

INSPRATIONS

Winter 2007

Illinois Chapter
National School Public Relations Association

Who are we?

Each spring the INSPRA Board of Directors conducts a membership survey to assist with program planning, assess strengths and weaknesses, and to provide snapshot of our membership in demographic terms.

Sixty-six members responded to the June 2007 survey, out of a membership of 154. Here are some of the highlights:

Job responsibilities/regions

- 62 percent are full-time PR professionals
- 12 percent are part-time PR only
- 10 percent are full-time with other job responsibilities

- 87.5 percent report directly to the superintendent

- 64 percent are a member of the superintendent's cabinet

- 65 percent have been in school public relations for 10 years or less

- 84 percent were from the suburbs of Chicago

Education

- 54 percent have bachelor's degrees
- 19 percent have master's degrees
- 11 percent have type 75 certificates
- 12 percent have doctorates

Salary ranges*

- 14 percent earned \$40,000 - \$49,000
- 12 percent earned \$50,000 - \$59,000
- 21 percent earned \$60,000 - \$69,999
- 16 percent earned \$70,000 - \$79,999
- 26 percent earned \$80,000 - \$89,999
- 7 percent earned \$90,000 - \$99,999
- and one individual earned \$100,000 or more.

*The salary question did not specify if pension payments or benefit costs were included in the figure.

And, finally, women dominate this organization, with 86 percent of respondents female.

Mentor program offered to new professionals

INSPRA offers a personalized Mentor Program to assist professionals new to school public relations. Membership VPs Mindy Ward and Julie-Ann Fuchs will match you up with a mentor from a similar district size and type within your geographic area. Your mentor will set up monthly phone conferences, serve as a sounding board for issues or ideas you have and help guide you to becoming a strategic planner for your district. In addition, there are special programs for mentees. In January following Tips and Tactics, the group will meet to look at communications calendars of activities. They will have samples from other districts to help you create your own.

For more information, contact Julie-Ann Fuchs at jfuchs@kaneland.org or Mindy Ward at wardm@d62.org.

Focus Group Training postponed to January 11

Due to illness, the Focus Group Training day-long seminar scheduled for November 30 had to be postponed to January 11. If schedule conflicts prevented you from signing up for the November 30 program and you are interested in the January 11 session, please contact Chris Glatz at cglatz@managementservices.org. For more information on the program, go to the INSPRA website at www.inspra.org.

Research is an essential ingredient to every successful public relations plan. This day-long session will prepare you to run effective focus groups, an informal research method that is valued for the in-depth information it can provide for school issues. You will learn how to write questions, lead the group into discussion and report the results.

David Luther, of Missouri chapter of NSPRA, will lead the session, which will be held at Aramark in Downers Grove.

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(815) 464-3275

Karen Geddeis earns APR designation

Karen Geddeis, School District U-46 manager of communications support, recently received her national Accreditation in Public Relations. Accreditation in Public Relations is a voluntary certification program for public relations professionals, administered by the Universal Accreditation Board. The designation is acquired by passing a readiness review by a panel of three APR professionals and a written exam. The designation Accredited in Public Relations (APR) signifies a high professional level of experience and competence. Karen, INSPRA board secretary/treasurer, is among eight INSPRA members who have earned the APR designation.



Karen Geddeis, APR

Congratulations Karen!

New efforts to serve INSPRA members

NSPRA Tips and Tactics for the 2007-08 school year kicked off October 19 with a presentation on No Child Left Behind. It was also the start of a new format that Program VPs Kristine Liptrot and Peg Mannion are developing to facilitate more networking among members. Be ready to look for topics of discussion and find a group at the January session.

Annual Membership Meeting December 14

Plan to arrive at 8:30 a.m. at the Friday, December 14 session for the General Membership Annual Meeting. Agenda includes:

- ❖ Highlights from the last year
- ❖ Mentorship Program overview
- ❖ Web site initiative
- ❖ Upcoming programs
- ❖ How to get involved – overview of various jobs of INSPRA board members

The board will also allow time for questions and feedback.

Don't miss our drawing – Past President Melea Smith will hold a drawing for two scholarship awards provided to the Illinois chapter by NSPRA for being named a Blue Ribbon chapter. A free national membership will be awarded to one new INSPRA member, and a \$100 discount to the national seminar will be awarded to one of the participants in the mentorship program. The drawing will be held based on members present at the December meeting!

Are you an INSPRA Member who needs help?

One of the most popular services provided by INSPRA is the e-mail list-serv, "INSPRA Member Needs Help." All you have to do to use the service is create an email with that phrase in the subject line, write your question and e-mail contact information, and send it to cglatz@managementservices.org. Our association manager, Chris Glatz, will send it out to the membership, usually within 24 hours. Then, wait for responses to arrive in your Inbox. This service will be revised slightly when we launch the members-only Web site in 2008. It is the organization's goal to create a bulletin board of "Needs Help" issues for all members to review as issues arise.

Midwest Foundations Conference February 8

The 2008 Midwest Education Foundations Conference is a must-attend for anyone involved in school foundations – board members, executive directors and communications staff who have a role in assisting their district's foundations. To view a copy of the brochure go to www.inspra.org/events_programs/conference.html.