



**PRSA**

Buffalo Niagara Chapter

Twenty-Fifth Annual Excalibur Awards  
Honoring excellence in public relations

Call for Entries 2014

## **The EXCALIBUR tradition**

Excalibur, the legendary sword of King Arthur, is a symbol of the fortitude of the public relations profession in western New York. In order to celebrate and commemorate the triumphs of the programs, projects and people that strengthen our profession, the Buffalo Niagara Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) created the Excalibur Awards competition in 1989, and it has become an annual tradition. The awards recognize public relations programming, projects and professionals for outstanding achievement in the practice and support of public relations in western New York during the previous calendar year. The competition is open to both PRSA members and non-members. Winners will be honored at this year's awards dinner on Wednesday, June 25, 2014.

## **Division One – Programs and Projects**

### ***Judging***

This year, a panel of public relations professionals from the PRSA Capital Region NY chapter will review the entries and select winners. Entries will not be considered for an award unless they meet a minimum numerical level of 22 points (out of 30), even if the entry is the only submission for a specific category.

Awards will be presented in as many as 36 categories to the highest scoring entries meeting the specified point requirements. A **GOLD AWARD** requires a minimum score of 28 points (out of 30); a **SILVER AWARD** requires a minimum score of 25 points (out of 30); and a **BRONZE AWARD** requires a minimum score of 22 points (out of 30). A **PLATINUM AWARD** will be presented to the entry chosen as “best of show” in each of the two divisions.

## ***Award Criteria***

All entries will be judged on their own merit, not in comparison to others. Work that took place during the 2013 calendar year is eligible for entry. Judges will consider effective use of budget allocations and evaluate each entry by the following criteria:

### ***1. Research and Planning***

Describe the research used to determine the scope of the problem or opportunity. Was the research carried out in response to a problem or to examine a potential problem? Was the research relevant to overall planning or audience identification? Did the research reflect a clear need? Was a process defined by which to gauge the program's success?

In general terms, what was the plan (what were the objectives)? Who were the target audiences? What was the overall strategy employed? What was the projected budget?

### ***2. Execution***

Show how the plan was implemented, materials were used, techniques utilized to win support, and how effectively resources were used. How were the plans executed? Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled? Were non-traditional public relations tactics employed?

If applicable, describe, based on budget and scope, the technical aspects of the project. What graphic or communications elements set it apart from others? What creative elements were used and how? Was the project consistent and/or appropriate for the state audience(s)?

### ***3. Results & Evaluation***

Show to what degree a program met its objectives and utilized its budget. How were results tied to the strategic objectives? What were the quantifiable outcomes? Were any results unexpected? What efforts were made to identify, analyze and quantify those results? (Note: media circulation figures are not acceptable as the only means of quantitative measurement.)

## ***Category Selection***

***Entries in the Division One A - Programs*** should focus on public relations strategies (crisis communications, special events, social media strategy, etc.) employed to achieve goals set in an overarching campaign. Strategies should include measurable objectives. Emphasis should be placed on how and why the strategy was chosen to achieve a goal or goals (research,) objectives undertaken to realize the strategy (execution) and its level of success (results & evaluation.)

***Entries in Division One B - Projects*** should focus on tactics (newsletter, press kit, speech, etc.) used to achieve measurable objectives in a public relations campaign. Emphasis should be placed on the how and why the tactic was chosen to reach or support a goal (research), how it was implemented (execution) and its level of success (results & evaluation.)

# Categories

## Division One A – Programs

### ***1 Community Relations***

Programs that seek to win the support or cooperation of, or that aim to improve relations with, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization(s) has an interest, need or opportunity.

### ***2 Institutional Programs***

Programs affecting an organization's stature, reputation or relations with its publics or key elements of its publics.

### ***3 Special Events and Observances***

Programs or events such as commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities designed to draw attention to or promote an organization's products or services.

### ***4 Public Service***

Programs that advance public understanding of a societal issue, problem or concern.

### ***5 Public Affairs***

Programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidates.

### ***6 Marketing Consumer Products or Services***

Programs designed to introduce new or promote existing products or services to a consumer audience.

### ***7 Marketing Business-to-Business***

Programs designed to introduce new or promote existing products or services to a business audience.

### ***8 Global Communications***

Any type of program (i.e., institutional, marketing, special events) sponsored by an organization that demonstrates effective communications implemented in two or more countries.

### ***9 Crisis Communications***

Programs undertaken to deal with an event that has had or may have an extraordinary impact on an organization and its constituents.

### ***10 Internal Communications***

Programs target specifically to special publics directly allied with an organization (e.g., employees, members, affiliated dealers, franchisees).

### ***11 Investor Relations***

Programs directed toward shareholders, other investors and the investment community.

### ***12 Multi-Cultural Public Relations***

Any type of program (i.e., institutional, marketing, special events) specifically targeted to a cultural group.

