



June 2016



## Message from the President

Dear SPRF Members,

Happy Summer! School is out but the SPRF board and committees are in session with award programs and conference registration now open.

Planning is well underway for the Southern Public Relations **Hall of Fame induction ceremony on Aug. 5** in Starkville, MS, and our **Annual Conference Sept. 18-21** in Sandestin, Fla. We hope you'll join us at these events and take advantage of these benefits of your SPRF membership.

Congratulations to this year's nominees for SPRF's Professional Achievement Award, our organization's highest individual honor. Kristina Hendrix, APR of PRCA, Aleis Tusa, APR of PRAL, Samantha McCain, APR of PRAM and Ken Hair, APR of ECPRO have already been recognized by their state associations, and a panel of senior PR practitioner judges from outside of our region will select one of these individuals to receive the SPRF award during the conference.



This year, SPRF will recognize those Outstanding Educators who were honored at their state levels, but will not name a regional Educator of the Year as we continue our efforts to revitalize our Educators award program. A special thanks to Missy Laborde, APR, and her task force who have been working for the past 18 months to identify ways to support and engage those who teach public relations and recognize their contributions to our profession.

And don't forget to prepare your entries for the Lantern Awards program. The

## UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

As we begin 2016, please take a moment to update your profile in the SPRF membership directory.

Here are instructions for all members:

1. In the top right-hand corner of SPRF.org, click on "Login"
2. Your username is your email
3. To set your password, click on "Forgot Password?" and follow the instructions
4. When you first log-in,
5. Click on "Edit Profile" and update all fields with your current information and click Submit.

It is important for all members to log in and edit their profile with current information. This keeps all members' information up to date in the member directory.

\*If your username/email does not come up, please contact your chapter or state membership chair or email the SPRF VP Membership Kathy Newby. You will receive an email with your username and password once it is set-up. Once you log in, follow the above steps.

If you do not receive your verification code, first check your spam/junk folder. If it still does not come through, please email Kathy to have it be manually set-up.

## 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Jennifer Jenkins, APR, PRCA  
Mobile

### President-Elect/Conference Chair

Leigh Perry Herndon, PRCA  
Mobile

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Kathy Newby\*, ECPRO

### VP Professional Development

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Beach

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Micah Walker, PRAL Central

### Past President

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PRAM MS Beach

### Members-At-Large

Josh Till\*, PRCA Birmingham  
Kathy Bowers, PRCA  
Birmingham  
Lorri Freeman, APR, PRAM Gulf  
Coast

SPRF board is preparing a great webinar with guest speaker from the Mississippi Department of Transportation Jarrod Ravencraft whose team took home the PRAM PRISM Best of Show and SPRF Lanterns Best of Show awards in 2015. Look for more details soon!

The SPRF board welcomes your feedback and suggestions to continue to serve you, our members in the PR profession.

Best regards,

Jennifer Graham Jenkins, APR

2016 SPRF President

[jennifer@jjpragency.com](mailto:jennifer@jjpragency.com)

## Registration Now Open for 2016 SPRF Conference - Meet us in Destin

Have you registered for our conference in Sandestin, Fla., Sept. 18-21? If not, mark that off your To-Do list today! Registration is open online and the early bird rate to attend this year's event is \$450. Go to <http://sprf.org/index.php/2015-05-17-17-07-34/annual-conference> to register. Also, rooms can now be booked at the beautiful Sandestin resort for a deeply discounted rate using the SPRF group rate. Do not delay booking your accommodations, as this these rooms are sure to sell out early. To make reservations, go to: <http://www.Sandestin.com/23I20Z.aspx> or call 800.320.8115. The group code is: 23I20Z. The rate is available from Friday, Sept. 16 through Thursday, Sept. 22.



## SPRF Lantern Awards are now open!

Don't miss this opportunity to have your work recognized on a regional level.

