

**PRSA Boston 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Luncheon Thursday, April 27**

*Featured Keynote Speaker - Tom Hoog, one of our industry's leaders... named by PR Week as one of the 100 most influential public relations practitioners of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*

The Boston Chapter of PRSA will celebrate its 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 27 with Tom Hoog, Fellow, PRSA, as keynote speaker and a stellar gathering of past presidents, Fellows, and APRs. Please join us at The Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, at noon, Thursday, April 27.

**Here's April N&V at a glance:**

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT, NANCY STERLING, APR**

Dear Fellow PRSA Members:

Along with the usual delights of spring, PRSA has a special offering for you this month. On Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, our chapter celebrates its 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To mark this significant milestone we are hosting a special luncheon from 12 pm to 2 pm at the Royal Sonesta Hotel. Tom Hoog, APR, Fellow PRSA, special assistant to the chairman of Hill and Knowlton and a past chairman of that august agency himself, will be our guest speaker. Special recognition will be given to former chapter presidents, PRSA fellows and all APRs. RSVPs are already starting to roll in and we hope that you and your colleagues will make it a point to join us for this very unique occasion.

We also have another ongoing benefit for our members. Under the leadership of our

Director-at-Large Jennifer Bien, we are hosting monthly PRSA national webinars locally at low cost. Here's what longtime PRSA member Ann Getman, APR, had to say about the March event, "Societal Trends and Their Implications for Communications" held at CBS4 (WBZ-TV): "Good cost, good company, and great content. This is a great way to add value for senior members and for IPN members—very affordable, accessible and it reproduces the level of discussion we miss from big agencies with lots of ideas and resources." This month's topic will be "Reputation Management," held at The Castle Group, 18 Tremont Street, on Tuesday, April 11 from 3 pm to 4 pm.

Because of these two special events, we will not be having our regular monthly program

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## Freelance PR Opportunity Available (Thanks to Henry Stimpson for passing this notice along)

Shoestring Creative Group is looking for freelance PR/marketing consultants (with specific experience and expertise working with nonprofits) to join our network of people doing great work for good causes. We are currently seeking to add a consultant to our group in the Boston area.

We currently have clients in several cities and across the country and are looking to grow our network. Hourly contract rate: \$30-\$50/hour.

If you are currently a successful freelance PR/marketing consultant with 10+ years of experience and welcome the idea of being part of a well-known group of professionals working to further good causes, we look forward to hearing from you. Enjoy the same flexibility and enjoyment that comes with freelance consulting work, but with added resources and benefits (and without all of the stress that comes with going it alone).

We provide our consultants and group members: meeting space, marketing support, technical resources, professional development, and the opportunity to work

together as part of a creative team working on very interesting and meaningful projects. PR/marketing consultants serve as project directors, and have a high level of responsibility and autonomy.

Shoestring Creative Group is located in Portland, Maine with clients and group members located across the country. We are a full-service, award-winning marketing communications firm that specializes in serving nonprofit organizations. For more information about Shoestring Creative Group, please visit our website: [www.shoestringgroup.com](http://www.shoestringgroup.com).

Interested freelance PR/marketing consultants should submit an information letter of inquiry and a resume to Hannah Gregory, Managing Director/Founder, [Hannah@shoestringgroup.com](mailto:Hannah@shoestringgroup.com). Phone calls welcome: 207/582-1345.

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in April. However, please take a moment to mark your calendars for our May program, which will be "Real-Time PR" on Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. We will discuss webcasting, podcasting, RSS and the latest tools to get your organization's or client's news out quickly.

I also wanted to mention that our membership drive in February and March was a big success. Led by Membership

Chair Julie Lear, APR, a number of new folks at all professional levels joined our chapter. We will be introducing them at future events, so please make them feel welcome since that is a large part of what PRSA is all about.

I hope to see you all at the anniversary luncheon on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Best,

Nancy Sterling

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Tom will speak on *Public Policy Issues as an Opportunity for Corporate Leadership*. He will discuss corporate social responsibility, how CEOs and their companies can take a leadership position on public policy issues that can make a difference to their companies, why it matters that the C-suite become visible on important issues of the day, and how public relations practitioners can play an important role in helping their clients come out of hiding on public policy.

