

# The PRSA 2009 Mercury Awards



## Call for Entries

**Sponsored by the Connecticut Valley,  
Southern Connecticut, and  
Westchester/Fairfield Chapters of PRSA**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Mercury Awards recognize outstanding work in the public relations, communications and marketing professions. The awards are designed to honor creative and strategic excellence and to encourage outstanding performance in our field.

The program also recognizes one individual as Practitioner of the Year, honoring a PRSA member who has significantly served the profession through a history of achievement, experience and reputation.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Who may enter: Any professional in the field, PRSA member, or member of affiliated communication organizations based in Connecticut, New York's Westchester County and Lower Hudson River area, and the Pioneer Valley in Massachusetts who are responsible for the creation of communications, marketing or public relations strategies and/or tactics. Agencies outside of this geography may enter on behalf of a qualifying client located within our area, but the client must be listed as the award recipient.

What may be entered: Any communication program or product at least some part of which was produced in 2008.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Please complete the entry form and attach the accompanying material in a binder by the deadline. Send your entry with a check payable to PRSA to the address below, or deliver in person. For your convenience, sample winning entries and counselors are available to answer or assist you in completing your entry. Information on the Mercury Awards and entry forms may be found at chapter websites, [www.prsact.org](http://www.prsact.org), [www.prsa-cvc.org](http://www.prsa-cvc.org) and [www.prsa-wf.org](http://www.prsa-wf.org).

There will be a Best in Show winner from the Strategic Campaign Entries and a Best in Show winner from the Tactical Entries. A gold and silver winner may be awarded in each category. Award winners will be contacted in late May. The awards ceremony will be held on Thursday, June 11 at Anthony's Ocean View in New Haven, Connecticut.

### **DEADLINE**

All entries must be received by Monday, April 13, 2009 at 5 p.m. Any entry delivered after this date, but no later than 5 p.m., Thursday, April 16, 2009 must include a late fee of \$25 for each late entry with the entry fee payment in order to be considered.

### **FEES**

#### **Comprehensive Campaign (Strategic)**

\$60 per entry by PRSA member or member of an affiliated organization

\$70 per entry for non-member or non-affiliated organization

\$50 per entry if 2 or more entries for PRSA member or member of an affiliated organization

\$60 per entry if 2 or more entries for non-member or non-affiliated organization

#### **Single-item Component (Tactical)**

\$40 per entry by PRSA member or member of an affiliated organization

\$50 per entry for non-member or non-affiliated organization

\$35 per entry if 3 or more entries for PRSA member or member of an affiliated organization

\$45 per entry if 3 or more entries for non-member or non-affiliated organization

#### **Practitioner of the Year**

There is no fee for nomination.

## **JUDGING CRITERIA**

PRSA members from a sister chapter in the United States will serve as judges. Entries may be moved to the appropriate category or division at the judges' discretion. Judges have the right to withhold an award in any division if the entries do not, in their opinion, merit recognition. Judges also reserve the right to disqualify entries if submission guidelines are not followed.

## **ENTRY GUIDELINES**

- Each entry must be submitted in a separate three-ring binder (no oversized binders more than 12" long).
- The completed entry form must be mounted on the outside front cover. Entry forms may be photocopied to submit multiple entries in the same or different category.
- Video entries, vodcasts, or broadcast coverage must be submitted on DVD. Audio entries, including radio coverage and podcasts, must be submitted on an audio CD. All should be labeled with the entry name.
- Web sites: include hard copies of pages that support your entry.
- All entries must include typewritten summaries in type 10 points or larger: a one-page summary for Tactical entries and a two-page summary for Strategic Campaign entries. The entrant's name and company/organization should appear in the upper left-hand corner. The category number and name along with the title of the entry should appear in the upper right-hand corner.
- Enclose one check for all entries, payable to "PRSA". Your check should be clipped to the outside of your first entry. Send entry (with entry form, binder, samples, summary and check) to:

Alison Karam, APR  
Director, PR, Marketing & Research  
First Experience Communications  
701 Hebron Ave  
Glastonbury CT 06033  
860-657-3815 x21

Entries will be accepted Monday through Friday from March 31 to April 13 during normal business hours: 9:00am to 5:00pm.

