

National Association of Government Communicators 2017 Communications School Agenda, as of 4-13-17 June 13 - 15, 2017

TUESDAY, JUNE 13

Advanced Training Workshops: 8 a.m. – noon

Communication Planning: Defining Success and Setting Goals

Christopher O'Neil, National Transportation Safety Board

Good communication planning requires a mutual understanding of the desired end state - both communicator and customer need to understand and share the goal of any communication effort. This shared vision of success becomes the foundation of communication plans that integrated, coordinate and synchronize communication efforts designed to reach a specific goal. This workshop will use real-world examples to illustrate the communication planning process, providing students with practical and implementable communication planning techniques.

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Bootcamp

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR liaison and Director of the Monmouth County (NJ) Department of Public Information & Tourism and Ann Knabe, APR+Military Communications and Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense 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

Advanced Training Workshops: 1 – 5 p.m.

How to Contain Crises in Today's Viral World

Andrew Gilman, CommCore Consulting Group

You know how quickly it can happen. And in today's world it may not be a question of if - but when - a viral crisis will affect you and your organization or agency. What are the new rules for preparing for crisis in today's fast-moving, viral social media world? Are you prepared? This interactive, hands-on workshop is designed to help you become aware of potential crises, create effective communication crisis strategy, measure your response effectiveness, and prepare yourself and your agency or organization to maximize your overall communication goals. We will discuss current viral crisis situations and the communication reaction and responses both good and not-so-good, and then give you the opportunity to test your viral crisis communications skills with role playing and analysis. In addition, we will provide ideas and tips you can use immediately to prepare your organization.

How to Develop Persuasive Messages with Science of Storytelling

Gideon For-mukwai, Story Warrior Associates

Emerging neuroscience and social psychology research tells us that the best way to transmit highly effective and sticky messages is through the use of storytelling. With limited resources in times of crisis and emergencies, government communicators have a duty of persuading audiences on critical issues of public life. With the emerging science of storytelling, government communicators can craft messages that resonate with audiences. To craft such messages that are sticky and contagious, communicators must have a greater understanding of story science and how to choose stories and messages that spread from person to person. This workshop provides the tools and techniques needed in heightening messages for public briefings, press releases, memos, and sensitization events, without resorting to bureaucratic clichés.

Plain and Simple: Plain Language Concepts and Techniques for Government Communicators

Wendy Wagner-Smith, Training Coordinator, Plain Language Action and Information Network

The plain language movement (also called the plain English movement), is a worldwide initiative, with countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, and South Africa leading the charge to improve communications for citizens. However, since 2010 when the Plain Writing Act was signed into law, the federal government has been mandated to produce materials for the public and stakeholders that are clear and easy to understand. And this effort is spreading across the country to the state and local level, because citizens want to be able to understand what their governments are saying. In this course, you'll learn what plain language is and is not, what the concepts and principles of this method of writing require, and how to apply those techniques in your own writing. You'll learn how to self-edit and remove excessive and complicated words, rely on simple, clear options, stop sounding "fancy," and how to deal with the push-back you will get from managers and subject matter experts. Bring pencils – you'll be working on exercises throughout the class to solidify what you're learning in your mind.

Evening Activity: 6 p.m.

Cardinals Nation at Ballpark Village

Watch the St. Louis Cardinals vs. the Milwaukee Brewers from the comfort of Cardinals Nation restaurant, located directly across the street from Busch Stadium. The restaurant features a high-energy, memorabilia-infused space with three separate patios, two large bars, and unparalleled sports viewing with large flat screen TVs and other multimedia features.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14

8:30 – 10 a.m.: General Session

Welcoming Remarks by NAGC President Kathryn Stokes

Reimagining the Arch: Working with Multiple Agencies to Communicate a Monumental Transformation

Ryan McClure, Communications Director, City Arch River Foundation

CityArchRiver Project, a \$380 million public-private renovation of the Gateway Arch grounds and surrounding areas, serves as a back drop to discussing how to effectively communicate a complex project to the public while working in a partnership with multiple agencies and organizations. The CityArchRiver Project involves federal, state, local, and private organizations all working together to transform the Gateway Arch experience for all.

