

INSPRATIONS

Spring 2009-10

www.inspra.org

Illinois Chapter
National School Public Relations Association

And, the Winner Is...

If you're a star watcher like me, you've memorized the long award show schedule that started weeks ago and continues through the end of March. The Golden Globes, Emmys, Grammys and miscellaneous shows have prompted you to stock up on snacks and rearrange your schedule so you won't miss the arrival of the stars or one minute of the shows. Award and recognition season has arrived. Well, it is also award and recognition season at INSPRA.

Friday, May 7, the Distinguished Service Awards (DSA) Breakfast, scheduled for Meridian Banquets in Rolling Meadows, honors deserving school district staff, volunteers and community members in eight categories. The reception and registration begins at 8:30 AM. Breakfast starts at 9:15 AM. The highlight of the ceremony is the announcement of the Public Relations Ambassador of the Year and the PR Professional of the Year Awards. This is your district's chance to recognize stakeholders who serve as public relations ambassadors for education.

Since this is my last presidential communication, I want to spotlight and thank the members of my Executive Committee and Board. Each one has represented your interests in a thoughtful and generous manner. This year was a challenge with the resignations of one Board member, one Regional Director, and one Vice President due to changes in their personal and professional lives. So many INSPRA board and general members served on committees or assumed more than their role to offer the general membership outstanding Tips and Tactics sessions, conferences, and contests. You are to be commended and honored.

Recognition is a huge contributor to building morale. Please take the time to nominate those who deserve recognition in your district for the DSAs. Better yet, please express your appreciation for the dedicated individuals who work as a team to make INSPRA an award-winning communications organization.

So, polish your shoes, select your best outfit, and get ready for May 7. I will look for you on the red carpet.

Mindy Ward
INSPRA President

Distinguished Service Awards Deadline Extended --Keynote Speaker Announced

The deadline for the Distinguished Service Awards has been extended to Friday, March 19. All entries must be emailed to cglatz@managementservices.org. This is your annual opportunity to honor individuals that are spreading the good word about your school district. Don't miss out!

The 2010 Distinguished Service Awards Breakfast will be held on Friday, May 7, at the Meridian Banquets in Rolling Meadows. This year's keynote speaker is Stacy Holland, an 18-year veteran of school public relations and the recipient of the 2007 INSPRA Public Relations Professional of the Year award.

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FOIA for School Districts: Workshop Plus Practical Tips

Tips and Tactics

Program & Q/A--Friday, March 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

ARAMARK , 2300 Warrenville Road, Downers Grove, IL

The new Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines pose different communication challenges for school districts. Join INSPRA colleagues in learning the in's and out's of new regulations from the official source, and then hear how one school district has creatively responded.

Sara Gallagher, Assistant Attorney General, Public Access Bureau, Illinois Attorney General's Office, will conduct a workshop and answer questions on the new FOIA regulations and how they impact school districts in Illinois. Note: please download materials in advance from the Attorney General's web site:

http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/foia_educationalmaterials.aspx

Allison Strupeck, Supervisor of Communication Services in Community Unit School District 300, will share her district's online FOIA program that demonstrates accountability and transparency without adding to the staff workload. Learn what happened when it became easier than ever for the public and media to access information. **Networking/lunch at 11:30 a.m.**

INSPIRA Foundations Conference a Success

With nearly 120 people in attendance, the 2010 Midwest Education Foundations Conference, Taking the Next Step: What Will Yours Be? was a great success. Thank you to the committee again for all their time and effort: Bill Clow, Terry Ryan, Tony Hamilton, Buzz Perry, Chris Glatz, and Bridget McGuiggan. Our keynote speaker, Jodi Bender Sweeney, did a remarkable job with her presentation. She discussed what it takes for a foundation to set a real vision, develop a case around that and then raise significant funds through major gifts – moving your foundation to the next level. The panel presentation, moderated by Jim Collogan of the National School Foundation Association, addressed the topic of major donors and their relevance to your school and K-12 foundation. The afternoon portion of the workshop concluded with eight roundtables, all of which provided attendees with new ideas to implement for the coming year.

A note of thanks to Harris Connect, Horace Mann Insurance and Superior Print Services of Lemont for their sponsorship of this event.

A Testament to INSPRA

Dear INSPRA colleagues:

As I enter the last few months of my career as an Illinois educator, I am taking stock of many aspects of my career. One process I am undertaking in this vein is to recognize and say thanks to those that helped and supported me. When I became a superintendent of schools in 1998, it quickly became clear to me that effective communications with both internal and external communities were crucial. As I looked around for assets to help me with this challenge, I found NSPRA and INSPRA. My first experience with either was to attend a national conference where I also attended the Illinois reception, and met many Illinois members who proved to be helpful and inviting. Working with INSPRA over the years was both enjoyable and productive for me. INSPRA, and in many specific instances individual INSPRA members, have been very helpful to me over the last 12 years. I speak highly of INSPRA to Board members and my fellow superintendents. By example, INSPRA sets and meets very high standards as a professional association. The consistently high professionalism and focus on what is most important is clear and gratifying. Thank you INSPRA and INSPRA members for all that you did to help me. Our school district is a better organization because of your efforts, and I was certainly a more effective superintendent because of your efforts and resources.

Dr. Charles McCormick, Superintendent, Kaneland Community Unit School District 302