**Late entries** may be delivered by 5 p.m. Thursday, April 16 with a \$25 late fee per entry to the address noted above.

Entries and summaries of judges' comments will be available for entrants to pick up at the Mercury Awards ceremony on June 11. Entries not picked up at the event will not be returned.

For further assistance or questions please contact:

**Mary Ingarra, APR, Southern Connecticut Chapter Representative:**  
(860) 669-8630 x 3014, mingarra@ctwater.com

**Stephanie Harwood, APR, Fairfield/Westchester Chapter Representative:**  
(203) 972-7574, smharwood@juno.com

**Alison Karam, APR, Connecticut Valley Chapter Representative:**  
(860) 657-3815, ext. 21, karam@firstexperience.com

Please review Judging Criteria required for Strategic Campaign and Tactical Entries, as well as for Practitioner of the Year.

## CLASSIFICATIONS

### A. Tactical (Single-item) — Recognizing the Very Best in Public Relations Tactics

This section recognizes outstanding public relations tactics, the individual items or components of programs or campaigns. They are awarded in 21 main categories, many of which have subcategories.

How to prepare your entry:

#### Judging Criteria

- Judging will be based on planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence, and results.
- Results should provide evidence of how the stated objectives were met and how the entry impacted the success of a broader or on-going program.
- Evidence may be qualitative or quantitative, as appropriate for the scope and nature of the entry.

#### How to Prepare Your One-Page Summary

- The one-page summary is perhaps the single most important component of the Mercury Award entry.
- Develop a concise one-page summary, which should include objectives, audiences, budget (if possible) and a summary of results. Also, consider any specific information requested in the individual category.
- Your summary sheet must be attached to your entry in the specified size binder, and the type-face must be 10 points or larger. Any PRSA member should feel free to submit Bronze Anvil entries in this category.
- Be sure to include the category name and number and entry title in the upper right-hand corner of the cover sheet. See entry guidelines.

### B. Strategic Campaigns —Recognizing the Very Best in Comprehensive Public Relations Campaigns

This section recognizes complete public relations programs that incorporate sound research, planning, execution and evaluation. They are awarded in 10 categories, most of which have sub-categories.

How to Prepare Your Two-Page Summary:

- The two-page summary is perhaps the single most important component of this Mercury Award entry.
- Judges will evaluate the program on the merit of four criteria: research, planning, execution and evaluation. Judges first evaluate your entry based on the summary.
- At least some part of the program must have occurred in 2008. Programs typically score higher if they are near completion, because evaluation against initial objectives can be better determined. Feel free to submit Silver Anvil entries for this category.
- Choose the most appropriate category. It is possible that an entry could be appropriate for more than one category. In deciding which category is most appropriate, entrants should examine program objectives and target audiences.
- Your binder should include any supporting materials referred to in the two-page summary. For example, if you refer to a public relations planning document, a copy of the plan should be included in the binder.
- Other examples of supporting materials would be clippings, reports, letters, pictures and samples of tactical materials.
- Structure your two-page summary to include:

#### RESEARCH

Analyze or describe the situation on which the program is based. When addressing the actual research component, describe who specifically initiated the research. Was it in response to a problem or to examine a potential problem? Did research help to redefine the situation in any way? How was the research relevant to shaping the planning process? How did the research help define the audience(s) or the situation?

#### PLANNING

How do the plans correlate to the research findings? Who was involved in the planning? In general terms, what was the plan? For example, what were the specific objectives of the program? Who were the target audiences? What was the overall strategy employed? What materials were used? What was your budget?

#### EXECUTION

How were the plans executed and what were the results? In general terms, how did the activities flow? Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled? Were other organizations involved? Were other non-traditional public relations tactics (e.g., advertising) employed?

#### EVALUATION

What method(s) of evaluation were used? How are results related to research findings? How are results related to strategic objectives? (Note: media circulation figures are not acceptable as the only means of quantitative measurement.)

## **Entry Categories**

### **A -- TACTICAL**

#### **A-1. MEDIA RELATIONS**

- a. For-profit Organizations
- b. Not-for-profit Organizations

Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations. Submit press releases, media advisories, pitch letters, requests for coverage, etc., along with evidence of the resulting media coverage (article, interview, broadcast feature, etc.) and one-page summary. TV coverage should be submitted on a DVD and radio coverage on a CD.