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.: Breakout Sessions

“Fail-Proof” Media Coverage

Kesha Whitaker, Public and Media Relations Manager, Shelby County Trustee’s Office

This breakout will include best practices on how to package media stories that are irresistible to reporters. Don’t look at it as doing their job—the media relies on you to provide information while giving you the opportunity to shape the story.

Case Study: The Gatlinburg Fires

Dana Soehn, Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Marci Claude, Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

Perrin Anderson, Sevier County, TN

On November 28, 2016, a devastating wildfire turned Gatlinburg, Tennessee, a mountain resort town, into a disaster zone. A total of 17,140 acres burned and 12 people lost their lives in the Gatlinburg Fires. This panel discussion will describe the experience from several different points of view.

Seven Ways to Explain Complex Ideas to the General Public

Michael Pina, Department of Transportation

In today’s fast-paced digital age, it’s difficult enough just to get the public to listen. In a society that communicates in two-minute sound bites and 140 characters, how can your agency explain its complex, life-saving work concisely and effectively? To gauge support as well as obtain buy-in, the public needs to be adequately informed about a range of issues, from genetically modified foods to health-care economics to self-driving cars. Today, government communicators must effectively educate the media, stakeholders, and senior leadership, as well as train subject matter experts to effectively communicate key messages. The U.S. Department of Transportation is using various methods to educate the public about connected vehicles, a complex new technology that can reduce traffic accidents by 80 percent. In this session, we will outline some of the Department’s tools, messages, and lessons learned in educating the public about this transformative technology.

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.: Lunch and General Session

The Internet is Magic (And Other Crazy Things We Believe About It)

B.J. Mendelson, Author

In the follow-up to B.J. Mendelson's "Social Media is Bullshit" (St. Martin's Press), the author returns with updates from the frontlines of the digital marketing world concerning the myth and hype of today's communications platforms and best practices. (*Please note: Mr. Mendelson's talks are often laced with profanity.*)

1 – 2 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Snapchat 101: How to Communicate Government Information in the Land of Emojis

Jessica Milcetic, Director of Social Media, USA Gov

Snapchat is the hottest social media platform on the block and a tool that government communicators can't afford to ignore. Come learn the ins and outs of Snapchat and how to create an engaging presence on a platform dominated by millennials. Participants will leave this session armed with answers to questions about how government should communicate on Snapchat, how to develop a strong strategy and how to address accessibility and records management issues.

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR)

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR liaison and Director of the Monmouth County (NJ) Department of Public Information & Tourism and Ana Knabe, APR+Military Communications and Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense University

A shorter version of the half-day workshop, this breakout session will give participants an overview of the Accreditation process and help set a timeline and expectations for the APR application, presentation, and exam.

Using Social Media to Pass a Public Safety Sales Tax

Sharon Watson, Johnson County, Kansas

I am interested in presenting on our county's education effort in 2016 for a public safety sales tax ballot initiative to build a courthouse and coroner facility. The measure was successful and the public approved it by more than 16,000 votes. The presentation would cover lessons learned in educating residents on a public safety sales tax ballot initiative using social media and other communication tools. Many of our communities in the KC Metro are starting to go through this ballot initiative education efforts, so I thought our lessons learned might be helpful to those PIOs who find themselves faced with this challenge.