Entries are judged on individual merit by nationwide PR practitioners. The awards program offers three levels of recognition, including Certificates of Merit, Awards of Excellence and Lantern Awards. From those, the judges



Coast  
Ken Hair, ECPRO, APR  
Erin Parsons Garrett, APR, PRAM  
Central  
Ginger Guttner\*, APR, PRAL  
Baton Rouge

### Ex Officio Members

Kim Collins, APR, Association  
Assistant  
Caron Blanton, APR, Universal  
Accreditation Board  
Representative  
Adam Kelley, APR, Universal  
Accreditation Board  
Representative

\*State President

also select the Best of Show Award and up to two  
Judges' Choice Awards.

**The deadline for entries in the 2016 Lantern Awards  
program is July 15.** Eligible entries must have been  
produced between **May 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016.**



**Entries submitted prior to July 1, 2016, will be \$55  
per entry.** Entries submitted **between July 1 and July 15** will be **\$65 per  
entry.**

A professional member who submits and pays for three or more entries at  
one time will receive a \$5 discount per entry (\$50/\$60). All student entries will  
be \$20 per entry.

There will be no additional extended  
deadline. All materials will be submitted via an online entry website only; NO  
binders will be accepted.

The Lantern Awards use an online awards management system.

Research = up to 500 words  
Planning = up to 250 words  
Implementation = up to 500 words  
Evaluation = up to 250 words

[Enter here!](#)

Contact **Ginger Guttner, APR**, at [ginger@lsu.edu](mailto:ginger@lsu.edu) if you have any  
questions.

## Betsie Gambel honored by PRWeek

**Gambel Communications** is proud to announce that president **Betsie Gambel** has  
been recognized on *PRWeek's* inaugural "**Champions of PR**" list. Gambel is one of 36  
women in the United States recognized with this honor, which acknowledges Public Relations  
practitioners who excel within their field and maintain focus in philanthropic work.

Gambel holds more than 25 years of experience in  
public relations and founded Gambel Communications in  
2009. She excels in all aspects of PR including media,  
community and government relations; special events;  
crisis communication; and issue management.

"I have had the honor of working with Betsie for several  
years, and I could not think of anyone else more  
deserving of this recognition," said Amy Collins, director  
of strategy at Gambel Communications. "Her passion  
and her drive to be active in the New Orleans' comm



unity are what make her stand out."



Gambel is the first woman from Louisiana to be inducted into the Southern Public Relations Federation's PR Hall of Fame. She is also a 2012 graduate of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business program and was honored as one of *New Orleans CityBusiness*' 2012 and 2015 Women of the Year. Additionally, Gambel was recognized as the 2013 Small Business Administration (SBA) Region VI 2013 Women in Business Champion, a Young Leadership Council Role Model, and a Cancer Crusaders honoree, to name a few. She is a former president of the Junior League of New Orleans and a graduate of Sweet Briar College.

Gambel, along with the fellow "Champions of PR" honorees, were honored at a reception in New York in May. To view the complete list of honorees, [click here](#).

## "It Takes a PRO" from UAB

UAB has put together a campaign toolkit called, "It Takes A PRO," designed to provide APR Chairs and their UAB participating organization and chapters with marketing guidance and products that w

ill shift the general view of the APR program, drive traffic to the APR website and ultimately increase the number of people in your pipeline and sitting for the Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations. "It Takes A PRO" was launched in April 2016 and the messaging and materials should be used year-round to increase APR credibility and visibility within the public relations profession and among other key stakeholders.



The toolkit includes a brochure, web copy, graphics, social media posts and more... check it out at <http://www.praccreditation.org/teach/apr-chairs/ItTakesAPR>

## Goody Bag/Door Prize Donations Needed

We want to make sure attendees of the SPRF Waves of Change 2016 Conference take home a goody bag full of items they'll find handy to use in the home or office. We are seeking donations of giveaways from our members to include in the bags.

Please contact [Kathy.bowers@childrensall.org](mailto:Kathy.bowers@childrensall.org) or 205-914-0357 if you have 180-200 logo items you would like to share.

If you have a door prize you'd like to donate for the Conference, contact **Monica LaBarge** at [mlabarge29@gmail.com](mailto:mlabarge29@gmail.com).

## Students: Conference Savings!

**Make sure your student members get this memo - and send it to your PR educator friends!**

On the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 18 the conference will offer sessions designed specifically for college students followed by a reception where students can network with professionals.