#### **A-2. PRESS KITS**

Hard-copy, DVD, or on-line packages designed, written, and produced to generate media coverage. Judging will be based upon clarity of written message and design. Note: Results will not be the determining factor in this category.

#### **A-3. NEWSLETTERS**

Publications designed, written and published periodically to provide brief and timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization's overall objectives. Submit three consecutive issues along with one-page summary.

- a. Print
- b. Online

#### **A-4. MAGAZINES**

This material is designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a regular basis. Magazines typically are differentiated from newsletters by the number of pages and length of articles. Submit three consecutive issues along with one-page summary.

#### **A-5. ANNUAL REPORTS**

- a. For-profit Organizations
- b. Not-for-profit Organizations

Publications that report on an organization's annual performance. Submit one copy of the publication (print-out if digital) along with one-page summary.

#### **A-6. BROCHURES**

Pamphlets, booklets or other small publications designed to inform a target audience about an organization, product, service or issue. Submit one copy of the publication along with one-page summary.

#### **A-7. SPECIAL PURPOSE PUBLICATIONS**

Single-issue publications designed for a special purpose. Books and other publications not eligible for consideration in other categories should be entered here. Submit one copy of the publication along with one-page summary.

#### **A-8. DIRECT MAIL/DIRECT RESPONSE**

Communications designed to solicit a specific, immediate response by the target audience. This can be a single communication or a series. Quantifiable, specific actions by the target audience resulting solely from the sponsor's communication should be detailed in the summary. Entire communications programs should be entered under the campaign entry category below, rather than in this category. Submit one copy of the publication along with a one-page summary.

#### **A-9. VIDEO NEWS RELEASES**

Pre-produced videos distributed to television stations to inform target audiences about an event, product, service or organization. Entries should be submitted on a DVD. The one-page summary should include usage statistics or other means of quantified measurement.

#### **A-10. AUDIO PROGRAMS/PODCASTS (INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL)**

Audio programs targeted toward internal audiences such as employees, members, etc. or external audiences. Must be originally produced. Submit audio CD along with a one-page summary that includes rationale for chosen format, statistics or other quantifiable measurement to support objectives.

#### **A-11. VIDEO PROGRAMS/VODCASTS (INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL)**

Video programs or vodcasts directed at internal or external audiences. Submit on DVD along with a one-page summary that includes rationale for the chosen format, statistics or other quantifiable measurement to support objectives.

#### **A-12. TELEVISION PSAs**

Video productions of one minute or less distributed to television stations as non-paid Public Service Announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted on a single DVD. The one-page summary should include documentation of results.

#### **A-13. RADIO PSAs**

Audio productions of one minute or less distributed to radio stations as non-paid Public Service Announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted on a single CD. The one-page summary should include documentation of results.

#### **A-14. SPEECHES\* (See Note)**

Submit text of speech along with one-page summary. Summary should include information on audience, purpose of speech and any documented results.

**A-15. BY-LINED FEATURE STORIES/ARTICLES\* (See Note)**

By-lined for a company or client and published in an external publication. Judged on placement and writing skills. Submit text of feature article as well as documentation of publication and its placement. The one-page summary should include target audience, objectives and any documented results.

**A-16. EDITORIALS/OP-ED COLUMNS\*(See Note)**

Opinion articles written as an editorial, guest column, or letter to the editor. Submit text of article and documentation of publication. The one-page summary should outline objectives, audience, results and budget.

**A-17. ADVERTORIALS\* (See Note)**

Paid advertising written as editorial matter to gain support for a product, issue, program or organization. Submit text of editorial matter and documentation of publication. The one-page summary should include target audience, objectives and budget.

**A-18. RESEARCH/ EVALUATION**

Research that provides a meaningful contribution or input to a public relations program, or an evaluation documenting the value or benefit of a public relations program or tactic. Sample of the methodology and findings of any research should be included in the entry, along with a one page summary. One-page summaries for evaluations should detail how and why this method is unique and valuable.

