# The "Mark of Distinction" Recognition Program
# for NSPRA Chapters

## Entry Form
**(Please include this information with each individual entry)**

Chapter Name: Ohio School Public Relations Association (OHSPRA)

Chapter President: Crystal Davis

*President's contact information*

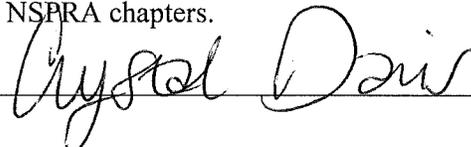District/Organization: Ohio School Boards Association

Address: 8050 N. High St., Suite 100

City/State/Zip Code: Columbus, Ohio 43235

Telephone: 614-540-4000, ext. 272    e-Mail: cdavis@ohioschoolboards.org

## Right to Use Materials Statement

On behalf of the Chapter, I agree that NSPRA has the right to use any materials, project/program examples, etc., submitted in this entry in Association print/online publications, on the website, and as "best practice" resources for NSPRA chapters.

Signature of Chapter President: _____

## Application Process Checklist

[✓] Each entry includes this cover form and the Entry Specifics form.

[✓] **A single PDF that includes links to related supplemental materials and examples is attached.** (If entering in more than one category, a single PDF for each category entry is attached or sent individually).

[✓] Chapter president has signed the "right to use materials" statement on the entry form.

[✓] **Entry is delivered no later than May 15** and sent to awards@nspra.org, subject line "Mark of Distinction."

# Mark of Distinction Entry Specifics

**Chapter:** OHSPRA (Ohio School Public Relations Assoc.)

## Please complete and include the information below for each individual entry

☐ **Section I: Membership Building**

- Current number of chapter members _____

- NSPRA-provided membership baseline number as of June 1 _____

- Number of chapter members who belong to NSPRA as of April 30 _____

═══════════════════════════════════════════════════════

☑ **Section II: Special Focus Areas**

    ☑   Category A – chapter has less than 50% NSPRA membership

    ☐   Category B – chapter has 50% or more NSPRA membership

☑ 1. Professional Development/PR Skill Building

☐ 2. Special PR/Communication Program, Project or Campaign

    ☐   One-time project/program (completed within a single year)

    ☐   Continuing annual project/program (repeats each year; demonstrate new/improved/revised components)

    ☐   Multi-year project/program (one-time only with defined start and end dates)

    ☐   Multi-year phased project/program (components implemented in clearly defined phases each year)

☐ 3. Coalition-Building/Collaborative Communication Effort

OHSPRA advocates for the field of school PR by demonstrating and publicizing the expertise and importance of communication experts and supporting their continuous improvement and professional development.

The association's mission is to facilitate support for and trust in education through comprehensive communications, public relations, and marketing efforts. To accomplish this, OHSPRA provides multiple opportunities throughout the year to allow its members to gain relevant, industry-related knowledge, network and form strong relationships with colleagues across the state. The association also promotes collaborative partnerships that provide innovative opportunities to allow members to be on the cutting edge of school PR and current educational initiatives.

For the past few years, OHSPRA has focused extensively on improving the quality of our professional development offerings, and providing a strong fiscal foundation for the chapter. After a review of the 2017-18 OHSPRA PD Plan, Chapter Goals & Progress Report, which are goals that were set at the 2017 Board retreat plus a progress report that I added to the plan to summarize everything in one document, (please copy and paste the following link into your browser if the hyperlink doesn't activate: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mg6sRlw1_wg4SgxYYXQ47v4bWPu4EQMY), 29 goals/targets were met in 2017-18, including (to name a few):

