

NAGC

National Association of
Government Communicators

National Association of Government Communicators **2017 Communications School**



GATEWAY TO THE BEST IN
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

June 13 - 15, 2017

Drury Plaza Hotel St. Louis at the Arch



Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Advanced Training Workshops

8 a.m. – noon

Communication Planning: Defining Success and Setting Goals

Christopher O'Neil, Chief of Media Relations, National Transportation Safety Board, and President-Elect, NAGC

Communication planning has never been more important to effective communication than it is in today's information environment. Multiple communication channels, noise created by competing narratives and the dwindling attention span of your audience require purposeful communication planning to integrate, coordinate and synchronize your communication efforts.

This interactive advance workshop is a must for any government communicator working across multiple platforms, engaging multiple and diverse audiences or working to align communication efforts to a specific goal. Learn how to define communication goals, separate strategy from tactics and use research and evaluation to enhance message development.

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) Bootcamp

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR liaison and Director of the Monmouth County (NJ) Department of Public Information & Tourism

Ann Knabe, APR+ Military Communications and Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense University

APR Mini-Jump Start

Get started on your APR journey! Review the accreditation process and discuss the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to successfully prepare a panel presentation and complete the exam. Taught by seasoned APRs, this course focuses on 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, president and CEO of CommCore Consulting Group

We all 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 a 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 an effective communication crisis strategy, measure your response effectiveness, and prepare yourself and your agency or organization to maximize your overall communication goals. You'll discuss current viral crisis situations and the communication reaction and responses — good and not-so-good — and then give you the opportunity to test your viral crisis communications skills with role playing and analysis. You'll leave with 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 storytelling. Using the science of storytelling, government communicators can craft messages that resonate with audiences. You'll gain an understanding of story science and learn how to choose stories and messages that spread from person to person. This workshop will give you the tools and techniques you need to heighten messages for public briefings, press releases, and memos 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, and Marketing Director, NAGC

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 overly formal or "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.

Evening Activity

6 p.m.

Cardinals Nation at Ballpark Village

Watch the St. Louis Cardinals play 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, 2017

8:30 – 10 a.m.: General Session

**Welcoming Remarks by
NAGC President Kathryn Stokes**

**Opening Keynote
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, is the back drop of Ryan's discussion of 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

Are you new to the world of government communications or a seasoned professional struggling with ways to land stories for your organization? Become an information architect and make your pitches irresistible to journalists. Learn strategies for creating media opportunities by packaging stories. This session will also feature case studies and feedback from print and broadcast media professionals who will share what they look for in a great story.

Case Study: The Gatlinburg Fires

Dana Soehn, Management Assistant/Public Affairs/Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Marci Claude, Public Relations Manager, Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

Perrin Anderson, Public Information Officer, Sevier County, TN

On November 28, 2016, a complex of wildfires burned 17,904 acres across Sevier County, Tenn., turning the mountain resort town of Gatlinburg into a disaster zone. The fires originated from multiple locations including the Chimney Tops 2 fire in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and downed power lines outside the park. A total of 11,410 acres of national park lands and 6,494 acres outside the park burned. Worst of all, 14 people lost their lives in the Gatlinburg fires. This panel discussion will describe the experience from several different points of view. What would your agency do if confronted with such a disaster?



Seven Ways to Explain Complex Ideas to the General Public

Michael Pina, Program Manager, Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Transportation

In a society that communicates in two-minute sound bites and 140 characters, how can your agency explain its complex, live-saving work concisely and effectively? Today, government communicators must effectively educate the media, stakeholders, and senior leadership, as well as train subject matter experts to effectively communicate key messages. This session will teach you seven ways to break down and explain the complex work of government.

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, Writer, Editor, and Mall Santa

He's the guy who dares to question the veritable religion of social media marketing, and he's making people serious about effective communications stand up and listen.

B.J. Mendelson, author of *Social Media is Bullshit* (St. Martin's Press), joins us today with his latest presentation that answers the question, "If social media is bullshit, what should I be doing to effectively communicate with my audience online and off?" This presentation will answer that question and many more you may have about marketing in the age of fake news, algorithms, and short-attention spans.

B.J. uses profanity and salty language unapologetically, and we do not want people to be surprised by this. If you need to exit after lunching before his talk begins, we'll understand.

1 – 2 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Social Media Stories: How to Communicate Government Information in the Land of Emojis

Jessica Milcetch, Director of Social Media, USA.gov

Social media "stories" have been introduced through various platforms as an effective communication tool. Come learn the ins and outs of sharing your agency's mission through the story format to engage your audience. Participants will leave this session armed with answers to questions about how government can communicate in stories, how to develop a strong strategy for using Stories and how to address accessibility and records management issues. Note: This session is not an endorsement of any social media platform using story format.

Accreditation in Public Relations (APR)

Laura Kirkpatrick, NAGC APR liaison and Director of the Monmouth County (N.J.) Department of Public Information & Tourism

Ann Knabe, APR+ Military Communications and Dean of Students, Associate Professor, and Reserve Component Chair at National Defense University

If you've been thinking of pursuing your APR certification but could not attend the half-day workshop, this short breakout session will give you a speedy overview of the accreditation process and help you set a timeline and expectations for the APR application, presentation and exam.