**A-19. CREATIVE TACTICS**

Unconventional, creative tactic or approach used as part of a public relations program. Documentation of how the tactic contributed to the results of the campaign should be included in the one-page summary. (If objects are large or bulky, send a photograph or video representation).

**A-20. WEB SITES**

- a. Marketing/External Communications
- b. Intranet/Internal Communications
- c. Online Media Rooms

Submit a one-page summary including Web address, objectives, target audience, techniques, budget and results. Include "screen grabs" or print copies of key Web pages. Submit a copy of the CD-ROM along with the summary.

**A-21 NON-TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Use of non-traditional communications in a public relations program; may include webcasts, social media, blogs or blogger campaigns. Submit a one-page summary including Web address, objectives, target audience, techniques, budget and results. Include "screen grabs" or print copies of key Internet pages. Submit a copy of the CD-ROM along with the summary. Note: All entries will be judged equally without regard to the type of interactive media used.

**\*Note:** Entries in A-14 Speeches, A-15 By-Lined Feature Stories/Articles, A-16 Editorial/Op-Ed Columns, and A-17 Advertorials must be written in their entirety, or substantively, by the entrant

**B – STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS**

**B-1. Community Relations**

- a. For-Profit Business
- b. Not-for-Profit/Associations/Government

Programs that seek to win the support or cooperation of, or that aim to improve relations with, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity. "Community" in this category refers to a specific geographic location or locations. (Campaigns designed to promote products should be entered in Marketing Products or Services.)

**B-2 Reputation/Brand Management**

- a. For-Profit Business
- b. Not-for-Profit/Associations/Government

Programs designed to enhance, promote or improve the reputation of an organization with its publics or key elements of its publics, either proactively or in response to an issue, event or market occurrence.

**B-3. Special Events and Observances**

- a. Programs or events scheduled from one to seven days
- b. Programs or events scheduled for more than seven days

Length of the program or event does not including planning and preparation. Events may be commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities such as a year-long anniversary.

**B-4. Public Affairs**

Programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies - at the local, state or federal government levels - so that the entity funding the program benefits, or programs that advance public understanding of a societal issue, problem or concern.

**B-5. Marketing Products and Services**

Programs designed to introduce new or promote existing products and services to a consumer or business audience.

**B-6. Crisis Communications**

Programs undertaken to deal with an unplanned event, requiring immediate response.

**B-7. Internal Communications****a. For-Profit Business****b. Not-for-Profit/Associations/Government**

Programs targeted specifically to special publics directly allied with an organization (i.e., employees, members, affiliated dealers or franchisees).

**B-8. Investor Relations****a. Companies with sales more than \$500 million****b. Companies with sales of \$500 million or less**

Programs directed to shareowners, other investors and the investment community.

**B-9. Multicultural Public Relations****a. For-Profit Business****b. Not-for-Profit/Associations/Government**

Any type of program (e.g., institutional, marketing, or community relations) specifically targeted to a cultural group.

**B-10. Integrated Communications****a. For-Profit Business****b. Not-for-Profit/Associations/Government**

A program that employs the creative and effective integration and leadership of public relations strategies and tactics with other promotional marketing communications. It should demonstrate the integration of strategies, plus the budget and measurement of return on investment of the communications to any stakeholder group including employees, consumers, the media and shareholders.

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## 2009 Mercury Entry Form

Category Number/Name (include subcategory if applicable):

Entry Title:

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### Organization for which the entry was produced:

Name

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Address

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City/State/Zip

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### Person or contact submitting entry:

Name, Title

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Organization

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Address

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City/State/Zip

---

Business/Day Phone

---

Email

---

### Payment: (see page 1 for entry fees):

Payment is for \_\_\_\_\_ # of total entries: \_\_\_\_\_ # of tactical(s) \_\_\_\_\_ # of campaign(s)

Late payment: \$25 late fee for each entry: \_\_\_\_\_ # of late entries (submitted April 14-16)

**Make check payable to: PRSA.**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Submitted**

PRSA Member? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Name of Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate below if you are a member of any of the following associations. If yes, you are entitled to the member rate.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Marketing Assn.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> International Assn. of Business Communicators           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairfield County PR Assn.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairchester Communications Council                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ad Club of Connecticut                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Marketing Assn.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National Investor Relations Institute                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing Communications Council of Central Connecticut |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connecticut Art Directors Club                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Marketing Assn.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Marketing Assn.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Assn. for Women in Communications                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Society for Marketing Professional Services Communicators |  |