Former chairman of Hill & Knowlton and now special counsel to the chairman of H&K, Tom has been an ambassador for both PRSA and Counselors Academy for many years and a positive voice for the higher purpose of public relations in counseling management and society on issues of public policy and public affairs.

He was named PRSA's Gold Anvil award recipient in 2004, recognizing his distinguished career in public relations. He was president and CEO of Hill & Knowlton from 1996 through 2001, responsible for managing the firm's 13 U.S. offices. He also is a former chairman of PRSA's Counselors

Academy and is widely recognized as one of our industry's leading practitioners, having been named by PR Week as one of the 100 most influential public relations practitioners of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

He currently serves at the pleasure of the president of the United States on the advisory board of the Smithsonian Institute's National Air and Space Museum. He also serves on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial advisory board, chairs the board of directors of The Wolf Trap Foundation, serves on corporate boards of directors, and is a frequent speaker at universities around the U.S. He also has extensive political experience, having worked with President Clinton, Gary Hart, Robert Kennedy and George McGovern. He spent six years as a naval aviator with the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet.

When:

Thursday, April 27, 2006 / 12:00 – 2:00pm

Where:

The Royal Sonesta Hotel Boston, Five Cambridge Parkway, Cambridge, MA 02142  
For directions, visit: [http://www.royalsonestaboston.com/get\\_there.htm](http://www.royalsonestaboston.com/get_there.htm)

Cost:

PRSA Boston Members - \$55  
PRSA APRs - \$50  
Non-members/Guests - \$65

To register, go to: <http://www.opinionpower.com/Surveys/911036723.html>

## PRSA Boston Offers Monthly Virtual Seminars

This year, PRSA Boston is offering a new, affordable and accessible professional development tool in the form of virtual seminars. Each month, the chapter hosts a teleseminar or webinar that covers a current topic, issue or trend that is impacting your life as a public relations professional. While the cost of each seminar is generally hundreds of dollars, you pay just \$25 (for members; \$35 for guests), and can count on a convenient location in alternately the downtown Boston or Metro West areas.

Some of the upcoming virtual seminars include "Reputation Management for Reputation Managers," taking place on April 11 at The Castle Group from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. In May, join us for "Getting the Most

out of Surveys." Schwartz Communications will host this seminar on May 11 beginning at 3:00 p.m.

If you are a mid-level to senior-level practitioner, these monthly seminars are the perfect tool for taking your career and business to the next level.

Monthly teleseminars/webinars are scheduled by PRSA Boston Director-at-Large Jennifer Bien. If you are interested in learning more, or would like to be the host site of a future seminar, please contact Jennifer Bien at [jennifer\\_bien@earthlink.net](mailto:jennifer_bien@earthlink.net).

## MASSNONPROFIT.ORG Website Launched ...News and Information for and about the Massachusetts Nonprofit Sector

Peter Lowy, publisher of Massnonprofit.org, has announced the launch of a new website, [www.massnonprofit.org](http://www.massnonprofit.org), a news and information website about and for the nonprofit sector in Massachusetts.

Why massnonprofit.org? Because there is no comprehensive, up-to-date, authoritative information resource - in print or on the web - devoted to Massachusetts nonprofits as a whole. Massnonprofit.org solves this problem. *This is the only website dedicated to the large and growing nonprofit sector in Massachusetts.*

In addition to news, Peter is looking for

Expert Advice articles that provide solutions to operational problems aimed at helping nonprofits succeed. Authors could include nonprofit staff, board members and other advisors, or outside experts. The emphasis is on authoritative, practical advice. Expert Advice articles should be about 600 words.

Email Expert Advice articles, as well as suggestions, inquiries and news, to [editor@massnonprofit.org](mailto:editor@massnonprofit.org).

Peter can be contacted at (781) 326-9980 / [peter@massnonprofit.org](mailto:peter@massnonprofit.org).