2:30 – 3:30 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Using Protocol to Brand Your Agency

Kathleen Zona, Protocol Officer, NASA2:30

Cheryl Chambers, U.S. Census Bureau

Every good public relations staffer knows that you don't have to have the word "Communicator" in your job title to be a full-time communicator. Communications occur through your interactions with your customers every day. How would you like your agency to be remembered? People may forget what you said, and what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel. We define protocol as the

science of facilitating relationships and memories in the different ways that you come in contact with your clients. For a government agency, this includes your web site, the services you offer, and the products you create. This presentation will cover how exemplary protocol can be achieved with little resources, and how your protocol style can shine through in all your agency's communications--verbal, online or written. Videos and images will be shown that cover current events and provide a background on the importance of protocol and business etiquette, not only to your external customers but in day-to-day dealings with your co-workers. Cubicle etiquette, anyone?

Plain and Simple: Plain Language Concepts and Techniques for Government Communicators

Wendy Wagner-Smith, *Training Coordinator, Plain Language Action and Information Network*

The plain language movement (also called the plain English movement), is a worldwide initiative, with countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, and South Africa leading the charge to improve communications for citizens. However, since 2010 when the Plain Writing Act was signed into law, the federal government has been mandated to produce materials for the public and stakeholders that are clear and easy to understand. And this effort is spreading across the country to the state and local level, because citizens want to be able to understand what their governments are saying. In this shorter version of the half-day workshop, you'll learn what plain language is and is not, what the concepts and principles of this method of writing require, and how to apply those techniques in your own writing.

Communication, for a Change: Helping Your Leaders Talk About Change

Blythe Campbell, *Senior Communications Director, NANA Development Corporation*

Communications professionals have a vital role in the success of organizational change, but often we are brought into the project when it's time to issue a press release or draft a layoff notice. In this fast-paced session, you'll learn how to prepare yourself and your leaders now so you, and they, are ready to communicate effectively when change comes. By the end of this session, attendees will know:

- How to build and share context around organizational change with employees.
- The five ways communications professionals can bring value to the change process.
- How to collaborate with senior leaders throughout the change process

3:45 – 6 p.m.: Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards Presentation and Reception and Communicator of the Year

Evening Activity: 6:30 p.m.

Guided walk to the St. Louis Arch. Visit the museum and/or ride to the top!

THURSDAY, JUNE 15

8:30 – 10 a.m.: Annual Business Meeting and General Session

Uprising: A City Divided

Mark Basnight, Senior Public Affairs Training Specialist, Argonne National Laboratory, Public Affairs Academy

Holly Hardin, Public Affairs Training Specialist, Argonne National Laboratory, Public Affairs Academy

In the wake of an officer involved shooting, the City of Charlotte (NC) was thrust into the national spotlight after the unexpected and unanticipated uprising of civil unrest. The dramatic events of September 20 – 24 left one dead, several injured, hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage, and a city divided until the release of information exposing the facts and truth of the police investigation were reluctantly released. Public Affairs Science & Technology (PAST) Fusion Center staff deployed to Charlotte to observe JIS/JIC operations, news briefings and conferences, gather news media data, social media data, and interview various parties affected. The data obtained from this deployment has been utilized to create a case study, offering the audience the opportunity to extrapolate lessons learned.

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.: Breakout Sessions

The Role of Government Communicators and Transition in Government

Christopher O’Neil, National Transportation Safety Board and **John Verrico**, Department of Homeland Security

This panel discussion will examine the role of career, professional government communicators during transitions in government leadership. Perspectives will be offered by senior communicators who have experience with transition teams and understand the necessity for career government communicators to champion transparency, accountability, and excellence in government communication with incoming administrations and their appointees.

Measurement Analytics 101

Ben Kessler, Head of Government Solutions, Meltwater

At a loss on how to benchmark metrics for real-world decision making? Take a crash course in PR and measurement analytics 101. Ben Kessler will demonstrate how to pinpoint annual KPI metrics and ROI for your public relations strategy, break down pain points in reporting, and share examples of best practices across Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies. Additionally, in this session you will learn how to:

- Give your agency a voice in the growing role of social media in the public sector.
- Justify key decisions on programs by measuring growth and quality of media.
- Leverage influencing trends to identify new media opportunities outside of typical journalism beats.

