

**The Sunshine State Public Relations  
Association Presents  
The 2008 Best of Show**

This annual Sunshine Medallion Award's recognition event recognizes excellence in Education Communications and Public Relations for public relations tools, and programs submitted by schools and district communications professionals throughout Florida.

2008 is the second year for *Best of Show*, entries deemed to be the "best of the best" by judges, for their originality, effectiveness in communication, and positive impact on their community and schools.

This year's winners include:

**Collier County, for their "Open Mic" TV Show:  
Joe Landon**

**Category:** Broadcast TV Medium District

**Copy:** "Collier County for "Open Mic". A demoralized district with both staff and community upset over multiple issues, The Communications team looked for a way to calm a PR nightmare. Partnering with Naples Daily News to create a live monthly half-hour televised call-in show with the superintendent taking unscreened calls and questions from viewers. Advertised at no charge in the Naples Daily News. It's working as there are fewer e-mail questions and fewer nasty letters to the editor.

**For more information:** [LandonJo@collier.k12.fl.us](mailto:LandonJo@collier.k12.fl.us)

**Pinellas County, for their Referendum Renewal Campaign:  
Andrea Zahn**

**Category:** Overall Image Campaign Large District

**Copy:** Pinellas County for referendum campaign, "Education Matters". In September 2007, Pinellas conducted a poll showing that 66% favored renewing of the millage rate to recruit and retain good teachers. The result was to launch a PR campaign and put the referendum on the January Presidential Primary ballot. It passed with 70% voter approval. Teachers, the 3rd or 4th largest voter block in any community, were also targeted. "You do the math!" Teachers can almost single-handedly pass (or defeat) referendums. PR's most powerful partner.

**For more information:** [zahna@pcsb.org](mailto:zahna@pcsb.org)

**Polk County, for their Video PSA's, "I Teach":  
Leah Lauderdale**

**Category:** Promotional Video Large District

**Copy:** Polk County's "I Teach". Can PSA's work to build support for teachers? Depends on the process you use to put them together, how you distribute them once you've got them, and how creative and entertaining they are! Polk County involved local businesses, agencies and former Teachers of the Year to develop and broadcast six 30-second spots. Bright House Cable broadcast the PSA's 2,016 times to 100,000 households. Comcast aired the spots 300 times, theaters showed the PSA's before movies and posters were created for all 150 schools. Results? 83% of surveyed district employees noticed more appreciation for teachers. Great process, great documented results.

**For more information:** leah.lauderdale@polk-fl.net

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Joe Landon (left), Leah Lauderdale (middle left),  
Dennis Duda (middle right) Principal of Lakewood High School,  
Chancellor Haithcock (right) from the Department of Education.