## IPN Members Hear Presentation on Independent Contractor Statute

by Michael Morgan, Morgan & Associates

A statute little noticed at the time of its implementation has far reaching implications for professionals in many Massachusetts industries, including independent public relations practitioners and those who hire them. Members of PRSA Boston's "Independent Practitioners' Network" (IPN) and other public relations professionals recently had the opportunity for a legal perspective provided by business attorney Jeffrey K. Schaffer

A partner in the Westborough firm of Sager & Schaffer LLP, Schaffer said the Independent Contractor Statute was originally enacted in 1990 and amended in July 2004. The law states that an independent contractor is considered an employee – with that person's "employer" having responsibility for withholding from his or her pay federal and state taxes, Social Security, and workers compensation – unless (s)he meets all these circumstances: the contractor has freedom from direction and control (by the "employer"); customarily engages in independently established trade; and performs a service outside the usual course of business of the "employer."

Schaffer noted that the July 2004 amendment removed a fourth prong to the independent contractor test (favorable to sole practitioners): that the contractor perform work outside the usual place of business of the "employer." Until July 2004, as long as the people performing the service met the three other tests and did not work in the same place as the person/entity they worked for, they were independent contractors.

Schaffer said the state's position is that allowing workers to operate as independent contractors deprives them of Social Security contributions and workers compensation benefits and federal and state withholdings; but he argued that, in imposing this law, Massachusetts is "intervening into the area of contractual rights and the manner of doing business."

He explained that the statute was a reaction to bidding inequities on construction contracts issued during the Big Dig, when contractors "were bringing in people from everywhere. Some were legitimate and some were just taking advantage of the situation." But he noted that the law is "Draconian," as plaintiffs can sue the "employer" for treble damages, attorneys' fees and court costs. "Employers" found guilty of intentional – or even unintentional – misclassification of employees could face a prison sentence of up to five years or fines of up to \$50,000.

The law states that willful violation occurs when an employer knew or showed "reckless regard" for whether its conduct was prohibited. The statute, and its application to other industries, was reinforced by an Attorney General's advisory in August 2004. While noting the advisory "does not have the force of law," Schaffer pointed out that, historically, "such administrative interpretations have been given great deference by the courts."

### **Implications for Public Relations Professionals and IPN Members**

IPN members may find themselves working as subcontractors for each other, handling project overflow or lending specific expertise

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over a limited period of time. For a contracting sole practitioner (as “employer”), the costs of paying the subcontractor “employee” benefits could be too expensive and discourage hiring each other to meet project needs. Additional paperwork costs for administering withholdings could also be prohibitive, as opposed to the modest costs of processing a monthly invoice and issuing an annual 1099 for the subcontractor.

Because we as independent practitioners generally know each other – and understand each other’s roles, skills and clients – there is much less potential for lawsuits filed by a subcontracting “sole,” claiming (s)he is an employee and thus entitled to benefits. But “employer” soles, could still be held liable for workers comp or negligence claims, or find themselves defendants in cases where they hired what they thought was an independent contractor, only to face prosecution by the state for violating the statute; and/or tax collection action (for failing to make withholdings) by the state Department of Revenue or the Internal Revenue Service.

Schaffer suggested ways for “employers” and contractors to comply with the law. He said one of the best is to have multiple clients, preferably with contractual agreements, that will meet the three conditions of the law; and when hiring subcontractors, have them meet these same tests. He said to ask these questions: “Does a person to be hired for a specific task: own their own business; service other customers; perform a service out of my usual course?”

Noting that he is an attorney and not a public relations professional, he said “I am not in the business of announcing good

things about my business,” and thus might need professional (communications) help in a narrow area,” provided by an independent contractor. He also observed, “The more you have interstate clients, the more you make your case.” Other, more minor, protections may include having business cards, a Website, incorporation papers and “Doing Business As” certificate, and advertising in newspapers and the Yellow Pages.

