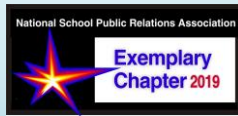


The “Mark of Distinction” Recognition Program for NSPRA Chapters



Program Description & Guidelines

Purpose:

The annual NSPRA Mark of Distinction Recognition Program recognizes the efforts of state chapters in supporting NSPRA’s mission of building support for education through responsible public relations that leads to success for all students. This includes:

- Developing and carrying out activities/projects/programs related to NSPRA’s Mission, Goals and Objectives;
- Working to promote the importance of effective communication as a management function at both the district and school level;
- Enhancing and elevating the role of the school public relations professional;
- Providing professional development and support for chapter members and other education leaders in the state;
- Advocating for students and schools through coalition-building and engagement efforts that connect schools and communities in shared responsibility for education.

Requirements and Criteria:

- Chapters must be in “good standing” with the Association, which requires the chapter to:
 - ✓ 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.
- Only activities, projects or programs developed and implemented under the auspices of the chapter or in named collaboration with another association, organization or group will be considered. Activities, projects or programs that chapter members engage in at their own districts will not be considered eligible for “chapter” recognition unless evidence is shown that this is a specific component of an inclusive chapter effort.

Recognitions:

Chapter recognitions are divided into two sections:

Section I – Membership Building: focuses on building NSPRA membership at the state level;

Section II – Special Focus Areas: recognizes chapter efforts in developing programs and activities relevant to the core purpose and overall function of NSPRA chapters.

Chapters may enter one or more of the specific recognition areas. For example, a chapter may submit an entry for *Section I: Membership Building* and also for any or all of the special focus areas in *Section II (Professional Development/PR Skill-Building, Special PR/Communication Program, Project or Campaign, Coalition-Building/Collaborative Communication Efforts)* or for any combination of the recognition areas, **up to a maximum of four entries. Only one entry may be submitted per each Special Focus Area of Section II.**

Please note: Special Focus Area recognitions are divided into eligibility categories.

Section I: Membership Building

Eligibility: All chapters in good standing are eligible to enter.

Description: Chapter initiates and maintains a concerted effort to increase the number of chapter members who belong to NSPRA. **The goal is to increase chapter membership in NSPRA to 50% or better.** NSPRA will provide starting membership baseline numbers (based on May membership count) to chapters by June 15. The entry must show documentation and evidence of the chapter's active membership recruitment efforts. This could include as applicable:

- Chapter's membership marketing/recruitment campaign plan;
- Chapter's membership recruitment materials (brochures, letters, email and social media messaging, webpages, etc.);
- Links to chapter website information on membership and how it links to NSPRA's website;
- Participation in NSPRA Chapter Membership Incentive programs.
- Documentation of how membership materials are displayed at the chapter's meetings, conferences or at chapter booths at other education conferences;
- Examples of presentations/PowerPoints used to promote NSPRA membership;
- List of current chapter members (at the time entry is submitted).
- Other relevant examples of chapter's recruitment efforts.

Chapter Recognition Incentives for Membership Building

- ✓ **10% increase in NSPRA membership for the year:** One PR Power Hour
- ✓ **20% increase in NSPRA membership for the year:** One professional membership to NSPRA* and one PR Power Hour
- ✓ **30% or more increase in NSPRA membership for the year:** One professional membership to NSPRA*, one PR Power Hour, and a \$200 discount on one Seminar registration**
- ✓ **Overall NSPRA membership recruitment effort/campaign:** In addition to recognition for increases in membership, chapters will be judged on their overall recruitment effort. To be considered for this extra recognition, a chapter must have increased NSPRA

membership by a 10% minimum. Incentives awarded for the overall campaign are an additional PR Power Hour and a copy of *Making Communication Work for You and Your Schools*.

Section II: Special Focus Areas

Eligibility: All chapters in good standing are eligible to enter in their designated category.

Submissions are limited to one entry per Special Focus Area.

There are two entry categories for the Special Focus Area recognitions:

- **Category A** – chapters with **less than 50% NSPRA membership**
- **Category B** – chapters with **50% or more NSPRA membership**

- 1. Professional Development/PR Skill-Building** – Chapter plans and provides a variety of programs/activities throughout the year that are designed to support the professional growth and status of members and improve the communication skills of all educators (administrators, board members, teachers, support staff, etc.). This can include but is not limited to, conferences and workshops, chapter meeting programs, member mentor programs, PR counsel and crisis support efforts, contests and awards, and activities to raise the visibility of the school PR profession.

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;
- Chapter goals and objectives for programs/activities;
- Documentation and copies of conference/workshop/meeting programs and agendas, marketing materials, tip sheets and/or PowerPoint presentations distributed to participants;
- Examples of specific programs/activities (i.e., crisis counsel, contests and awards, etc.);
- Identification of target audience and participation/attendance lists;
- Documentation/demonstration of measurable outcomes, effectiveness and success of the program/activity;
- Explanation of how program/activity relates to NSPRA’s Goals and Objectives;
- Other relevant examples of chapter’s professional development/PR skill-building efforts.

Category A Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. One PR Power Hour
3. Copy of *Rubrics of Practice and Suggested Measures* benchmarking resource

Category B Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. One PR Power Hour
3. 50% discount on one New Professionals Pre-Seminar Workshop
4. 50% discount on one APR Prep Pre-Seminar Workshop

- 2. Special PR/Communication Program, Project or Campaign** – Chapter plans and implements a program, project or campaign with a specific goal (i.e., education advocacy; communicating high-interest topics such as Common Core State Standards; school budgets/funding; communication accountability (CAP) research; development of a product

for sale; public service campaign; special event, etc.). Program/projects must be underway at least one year to be eligible for entry.

