



SUNSPRA

Sunshine State School
Public Relations Association



“Thursday Thoughts” – 1.19.17

Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC, SUNSPRA President

Whew! What a busy time it’s been! I’ve not been able to share with you since late November thanks to handing out SUNSPRA awards in Tampa, Christmas/Winter Break, a new superintendent and leadership team in my district, and multiple news events taking place with some of my schools. Nevertheless, I’m thrilled to share this latest issue of “Thursday Thoughts” with you, the first issue for 2017!

There is lots of action right now in public education, including pre-session meetings with Florida’s legislators, the upcoming Legislative season, FSA testing, and a new secretary of education for our country (not to mention a new President and entire cabinet). Hopefully, you won’t have to deal with much political “fallout” with the Inauguration season.

AWARDS time

We had five contenders for this year’s Outstanding Superintendent and Leading Light awards! Thanks to an esteemed panel of APR/CPRC judging professionals, our winners are:



Duval County Assistant Superintendent of Communications Mark Sherwood (center) accepts SUNSPRA’s 2016 Outstanding Superintendent Communicator Award for Dr. Nikolai Vitti (above) recently in Tampa. Standing with Sherwood are Blackboard’s Judd Aungst (left) and SUNSPRA President Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC.



Teresa Stoupas (center) receives the 2016 Margie Davidson "Leading Light" Award in Tampa from the Sunshine State School Public Relations Association. Also included with Stoupas are (l-r) Blackboard's Judd Aungst, Stoupas' husband Ben Baxley, Palm Beach County Schools' Communications Manager Kathy Burstein, and SUNSPRA President Kevin Christian, APR, CPRC.

We honored both recipients at FSBA's Joint Conference in Tampa Bay last month. Special thanks to Judson Aungst (pictured) and the folks at

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for returning as our exclusive awards sponsor. We are grateful to all those who entered this year's competitions. SUNSPRA also appreciates Greg Turchetta (Sarasota County Public Schools) for presenting twice on social media stories and successes. As well, Karen Hansen and EFP (Education Funding Partners) stepped up with financial support for SUNSPRA.

Now, get ready for the Medallion Awards, which will be handed out during FASA's Summer Conference in June. Already, SUNSPRA is confirmed to present two sessions. We're also working on a dedicated "communications" track to specifically benefit SUNSPRA members with professional development. Stay tuned...s

WELCOME

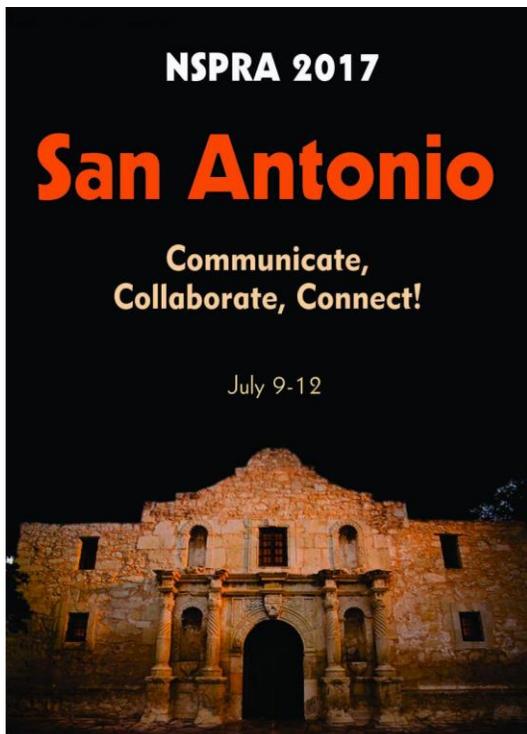
We've had great response to membership renewals. Our goal this year is to increase membership by 10 percent, which means six additional members. I would ask you to encourage your colleagues to join, others in your office, even your individual school principals that fully understand the value of great PR. Our second membership objective calls for three new districts or entities to join SUNSPRA. We already have FL DOE on board (thanks!).

Meantime, we say "welcome" the following new members:

- Lauren Bankert, communications coordinator, Clay County School District
- Scott Howat, chief communications officer, Orange County Public Schools
- Kathy Marsh, director of media relations, Orange County Public Schools
- Lauren Stillwell, director, communications, Lee County School District
- Melissa Mickey, coordinator, communications, Lee County School District
- Jason Still, supervisor, TV Production & Communications, Lee County School District

And we say "Welcome Back" to:

- Joe Landon, communications consultant, retired
- Dylan Thomas, director marketing and events, Orange County Public Schools
- Sherri Owens, communications officer, Lake County Schools
- Jason Wheeler, information/media specialist, Flagler County School District
- Laura Howard, Internet communication specialist, Lee County School District
- Mike Barber, director of communications, School District of Manatee County
- Kerry Padrick, assistant superintendent, St. Lucie Public Schools



NSPRA '17 – San Antonio

San Antonio Seminar Scholarship applications are due Feb. 1!

Please share this with your chapter members and encourage those who have never attended a Seminar or who have been unable to attend in recent years to submit their applications for scholarships. They may apply for all they are eligible for (separate applications are needed for each).