Schaffer also cautioned that Massachusetts is likely to prosecute the law very strictly, but noted that current enforcement seems to focus on “big fish,” over whom the law was written. He suggested some possible good news for public relations professionals in that the industry “seems pretty pure.” He warned, however, that actions taken against public relations “employers” could more likely come from insurance companies who are auditing the 1099 forms of contractors working in the industry and that their motivation would be to “sell more workers compensation policies.” Suits might also be filed by competitors who feel a company/“employer” has had an unfair advantage if that entity misclassified employees as independent contractors, as was the case with many Big Dig contractors.

In closing, Schaffer said the Independent Contractor Statute is “anti-small business” and that he saw potential for the law to be amended. He also said the next Attorney General might take a different enforcement approach or issue a “more forgiving advisory.” He urged public relations professionals and others to contact their state representatives and trade associations to learn more about the issue and discuss possible future strategies.

## PRSSA CORNER

### Prelude to a PRize Winner



by Jessica Carberry, Stonehill College (PRSA Boston News & Views Contributor)

Great things are happening to Ashley Cheng, a senior at Boston University and president of the Edward L. Bernays Chapter, PRSSA, at BU. This past March, Ashley was chosen as first place prize winner of the Daniel J. Edelman/PRSSA Award for the Outstanding Public Relations Student.

As winner, Ashley has been granted \$1,500 cash, an engraved globe sculpture, a 3-

month paid internship in one of Edelman's United States offices and her name displayed in Edelman's Chicago headquarters.

The Edelman/PRSSA Award, which is given to just three students nationwide, was created in 1990 by company executives in conjunction with PRSSA. Students who compete for this award must be a PRSSA member and are judged on their "1) leadership; 2) public relations-related achievements and activities; and 3) recommendations from faculty members and/or industry professionals." This award was created to "let the legend live on, to remind young professionals that hard work, dedication and leadership do result in success."

Originally from Austin, TX, Ashley is majoring in Communications and Public Relations and, in addition to being president of the BU PRSSA chapter, she has been a team captain for the American Cancer Society's All University Relay for Life team and last year was able to raise \$1,300. The following is a conversation I had with Ashley regarding her significant accomplishment:

What interested you enough to get involved with PRSSA? (What was the most interesting or captivating issue that brought you into this field?)

I joined PRSSA as a freshman because the majority of my classes were in liberal arts, and I had no idea what PR was all about! I wanted to make sure I knew what I was getting into before I declared my major. PRSSA at BU was a much smaller, less involved organization when I first joined. It's

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*(Winner continued from page 7)*

grown to be such a huge part of my life since then. However, initially, it was just about getting a taste of PR for me.

I think one of the best things about working in this field is the ability to inspire change; that's really what PR is all about—motivating people to act, whether it is to buy your product, vote for your candidate or volunteer for your organization. I also love how diverse this field is. There is a lot of room to change your mind from specialty to specialty and grow throughout the whole process.

What are some of your responsibilities as PRSSA president?

Some of my responsibilities include scheduling weekly programming (such as getting speakers, organizing brainstorm sessions for our student firm PRSSAgency), editing and designing our monthly newsletter PRoper-Ganda, sending weekly e-mail updates to members, overseeing events (such as awards dinners, end of the semester parties and agency tours).

How would you define your experience in PRSSA? (Do you think it is a useful association to be a part of in order to get into this field?)

I think organizations like PRSSA are an essential addition to any PR major's education. The networking opportunities, hands-on experience, and relationships you can gain, provide a supplement to the traditional classroom curriculum.

I really owe so much to this association. Being a part of PRSSA has given me the chance to expand what I learn in the classroom and start applying these lessons to real world settings. Our student-run agency for BU organizations, PRSSAgency,

is a great example. We just got started this year, so we have a lot to learn still about creating our own PR firm. The process of setting up the organization has been an amazing learning experience in itself.

What major accomplishment helped you attain the Edelman/PRSSA award?