### ***13 Integrated Communications***

A program that employs the creative and effective integration and leadership of public relations strategies with other promotional marketing communications. It should demonstrate the integration of strategies, plus the budget and measurement of return on investment of the communications to any stakeholder group, including employees, consumers, the media or shareholders.

### ***14 Social Media Strategy***

A public relations campaign or program based on a thorough strategy of research, planning and evaluation that is executed via one or more social media channels.

## **Categories**

### **Division One B – Projects**

#### ***1 Media Relations***

Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations. Submit press releases, media advisories, pitch letters, requests for coverage, etc. along with evidence of the resulting media coverage.

#### ***2 Newsletters***

Publications designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a regular basis. Submit three consecutive issues.

#### ***3 Magazines***

Publications designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a regular basis. Magazines are typically differentiated from newsletters by the number of pages and length of articles. Submit three consecutive issues.

#### ***4 Annual Reports***

Publications that report on an organization's annual performance.

### ***5 Brochures***

Pamphlets booklets or other small publications designed to inform a target audience about an organization, product, service or issue.

### ***6 Special-Purpose Publications***

Single-issue publications designed for a special purpose. Books and other publications not eligible for consideration in other categories can be entered here.

### ***7 Press/Media Kits***

News releases, photographs and other background information compiled for an organization, product or issue.

### ***8 Direct Mail/Direct Response***

Communications that are designed to solicit a specific, immediate response by the target audience. This can be a single communication or a series. Quantifiable, specific actions by the target audience recipients resulting solely from the piece(s) should be detailed. Entire communications programs should be included in the Programs Division.

### ***9 Internal Video/Audio Programs***

Video programs directed primarily at internal audiences such as employees, members, etc. Entrants should submit programs on a CD or DVD as a reasonable representation.

### ***10 External Video/Audio Programs***

Video programs directed primarily at external audiences. Entrants should submit programs on a CD or DVD as a reasonable representation.

### ***11 Television PSAs***

Video productions of one minute or less distributed to television stations as non-paid public service announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted on a CD or DVD.

### ***12 Radio PSAs***

Audio productions of one minute or less distributed to radio stations as non-paid public service announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted on a CD or DVD.

### ***13 Speeches***

Submit text of speech along with summary, which should include information on audience, purpose of speech and any documented results.

### ***14 Feature Stories***

Submit text of feature article as well as documentation of publication and its placement.

### ***15 Editorial/Op-Ed Columns***

Opinion articles written as an editorial, guest column or letter to the editor. Submit text of article and documentation of publication.

***16 Advertorial***

Paid advertising written as editorial matter to gain support for a product, issue, program or organization. Submit text of editorial matter and documentation of publication.

***17 Research/Evaluation***

Research that provides a meaningful contribution or input to a public relations program, or an evaluation documenting the value or benefit of a program or tactic. Samples of the methodology and findings of any research should be included in the entry along with the summary.

***18 Creative Tactics***

Unconventional, creative tactic or approach used as part of a public relations program. Documentation should include how the tactic contributed to the results of the campaign.

***19 Interactive Communications***

New, creative or unconventional use of technology in a public relations program. Submissions may include: Web sites, intranets, etc. Summaries should include Web addresses (if applicable) and “screen grabs” (printed copies of key sites) in case of connection failure with sites during judging.

***20 Articles on Public Relations***

Scholarly or professional publication.

***21 Presentations/Workshops on Public Relations***

Presented to scholarly or professional groups.

***22 Social Media Tactics***

Implementation of a large-scale, singular or series of social media tactics (such as infographics, videos, photo galleries, contests, targeted ads, etc.) used to achieve measurable objectives and support a larger social media strategy.

# HOW TO ENTER

## *Division One*

You may enter as many submissions as you like. For each entry, please follow the rules below:

- Choose the appropriate category. Each project or program may be entered in only one category.
- Be sure that at least part of your program (Division 1A) and/or your entire project (Division 1B) was completed during the calendar year of 2013.
- Prepare a concise summary no longer than two typewritten pages for each entry to introduce the judges to your program or project. Criteria/considerations should be addressed in order: RESEARCH & PLANNING, EXECUTION and RESULTS & EVALUATION.
- Include a 75-word written overview of the entry for use in the script/program book. In addition, please email the overview to **Justina Fetterly** at [jfetterly@csat-k12.org](mailto:jfetterly@csat-k12.org) **no later than Friday, May 2, 2014 at 5 p.m.**
- Submit entries on pages no larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches. Secure all relevant materials in a binder or other appropriate fashion to ensure they don't become separated. Slide show, video and audio entries should be submitted on CD or DVD. Attach duplicate of the entry form to the CD or DVD.
- Securely fasten TWO entry forms at the beginning of the entry.
- Include TWO copies of the two-page entry summary.
- Enclose a check made payable to Buffalo Niagara Chapter PRSA.
- If your entry is mailed and you require proof of delivery, please use certified or registered mail.
- Deliver or mail your entry and check so they are received by 5 p.m. on the day of the chosen deadline.
- All entries will be available for pickup at the awards dinner. PRSA is not responsible for entries left 30 days after the event.