All Seminar Scholarships are administered by the NSPRA Foundation for the Advancement of Education. They include:

- Two [Foundation Seminar Scholarships](#) for a full registration plus a \$250 stipend for expenses;
- The [Armistead New Professional Seminar Scholarship](#) for a combined registration to the New Professionals Pre-Seminar Workshop and a full Seminar registration;
- The [Dawn K. McDowell Memorial Scholarship](#) for a full registration;
- The [Don Bagin Memorial Scholarship](#) for a full registration;
- The [Executive Board's Seminar Scholarship](#) for a full registration (Note: this Scholarship is also open to members who have not attended the Seminar in three years or more);
- The [Pat Jackson Seminar Scholarship](#) for a full registration (Note: this Scholarship is also open to members who have not attended the Seminar in three years or more);
- The [Joe Krumm Leaders Memorial Scholarship](#) for a full registration (Note: this Scholarship is also open to members who have not attended the Seminar in three years or more).

For more information about the Foundation and the eligibility requirements for each scholarship go to the [NSPRA Seminar/Foundation Scholarships](#) section of our website. The eligibility requirements vary for the scholarships, so be sure to read them carefully. **The deadline for all Seminar Scholarship applications is February 1, 2017.**

JUDGES WANTED

Each year, the Illinois chapter of NSPRA (INSPRA) holds Distinguished Service Awards to honor those in and beyond school communications whose work supports and promotes excellence in education. INSPRA would like help from fellow NSPRA chapter members in judging the DSA entries. If you are able to give about an hour of your time between February 27 and March 24, please sign up below by clicking the link. **NEW THIS YEAR:** We will be using the online judging platform called Reviewr. If you have questions, contact Gina Steinbrecher (steinbrecher@wego33.org). Thank you!

<https://goo.gl/forms/YoZWpJHuLD0cgCoe2>

LEGISLATIVE & ISSUES UPDATE

[Jamerson Elementary teacher's big surprise: \\$25,000](#)

Dad dressed appropriately - a sharp suit and matching tie. He helped set up the assembly in the cafeteria that morning, wondering who they would recognize.

[School may lose eligibility for breakfast program](#)

There's a lot of hunger at Crystal River Primary School. The problem is, there might not be enough.

[Flagler schools superintendent Jacob Oliva leaving after school year](#)

After 17 years with Flagler Schools, the last three as superintendent, Jacob Oliva has accepted a position with the state Department of Education and will leave his current job after the academic year ends on May 26.

[Student attendance waiver rules change after new Florida law](#)

Attendance waiver rules are changing for Okaloosa County schools as the district responds to a new Florida law.

Are you an NSPRA member? If not, joining NSPRA helps you AND SUNSPRA!

Special Offer for NSPRA Chapter Members

Join the National School Public Relations Association Now and Save \$100!

Chapter members, this incentive is for you!

Expand your PR knowledge and resource repertoire by joining NSPRA. If you join NSPRA now, we'll reduce the individual professional membership rate to \$175, a **\$100 savings** off regular membership dues. This discount is available only to chapter members who do not currently belong to NSPRA.

Reasons to Join NSPRA:

- Access national and relevant members-only insight from the best in the school PR business.
- Network with and tap the minds of top pros in the U.S. and Canada.
- Discounted — and even free — resources such as books, kits, and videos developed for school communicators.
- Access practical resources in the members-only section of our website.
- Reduced rates for the renowned NSPRA Seminar — the best professional development opportunity for school communicators.
- Special discounts for monthly PR Power Hour webinars on timely topics of interest to school communicators.
- Weekly and monthly newsletters that provide concise solutions you can use immediately.
- Instant counseling from NSPRA veterans when you run into those sticky situations that plague your system.
- Discounts on NSPRA's communication audits.

Look to NSPRA Solutions for:

- Advocacy for education and the need for school PR
- Marketing and branding in today's competitive climate
- Building community support through engagement
- Counseling on controversial issues to receive confidential second opinions for possible solutions
- Social media insight and assistance
- Benchmarking guidelines for developing your program
- Visibility for your program through NSPRA awards and recognition programs
- Dealing with organized community opposition
- Winning finance and bond elections
- Developing your staff into PR ambassadors
- Increasing parent support
- Promoting accountability
- and more!



Julie Thannum, APR
NSPRA President

Learn more about NSPRA by visiting www.nspira.org.

NSPRA
The leader in school communication™

What Members Say About NSPRA Resources:

"Even though I get tons of email ***I always read what NSPRA sends*** because it is ***useful for me to be better at my job*** and help others in PR. Thank you!"

"Great exposure to other school district PR programs so you can ***borrow from the best.***"

"Through NSPRA the ***toughest task is made easy.***"

"The professional help and support, and the excellent products, more than offset the cost of membership. ***It's a great value!***"

"***NSPRA never wastes my time.*** E-newsletters give me choices, and I can always find something useful in each edition."

This new member discount is available to current chapter members until **May 15, 2017**, so take advantage of it now. Find how you can take your career to the next level as an NSPRA member!

Yes, please sign me up for an NSPRA individual professional membership for \$175 for my first year!

Your name: _____

Your title: _____

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State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ - _____

Email address: _____

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Questions?
Email info@nspira.org or **call** 301-519-0496

Learn about NSPRA membership or subscription options online at www.nspira.org/members.

Membership fees cover one-year of membership from the day you join. After the first year, membership rates will return to the regular membership rate of \$275 for each subsequent year's membership renewal. This discount does not apply to existing NSPRA members. NSPRA professional members are eligible to vote and run for office, and are eligible for the accreditation process, and receive all materials and benefits. Other membership or subscription options are available. For more information, visit www.nspira.org/members.

Until next time, keep shining the light on school PR in Florida!

Kevin

Kevin Christian, [APR](#), [CPRC](#)

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