASSAGE THERAPY/EARTH DAY EVERY DAY

Recently, our team has been involved with lots of design and editorial work for our clients. For Restorative Massage Therapy, we wrote a press release for the company's 4th anniversary and began pitching it to local media. We have also been posting to the company's Facebook page, as well as designing a coupon and banner for the 4th anniversary event. Lastly, we've been working on revamping RMT's website. For Earth Day Every Day, we wrote a press release about their "One Minute for Earth" campaign and began pitching it to local media, developed recruitment emails for speakers and created social media posts to promote the organization.

- Madison Farabaugh

## HLLA/SVEC

We are very focused on media relations for the HLLA account team. We completed two interviews and are putting the finishing touches on a SVEC feature story. We are also working to gain media coverage for the upcoming HLLA Bat-A-Thon event. Our creative team members have been hard at work producing tons of family friendly graphics for us to share on HLLA's social media.

- Stefany Fuentes

## CREATIVE TEAM

The Creative Team has been incredibly productive this month! From developing our brand identity as Bluestone Creative, with our very own logo, to designing a plethora of recruitment deliverables, including graphics, engaging videos of our employees and alumni and so much more. We are beyond excited to see how our team members flourish with next month's projects!

- Emma Sisk



## WORKSHOP RECAP

By Alia Elias

Student-run agencies like Bluestone Communications offer students first-hand experience before they enter the workforce, and they can be even more valuable than an internship because students get to touch a little bit of everything. Luckily at Bluestone, we have an amazing professional adviser, Kendra Kojcsich, to help guide us. At our firm meeting on October 21, Kendra led a workshop about how to position Bluestone on resumes and how to position yourself when searching for jobs! The bulk of the workshop's content was about resumes; specifically, what agencies are looking for and what to highlight from Bluestone. She summed it up into three main tips:

### Don't be scared to show an online presence.

Whether it be on LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, etc., employers want to get to know you. It may make you stand out if there is a particular passion or part of your life you want to showcase. Personality is key— just remember to keep it appropriate!

### Attention to detail is important.

When writing emails and sending cover letters, resumes and work samples to employers, it is important to make sure everything is accurate and spell-checked. Materials that are addressed to the wrong employer and have misspelled words are commonly thrown out at a first glance.

### Tread lightly with your layout.

It is certainly fine to include color and personality to a resume or professional document—it may even be preferred, but make sure it still looks clean and sophisticated. Your resume should reflect you. Be concise when you can and consider using buzzwords agency folks use.

Additionally, Kendra gave two key ways to look at how to position yourself when searching for a job: intangible skills and outreach. Most employers can teach you entry-level skills, especially if an agency has a particular way of doing something. It's more about displaying intangible skills (e.g., critical thinking, curiosity, drive) in interviews rather than on-paper experience.

She also encouraged us to take the initiative and not feel uncomfortable when building our network. Kendra recommends that JMU students search on LinkedIn, identify top agencies, figure out which alumni work there or have connections there and reach out. More often than not, people are more than happy to help. Finally, Kendra ended the informative workshop with some wise words: agency life is not for everyone! It's chaotic and stressful yet rewarding, and Bluestone helps to prepare us to navigate it more successfully.

We want leaders at Bluestone Communications! While this BuzzFeed quiz was created as a fun way to engage with our co-workers and audience on social media, it also matches quiz-takers to current leaders in the firm. Learning that you could be the next Amanda, Connor, Sophia, Emma, Stefany, Madison or Taylor is motivating and fosters the mentorship mentality here at Bluestone. [Take the quiz today to find out Which Bluestone Exec Member You Are!](#)

## FIRM RESULTS:



AMANDA: 3



CONNOR: 8



SOPHIA: 8



EMMA: 5



STEPHANY: 2



MADISON: 3



TAYLOR: 0

Even Taylor didn't get herself—she got Stefany who got Connor...

## BLUESTONE'S SPOOKTACULAR COSTUME PARTY

Our motto is work hard, play hard here at Bluestone. To celebrate Halloween and the hard work of our teams, we had a Zoom costume party with some fun games and activities! First, we revealed our costumes one at a time by starting with our video disabled. If our work is any indication of how creative we are, our costumes did not disappoint. We had a hot dog, a ghost, a Dunkin Donuts employee, Wednesday Adams and more! Post Malone even made an appearance. Check out our costume contest winners!



Sophia Ferguson



Amanda Christian



Jamison Crenshaw

### 1ST PLACE

Jessica Klonaris  
a.k.a Violet Beauregarde



### 2ND PLACE

Liv Hart,  
Miss Communication



### 3RD PLACE

Buddy the Elf —  
oh wait, Hunter Shaw!