## *Entry Fees - Division One*

### **Early Bird Deadline**

Early bird deadline entries must be received by **5 p.m. on FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2014**

\$55 per entry for PRSA members

\$45 per entry for PRSA members at registered 501(c)3 organizations\*

\$70 per entry for non-members

\$60 per entry for PRSA non-members at registered 501(c)3 organizations\*

### **Final Deadline**

Final deadline entries must be received by **5 p.m. on FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2014**

\$75 per entry for PRSA members

\$65 per entry for PRSA members at registered 501(c)3 organizations\*

\$90 per entry for non-members

\$80 per entry for PRSA non-members at registered 501(c)3 organizations\*

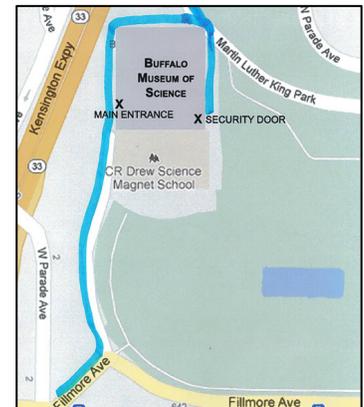
*\*You must provide a copy of your organization's W-9 form indicating tax exempt status in order to receive this rate.*

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## *Submitting Entries - Division One*

You can send or drop off your entry(ies) with a check made payable to Buffalo/Niagara PRSA to:

Excalibur Awards  
Buffalo Museum of Science  
Erin Collins  
1020 Humboldt Pkwy  
Buffalo, NY 14211



***Special Instructions:*** Drop entries off at the museum's back security doors and NOT at the front admission desk. From the museum parking lot, drive north past the main entrance and past the building. Veer right, drive past the old front stairs, and continuing right toward Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Before entering the park, turn into the driveway that leads to the back security doors. Ring the bell and museum security will take your entry(ies).

***-OR-***

Excalibur Awards  
Charter School for Applied Technologies  
Justina Fetterly  
2303 Kenmore Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14209

***Special Instructions:*** Ring security bell at the front entrance. Once buzzed in, inform secretaries the submission is for Justina Fetterly and leave in foyer where designated.

## ***Division Two – Special Honors***

In addition to recognizing outstanding public relations programming, the Buffalo Niagara PRSA Chapter's Board of Directors will recognize and reward an **Outstanding Practitioner**, **Outstanding Executive** and a **Rising Star Award** to selected individuals who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in the practice and support of public relations in western New York and are nominated by their peers in the public relations field.

To nominate an individual for a Special Honor Award, fill out a nomination form located on the Excalibur Awards main page. Complete and return it to Tony Astran at the address below by **5 p.m. on Friday, April 25, 2014** for review by the Board of Directors. Please note that additional information (such as a resume or reference) may be requested at a later date, and that no award may be given, if, in the judgment of the Board, none of the nominees meet the criteria. Also note that **NO LATE ADMISSIONS** will be accepted.

### ***May C. Randazzo Outstanding Practitioner Award***

Named in honor of May Randazzo, APR – a respected practitioner who died after a brief illness at the age of 57 – this award is given to a Western New York public relations professional, who, like May, has achieved exceptional success, displayed the highest ethics and is dedicated to serving the community and our profession. Nominees and candidates **MUST** be a member of the Buffalo/Niagara PRSA Chapter.

### ***Outstanding Executive Award***

This award honors a Western New York business executive (CEO, Senior Director or Executive) who recognized and supports the role of public relations within his/her organization (business/institution, for-profit or not-for-profit) and throughout the community. Nominee must be from outside of the communications industry. Members and non-members of PRSA may nominate candidates.

### ***Rising Star Award***

This award honors an outstanding newcomer to public relations who has demonstrated leadership potential in his/her initial years in the profession. Nominations **MUST** come from a member of the Buffalo/Niagara PRSA Chapter.

**Send Completed SPECIAL HONORS Nomination forms to:**

Excalibur Awards Special Honors

c/o Tony Astran, APR

6563 Milestrip Road

Orchard Park, NY 14127

716-982-2088

[tony\\_astran@yahoo.com](mailto:tony_astran@yahoo.com)

Entries will not be returned without a postage-paid carrier package. There is no entry fee for Outstanding Practitioner, Outstanding Executive or Rising Star nominations.

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### Questions?

For more information, please contact Committee Chairs **Erin Collins** at [ecollins7@gmail.com](mailto:ecollins7@gmail.com) or 716-479-2337 or **Justina Fetterly** at [jfetterly@csat-k12.org](mailto:jfetterly@csat-k12.org) or 716-876-7505 ext. 2136. For helpful tips on submitting a winning entry, check the Excalibur Resources Center on the Excalibur Awards page of our website.

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### Save the Date

*The Excalibur Awards Dinner will be held on Wednesday, June 25, 2014 at Buffalo Iron Works, 49 Illinois Street, Buffalo, NY 14203.*

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