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. Seasoned reporter and former CBS News Correspondent Jennifer Miller shares these skills in a fast-paced presentation that will leave you wanting more.

11:45 a.m. – 1 p.m. Lunch and General Session

Manley Feinberg

Manley Feinberg, former CEO of Build-A-Bear Workshop, will provide an inspirational keynote on leadership, brought to life through fabulous photography and riveting stories from a lifetime of adventure. Manley vividly shares compelling lessons from his adventures and leadership experiences in a way that allow you to relate to your own challenges.

1:15 – 2:15 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Communicators Communicating: Break Down Silos to Work More Effectively

Bethany Hornbeck, Mother Communications and NAGC Professional Development Director, and Christian DeLeon, New Life Arts Design

NAGC Professional Development Director Bethany Hornbeck will be joined by colleague Christian DeLeon of New Life Arts Design to discuss a 2016 project that paired their skills in a website revamp for a state university-based youth development program. Bethany and Christian took an unconventional approach to their partnership that gave each of them more-than-usual latitude to do their jobs . . . and have more-than-usual fun along the way. They'll talk about how other communicators can follow their lead and initiate a trend to break down barriers among communicators in government agencies.

Community Branding that Works

Ben Muldrow, Arnett, Muldrow and Associates

Learn about successful community branding tactics that have been developed over the last 15 years by one of the nation's top community Branding experts.

What Now? Connecting with the Media and the Community Post Ferguson

Vera Culley, Social Media Coordinator, St. Louis County Police Department

Learn about the Who, What, When, How, and Why of communications strategies to enhance interaction with the media and community members. If we inverse the process and ask “Why” first, we can create a better vision and plan for connecting with our partners in both fields. Vera Culley has had the unique experience of working in both media and law enforcement during a pivotal time of civil disobedience.

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Communicating Your Best Self

Deborah Ostreicher, Assistant Aviation Director, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport

What does it take to finally make that breakthrough to effective communication? What makes for a compelling presentation? How can you get buy-in on your ideas, whether it's with an elected official or your own staff? Learn the tools to communicate your best self in every situation so that you can achieve success.

Balancing Your Personal and Professional Brands Online

Mike Koehler, President, Smirk New Media

When you are working as a communicator for a government agency, public perception of is critical. And sometimes avoiding crisis is Job #1. But what if the crisis comes from within your own walls, through social media. You have opinions, you should be able to say whatever you want! Right? But having both a

personal face and a professional face online can be tricky. Will your personal Twitter rants alienate potential customers? And could an interaction on Facebook end up in bad PR? Smirk New Media's Mike Koehler, a nationally-known speaker on this topic, will share tips and strategies for this juggling act. You will walk away with peace of mind about all the content going out on social media - whether it's from you or your brand.

Implementing Culturally and Linguistically Relevant Communication to Diverse

Leslie Quiroz, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health

Kelley Elliot, Writer-Editor

This session will describe best practices developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health (HHS OMH) in ensuring culturally and linguistically appropriate communications to diverse audiences. The presentation will also provide examples of how the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health (National CLAS Standards) can be embedded in your communication strategies to increase inclusion and receptivity. Presenters will discuss the importance of delivering information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and explain how HHS OMH tailor's communication information and outreach activities to address the needs of its various audiences. This session will also provide examples of HHS OMHs work with other Federal agencies and divisions to develop and disseminate communication resources and information that are relevant, appealing and culturally appropriate.

4 – 5 p.m.: General Session

The Media Today....and For At Least the Next Two Weeks!

Dennis Kendall, Director of Broadcast News, QNI, St. Louis

Chris Regnier, Reporter, Fox 2 Now, St. Louis

Kent Boyd, Former Journalist, PIO of Springfield/Branson Airport

Who better to talk about the changing media landscape than those who work in the industry! This panel discussion will focus on how government communicators can help the media....and how the media can help government communicators.