Students may choose to attend the entire conference at a DISCOUNTED RATE or select a Sunday/Monday registration only.

· **Full conference registration for students is \$250  
(includes Sunday-Tuesday, except for awards dinner)**

· **Sunday and Monday only conference registration for students is \$150**

Go to <http://sprf.org/index.php/2015-05-17-17-07-34/annual-conference> to register.

## **In Memoriam: Sally Kuzenski**

**Long-time friend and fellow practitioner Sally Kuzenski recently passed away. If you would like to send a note to the family, you'll find that info below.**

Retired journalist **Sally Thompson Kuzenski** died June 3, 2016 at Santa Rosa Beach, Florida. She was 83, and a native of the Mississippi Delta.

She leaves her husband, Kenneth F. Kuzenski of Santa Rosa Beach, FL, and children J. Kenneth (& Nan) Kuzenski of Raleigh, NC, Delta Kuzenski of Santa Rosa Beach, and John C. (& Zsuzsanna) Kuzenski of Apex, NC. She also leaves a brother, Mickey Thompson of Cleveland, MS, and sister, Nancy Thompson Petty of Brandon, MS. Preceding her in death were her loving parents, C. Thornton and Hazel Thompson of Merigold, MS, and brothers Rex Thompson of McCool, MS, Grover Thompson of Clarksdale, MS and Pat Thompson of Merigold, MS.

Kuzenski was a **30-year veteran of Louisiana State University** where she served as **Director of LSU News Service and Assistant Director of Public Relations**. She was the recipient of some 50 regional and national

awards for writing and public information planning, including the President's Award from the National Mosquito Control Association. Her numerous science articles were picked up by both the national and international press.

Honored at the annual meeting of the 1997 Louisiana Higher Education Public Relations Association, Kuzenski was described by the state's higher education commissioner as **"foremost in her field," and a person who had broken the gender gap in state and regional public relations.**

Kuzenski was past president of Baton Rouge Press Club, the Public Relations Association of Louisiana (PRAL), Southern Public Relations Federation, and Louisiana Higher Education Public Relations Association. She was the first woman inducted into the PRAL Hall of Distinction.

In her early career as columnist-reporter for the Baldwin Times in Bay Minette, AL, Kuzenski was named Spanish Fort's 1964 Neighbor of the Year for her work in helping get Interstate I-10 rerouted across Mobile Bay.

Funeral services were held at Point Washington Methodist Church on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, with burial at Gulf Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the



family asks that donations be made to a fund for the needy at Bowie Methodist Chapel in McCool, Mississippi 39108. To share memories, express condolences and sign the guestbook, please visit [www.daviswatkins.com](http://www.daviswatkins.com).

## Is YOUR chapter a Chapter of Distinction?

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SPRF established the Chapter of Distinction (COD) Awards program to promote continuous improvement in the function, outreach and benefits to members and communities stemming from the activities of its member chapters. This annual program encourages member organizations to evaluate yearly their own activities as well as plan ahead to make measurable progress in these areas. Awards are presented in eight categories: Accreditation, Chapter Management, Communication, Membership, Programs, Projects, Education and Public Service.

This year's award program will be held on **Tuesday, Sept 20**, at the SPRF Conference in Destin. Here SPRF will recognize the top three chapters in eight individual achievement categories along with the top, overall Chapter of Distinction Chapter and the Jamie Palmer Award.

**The COD award entry deadline this year is Friday, July 29, 2016.** Visit <http://www.sprf.org/index.php/awards/chapter-of-distinction-program> for more information. Visit [www.sprf.secure-platform.com](http://www.sprf.secure-platform.com) to upload COD entries.

## Senior Practitioners WANTED

### 2016 Senior Practitioner Guidelines

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Each year, SPRF member organizations (ECPRO, PRAL, PRAM, and PRCA) and their respective chapters are invited to identify up to two professionals per local chapter to be recognized as SPRF Senior Practitioners. The Senior Practitioner designation was established to honor members of SPRF who are recognized by their peers as veteran public relations professionals with high ethical standing. Recipients of this designation are announced at the SPRF annual conference.

