

KALEIDOSCOPE

EXPLORING THE MANY FACETS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Fall/Winter 2004



What Ever Happened To Shades of Gray?

by Anne Sceia Klein, Fellow PRSA

(The following is reprinted from our Summer 1993 issue. Unfortunately, the problem seems only to have gotten worse.)

The answer is either yes or no.

If you don't agree, you disagree.

If you favor one view, you oppose the other.

If you are not for me, you are against me.

If it's not black, it's white.

Wait! Let's hold it for a second and ask: What ever happened to shades of gray?

Adherents at opposite poles of today's key issues each feel that they can shed valuable light on things. But as polarity grows, hard-nosed advocates are shedding very little light on the middle ground between the poles where real solutions lie.

Academics have a name for this either/or response. It's "dual thinking."

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Honors

PRSA HONORS CHRIS LUKACH

The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) presented to AKA associate Chris Lukach its Gold Key Award at its National Convention in New York in October. PRSSA is an offshoot of the Public Relations Society of American (PRSA), the world's largest professional organization for public relations practitioners.

Chris is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Rowan University, where he received a bachelor of arts degree in communications with a specialty in public relations. He joined AKA this summer and now is an integral part of the team, providing public relations support for several AKA clients.

The Gold Key Award is the highest national honor given to members of PRSSA who demonstrate academic excellence in public relations and leadership qualities. Chris was very active in the Rowan PRSSA chapter where he served as president and assistant editor of the chapter's newsletter. The Rowan chapter also was honored at the PRSSA convention as "Outstanding Chapter in the Nation" for the period during which Chris was president. Anne Klein has served as the chapter's professional advisor for over 25 years.

Chris received a number of other awards during his academic career, including the Anthony J. Fulginiti Gold Medallion as outstanding graduating public relations senior, presented by the Philadelphia chapter of PRSA; Rowan University PRSSA's Superior Student Award; the Philadelphia Public Relations Association's Brodey Student



Chris Lukach receives his Gold Key award from Sarah Yeaney, national president of the Public Relations Student Society of America.

Achievement Award; and PRSA's Stephen D. Pisinski Memorial Award.

Although busy with his client responsibilities at AKA, Chris is also active in professional organizations. He is helping coordinate the silent auction for the PRSA Philadelphia chapter's annual Pepperpot Awards ceremony in December, and serving on the 2005 Hall of Fame committee for the Philadelphia Public Relations Association. Coincidentally, it was at the 2004 ceremony, where Anne Klein was inducted into the PPRA Hall of Fame, that Chris received the Brodey Award.

AKA WELCOMES NEW ASSOCIATE

Michael S. Gross, who previously served as special project coordinator for a large southern New Jersey township, has joined AKA as an associate. Mike planned and executed numerous events,



Mike Gross

in addition to speech writing for the mayor for all township events. He has had extensive experience in media writing and contact, community outreach, and relationship building.

Mike also has worked with the Philadelphia Sports

Writers Association as an event planner. He helped to coordinate and oversee its annual award banquet, including the centennial banquet that featured a panel of more than 100 honored athletes and journalists with hundreds of media and sports enthusiasts in attendance. Mike received his bachelor of arts degree in

communications, specializing in public relations from Rowan University where he was an account executive in the student PR firm of the school's PRSSA chapter.

FIRM WINS JASPER AWARD

The Jersey Shore Public Relations and Advertising Association awarded AKA a Silver "Jasper" award for "Making Investment News," a program carried out for the National Association of Investors Corp. (NAIC). AKA worked with cable network CNBC on a series of features titled "Real People, Real Investing," featuring members of several NAIC investment clubs discussing their clubs' backgrounds, investment strategies and results. AKA prepared the participants for their five-minute segments with interview tips, anticipated questions, and talking points; worked with the producers on logistics; and distributed news releases and advisories announcing each club's CNBC appearance to local media outlets.

AGENCY REPORT CARDS

by John Moscatelli, COO

Each year, we survey our clients to measure their satisfaction with our service. While we seek feedback throughout the year, we believe it also makes sense to ask in a more structured way, and we do that through our "Agency Report Card." This gives our clients an opportunity to share their insights with us. This year, our requests for client evaluation were mailed in early September, and we are very pleased with the feedback this initiative generated. Asked what they liked most about AKA, clients said they value our professional staff, our responsiveness and the personal attention they receive. While we are gratified with all the positive feedback, we especially want to hear how we can improve our service and better meet our clients' needs.

Client News

AKA helped publicize the inaugural **Friends Life Care at Home** Halloween Bone Run, Walk 'n Roll. The event, to promote osteoporosis prevention and disability awareness, was held at scenic Norristown (Pa.) Farm Park on Oct. 24. The Halloween-themed, family-friendly event consisted of a 5k run, four-mile walk, health fair and Halloween costume contest. It attracted more than 100 participants and raised money for the National Osteoporosis Foundation. Osteoporosis affects many members of Friends Life Care at Home, which provides services to allow members to remain in their own homes as they age, rather than move to a nursing home.

Global information provider **Thomson Scientific**, a business of the Thomson Company, commissioned AKA to compile case studies about customers' uses of Thomson products. AKA associates spoke with customers from the United States, the Czech Republic,



AKA staff members (l-to-r) Chris Lukach, Tara Bennett, John Moscatelli and Mike Gross participate in the Friends Life Care at Home Halloween Bone Run, Walk 'n Roll.

Australia and Korea, among others. Thomson – whose products include the Web of Science[®], a leading research resource for academic, corporate and government librarians worldwide – uses the case studies in various marketing materials. They have also been highlighted on the company's Web site and referenced in speeches at international events.

