

National Association of Government Communicators 2018 Communications School Agenda June 19-21, 2018 Ft. Myers, Florida

TUESDAY, JUNE 19

Palm Foyer

Registration 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

ADVANCED TRAINING WORKSHOPS: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Tarpon 1

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Bootcamp Part 1

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR Liaison, Ann Knabe, Ph.D., APR+M, Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense University, Bey-Ling Sha, Ph.D., APR, Professor of Public Relations, Director of the School of Journalism and Media Studies, San Diego State University

APR Mini-Jump Start - This working session will help you get started on your APR journey by reviewing the accreditation process and discussing the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to successfully prepare a panel presentation and complete the exam. The course is taught by seasoned APRs and focuses on numerous APR / APR+M examination topics, including:

- What to expect during the APR / APR+M process
- Ethics and law
- Communication Models and Theories
- Research, Planning Implementation and Evaluation
- Crisis Communication Management
- Media Relations

Tarpon 2

Alexa, Help Me Stop Smoking!

Josh DeLung, Sr. Manager, Experience and Content Strategy, ICF

This advanced training workshop will help introduce participants to artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool for communicating with target audiences.

Personal assistants like Amazon Echo's Alexa and chatbots like Poncho the Weather Cat have become part of everyday life. Government communicators should consider how AI may serve the needs of their constituents, such as helping them with important health behavior changes. Chatbot platforms have become increasingly sophisticated and easier to use than they were even just a few years ago. Attend this workshop to learn the basics about what chatbots are, how they work, the components you need to design one, and what use cases we've seen deployed so far for social good.

Get hands on with dialog flows, intents, technical requirements, a platform demo and hackday planning. Bring a laptop to get maximum benefit out of this workshop!

ADVANCED TRAINING WORKSHOPS: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tarpon 1

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Bootcamp Part 2

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR Liaison, Ann Knabe, Ph.D., APR+M, Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense University, Bey-Ling Sha, Ph.D., APR, Professor of Public Relations, Director of the School of Journalism and Media Studies, San Diego State University

Tarpon 5

Developing Communications Plans

Chris O'Neil, Chief of Media Relations, National Transportation Safety Board

Whether you've taken a workshop with Chris O'Neil before, or if this is your first time, the Developing Communication Plans workshop is a must for anyone looking to build or reinforce their communication planning skills. Focused more on practical application and less on theory, this interactive workshop will have participants working in groups to craft communication goals, objectives, strategies and tactics for a communication plan, using input provided by the instructor through interactive role play. Participants will gain valuable experience in conducting a scoping session that will help them define audiences and desired outcomes. They will then practice developing a supporting communication plan. Participants should bring Microsoft Word and Excel enabled laptops or tablets for use in the group work.

Tarpon 2

Ten Ways to Use Social Media for Branding and Marketing

Erik Deckers, President, Pro Blog Service

Social media is no longer special knowledge for communicators; it's the price of admission in reaching today's public. People get their news via social media which means it's sometimes just plain luck if people hear your message. There are so many networks to choose from, it's hard to figure out where you should invest your time and energy. Do you push your messaging out to all of them, or just a few? And which ones? This workshop will look at how to use different social networks, and the kinds of communication people want on those channels. We'll look at how blogging can help your messaging, how to build your audience, and what's happening with Facebook, Instagram, and other networks. We'll also look at the future of social media and content marketing, and what you can expect over the next five years.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20

Palm Foyer

Registration 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES, GENERAL SESSION: 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Tarpon 3-4

Using Social Media During a Crisis: Our Hurricane Irma Story

Jamie Johnson, *St. Johns County Sheriff's Office*; **Michael Ryan**, *St. Johns County Government*; **Melissa Wissel**, *City of St. Augustine*; and **Jeremy Robshaw**, *St. Johns Fire and Rescue*

Our opening session features government communicators from our host State of Florida. Representatives from five different agencies will describe joint efforts to present a unified front on social media — before, during, and after Hurricane Irma. Featuring St. Johns County, Fire and Rescue, the City of St. Augustine, the Emergency Operations Center, and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, you'll learn how local government and law enforcement effectively used social media to communicate crucial information to constituents.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Tarpon 1

Executive Presence: Communication Techniques for Executives

Jennifer Miller, *Principal, Rockford Gray*

This discussion focuses on both the good and bad impressions leaders make when they walk into a room and begin to speak. Studies show that executive presence counts for 26% of what it takes to get promoted. We will discuss vocal executive presence – which focuses on how one uses his/her voice, as well as the broader picture of how those in leadership positions can look and carry themselves to be effective. Our goal is to get participants thinking about how they use their voice, body language and choice of dress, and then consider the message they are sending. Participants should leave with an understanding of what constitutes executive presence and the knowledge that there are things they can do to enhance their own sense of executive presence.

