2020 MOSPRA Mark of Distinction Award Application

“Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Preparation Study Cohort”

The Missouri School Public Relations Association is pleased to present our 2020 NSPRA “Mark of Distinction” Award application for our Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Preparation Study Cohort. This year all of us have faced challenges that have called for changes in how we approach our work, and this includes how MOSPRA offers services to members. As those evaluating our application will note, several of the opportunities we provide to members were either delayed or canceled this year; however, we will provide evidence of the plan, examples of completed work, and samples of past documentation of the program.

Background and Overview of Program

For more than 25 years, MOSPRA has offered assistance to members and non-members wishing to obtain their Accreditation in Public Relations (APR). In the early years, assistance was provided in a less formalized manner. A member who had obtained his or her APR would act as the moderator of in-person study sessions. This was effective, but was hindered by the inability for members to easily gather together (scheduling, travel time, etc.). Several years ago, Stephanie Smith, APR, (Fort Osage School District) approached the MOSPRA Board with a proposal to formalize the program. The Board approved the effort and Stephanie, along with others, developed a program that could be delivered both online and in person. The program is currently chaired by Michelle Mueller, APR, (Ritenour School District, St. Louis), and it continues to evolve and improve. With the exception of two brief in-person meetings at the beginning and end of the school year, the cohort meets online via the Join.me webinar software. Guest presenters with specific expertise often join the cohort facilitator. Members of the cohort are also encouraged to form smaller study groups to work through the process.

MOSPRA has 16 active members who have obtained their APR credentials with many more in pipeline. (Unofficially, MOSPRA is in the top five of NSPRA state chapters with number of accredited members.)
Chapter Standing

MOSPRA is in good standing with the national association and meets the following criteria:

- Maintain a minimum of 10 NSPRA members among the membership as required in NSPRA Policy 260.1 Chapters – Purpose and Formation;
- Meet at least once during the fiscal year;
- Submit the required Annual Chapter Cash Flow Report by Oct. 30 of the year;
- Submit a current chapter membership contact list by Oct. 30 of the year;
- Submit the names of newly elected chapter officers following an annual election;
- Adhere to its chapter bylaws.
- *All activities, projects or programs submitted must be completed between May 1 and April 30 and should relate to the chapter purposes stated in the section above. (*As noted above, we will share samples from previous work, much of which would have been used this year, but due to COVID-19, we were unable to fully implement each aspect of the plan.)*

Section II: Special Focus Areas

Category A: chapters with less than 50% NSPRA membership

1. Professional Development/PR Skill-Building

The entry should show documentation and evidence of chapter programs/activities and clearly explain the program or activity. Judging considerations include:

Impact of overall year-long effort:

As noted earlier, MOSPRA’s submission for the Mark of Distinction Award is specifically for the 2019-2020 school year; however, the program is ongoing and has been in place for many years. The overall impact is that participants in the program develop a much higher level of professionalism in public relations. Not every individual who joins the cohort completes the rigorous process of completing their APR, but many do (and those who don’t still benefit from the study program).
Chapter goals and objectives for programs/activities:

MOSPRA Board Strategic Plan: Strategy 1.3.2: An Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) chairperson (or co-chairpersons) will provide resources and support to members seeking to obtain their APR. Ideally, there will be a co-chair from each side of the state.

View MOSPRA Strategic Plan, 2018 – 2021

Documentation and copies of conference/workshop/meeting programs and agendas, marketing materials, tip sheets and/or PowerPoint presentations distributed to participants:

Marketing: The APR Cohort Program is marketed through the MOSPRA Update e-newsletter and through announcements/emails provided by the program chair.

APR Preparatory Email (Dated July 27, 2018, but information carried over to the 2019-2020 Cohort)

MOSPRA APR Candidate Survey

APR Study Cohort Interest Email

Meeting presentations:

Steps to the APR (This presentation was part of the 2018 and 2019 MASA/MOSPRA Spring Conference (and was planned for the 2020 conference which was canceled). It is dated 2018 but was part of the 2019-20 potential candidate breakout session.)

MOSPRA APR Study Syllabus 2019-20

Cohort Online Presentations

Presentation 1: What To Know

Presentation 2: Research

Presentation 3: Planning 1

Presentation 4: Planning 2

Presentation 5: Implementation & Evaluation (1)
Examples of specific programs/activities (i.e., crisis counsel, contests and awards, etc.)
Not applicable

Identification of target audience and participation/attendance lists

Spring 2019 Membership Survey (includes questions regarding “interest in obtaining APR)

MOSPRA APR Candidate Survey (Dated June 2018, but data carried over to 2019-20)

Documentation/demonstration of measurable outcomes, effectiveness and success of the program/activity

Due to the pandemic, we were not able to do a post-program survey. Success of program may be measured in number of participants and number of those achieving their APR.

