



# exposure



## DP/PC Chapter of FPRA Recognized at State Conference

As many of you have heard by now, the DP/PC Chapter of the FPRA was recognized during the 2010 State Conference in Naples, Florida -- in a big way.

In the **Community Relations** category the Award of Distinction was presented to the chapter for Style Your Sole a community outreach program designed to bring a new pair of shoes for needy children in Polk County. In the **Presentation** category the Golden Image Award went to the Polk County Board of County Commission and the Communication Division/PGTV for their Polk County e-Town Hall.

And, the **Grand Golden Image Award for Audio/Visual Tools of Public Relations** went to the Polk County Board of County Commission and the Communication Division/PGTV for their Polk County e-Town Hall.

The final individual award given for service to the Florida Public Relations Association has been established as the highest, most prestigious award of the Association. The award honors the spirit and dedication of FPRAs first president and founder, Lt. Col. John W. Dillin, and his lifetime of service to and support of the Association. The purpose of the annual award is to recognize an FPRA member for his/her outstanding contribution to the Association and the field of public relations.

The winner of the 2010 John W. Dillin award is: Leah Lauderdale, APR, CPRC of Polk County Schools. As Senior Director of Community Relations for Polk County Schools Ms. Lauderdale has served the DP/PC Chapter of FPRA since 1998 and has served as Chapter President as well as State Association President. Congratulations,

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## Look For It!

Next month, *Exposure* will change to an "e-newsletter" format -- simply click and read!

## President's Message

by Cindy Rodriguez



Annual Conference was awesome and DP/PC was well-represented with 15 registrants, five of which received chapter scholarships for their registration. We'll be hearing from our scholarship recipients about their individual conference experiences, so be sure to look for those stories in this edition of *Exposure*. And, even though the professional development opportunities were absolutely phenomenal and the networking events were just loads of fun, the highlight of conference, for me at least, was

the huge swell of pride I felt when the State's topmost honor, the Dillin Award, was presented to our own Leah Lauderdale! Leah's contributions to the public relations profession, our chapter and the state association as well as her career-long mentoring of fledgling practitioners make this a very well-deserved honor. Congratulations, Leah and...thanks for making us all look so good!

Then, as icing on the cake, we enjoyed a great celebration of chapter and individual accomplishments at our August 18th luncheon meeting! A big thanks goes out to all those who attended and participated and, for those who were unable to attend, here's a recap of what you missed and a partial list of the all-star recipients of the DP/PC 2010 awards.

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# President's Message

(Cont'd from page 1)

Leading off, as an appropriate punctuation to celebrating her 20th year as an FPRA member, Jennifer Bush (Publix ) was recognized as the John Dillin, APR, CPRC Professional of the Year. This is, of course, the highest honor our chapter bestows and we were thrilled to present it to Jennifer – a stellar public relations professional who has contributed so much, for so long, to our chapter's successes.

Next, the Bob Gernert, APR, CPRC Member of the Year award went to Shirley Whitney (retired, or so she claims). And, quite frankly, unless you never attended a single meeting or professional development session this year, you have to know that Shirley was integrally involved in EVERY chapter endeavor – contributing in her own unique and wonderful way to each achievement. When it comes to being engaged and “making it count,” Shirley serves as the quintessential role model for all of us!

And, this year, we introduced a new recognition. The inaugural DP/PC Rising Leader award went to Jenny Baker (Watson Clinic). Jenny's list of accomplishments and continuous acceptance of increasingly larger leadership roles in our chapter made her the perfect choice. To all our new members out there...this is a recognition to which each of you should aspire. To be eligible, you must be a current professional-category member of the chapter and a member of FPRA for at least two, but not more than five years. The award recognizes a professional who has become more and more actively involved – an “up and comer,” like Jenny. Members of the State Executive Committee and State Board are not eligible as they are considered “arrived,” rather than “rising,” leaders.

The Public Service Award, which recognizes a local business or organization for outstanding public service that is not a part of the organization's mission, went to Polk County Fire Rescue (PCFR). Clearly these dedicated public safety professionals provide public service every day in their official capacity. But this award acknowledges that they do so much more, over and above fire protection, in and for our community, including their annual MDA fundraiser (Fill the boot) campaign and their involvement with children's burn camp – a camp that meets the special needs of children who have suffered any type of burn injury. And this

year, PCFR partnered with us for the “Fill-A-Bucket” campaign, participating in a media kick-off event, offering their fire stations as convenient community drop-off points for donations and making many donations of their own. Thanks, PCFR, being a great example of continuous public service!

After all that, we gave out some really fun, light-hearted awards to many chapter members in recognition of their unique contributions. The entire event demonstrated, in a very meaningful way, the fact that our chapter definitely “made it count” in 2010!