Tarpon 2

Planning for Disaster: A Crash Course in Crisis Communications

Lori Lawson, *Digital Engagement Specialist, U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs*

Social media has dramatically shifted the public's expectations surrounding access to information, particularly during a crisis. The evening news no longer satisfies the demand for information. Instead, people turn to real-time updates posted to social media. Is your organization prepared to join the conversation?

Effective crisis communication requires planning and practice. As a crisis communicator, you must be agile, accurate, and able to capture the right tone – all within minutes. This session will use examples from recent crises to teach you:

- Tips for preparing for a crisis ahead of time
- How to adapt your organization's usual social media style during a crisis
- Practical tips to meet the demand for information during a crisis

Tarpon 5

Twelve Ways to Improve Your Writing

Erik Deckers, President, Pro Blog Service

It's frustrating for beginning writers who want to hone their craft but aren't given much direction beyond "write every day," and "read a lot." Most so-called communication secrets are nothing more than "write good stuff," which is completely unhelpful. Wouldn't it be great if there was just one list of tips you could follow?

This session will look at different writing secrets professionals use to produce tight, interesting content and break them down into simple steps everyone can use to improve their own writing. We'll learn how to cut out unnecessary language and filler words, how to harness metaphors and similes to better understand complex ideas, and which grammar rules you should ignore. We'll look at some unusual advice that every professional writer knows (and even does), why inspiration is the downfall of many writers, and one psychological trick that will cut years off your learning curve.

LUNCH WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Tarpon 3-4

The Perfect Amount of Funny

Officer Drew Fennelly, Lawrence, Kansas Police Department

Humor on social media can capture the attention of your audience and help your agency garner a place in the national spotlight. But when you're a government agency, it's about striking the right balance. In 2015, Officer Drew Fennelly proposed the idea of a Twitter account for the Lawrence, Kansas Police Department, and found that 'sweet spot' between slapstick and serious: 75,000 followers, millions and millions of impressions, multiple appearances on ESPN, several viral tweets, and one 2017 Golden Post Award for "Best Use of Humor." Prepare to learn.....and be entertained!

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Tarpon 1

What's Your Story? Best Practices for Engaging with Media in Good Times and Bad

Jennifer Miller, Principal, Rockford Gray

Good media and communications skills don't just happen. These skills are learned and perfected over time. Rockford Gray's Jennifer Miller shares the Rules of the Game: what everyone needs to know before talking to the media. We discuss how to manage the interview, respond to difficult questions and why you should never treat the interview as a conversation. We believe the best spokespeople know how to prepare for an interview, set their agenda and use it. Jennifer will walk you through those steps and show examples of what it looks like when someone uses their agenda effectively. We conclude with an exercise that breaks down the process reporters use to compose their stories, revealing the spokesperson's true role is in any news story.

Tarpon 2

The Cake is a Lie: Making Portals Great Again

Josh DeLung, Sr. Manager, Experience and Content Strategy, ICF

There was a time when the Internet was in its infancy, and web portals such as America Online served a purpose to curate the best of the information superhighway and serve it up to users. Otherwise, the web was a messy place, and search capabilities were still fledgling.

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Today, we have a different name for a list of links related to the information we want — the Google search results page.

But the U.S. government still maintains several portal sites, also known via unwieldy names such as clearinghouses and information gateways. Given the ubiquity of search, how can government communicators increase the usefulness, usability and user delight of their portals?

This session will provide attendees with cross-disciplinary steps they can take to help evolve a Web 1.0 approach into something that matches modern users' expectations.