Guidelines for Nomination:

1. Nomination and selection is made by each local chapter based on criteria set by the Southern Public Relations Federation. To receive the designation "Senior Practitioner," a recipient must meet three of the following four criteria:

- 15 years of full-time public relations experience
- Accreditation by a UAB member organization
- Officer or board member at chapter, state or SPRF level
- Recognition of professionalism as evidenced by such awards as Professional Achievement Award, Lantern Award or similar honor.

2. Nominees may be designated as a senior practitioner only one time in their career.

3. Submit nominations via e-mail to: Ron Barnes, APR, VP Professional Development, [ronbarnes@coastepa.com](mailto:ronbarnes@coastepa.com). (You can find the form on our website or email Ron for a copy.)

4. Deadline - Nominations must be received by Friday, July 29, 2016.

5. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Ron at 228-363-7338 or [ronbarnes@coastepa.com](mailto:ronbarnes@coastepa.com)

To view a list of past designees, go to: <http://www.sprf.org/index.php/awards/senior-practitioners>

## Learn how to bring home a Lantern with this FREE Webinar from SPRF

Want to bring home a Lantern? Join us for a FREE webinar presented by a Best of Show winning PR professional. Rob Pettit of the Mississippi Department of Transportation will share his expertise in a 1 hour webinar including a Q & A scheduled for ***Monday, June 13 at 11:00 a.m.***

11 a.m.- Noon central time, Monday, June 13

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6918006590726186754>

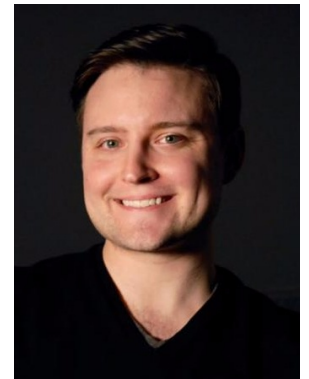
### The Route to an Award Winning Entry

Webinar ID: 127-477-219

Attendee Phone Number: Dial In 334-323-0270

#### Featured Speaker:

Rob Pettit is the Digital Media Manager at the Mississippi Department of Transportation. He has a decade of experience as a digital marketing strategist with work experience for government organizations, advertising agencies, non-profits, small businesses, and corporations both in-country and abroad in a bilingual setting. In his current role at MDOT, he is responsible for managing the digital media strategy and online presence of the organization's brand and messaging through multiple digital properties including social media platforms, websites and mobile apps.



## Get Recognized for Your Expertise

With so thorough a process, the APR credential is both a professional and personal achievement - a badge of drive, capabilities and dedication. Receiving this Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) administered recognition demonstrates your proficiency and alignment with best public relations practices and knowledge that will take you to the next level in your career. In the career market, you can distinguish yourself communicating a superior breadth of experience, depth of industry knowledge and passion for public relations with just three letters.

**Learn more about becoming an APR through your local chapter**

representative or visit [www.praccreditation.org](http://www.praccreditation.org)

*Founded in 1972, Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF) is a regional network of nearly 1,500 public relations professionals from Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and north Florida who share a common interest in the public relations profession. SPRF exists to further the professional and networking interests of today's public relations and communication professionals in private, public and nonprofit businesses and organizations. Along with networking, SPRF serves to advocate on behalf of and assist its members through ongoing professional development and defining ethical behavior.*

*SPRF, along with eight other regional and national public relations organizations, is a participating member of the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB), the national body which administers the Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) mark. Members certified as APRs have successfully demonstrated competency in the knowledge, skills and abilities required to practice public relations effectively in today's business arena.*

SPRF wants your chapter news! No matter how big or small, please make it a habit to send your chapter news to SPRF for the monthly newsletter and posting region-wide. Make sure to check out the latest SPRF news on our website at [www.sprf.org](http://www.sprf.org).

Send us your job postings, new positions, chapter or member news at [sarah.clancy@hcahealthcare.com](mailto:sarah.clancy@hcahealthcare.com).

Sarah Clancy  
VP Communications  
Southern Public Relations Federation

STAY CONNECTED



[www.sprf.org](http://www.sprf.org)