I think the people at Edelman really saw in my resume, portfolio and interviews that PR is a part of almost everything I do. I have been extremely involved in PRSSA during my three years at BU. I have served on the executive board for the past two years (as PRSA Liaison and President). Other than my past PR internships, I also try to integrate PR into my other extra curricular activities. I'm the Publicity Chair for our chapter of the American Cancer Society's All-University Relay for Life, and I coordinate the media relations campaign for our student-run television channel (butv10:TerrierVision), which just launched this spring. I've also been active in BU's Undergraduate Office of Admissions during my time at the University, and that's almost like doing PR for the school!

Also, a BU student wrote an article about me for the university newspaper, and she interviewed Laura Kestin, the Director of HR at Edelman, who said, "Ashley's resume impressed us from the very first moment we opened her binder. She's a front runner in performing so many different aspects of PR inside and out. On the phone interview, she seemed to not only understand Edelman as a company but PR and the culture around it."

How does it make you feel to win such a prestigious award as this?

Edelman's Chicago office called me to inform me about the award, and I went crazy. I was just SO excited! PR people are

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*(Winner continued from page 8)*

notoriously underappreciated because our results are so hard to measure. I've felt the same way about my academic career at BU. It's nice to know that someone out there is recognizing the work that you do.

What does this award mean, how will it help you in your career search?

I'm hoping the award will actually end my career search. The Edelman offices put a lot of emphasis on the possibility of being hired after the internship when candidates do a good job. I'm looking at this opportunity as a three-month long interview...for both sides. I'm hoping I like working there enough to stay, and I'm hoping they like me enough to keep me!

How is your experience progressing in Boston overall, as you are from Texas?

What are the differences between Boston and Austin in the public relations field?

Boston and Austin are actually pretty similar cities. Tech and healthcare are pretty popular in both cities, but Boston definitely has a more competitive media market. It was scary to move here at the age of 18 without any family or contacts in the area, but I've met a lot of wonderful people. I feel like I've built this network of really caring, supportive people in Boston, and now I

have to leave them all when I graduate! I'm moving to New York in June to work in Edelman's consumer group. I'm just hoping that my good luck travels to New York, and I run into the same type of generous, kind people working in PR.

What advice would you give a young person pursuing a career in PR?

I feel funny giving advice to young people pursuing a career in PR because I still am one! But, I would advise that they network everywhere they go. It's so true that you never know who will help you find that first internship or job. It's not about building contacts but about building relationships. You should always keep in mind that you might be the one to help someone else find that first internship or first job and be available as a resource as well.

I'd also suggest trying everything at least once. That unpaid internship could lead to a paid job one day, or that position in the field you thought sounded boring could end up being something you love. My favorite part about working in PR is that there is so much room to grow. There is PR everywhere, so we should all just find an organization or a message that we believe in. If we stand behind something we believe in, it'll make it a lot easier to do our jobs right and to do our jobs happily. And isn't that all we want?

## PRSA Accreditation Preparation: Give Yourself the *Accreditation Advantage...Tips* for Success

There is no *try*. *There is only do.* -Yoda

### **Why should *you* become Accredited?**

Professionals find Accreditation:  
is a source of pride (91%)  
develops professional skills (78%)  
provides personal benefit (75%)  
helps resolve ethical dilemmas (58%)

### **What are the steps in the process?**

- Apply for eligibility on [www.praccreditation.org](http://www.praccreditation.org)
- Seek coaching support from Accreditation chair
- Integrate online and in-print study materials

- Form local study groups
- Take Readiness Review
- Take Computer-based Examination
- Start signing your name: *You, APR!*

For more information on applying to take the Accreditation exam, contact either of the PRSA Boston Accreditation Committee co-chairs: Elise Lapham, APR, ([eliselapham@verizon.net](mailto:eliselapham@verizon.net)), or Diego Sanchez, APR, ([dsanchez@aac.org](mailto:dsanchez@aac.org)).

## DID YOU KNOW??

Through the PRSA partnership with DHL Express, members can save up to 25 percent on air express and ground shipping. More importantly, members can rely on DHL's commitment to guaranteed on-time delivery and customer service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To enroll and start

saving, call 1-800-MEMBERS today to speak with a dedicated Member Service Representative, or visit [www.1800members.com](http://www.1800members.com).