

INSPRATIONS

Spring 2006-2007

Illinois Chapter
National School Public Relations Association

A Message from INSPRA President Melea Smith

Dear Fellow PR Professionals -

It's hard to believe we've rounded the corner and are in the home stretch. Can you smell the new-cut grass? I don't think I've ever gotten over the thrill of the last day of school. Then again, I've never gotten over the thrill of the first day of school either!

Those firsts and lasts still move me. In April, I will pass the president's gavel to Terry Ryan. Thank you for the opportunity to serve this organization, which has given so much to me - both professionally and personally. Sometimes I believe we take the collaborative nature of INSPRA/NSPRA for granted. This kind of support and sharing just does not happen in corporate America, folks.

And speaking of sharing, I am excited to report that on the 26th of next month, an INSPRA panel will present on "Partnering with the Media" at the Illinois Association of Superintendents Association state conference. It's a first step toward a meaningful partnership with IASA.

INSPRA has also recently become a full-fledged, voting member of the new Illinois Education Roundtable. President-elect Terry Ryan is serving as our representative to that group. Please see her story below, describing the IERT, its membership, and its mission. The bottom line is this: INSPRA is enjoying a higher profile. We continue to raise the awareness of who we are and what we do, increasing the status of our individual members and the organization itself.

At the March 16th New Professionals seminar, some 30 people stayed after our Tips and Tactics workshop to hear the wisdom of Don Kirchoffner, APR and long-time PR professional, who was recently inducted into the PRSA College of Fellows. Following the session, INSPRA Board member and Superintendent Dr. Bill Dobbs asked me, "Where do we continue to get such great speakers?" The truth is that excellence attracts excellence. And your involvement is critical to that continued excellence.

This month, prior to the April 20 Tips & Tactics workshop, we will hold a membership meeting to vote on changes to our by-laws. These changes are necessary to bring our governing guidelines into alignment with current practice. We appreciate your attendance at this meeting, which will begin at 8:30 a.m. We will also honor our outgoing Board members and induct the new INSPRA Board (please remember to return your ballots by April 11). Networking opportunities will begin at 8:15 that morning.

If you want to expand your knowledge base exponentially, please register to attend the 54th annual NSPRA Seminar, scheduled for July 15-18, at the Pointe South Mountain Resort in Phoenix, AZ. The focus is Communication: Access, Achievement, and Accountability. Save \$50 by registering before May 25th. Hope to see you there!

Melea Smith, APR
msmith@naperville203.org

INSPRA selected as member of new Illinois Education Roundtable

by Terry Ryan, President-Elect

The Illinois Chapter of National School Public Relations is pleased to announce its new membership in the Illinois Education Roundtable. The Illinois Education Roundtable is a new organization that has been created to provide a unified voice for educational organizations advocating for excellence in Illinois public schools. The Roundtable will regularly and actively study, make recommendations, and promote action on critical public policy issues relating to education.

INSPRA is one of 19 member school leadership associations and organizations that make up the roundtable. The impact of the Illinois Education Roundtable will be widespread and influential on public policy issues in Illinois. The member organizations collectively represent:

- 872 school districts,
- 6,104 school board members
- 7,000 professional school leaders
- 230,000 teachers and other school personnel
- 2.1 million students

continued on page 2

President

Melea Smith, APR
Naperville CUSD 203

President-Elect

Terry Ryan
Lake Park HSD 108

VP Programs

Lori De Vos
Bremen District 228
Jay Wojcik
Lombard SD 44

VP Communications

Mary Todoric
CHSD 128

VP Membership

Russ Fletcher
Valley View SD 365U
Jennifer Bialobok
Lyons Twp HSD 204

Secretary/Treasurer

Jennifer Tempest Bova
Woodland CCSD 50

Past President

Brett Clark
Glenview SD 34

Regional Directors

North

Dr. Bill Dodds
Harrison School District 36

Central

Open

Chicagoland

Denise Lippe

Fenton HS

Greater Chicago

Peg Mannion

Glenbard Twp HSD 87

South

Carol Votsmier

Springfield District 186

Board Members

Dr. Charles McCormick

Kaneland CUSD 302

Rita DuChateau

CCSD 181

Karen Geddeis

SD U46

Kristine Liptrot

Downers Grove GSD 58

Darlene Johnson

CUSD 300

Administrator

Christine Glatz
(815) 464-3275

Distinguished Service Awards deadline April 13

The deadline for submitting entries to INSPRA's 2007 Distinguished Service Awards program, "Making a Difference in the Lives of Students," is Friday, April 13. The annual awards program is an opportunity to receive statewide recognition for your hard work as judged by a peer-standards reviewing committee.

NEW THIS YEAR: "INSPRA Public Relations Professional of the Year" has been added as a new nominating category this year. Also new this year is the location of the awards luncheon, which will be held on Friday, May 18, at the Bolingbrook Golf Club. Mr. Dick Johnson, NBC 5 Chicago Morning News anchor, will once again serve as Master of Ceremonies for the event.

Award-winners will be notified during the first week of May. Reservations for the Distinguished Service Awards luncheon must be completed no later than May 14, 2007.

Illinois Education Roundtable formed *continued*

By-laws were approved on Jan. 16, 2007 and Officers were elected on February 28, 2007. Current officers include: Chairman, Dr. Michael A. Jacoby, Executive Director, Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO); Vice Chair, Jo Anderson, Executive Director, Illinois Education Association (IEA-NEA); Secretary, Diane Rutledge, Executive Director Elect, Large Unit District Association (LUDA); and Treasurer, Larry Daghe, Executive Director, Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS).

The Illinois Education Roundtable will be guided by the following principles as it studies, recommends and promotes public policy for public schools:

- All students must have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century.
- All Illinois public schools must be adequately funded to insure Illinois has a world-class educational system.
- All mandates must be fully funded.
- All public policy decisions must be in the best interest of students and be research-based.
- All Illinois public schools must be accountable based on multiple indicators of success.
- All Illinois public school educators must be committed to continuous professional growth and the implementation of best practices in support of student achievement.

Other member organizations include: Illinois Association of School Boards; Illinois Association of School Administrators; Illinois Association of School Business Officials; Illinois Principals Association; Illinois Education Association; Large Unit District Association; Education, Research, Development; Legislative Education Network of DuPage; South Cooperative Organization for Public Education; Illinois Federation of Teachers; Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education; Illinois Association - Regional Superintendents of Schools; Elementary District Organization; High School District Organization; Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators; and Midwest Principals' Center.

The group began as the brainchild of LUDA President Bob Nielson (Superintendent, Bloomington Public Schools, District 87) and IEA-NEA Executive Director Jo Anderson. After common issues were identified, a mission and guiding principles, the group was formed and by-laws were approved. Officers were elected on Feb. 28, 2007. Terry Ryan, incoming president, is serving as IERT representative.