Now, looking ahead...as I slip into the enviable role of Immediate Past President, assuming those duties and taking on new challenges as part of the State's Executive Committee, I do so with complete confidence that Incoming President, Donna Wood, will build on this year's successes and take the chapter to even greater heights. Donna is a talented and dedicated public relations professional with a huge heart and great passion for our association. She and her team are already working on goals for this year, and while we don't yet know the specifics, I can assure you that Donna will place great emphasis on providing maximum value to chapter members in all things – programs, community involvement and more. We are very fortunate to have her leadership!

And, she'll be starting off with a bang because, in September, our speaker is incoming State President, Jennifer Moss, APR, CPRC. Jennifer will also install new chapter leaders at the luncheon meeting. Then, just a couple days later, over the weekend of September 17, our chapter will host the State Executive Committee for their Strategic Planning Retreat. Stay tuned because, as plans are finalized, there will be a networking event where DP/PC members can meet/greet our State leaders and learn more about their plans for the year ahead. I think a great turnout would be the perfect way to launch Donna Woods' year as chapter president and position us all for success, I encourage everyone to attend!

Thanks, again, for the opportunity to serve as your President. It has been a most rewarding year. The deeper relationships I've formed with many of you have been some of my greatest blessings. And, while going out on a cliché may not be the best strategy, I'll risk it because this one comes from the bottom of my heart and goes out to each and every one of you....thanks for the memories!

With Warm Regards,  
Cindy Rodriguez

## Join Us

for our next chapter meeting!  
Wednesday, September 15

We will hear from our state FPRA President, Jennifer Moss, APR as she installs or new slate of officers. Also, you won't want to miss the “passing of the gavel,” as past-presidents share insights from the year they served as president.

11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lakeland Yacht Club  
RSVP online at [www.fprapolk.org](http://www.fprapolk.org)

## Happy Anniversary to Rebecca Murphy,

DP/PC Chapter Member and past-president who joined

FPRA during the month of August in 2004. Thank you for

your contributions during the past six years!

# 2010-2011 FPRA State Conference



## A Few Thoughts About Conference

This year, our chapter awarded a record number of scholarships to five deserving DP/PC FPRA members. Below you will learn more about their conference experiences as they networked with PR professionals throughout the state and participated in countless educational sessions.

### **Ashley Barnett, Polk County Public Schools**

As a “Newbie” to the DP/PC FPRA Chapter, I am humbly honored to have had the opportunity to attend the 2010 Annual FPRA Conference. Not only was I able to participate in great networking events, but I also took part in an array of inspiring and applicable lectures. I was exceptionally impressed with the breakout session titled “Non-Profit PR: Converting Your Board Members to PR Ambassadors.” Cheryl Stock provided great insight for recruiting and educating board members to become motivated advocates for the agency mission. I was also enlightened by Jennifer Flakes’ seminar on the “One Ford: The story behind telling the Ford Story.” She eloquently related how Ford has been able to maintain focus on open communication while keeping a consistent image. The “Big Picture” that both speakers eloquently conveyed inspired me to rethink how I prepared PR strategies within my own agency.

Additionally, the Annual Conference allowed me to develop new friendships fellow chapter members. As I embark on this new year and my commitment to serve as Secretary of the DP/PC Chapter, I feel that I am now better equipped to carry out the board’s expectations and responsibilities. The Annual Conference was an excellent way to get connected to new people, new opportunities, and fresh ideas. I am delighted to have shared in this experience, and I plan to always make it a priority to attend this wonderful event!



This year's FPRA Annual Conference came at just the right time. I think I found myself getting bogged down in the day-to-day toil of a non-profit with too many duties and not enough bodies to do it. While I was still plugging away, the enthusiasm was definitely lacking.

The first general session was about being a PR "hybrid." This includes, but must not be limited to marketing/advertising, digital creation, PR/communications and brand building. All of these things are duties that fall on my shoulders and it was such a consolation to hear that this is something that we all need to be, regardless of company (NPO or not).

While there were many more classes and topics covered, my next favorite by far was the general session on strategic thinking. My boss is a strategic thinker and this session helped me to understand and hopefully, become a strategic thinker myself. A few notes from that session:

- Attitude does matter.
- Challenge assumptions.
- Say things that matter.
- The reason people run things is because they know where we are going.
- Be a source of inspiration.
- Help others succeed.

I walked away from this year's conference with sharper skills, more motivation, enthusiasm for what I do and a renewed love for all things PR. I cannot wait to go back next year and I would encourage everyone to budget this conference in next year and make plans to attend. You won't regret it.