- Maintained elevated membership levels — during each of the past few years we've maintained or added to the number of OHSPRA members).
- Piloted an awards judging swap with WSPRA. In the end, the Board was not happy with this judging method because WSPRA had substantially more entries as OHSPRA, which made a lot more work for our chapter than anticipated.
- Boosted OHSPRA-member participation at activities related to OSBA's Capital Conference. There were six sessions presented by OHSPRA members during the conference (compared to two the year before), OHSPRA hosted a social networking event and co-hosted the OHSPRA/OSBA Idea Exchange. The Board decided the extra sponsorship dollars brought in in 2016-17 should be used for this member networking event, which was well received, however, attendance was lower than expected.
- Re-evaluated our awards program which included adding four new award categories. This awards program helps members benchmark practices and advocate for their positions. It also provides recognition and feedback on how to improve and what to keep doing well.
- Collected the highest dollar amount ever in sponsorship dollars for the chapter. At Spring Conference this year, we also added social event sponsorship opportunities, which worked out better than expected.
- In a paper ballot vote before our membership, at Spring Conference more than 2/3 of members in attendance voted in favor of proposed changes to the association's bylaws relating to the nominating committee and length of the presidential term. These amendments will go before NSPRA's Executive Board for approval at their July meeting.
- Continued improving our system of using all-electronic awards entries and judging, membership applications and membership surveys.
- Jam-packed more sessions into our Spring Conference program than ever before, offering two days full of high-quality professional development and networking opportunities for our members.

Throughout the course of the 2017-18 year, we continued additional financial securities that came about by changing the way we budgeted for Spring Conference to designate more sponsorship money to help pay conference expenses; and by upping the amount of sponsorship dollars brought in to an amazing $22,500 this year! This far exceeded our goal of $15,000 and went significantly above the $16,500 collected last year (which also exceeded the 2016-17 goal of $15,000). Two new partnerships were formed in 2017-18 with Allerton Hill and Roetzel Consulting Solutions, while continuing our existing partnerships with vendors School Messenger/West, Blackboard, PeachJar, and SiteImprove. When it got close to our Spring Conference, we actually had vendors fighting to sponsor the social events, which we opened up to sponsorship for the first time this year! All of this has put the chapter in a much more fiscally secure position and has allowed the Board to focus more on providing strong PD programming rather than worry about the budget.

The OHSPRA Board of Directors is comprised of some of Ohio's top school communicators, allowing the Board to keep up with the latest news and trends. While maintaining current partnerships with other educational and communication organizations (Ohio Department of Education, Ohio School Boards Association, Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Public Relations Society of America), the Board desired to develop even more partnerships and sponsorships to implement professional development events for our 157 members and 105 member districts/organizations. For the first time this year, OHSPRA partnered with Real Choice Ohio, a non-profit that promotes the successes of public schools. One OHSPRA Board member now sits on the Real Choice Ohio Board.

As in the past, in 2017-18, OHSPRA PD events and initiatives included a day-long October workshop in partnership with the Ohio School Boards Association. This workshop brought in less registrants when compared to the same workshop the previous year, yet attendance was higher than in 2015. There were 22 participants in 2015, 63 in 2016 and 34 in 2017. OHSPRA also continued its mentor and scholarship programs geared toward those who are new to school PR. One member was awarded a conference scholarship to attend Spring Conference. Additionally, OHSPRA's 2-day Spring Conference in April (#AmplifyYourStory or https://twitter.com/search?q=AmplifyYourStory&src=typd) was an overwhelming success with more than 110 attendees.

Chapter communications focused on providing PD by highlighting best practices, news and resources in our newsletter (including member spotlights), on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/ohspra) and Twitter (https://twitter.com/OHSPRA) and in refining the website (http://ohspra.org). Our members now enjoy more robust resources available in the members-only Networking Center (http://ohspra.ss9.sharpschool.com/cms/one.aspx?portalId=3090&pageId=93989) and Resource Center (http://ohspra.ss9.sharpschool.com/cms/one.aspx?pageId=93924) which allows members to share and store communication materials for the future use. You can log in with username and password of kbasson at http://ohspra.ss9.sharpschool.com/gateway/Login.aspx?sso=0&ReturnUrl=%2fcms%2fOne.aspx%3fportalId%3d3090%26pageId%3d93924.

All other documents pertaining to the descriptions above and more are labeled in folders by topic and can be found on a Google drive at:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=16HHuMW3qIdOYUdEhXlQhkhBmqtalTOVr.
Inside each folder on the drive, please look first for the document named "Explainer" which explains the items contained in each particular topic's folder.