List of those currently participating in the program:

1. Melissa McConnell, Belton
2. Tim Krakowiak, Poplar Bluff
3. Anthony Dobson, Lindbergh
4. McKenzie Magnus, Kirkwood
5. Chuck McPherson, Northwest
6. Matt Lichtenstein, Dunklin
7. Ray Weikel, Kansas City Public Schools
8. Laurie Nehring
9. Derek Duncan, Parkway
10. Chantal Chandler, Special School District, St. Louis
11. Laura Wagner, Fort Zumwalt
12. Marci Minor, Mexico
13. Sheba Clarke, Grandview
14. Lana Snodgras, West Plains
15. Alex Fees, Rockwood
16. Beth Johnston, Lindbergh
Below is a list of all MOSPRA members (and non-members) who attained their APR (by year when data is available). Those in red participated in the current format of the APR Cohort program. Those in green participated in earlier MOSPRA cohorts.

1. Paul Tandy, Parkway (Eastern Region)
2. Chris Tennill, Clayton (Eastern Region)
3. Stephanie Smith, Fort Osage (Western Region)
4. Nicole Kirby, Park Hill (Western Region)
5. Jim Dunn, Dunn & Associates (Western Region)
6. Cindy Gibson, UNICOM (Eastern Region)
8. Mickey Schoonover, Pattonville (Eastern Region)
15. Tammy Henderson, North Kansas City (Summer 2018) (Western Region)
17. April Bryant, Orchard Farm (Spring 2019) (Eastern Region)
18. Matt Deichmann, Francis Howell (Spring 2019) (Eastern Region)

Former MoSPRA members with APR who are still in Missouri:

1. Cathy Orta, retired, Rockwood (Eastern Region)
2. Nez Savala (St. Louis metro area)- PRSA membership - 2015
3. Kim Cranston (St. Louis area)
5. Sarah Potter, Missouri University of Science & Technology (2017) (Mid-State Region)
Explanation of how program/activity relates to NSPRA’s Goals and Objectives

The MOSPRA APR Cohort Program relates to so many of the NSPRA Goals and Objectives it’s difficult to be specific; however, those areas most directly related include:

**Goal 1. NSPRA will be the professional organization that is indispensable to school public relations professionals and other education leaders.**

1. NSPRA members will have the skills they need to plan and implement an effective public relations program valuing inclusion and diversity.
2. NSPRA members will be recognized and valued as trusted advisors and members of school/district leadership teams.

**Goal 2. NSPRA will be the recognized leader and authority on school public relations.**

4. NSPRA members will use new and emerging communication technology to expand outreach and engage all stakeholders, including students, parents, staff and community members, in the schools.

**Other relevant examples of chapter’s professional development/PR skill-building efforts:**

MOSPRA is committed to assisting members as they work to achieve expertise in the field of school communications, public relations and marketing.

Sample MOSPRA professional development and skill building efforts:

**Fall Conference:** MOSPRA hosts an annual Fall Conference that in which one major topic is chosen. Participants have time during the two-day conference to “deep dive” into the subject. View our Fall Conference history. The MOSPRA Fall Conference is a past NSPRA “Mark of Distinction” Award recipient.

**MASA/MOSPRA Spring Conference:** MOSPRA joins with the Missouri Association of School Administrators to host a powerful three-day conference that includes breakout sessions on communications, legal matters, leadership, technology and much more. While the 2020 conference was canceled due to the pandemic, evaluators may View the 2019 Conference Program. The joint MOSPRA/MAESA Conference is a past NSPRA “Mark of Distinction” Award recipient.

[Colleague Connections (Mentoring)]
Monthly Regional Meetings: The Regional meetings allow those from the Eastern, Western, Ozark and Mid-State areas opportunity to come together to share the work they are doing and to receive professional development.

“Rogue” Sub-Regional Meeting: MOSPRA has several smaller sub-regional groups that meet across the state. These meetings allow members (and non-members) to come together without having to travel significant distances to attend regional meetings. The “Rogue” program is a past NSPRA “Mark of Distinction” Award recipient.

Annual Summer “One-Person PR Office Workshops.” The MOSPRA "One-Person PR Office Workshop" is a past NSPRA "Mark of Distinction" Award recipient.

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Final Thoughts: MOSPRA is proud to present our application for the 2020 NSPRA Mark of Distinction. The APR Study Cohort program, along with other professional growth opportunities, allows our members to better serve their school districts.