Tarpon 5

How to Save Your Social Media Plan

Mike Koehler, Founder/Chief Strategist, Smirk New Media

Digital marketing and social media are more important than ever for an organization's success in 2018. But the rules for what works has changed. In Jan. 2018, Facebook blew up the strategies of any group using a business page. Organic reach has died and thanks to these algorithm tweaks and audience expectations, it's back to the drawing board. This is, without a doubt, the biggest shift in digital strategy in years. So now what? Learn what deep data and audience feedback are telling us, and what best practices have emerged from the wreckage.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Tarpon 1

The Art of Good Science Communication: Be Bold, Speak Clearly

Steven Sobieszczyk, Hydrologist, U.S. Geological Survey

Inevitably, every scientist needs to talk science with policymakers, the media, and the public. Historically, this "exchange" has left much to be desired. But no longer! Come hear about techniques, tools, and resources every scientist needs to know before they step on stage. Learn why effective communication of science matters to everyone. Discover the secrets that help decision makers get past the gobbledygook they often hear when scientists speak. Or better yet, learn how to not speak gobbledygook. Get your message heard...and understood. Come participate in the "Art of Good Science Communication" session and walk away knowing how to be bold and speak clearly.

Tarpon 5

State of Rebranding: Modernizing Your State's Brand Identity

Laura Cederberg, Assistant Chief of Staff, Communications, Office of Governor Mark Dayton (MN); and Janelle Tummel, Assistant Commissioner, Enterprise Communications and Planning, Minnesota Management and Budget

In 2017 the State of Minnesota launched a unified brand identity, shedding 23 outdated agency logos for one cohesive look. The end result? A fresh, modern look to support employee recruitment, consumer confidence, and cost-savings across the enterprise. Project Directors will share how they oversaw change management and inter-agency collaboration to rebrand the state.

AWARDS PRESENTATION AND RECEPTION 3:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tarpon 3-4

Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards and Communicator of the Year Presentation and Reception

THURSDAY, JUNE 21

Palm Foyer

Registration 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, GENERAL SESSION 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Tarpon 3-4

Identifying and Addressing Communication Complexities (Why What You Say May Not Be What Your Audience Hears)

Mark Basnight, *Emergency Management Communication Analyst, Public Affairs Science & Technology Fusion Cell*; and **Holly Hardin**

Have you ever wondered why you have said one thing and your audience interpreted something totally different? Have you been misunderstood and thought, what's wrong with those people, didn't they hear what we said? There are a lot of filters your messages go through between the time your message is sent and it is processed by the receiver. Culture, history, literacy, biases and other complexities play a key role in how your audiences form their opinions, react and except or reject your message. In this interactive session, we will present and discuss 12 complexities of communication that public information professionals face today and what you should consider in order to get the desired outcome of your communication before formulating messages especially during complex incidents and events. The data for this research was garnered during the aftermath of an officer involved shooting resulting in civil unrest.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Tarpon 1

Blood, Guts, and Glory – Employee Engagement at USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service

Aaron Lavalle, *Deputy Assistant Administrator, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service*

A committed and engaged workforce is the holy grail of any healthy institution, organization, or government Agency – but employee engagement is as much an art as any science behind it. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) employs over 7,000 "front-line field employees", many of whom are unwired employees, without access to a government issued email address or computer. In 2016, FSIS launched a new employee engagement initiative, titled "i-Impact;" this was delivered to the majority of FSIS employees as a one-hour, in-person workshop. We will discuss the structure and successes of the 2016 i-Impact initiative, approaches to internal communications and demonstrate how employee engagement was utilized to create FSIS' 2017 i-Impact workshop.

Tarpon 2

Break Out of Your Cultural Comfort Zone to Communicate Globally**Annalisa Nash Fernandez**,

Intercultural Strategist

Break out of your cultural comfort zone. People are communicating more than ever, but still face linguistic and cultural barriers. In a globalized world, teamwork, collaboration, and business growth mean communicating across real and perceived borders. In this dynamic presentation, learn how cultural differences present challenges in everyday situations—including on social media—whether we perceive it or not. Explore cultural decorum across world regions, see American culture through a foreign "lens," and understand cultural expectations, drawing on business case studies, research in applicable fields of psychology and sociology,

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culture-related events in the news, and the latest academic theories on intercultural dynamics. You'll takeaway how to effectively penetrate foreign markets and build relationships across cultures without knowing the local language.

Tarpon 5

Managing the Rumor Mill

Kara Roberson, Communications Manager, City of Wentzville, Missouri

A growing number of citizens are engaging in citizen journalism by contributing to blogs, creating Facebook pages, and more. So, how do municipalities/counties best engage in a constructive dialog with citizens using technology? What are the best ways to avoid the rumor mill without oversharing? How do we tell our own story when so many others are telling it for us? Citizen journalism has had a major impact on the way public institutions disseminate information. This session will explore ways to combat the rumor mill through citizen engagement, social media campaigns, best practices and more.

