

KALEIDOSCOPE

EXPLORING THE MANY FACETS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Summer 2013



Honors & Awards

CONDA PART OF WINNING TEAM AT PR INSTITUTE

Senior Associate Kathryn Conda was part of the team that took home top honors at this year's PR Institute, hosted by the Philadelphia chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. The PR Institute is an advanced course for young professionals, providing an opportunity to sharpen and build knowledge of industry best practices under the guidance of seasoned professionals in the field.



The winning PR Institute team included AKCG's Kathryn Conda (left) and team mentor Chris Hatch (in white jacket) of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

This year, the PR Institute worked with Rebuilding Together Philadelphia, the local affiliate of Rebuilding Together, a nonprofit organization working to revitalize neighborhoods and preserve affordable homeownership by providing critical home repairs.

For eight intense weeks, each team competed to design a comprehensive communications plan for RTP before presenting it to a judging panel of client representatives and senior-level public relations professionals.

This is the second time an AKCG staff member has been on the PR Institute winning team. Senior Associate Kim Ciesla was on the team last year that won for the Support Center for Child Advocates.

Getting Past Denial - Before It's Too Late

by Anne Sceia Klein, Fellow PRSA and Christopher J. Lukach, APR

We continually ask ourselves, "Why do executive leaders live in a world of denial when an issue looms on the horizon or a crisis situation is about to explode – literally or figuratively? Why are executives so confident the issue will never surface and they can ignore it?"

How many times do we have to see another example of a leader in denial? Or hear another insincere or pathetic apology when the issue being denied erupts in controversy? Or see crisis communications counsel engaged days or even weeks *after* the issue has become front-page news?

It just keeps happening ... Penn State, Rutgers, the IRS, Paula Deen, etc., etc.

From our years of experience assisting clients prepare for issues or a crisis, we know that getting in front of the story is the best way to minimize its impact. Planning in advance and telling the truth ... being forthright ... saves reputations and

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FIRM WINS PYRAMID AWARDS

AKCG brought home two top prizes and an honorable mention from the annual Pyramid Awards ceremony in June. The awards, presented by the New Jersey chapter of PRSA, recognize excellence in public relations and communications by New Jersey practitioners.



Our work for client **New Jersey American Water** earned top honors in Digital Communications/Social Media, while our work with client **NuStart Energy Development, LLC** earned first place in Public/Governmental Affairs. Our media relations efforts for client **Mercy Home Health** earned an Honorable Mention in the Feature or News Article, Op-Ed category.

Photo: PRSA-NJ president Jennifer Tornetta presents the coveted Pyramid trophy to AKCG SVP and COO Chris Lukach.

ANNE RECOGNIZED BY AHA BOARD

The Central/Southern New Jersey Board of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association thanked AKCG founder and president Anne Klein in June for a decade of service. Anne served on the board of directors for six years, leading it as chairperson for two years. She was a member of the Go Red For Women Executive Leadership Team for six years and founded the Red Tie Brigade (for men) for the Southern NJ GRFW Luncheon (husband Jerry is a founding member of the Red Tie Brigade). In the photo at right, Howard Levite, M.D., president of the Central/Southern NJ Board, presents Anne with a plaque reading, "With sincere gratitude for your leadership and commitment to raise awareness and funds to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke."



Howard Levite, M.D. with Anne Klein

SJ BIZ RECOGNIZES BETH

South Jersey Biz magazine honored AKCG Vice President Beth Archer as one of this year's top "20 Under 40" business people. In the story – which made the magazine's front cover in May – Beth shares her many career accomplishments as well as her favorite smart phone app to keep everything organized at work and at home. Beth also was named to Drexel University's initial "40 Under 40" list in March.