We also participated in a This or That game where we learned that we have a controversial(?) love for apple cider over pumpkin-spice lattes and candy corn over candy apples. Lastly, we had employees submit dressed-up baby photos for us to guess the Bluestonian. We were some CUTE kids. Check out some of our favorites!

To see more of our costumes, go find the TikTok on our [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!** 🎃

By Logan Thompson

You just accomplished something great. Maybe it's landing a new job or getting an A on that paper you put so much time into, but for some reason you feel you don't deserve it.

If you've ever felt this way, you might be struggling with something called imposter syndrome. Imposter syndrome is defined as "the persistent inability to believe that one's success is deserved or has been legitimately achieved as a result of one's own efforts or skills."

Imposter syndrome stems from anxiety and it can completely take over the way you think about yourself—causing you to diminish your successes. But that's not true! It's not just luck that you've accomplished everything you have, it's due to your own hard work, knowledge, and commitment. It's time to stop feeling like a fraud.

Here are **5 affirmations** to help you combat imposter syndrome and feel confident in who you are:

**1. "I deserve this."**

All too often we find ourselves in situations where we can't seem to convince ourselves that we are worthy of what we have. Allow yourself to acknowledge that out of all the people who could've gotten it, you were the one who did. Good things come your way because you deserve them.

**2. "My voice and my ideas are completely unique. I add something to this situation."**

Sometimes it can be hard to recognize our own ideas as interesting or worthy of saying out loud, but 9 times out of 10, your ideas are probably pretty great. It's easy to tell ourselves that peers or coworkers have better ideas than we do, and maybe they do have some great ideas, but yours are just as worthy of being heard.

**3. "I am proud of what I have accomplished and what I will accomplish in the future."**

This one seems simple, but it's an amazing confidence boost. Acknowledging that your accomplishments are something to be proud of helps you to realize that you can continue to accomplish more amazing things in the future.

Pro-tip: make a list of every amazing thing you've ever done (or at least as many as you can think of), no matter how big or small. You'll be surprised how many you can think of and you'll finish feeling confident and proud!

**4. "It's okay to be nervous."**

I'll be the first to admit that sometimes I shy away from opportunities simply because I'm nervous about the outcome. What if I don't get the job? What if I'm unqualified? These are all thoughts that come to mind far too often, and that's ok! In fact, it's normal. We all get nervous sometimes, but the important thing to remember is not to let the nerves steer you away from doing something you truly want to do. Feel the fear, acknowledge those feelings and then do it anyways!

**5. "I can't be perfect."**

Maybe you're a perfectionist. Maybe you're a little too hard on yourself. That's ok—a strong work ethic is something to be admired. But let's be real, we aren't perfect and we never will be. Start setting more realistic standards for yourself, and then you can break free of negative thoughts that are holding you back.

**Bottom line is:**

We all feel inferior sometimes, but don't let that nagging voice in your head tell you that you're not good enough to go after what you want. You are deserving of all the good things in your life. No more feeling like a fraud. Let go of that inner critic telling you you're undeserving of good things because you're not 100% perfect. Instead, when that voice pops into your head, welcome it and let it drive you to accomplish even more.



## ★ BLUESTONE ROCKSTARS ★

**DELANEY CROWE**



ROCKSTAR,  
SWEET,  
WELCOMING

**STEPHEN FOSS**



DEPENDABLE,  
HELPFUL,  
LEADER

**LOGAN THOMPSON**



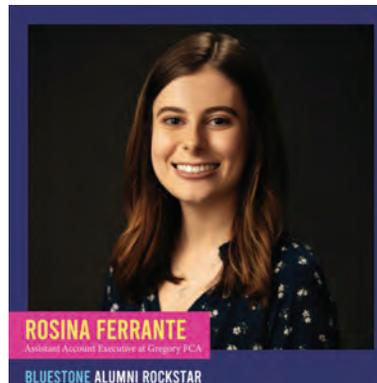
CREATIVE,  
EXCEPTIONAL,  
ASSET

**HELEN NGUYEN**



INITIATIVE,  
ABOVE &  
BEYOND

## ★ ALUMNI ROCKSTAR ★



Our alumni of the month is Rosina Ferrante. Rosina says that Bluestone prepared her for communicating and working with clients. As assistant account executive for Gregory FCA, she puts these skills to use every day. We are so thrilled to see you excel in your field, and happy to have you as one of our amazing alumni, Rosina!

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