LUNCH AND GENERAL SESSION 11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Tarpon 3-4

From Chaos to Collaboration: Changing the Way We Communicate with the Public

Larry Schooler, Senior Fellow, National Civic League

Picture this: your boss tells you to plan a "town hall meeting" on a controversial topic. You find a venue, set up chairs, and get quickly overwhelmed by a standing room only crowd--and they're angry. They may have been provoked by information (or misinformation) from social media, or even traditional media, and they're ready to burn your team in effigy. What to do?

This session is designed to take you, and your organization, from chaos to collaboration--embracing an entirely new paradigm for public engagement. Learn how to identify stakeholders and create customized strategies for engaging them; how to facilitate difficult conversations involving competing viewpoints; how to bring an array of stakeholders to consensus; and examine cutting-edge technology for public engagement.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS 1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Tarpon 2

Using Nextdoor for Public Agencies

Erick Gill, Communications Director, St. Lucie County, Florida

One of the biggest challenges for local governments is finding the best way to communicate with residents in an ever-changing media market. Newsprint is shirking. Television stations are scaling back on staff and airtime. Social media continues lead the conservation as one of the best ways to reach residents. While Facebook and Twitter dominate those discussions, Nextdoor is a platform that is working with local governments to help communicate directly to residents – specifically residential neighborhoods and homeowners associations. For the past two years, St. Lucie County, Florida, has been using Nextdoor with positive results. Communications Director Erick Gill will cover the pros and cons of adding this tool to your social media tool box, including records retention and measuring engagement.

Tarpon 5

“The Kentucky READ Poster Project”: Influencing Hearts and Opinions

Carly Gill, Program Compliance Coordinator, KY Department for Libraries and Archives; and Paige Davidson, Executive Staff Advisor, KY Department for Libraries and Archives

In Kentucky, the General Assembly controls budget appropriations to public libraries, yet some legislators still question the need for libraries in the Internet age. With a budget of \$0, the Kentucky Department for Libraries (KDLA) and Archives and the Kentucky Public Library Association (KPLA) Advocacy Committee found a way to get legislators excited about libraries, inform them of all that libraries do for communities, invite personal conversations about library experiences, and potentially increase library funding. How did they do it? Through “The Kentucky READ Poster Project,” which boasts 100% participation from the state’s General Assembly and all Constitutional Officers. Learn how this was accomplished through an ingenious poster program.

Tarpon 1

How to Get Booked on the Speaker’s Circuit

Mike Pina, Program Manager, U.S. Department of Transportation

Speaking engagements provide a great opportunity to reach key stakeholders and increase awareness of your agency’s work. Industry conferences, in particular, are a prime opportunity to get your message out and engage with stakeholders and colleagues. However, the competition can be fierce. Major events like South by Southwest (SXSW) can attract thousands of proposals vying for limited number speaking slots. This session will provide a step-by-step strategy for booking speaking engagements—for your boss, your colleagues or yourself. Identify speaking opportunities that make sense for your organization, contact show organizers, track events, develop exciting speaker proposals that stand out, and even draft a justification memo for travel approval. The session will also explain ways to prepare for your speech and use social media and on-site promotion to capitalize on your speaking opportunities.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Tarpon 2

Science Communication in the Digital Age

Greg Leatherman, Managing Editor, ECO Magazine

What’s the most cost-effective way to communicate? Enlisting someone else to distribute your message, of course. Original content remains the most valuable element in publishing. To get yours published, all you need are some insider tips on how to make it irresistible to editors.

Join us as Greg Leatherman presents Communication Tips for the Multimedia Age, including how you can turn material from your existing job into copy that is ready for publishing. He will also share tips on finding outlets that want your story.

Tarpon 5

Social Media, E-mail Marketing, and Website Content: Developing and Measuring Integrated Multi-Platform Messaging

Devika Rao, VP Account Services, O’Neill Communications and Jhai James, Communications Officer, Strategic Energy Institute, Georgia Institute of Technology

Today’s information moves fast. In order to be effective and compete with the virtual “noise” of the internet, savvy communicators have to reach their targeted audiences and hold their attention over what can sometimes be a substantial amount of time. In this session, attendees will see examples of key messaging strategies through various platforms such as email and social media to deliver energetic and relevant information to raise brand awareness and increase impact.

GENERAL SESSION 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Tarpon 3-4

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30 Great Ideas in 30 Minutes

Come prepared to share your great ideas, best practices and helpful tips. This annual Communications School tradition will provide you with useful information that you can take back to the office and use today!