Beth Archer at left

SOCMA WEBINAR

Senior VP Chris Lukach and VP Beth Archer presented a webinar entitled, "Navigating the News and Social Media during an Incident or Crisis," to members of the Society of Chemical Manufacturers and Affiliates. The team presented five best practices for chemical manufacturers in communicating with employees, neighbors and elected officials. They also reviewed the

principles that can preserve an organization's reputation during a crisis. After the online presentation, SOCMA members wanted know how to create a Community Advisory Panel, which AKCG has formed for several clients, as well as how to navigate resistance to preparedness.

CONDA IN ACTION

Senior Associate Kathryn Conda spoke to Temple University Professor Bill Wedo's Introduction to Public Relations class in April. Her guest lecture highlighted ways PR students can prepare for agency life after graduation and included simple networking tips to get their fledgling feet into the industry door. Kathryn is looking forward to lecturing again in the fall.

Kathryn also recently accepted a board position with the Philadelphia Public Relations Association. Beginning in July, Kathryn will serve as Chair of PPRA's Mentoring Committee. She will work to revitalize the existing mentorship program and pair rising stars with senior leaders in the field.

THE CROFT SOCIETY

In April, Chris attended a meeting of The Croft Society in New York, N.Y. Comprising esteemed independent

agency owners from around the country, The Croft Society grew out of the legendary agency owner roundtables hosted by PR management consultant Al Croft in Sedona, Ariz. (The group's name is a tribute to Croft, who passed away in late June.) In addition to constructive discussions and professional development programming, the group was treated to a behind-the-scenes look at the operations of the New York Stock Exchange and The Intrepid.

DOING HER PART

Senior Associate Kim Ciesla helped prepare a classic Philadelphia dinner with other Young Professionals Network members for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House on Chestnut Street (Philadelphia) in May. The Ronald McDonald House aims to provide a comfortable environment for families whose children are receiving care at the local pediatric hospitals. The house hosts up to 45 families and offers home-cooked meals daily that are provided by volunteers.

WE REMEMBER SHIRLEY BONNEM, AKCG SENIOR COUNSELOR

Shirley Bonnem, former Vice President of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, passed away in May. Shirley was an AKCG Senior Counselor for nearly a decade since her retirement from CHOP after 34 years. Shirley was widely recognized by the healthcare community for her work in public relations, marketing, development and government relations.



Shirley Bonnem

Shirley wrote widely on health services branding, communications management and other healthcare related topics in dozens of articles, several book chapters and two books. She had lectured throughout the United States and in Austria, China and Singapore.

Shirley was a wonderful lady and we will surely miss her and her wise counsel.

Client News

Members of the AKCG team visited St. Brigid's Farm, a working dairy in Kennedyville, Md., in May. AKCG recently began working with the **Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association**, and the farm tour gave our team members a first-hand glimpse into the milking process, as well as helpful insight into MDA dairy farmers' invaluable contribution to the economy. The team left with creative marketing ideas – and a new appreciation for the Jersey cow.

As part of a campaign to drive traffic to client **New Jersey American Water's** Facebook page, the AKCG team has been

busy photographing NJAW's mascot, Puddles the Duck, throughout the state. From the noble Battleship New Jersey in Camden to the iconic New Egypt Speedway – and even a trip to the Jersey Shore –

Puddles is one well-traveled duck! New Jersey American Water will post Puddles' travels online through the fall and ask fans and followers, "Where is Puddles?"



Puddles the Duck



AKCG's Chris Lukach (third from right) with Kim Ciesla and Kathryn Conda in front of him, tour a working dairy farm with team members from the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association, and a herd of Jersey cows in the background.

In July, AKCG Vice President Beth Archer played the role of public information officer at the annual **Plains All American Pipeline** Announced Spill Management Tabletop Exercise at the Plains Philadelphia facility. The exercise enhances Plains' ability to perform incident reporting functions, and to activate internal and external response capabilities.

AKCG led a social-media risk training session for members of an international client's social media team. Chris and Beth led the 25 attendees through a series of scenarios detailing crises and issues that could arise via social media channels and reaching consensus on their operational and communications responses.