AKA worked with **Main Line Health** on a comprehensive public information and education campaign to explain to residents of Lower Merion Township, a suburb of Philadelphia, the need for a zoning plan specifically dealing with hospitals. The lack of specific hospital zoning was having a serious impact on the system's ability to operate its hospitals efficiently and to meet the long-term needs of patients and physicians. As a result of extensive work with the community, the township's board of commissioners recently voted unanimously to create a hospital district zone for Lankenau Hospital. Community outreach with neighbors of Bryn Mawr Hospital is underway.

Long-time client the **National Association of Investors Corporation** (NAIC) has asked AKA to publicize findings of the Voice of the American Shareholder Poll. The poll, conducted by Harris

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AKA HELPS NORAMCO HELP ITS COMMUNITY

The city of Wilmington, Delaware, is well known as a center for the chemical industry. One company based there is Noramco, Inc., a pharmaceutical manufacturing subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson.

Noramco asked Anne Klein & Associates to help in planning and implementing a community outreach program. Our work has evolved into a multi-faceted program that has involved local civic leaders in a series of wide-ranging initiatives.

AKA and Noramco began with the premise that the best way to determine what help would be most valuable to the community would be to ask the community itself. So the program started with research. AKA convened focus groups of Noramco employees and conducted interviews with local community leaders to identify community issues and needs. Then, to get a better handle on who actually comprised the community, AKA staff members personally drove the neighborhood streets, making note of all businesses, churches, schools and other organizations. We then compiled contact information and began telephoning each of them.

From these conversations, AKA learned that while the community has many groups with programs intended to help community residents, there was no unified structure to identify needs that were not being met. Based on that information, in July 2003 AKA and Noramco invited key community leaders to a

meeting to discuss in detail how Noramco could play a more active role. Attendees at this first meeting included representatives from seven community nonprofit organizations, along with Noramco senior management and AKA



Johnson & Johnson executive Michael Bzdak (left) presents a \$90,000 grant check from J&J's Bridge to Employment program to members of Christina Partners for Excellence (CPE), a nonprofit foundation supporting student achievement in the Christina (Del.) School District. The grant was obtained with help from the Noramco Neighbors program.

representatives. From that first meeting has evolved a committee known as "Noramco Neighbors." In the ensuing months, its activities have grown by leaps and bounds.

When the Noramco Neighbors committee identified education as an area of needed emphasis, Noramco encouraged the formation of a special task force to pursue a grant from Johnson & Johnson's

Bridge to Employment program. By providing guidance and assistance in developing the grant application, Noramco was instrumental in helping the community task force qualify for a \$90,000 Bridge to Employment grant to help middle school students participate in a three-year program of after-school support, service learning, mentoring and exposure to healthcare careers. In September, Noramco celebrated the grant with a kickoff-luncheon for community leaders and received special accolades during the formal presentation, which AKA helped to organize.

Noramco Neighbors was the motivating force behind a first-ever Community Resource Guide published in September by the Christina School District. The need for such a guide became apparent during the Noramco Neighbors meetings. The school district took it on as an official project, and Noramco agreed to underwrite printing of the guide, which is distributed free to parents and students through area schools.

Further initiatives are planned, with subcommittees focusing on education and career development, youth health issues, and technology. And the reaction has been overwhelmingly favorable. Typical are comments like those of Dr. Robert Oesterling, director of clinical and field experiences at Delaware State University, who wrote that Noramco Neighbors "is without question an outstanding program, and we should use it as a model for education.... [It] demonstrates how businesses can give back to their communities."

Client News (continued)

Interactive, is a quarterly survey of Americans who own stocks and stock mutual funds, and measures key trends in shareowners' investing behavior and attitudes. NAIC is a nonprofit organization of investment clubs and individual investors, dedicated to providing a sound program of investment education and information to help its members become successful lifetime investors.

Reinforcing the commitment of the Catholic Church to South Philadelphia, Catholic Health Care Services, a division of **Catholic Human Services (CHS)** of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, agreed to purchase the assets of the Methodist Hospital Nursing Center from Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals. Anne Klein & Associates worked closely with CHS secretary Fr. Joseph A. Tracy to

draft communications materials and announce the acquisition. The nursing home was renamed St. Monica Manor in memory of Monsignor Aloysius F. Farrell, pastor of St. Monica Parish from 1944 to 1975. In the early 1950s, he identified a need for a Catholic nursing home in South Philadelphia. With this purchase, Msgr. Farrell's vision became a reality.

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(Continued from front page.)

To us, it's more like "duel thinking," with sharp-edged points that invite combat, not compromise.

Communications itself is part of the problem. In our '90s world with compressed time frames and 10-second sound bites, we don't have precious time for discourse, for compromise. As communicators, we see dual thinking popping up more often, especially as we witness the continuing segmentation of our population according to ever more closely drawn special interest groups.

Not everything is so simplistic that there can be only two sides to the issue. Let's take some time to hear what the other person is saying. Let's not lose our freedom to have discourse, to offer viable options and to effect constructive compromise.

When we see shades of gray, we build consensus and form coalitions. We avoid polarized viewpoints that allow someone to win only by forcing someone else to lose. *A.S.K.*

NICE WORDS

"... thank you for leading us down the path we have been following for the last couple of years in developing the relationships with our neighbors. ...the effort has been worthwhile."

*Vince Kranz, Manager
Environmental, Health and Safety
Noramco Inc.*

Anne Klein & Associates is a public relations consulting firm based in the Philadelphia region, with clients throughout the United States. It is a member of

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