Entries will be accepted Monday through Friday from March 31 to April 13 from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Send entry form, check, summary page, and binder for **delivery by 5 p.m., Monday, April 13** to: Alison Karam, APR, Director, PR, Marketing & Research, First Experience Communications, 701 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury CT 06033

**Late Entries** will be accepted from 9 a.m. Tuesday, April 14 **through 5 p.m., Thursday, April 16, 2009 (with a \$25 late fee per entry).**

## The PRSA 2009 Mercury Awards

### Practitioner of the Year Call for Candidates

Sponsored by the Connecticut Valley, Southern Connecticut and Westchester/Fairfield Chapters of PRSA



#### **INDIVIDUAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING PRACTITIONER**

The "Practitioner of the Year Award" is intended to recognize a PRSA member in Connecticut, Westchester/Lower Hudson River region or Southern Massachusetts who has significantly served the profession through his/her professional achievements, experience and reputation in the profession. Your nomination form (see attached) should include the achievements of the nominee and should indicate how these have advanced the profession of public relations and contributed to its positive visibility.

There is no fee for entering a nominee. Candidates may be self-nominated or nominated by another.

#### **Judging Criteria:**

**Personal Involvement:** List the organization(s) in which the nominee has been voluntarily involved, positions held, and scope of activity. These activities must not be solely on behalf of a client or employer, although they may be supported by them. This involvement may include service to one or many groups. These are not limited to organizations within our profession.

**Involvement in the Profession:** Indicate how the nominee has served to advance the profession through involvement in professional organizations or by creating professional development programs.

**Achievements and Impact:** Detail the achievements of the nominee and how these have advanced the profession of public relations. Show how the nominee's activities have brought about positive social, economic, political or professional action.

#### **Selection Process:**

Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of previous Practitioner Award honorees. The individual selected will be announced at the **2009 Mercury Awards event on Thursday, June 11** at Anthony's Ocean View in New Haven, Connecticut.

Please review the list of previous Practitioner Award honorees, who are not eligible for re-nomination.

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**2009 Mercury Entry Form: Individual Practitioner of the Year Nomination Form**

**Candidate being nominated:**

Name, Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Person or contact submitting nomination:**

Name, Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Business/Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Involvement:** List the organization(s) in which the nominee has been voluntarily involved, positions held, scope of activity. These are not limited to organizations within our profession. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

**Involvement in the Profession:** Indicate how the nominee has served to advance the profession through involvement in professional organizations or by creating professional development programs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

**Achievements and Impact:** Detail the achievements of the nominee and how these have advanced the profession of public relations. Show how the nominee’s activities have brought about positive social, economic, political or professional action.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**You may attach a bio or other supporting information.**

Please submit your completed nomination by **Friday, May 8** to:

Stephanie Harwood, APR  
2009 Mercury Awards Committee  
S.M. Harwood Consulting  
46 Main St.  
New Canaan CT 06840  
[smharwood@juno.com](mailto:smharwood@juno.com)  
Fax: 203-972-1327

**PRSA Mercury Awards  
Individual Award For Outstanding Practitioner  
Previous Honorees**

- 2008** Jenny Smith
- 2007** - Jim Lukaszewski, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2006** – John Morgan
- 2005** - Don Levin, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2004** - Fran Onofrio, APR
- 2002** - Ira W. Yellen, APR, Fellow PRSA
- 2001** - Michael Salius, APR
- 2000** - Deborah Percival
- 1998** - Carolyn Harris-Burney, APR
- 1997** - Sandy K. Hamer, APR
- 1996** - Western Todd
- 1995** - Thomas Fay
- 1994** - Laurence Cohen
- 1993** - Mary Farrell
- 1992** - Mary O'Connor
- 1991** - John J. Daly, Jr.
- 1990** - Ethel F. Fried
- 1988** - Richard E. Domagala
- 1987** - John F. Budd, Jr.
- 1986** - Roger Dove & Jerry Lowengard
- 1985** - Herbert J. Kramer & Charles Brunelle