AKCG provided round-the-clock support to a client in Norway facing a sensitive social media crisis. After working toward the situation's resolution, AKCG offered guidance on how the client can update its policies and standards to better prevent similar situations in the future.

AKCG is updating its Crisis Communications Manual offerings to best reflect the need for instantaneous communication via social media. Each scenario in the crisis communication manual now includes both a media statement for timely dissemination as well as recommended social media content. **St. Mary Medical Center** in Langhorne, Pa., for which AKCG wrote an award-winning manual in 2008, will receive the new format this summer.

AKCG Clients in the Media

In May, the morning news program, *Eye Opener Philly*, on TV station PHL17 featured **Mercy LIFE's** Caring Paws Pet Therapy Day as part of its weekly animal series. The segment highlighted ways seniors can reduce stress and loneliness – and even ease pain – through pet therapy at Mercy LIFE's Day Centers.

AKCG also secured a placement for Mercy LIFE in the July edition of the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's monthly publication, *Milestones*. The article showcased Pet Therapy Day and highlighted how senior participants in the program have the opportunity to interact with a variety of animals, exercising their motor and cognitive skills.

In June, Mercy LIFE celebrated its first annual PEER Graduation. PEER stands for Pennsylvania's Empowered Expert Residents, and AKCG EVP Jerry Klein, who doubles as our staff photographer, was on-hand to photograph the day's

special graduates. The seniors completed a training course on being advocates for other program members. We're looking forward to seeing Jerry's photos in some local papers this summer.

AKCG secured a placement in *Milestones* targeting baby boomers and seniors for the **Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association**. The July edition included a sizeable feature about the benefits of milk and dairy in preventing chronic illnesses such as osteoporosis and heart disease that commonly plague this age group.

On June 26, Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association sponsored the second annual Capital to Capitol ONE Ride, a 160-mile bicycle ride to raise awareness about childhood obesity. WGAL-TV, the NBC affiliate in Lancaster, Pa., came out to capture the excitement of the kickoff and help spread the message about dairy's role in maintaining a healthy weight.

Moxie Woman Magazine featured AKCG client **New Jersey American Water's** Director of Financial Planning and Analysis, Elba Deck, in its Summer 2013 issue. In the article, Elba shares her secrets to success both at her NJAW headquarters office in Voorhees and at home with her husband and teenage daughters. The issue, which includes a photo of Elba by Jerry, will be on newsstands all summer long!



Jerry Klein's photo of NJAW's Elba Deck appears in the Summer issue of Moxie Woman Magazine.

Getting Past Denial

minimizes the effect a poorly handled response can have on the bottom line.

What is your early warning system? It's easy. Have a gut that tells you to plan your strategy for the crisis or issue as soon as you sense something is amiss. Don't live in denial; the situation is not going to go away by itself. Plan for telling the truth; plan a sincere apology, if required, and develop a corrective action plan.

When you face the truth, there is no reason for denials. The consequence: penalties most likely will not be swift or severe. Negative public opinion may

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spike temporarily, but it will quickly return to pre-issue/pre-crisis levels. Truth always wins out. Your organization's reputation may even improve because of added respect you will gain by being truthful and correcting a problem.

Get past denial. Bring in the PR team in advance, even when there are no issues or crises on the horizon, so you have time to think about all the situations that could occur to damage your organization's reputation, and plan your responses. — *A.S.K. & C.J.L.*

NICE WORDS

"Let me belatedly thank you for the effective and professional job that you and your firm did for Berkshire School in April. You were superb, having been given only short notice and little time to organize the School's response. Every member of our Board of Trustees and the School's senior faculty was impressed with your performance.

I'll recommend you to anyone, and look forward to using your services again in the future should the need arise."

*Steve Norman
Chairman of the Board
The Berkshire School
Sheffield, Mass.*

Anne Klein Communications Group is a public relations consulting firm based in the Philadelphia region, with clients throughout the United States.

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