Using Social Media and Other Communication Tools to Pass a Public Safety Sales Tax

Sharon Watson, Director of Public Affairs, Johnson County, Kan.

Anytime a tax is necessary, government communicators face a major challenge! Let Sharon teach you how her county used social media and other communications tools to educate the residents about a public safety sales tax ballot initiative to fund a new courthouse and coroner facility.

2:30 — 3:30 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Using Protocol to Brand Your Agency

Cheryl Chambers, Civility and Business Coach and former NAGC Competitions Director

Kathleen "Kathy" Zona, Protocol Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Every good public relations staffer knows that you don't have to have the word "communications" in your job title to be a full-time communicator. Communications occur through your interactions with your customers every day. Cheryl and Kathy will teach you what protocol is and is not, how exemplary protocol can be achieved with few resources, and how your protocol style can shine through in all your agency's communications — verbal, online and written.

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

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

State and local governments are not bound by law as the federal government is to write in plain, clear language. But this effort is spreading across the country because citizens want to be able to understand what their governments are saying. In this short, high-speed 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. You'll leave knowing new ways you can begin immediately improving your writing.

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

Blythe Campbell, Senior Communications Director, NANA Development Corporation

Learn what to do when big changes are coming the senior managers turn to you for the right words. In this fast-paced session, Blythe will teach you how to prepare yourself and your leaders now so you are ready to communicate effectively when change comes. You'll leave knowing:

- 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 or ride to the top!



Thursday, June 15, 2017

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

Morning Keynote 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 (N.C.) was thrust into the national spotlight after the unexpected and unanticipated uprising of civil unrest. The dramatic events of Sept. 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. Mark and Holly will tell us the lessons learned from this extraordinary situation that might be critical to other government communicators in the future.

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.: Breakout Sessions

Monitor, Analyze, Engage: Your New Blueprint for Benchmarking Data in the Public Sector

Ben Kessler, Director of Government Solutions, Meltwater

Ben will teach you how to use metrics for your public relations strategy, break down reporting, and share examples of best practices in federal, state, and local government. You'll leave this session understanding how to:

- Give your agency a public voice with social media
- Justify program decisions by measuring growth and quality of media
- Identify new media opportunities through current trends 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 — they're learned and perfected over time. Think you already know how to work with media? We all can always learn more, right? A former CBS News correspondent, Jennifer is also a seasoned and engaging NAGC trainer. She'll teach you skills you had not realized you needed in this fast-paced session that will leave you wanting even more.

Implementing Culturally and Linguistically Relevant Communication to Diverse Audiences

Leslie Quiroz, Bilingual Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Kelley Elliott, Writer-Editor, Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Communicating with diverse audiences is a huge challenge for government communicators. Leslie and Kelley will describe best practices developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate communications to diverse audiences. Learn how the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health (National CLAS Standards) can be embedded in your communications strategies. Leslie and Kelley will also discuss the importance of delivering information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way and explain how their agency tailors information and outreach activities for various audiences.

11:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.: Lunch and General Session Reaching Your Next Summit: Seven Vertical Lessons and One Essential Question for Leading with Impact

Manley Feinberg, International Speaker and former CEO of Build-A-Bear Workshop

Known for his **Vertical Lessons**, Manley has an award-winning reputation for teaching businesses and organizations leadership solutions that yield measurable results every day. But that's not what makes groups stand in line to get on his calendar. Manley will vividly share compelling lessons from his adventures and leadership experiences with NAGC members. He'll leave you inspired and motivated to make real changes to develop the most important asset your agency has — **you!**

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

Christian DeLeon, New Life Arts Design

In 2016, Bethany and Christian paired their skills in a website revamp for a state university-based youth development program. They took an unconventional approach to their partnership that gave each of them more latitude than usual to do their jobs . . . and let them have lots of fun along the way. They'll teach you how to initiate a trend to break down barriers among communicators in government agencies.

Community Branding that Works

Ben Muldrow, Partner, Arnett Muldrow & 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

What if “why” was the first of the five Ws? Having worked in the field during a period of unprecedented civil unrest, Vera will teach you how to create a better vision and plan for working with media and the community by starting the famous listing in the inverse order.

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.: Breakout Sessions

Balancing Your Personal and Professional Brands Online

Mike Koehler, President, Smirk New Media

We’ve all heard about someone who made a poor decision with an online post and didn’t fare well. Having a personal and a professional face online can be tricky. When you are working as a communicator for a government agency, public perception of is critical. And sometimes avoiding crisis is Job No. 1. Mike will teach you how to successfully juggle the public and the private, prevent personal Twitter feed from alienating constituents or employees, and most importantly, prevent an interaction on Facebook from ending up as bad PR.

The Role of Government Communicators and Transition in Government

Christopher O’Neil, National Transportation Safety Board

John Verrico, Department of Homeland Security

This panel discussion will examine the role of career, professional government communicators during transitions in government leadership. If you work in an agency experiencing a major transition in leadership, you won’t want to miss hearing the perspectives of senior communicators who have experience with transition teams. These career government communicators understand the need to champion transparency, accountability, and excellence in government communication with incoming administrations and their appointees.

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, Public Information Officer, Springfield/Branson Airport, and former journalist

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.