Chapters must designate the entry as one of the following:

- ✓ **One-time project/program** (completed within a single year)
- ✓ **Continuing annual project/program** (repeats each year but demonstrates new/improved/revised components, i.e., Education Week events; Teacher of Year program; etc.)
- ✓ **Multi-year project/program** (one-time only effort with a defined start and end date. Should not be entered until complete.)
- ✓ **Multi-year phased project/program** (project/program components are being implemented in clearly defined phases each year. Each phase may be entered separately on its completion.)

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

- Impact of overall effort;
- Chapter goals and objectives for the program/project/activity;
- Timeline and calendar of events/activities;
- Communication plan related to program/project/activity;
- Documentation and copies of all related materials;
- Identification of target audience and explanation of desired outcomes;
- Documentation/demonstration of measurable outcomes, effectiveness and success of the program/activity;
- Explanation of how program/project/activity relates to NSPRA's Goals and Objectives;
- Other relevant examples of chapter's special efforts.

Category A Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. One PR Power Hour
3. One Professional Membership to NSPRA**

Category B Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. \$100 discount on one Seminar registration*
3. One PR Power Hour
4. One Professional Membership to NSPRA**

3. **Coalition-Building/Collaborative Communication Efforts** – Chapter initiates or joins another (or several) education/business/community group or organization to build support for education through a joint project or activity (i.e., statewide image/advocacy or education funding campaign; community involvement/engagement effort; project to provide communication resources or training on a specific topic, etc.). Effort must involve chapter as a named partner.

The entry must show documentation and evidence of collaborative efforts and activities and clearly explain the program or activity. Judging considerations include:

- Impact of overall effort;
- Chapter/coalition/collaboration partner goals and objectives for the project/activity;
- Timeline and calendar of related events/activities;
- Chapter's role as a coalition/collaborative partner;
- Communication plan related to coalition/collaboration efforts;

- Documentation and copies of all related materials and endorsements;
- Identification of target audiences and explanation of desired outcomes;
- Documentation/demonstration of measurable outcomes, effectiveness and success of the collaboration;
- Explanation of how collaboration relates to NSPRA’s Goals and Objectives;
- Other relevant examples of the coalition/collaboration effort.

Category A Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. One PR Power Hour
3. One Professional Membership to NSPRA**

Category B Recognition Incentives

1. \$200 discount on one Seminar registration*
2. \$100 discount on one Seminar registration*
3. One PR Power Hour
4. One Professional Membership to NSPRA**

Information about Recognition Incentives

Recognition incentives will be awarded at the NSPRA National Seminar during the Annual Meeting held on Sunday.

In addition to the specific incentives outlined above, all recognized chapters will receive certificates of award suitable for framing and the use of a specially designed “Mark of Distinction” for use on chapter websites and/or on printed materials and letterhead.

* **Seminar discounts may be used only at the time of registration** (*a discount incentive may not replace a Seminar registration that has been submitted and processed. No refunds will be given*). Discount incentives may not be combined with other special discounts other than those directly related to registration (i.e., Super Early-Bird and Early-Bird offers). Discount incentive awards apply only to the annual Seminar the year following the award and may not be deferred for use beyond that date.

** **All Professional Memberships to NSPRA that are awarded must be used for a new member only** and cannot be used for a membership renewal. Membership incentive awards must be redeemed by December 31 of the year of the award, no exceptions will be granted.

Chapters may select a PR Power Hour of their choice from the schedule of posted sessions for the program year following the award. PR Power Hour incentive awards may not be deferred for use beyond the designated year.

Judging:

Section I: Membership Building – Incentives will be awarded for percentage increases in membership. Chapters will also be judged on the overall membership recruitment effort against other entries based on membership category (A or B).

Section II: Special Focus Areas – Chapters will be judged with consideration given to the size of the chapter, creative use of existing resources, and success of outcomes as outlined in the explanation of the program, project or activity.

Application Process:
Entries are to be submitted electronically.

1. To be eligible for judging, entries must be complete and **emailed no later than May 15**.
2. **Entries should be submitted as a single PDF or Word document.** In addition to being used by the judging panel, these e-files will be used to as resources/best practice examples on the “Chapter” pages of the NSPRA website.
3. **Supplemental materials** (i.e., brochures, conference and presentation materials, handbooks, etc.) **should be accessible via links** in the entry document. *Do NOT attach separate PDFs or documents for each.*
4. Include the [Entry Form](#) information ([access here](#) or see below) for each entry (if submitting in multiple categories). The [Entry Form](#) may be sent separately from the entry OR all Entry Form information may be included in the entry PDF.
5. Chapter presidents must sign the statement on the Entry Form acknowledging NSPRA’s right to use all submitted materials in Association print or online publications, on the website, and as “best practice” resources for chapters.
6. Entries should be emailed to awards@nspra.org with the subject line “Mark of Distinction.”
Note: If the file is too large to send via email, please use Dropbox and send the folder invitation to Mellissa Braham at mbraham@nspra.org.

Notification/Presentation:

Chapters receiving recognition will be notified by the middle of June. The Mark of Distinction recognitions will be presented at the NSPRA National Seminar.

Questions:

If you have questions about the criteria or application process, contact Mellissa Braham, NSPRA associate director at mbraham@nspra.org or 301-519-1227.

Entry Deadline: May 15

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Entry Form

(Please include this information with each individual entry)

Chapter Name: _____

Chapter President: _____

President’s contact information

District/Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Telephone: _____ e-Mail: _____

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: _____

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 _____
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_____ **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