### **Sheree Saulter, Webster University**

I would like to thank the chapter for providing me with the opportunity to have such a wonderful experience. It allowed me the chance to spend more than the monthly hour meeting and really get to know members from our chapter. I am now convinced that the DP/PC chapter is the best FPRA chapter.

The sessions were beneficial to me both professionally and personally. I started the conference by attending the calling all "tweeps." This was really interesting to see everyone sending their tweets to one another. Tweeting has never been my thing, but after meeting some of the people there and having them explain to me what they use it for was definitely an eye opener. Now I am not saying that I am ready to tweet every day, but I have decided to utilize it a little more (as soon as I can figure out my password).

All of the sessions I attended were presented well. There was a great deal of information in each session. However, as I reviewed my notes I noticed a pattern of a themed message throughout my notes. One session discussed the importance of being proactive vs. reactive. I know we all have daily challenges that can cause us to be reactive, but when we have a strategic plan in effect it allows us the ability to be proactive.

In another session the speaker discussed having a contingency plan. We should all be ready for the worst case scenario. Once again, if we are prepared we will be able to be proactive and not reactive. In this session the speaker also discussed the importance of not withholding information from your consumers. He stated with the rise of social media you have no choice but to be transparent. He also stated that our consumers are savvy and that we should not assume they are naïve. With information being available at the stroke of a button it is best to stick to the honesty policy. Being honest allows you the control and ability to be proactive; lying only causes you to be reactive.

The presenter for the session of "Crisis in a Social Media World" was the icing on the cake. She worked for JetBlue Airways and was dealing with a crisis that day. She shared with us how JetBlue was handling the challenges with the employee who said a few choice words over the intercom to a customer. Once again with the growth of social media the story spread like a wild fire. JetBlue was already prepared for this because of a previous experience, and this allowed JetBlue to be proactive and not reactive. She reiterated the importance of being prepared for an emergency. She discussed their proactive methods of dealing with social media and why it was important for them not to simply ignore what was being said via face book and other social media networks. She also stated that it was very important to stick to your original story. When you start changing your story it causes doubt in the minds of the consumer.

I also enjoyed all of the general sessions. I had two favorites for the general sessions. One was the presenter from Ford. She explained how Ford dealt with the impact of the global recession. The decisions they made were all proactive. They saw the problem

Sheree Saulter, continued from last page

and decided to put together a strategic plan to overcome their challenges. I loved their whole concept of the Ford story. The other speaker I enjoyed from the general sessions was "Big Ideas, Creativity and Innovation". He simply reminded me to put the fun back into work and life in general. Life is already serious enough. Sometimes we need to relax and bring the kid out of us.

This conference has also enlightened my overall knowledge of FPRA. The organization is filled with talented, loving, dedicated, caring and most of all giving people. It has inspired me to do more in our community and with our local chapter. I am honored to be a part of the Dick Pope Polk County Chapter.

### **Teresa O'Brien, Polk County Public Schools**

I am extremely grateful in receiving the FPRA Conference Scholarship this year!

I was able to step back and see the Big Picture by:

- celebrating with the DP/PC Chapter in receiving two Chapter Awards
- focusing on Public Relations Strategy and Leadership
- confirming that our public relations programs fit and do make a positive impact
- expanding my professional network and making new friendships
- marking the outstanding achievements of our very own DP/PC FPRA members (one of whom is right next door to me!)

As a communications specialist for Polk County Public Schools, I left the conference energized and eager to continue recognizing the Good News of our students, schools, staff and district-wide accomplishments for the 2010-2011 school year.

The three days in Naples proved to be a great validation that what we do counts and I'm grateful that I was able to see the Big Picture with 17 other fellow DP/PC FPRA members!!!

### **Shirley Whitney, Retiree and DP/PC FPRA Community Projects Chairman**

I appreciate the opportunity to attend the 72<sup>nd</sup> FPRA Conference; I thank the chapter for paying my registration. I learned a lot at conference and probably more than I wanted to know about social networking!!! I'm just a neophyte in that and some of it was WAY over my head. I have attended national conference and spring conferences for ABWA for many of the years I have been a member, however, the FPRA conference was so professional and provided many learning opportunities. Our state officers were all professional in conducting the meetings.

I, along with my Fric and Frac partner, was totally surprised and thrilled to receive an award at the president luncheon for our community projects, Fill-a-Bucket and Style Your Sole. Only through the generosity of our members and community were these projects successful. Thank you!

The hotel was beautiful and the Golden Image Awards Dinner was awesome! And, we were again ecstatic that we received an award for Style Your Sole and elated that Cindy and the county received such prestigious awards – maybe someday!?

I enjoyed the networking with DP/PC chapter members that attended and state members that I met. The presentation on the last day by Joe Hice, APR, CPRC was very encouraging to know that no matter how bad, things can be turned around and in Joe's case,

