

The Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship Minnesota PRSA

The Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship, sponsored by Minnesota PRSA, is given annually in honor of the late Dr. Willard Thompson of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism. A panel of Accredited Public Relations (APR) professionals will judge the student entries and the award recipients will be announced at the Minnesota PRSA Classics Award Ceremony in the Spring of 2005 in the Twin Cities.

The top three scoring applicants (scoring a minimum of 70 out of 100 points) from the six affiliated PRSSA chapters of Minnesota PRSA will receive Dr. Willard Thompson scholarships. The top-scoring applicant will be named "Best of PRSSA" and will receive a \$1,000 scholarship, and the second and third top-scoring applicants will each receive a \$500 scholarship.

In addition, one finalist from each chapter will be selected for the President's Award and will receive an honorary certificate. These finalists will have the top-scoring applications within the communications experience (Section 3) of the scholarship entry. The Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship and President's Award recipients will be invited to a special lunch with the president of Minnesota PRSA.

To qualify for the Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship and President's Award, applicants must:

- ♣ be in good standing with their PRSSA chapter
- ♣ have attained a junior or senior level standing
- ♣ use any scholarship funds for educational expenses

The following point breakdown is considered when scoring the applications:

10 pts. Grade Point Average

10 pts. Faculty Recommendation

40 pts. Communications Experience

40 pts. Case Study

Applications are due no later than January 26, 2005!

Section A: Background Information

Applicant name:

Applicant's PRSSA chapter:

Current address:

Daytime telephone number:

Home telephone number:

Mobile telephone number:

E-mail address:

Overall grade point average: _____ (on a 4.0 scale)

Scholarship funds may be used for educational expenses including tuition, books, fees, student loan repayment or internship-related costs. Please specify how you will use the scholarship funds as a Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship winner:

In accordance with the rules governing this scholarship and the PRSSA National Bylaws, I, _____, swear that all information provided in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Student signature:

Date:

Faculty advisor signature:

Date:

Section B: Faculty Recommendation

This recommendation will contribute to the applicant's overall point total. Please include any insight you have into the student's academic performance, leadership qualities and social skills. You may print or type your recommendation on this page, or on your personal letterhead. Please staple any additional sheets to this form and return it to the student for submission with the application.

Applicant's name:

Faculty member's name:

Institution:

Title:

Faculty signature:

Date:

Section C: Communications Experience

Please attach a copy of your resume detailing your communications experience. Include activities such as internships, related employment, PRSSA projects and volunteer community work. Be specific and list your responsibilities for each activity. Please note this portion of the application contributes significantly to the applicant's overall point total and the selection of the President's Award.

Applicant's name:

Section D: Case Study

Applicant's name:

Please complete a double-spaced, typewritten public relations plan for the following situation. Put your name on all pages and staple them to this form. Your scenario is:

You are the communications director of For Kids Camp, a non-profit organization that was created to provide a positive camp experience for children ages 9-12, who have survived a traumatic event (traumatic injury, illness or personal loss) in their lives. Each child attends the camp free of charge by the donations collected by For Kids Camp. For Kids Camp has five locations across the nation (San Francisco, Calif.; Austin, Texas; Denver, Colo.; Minneapolis, Minn.; and Boston, Mass.). It was founded in 1955 by a philanthropic couple, Don and Dana Anderson, whose daughter died of leukemia at age 10. Don and Dana have passed away, but their son Ryan Anderson and his wife Joyce now run the camps. For Kids Camp has provided camp experiences for more than 500,000 children since its founding.

For Kids Camp provides emotional healing through a week-long camp consisting of music, art, sports and recreation activities that enhance confidence and self-esteem, as well as provide a fun and relaxing atmosphere.

For Kids Camp is well respected in its camp communities. Local entertainers, politicians and sports figures often volunteer at the camps, and For Kids Camp is always looking for more celebrity activism to bring more support to the camps.

For Kids Camp is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the summer of 2005. The Camp wants to celebrate its 50th anniversary through events, public relations and regional and national publicity. For Kids Camp wants to utilize its anniversary to gain more awareness of its program among potential sponsors and donors, as well as volunteers to serve as camp counselors. For Kids Camp also wants to increase its national visibility, although it doesn't have a camp in every state, it does service children all across the country.

Prepare a public relations plan to help launch this anniversary program including a maximum two-page press release that announces the anniversary activities.

Your plan should:

- Include research, objectives, planning and evaluation
- Develop an analysis showing your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Include your key messages for the appropriate audiences
- Stay within your allotted budget of \$200,000

The entire plan should be 2-6 pages, including the news release

**Please return all sections of this completed application to
Tracy Carlson by no later than January 26, 2005!**

Tips for Willard Thompson Scholarship Entries

The key to winning a Dr. Willard Thompson Scholarship is a clear, concise plan. The following are some things to consider while completing your entry.

- ♣ Follow the research, objectives, planning and evaluation format for your plan.
- ♣ Before writing your news release, try to ask yourself what the news or media hook is.
- ♣ Try not to focus on the design of the company logo and visual aspects of the news release, but rather concentrate on formatting your news release correctly – using the correct components (i.e. dateline, contact information, etc.)
- ♣ Ask someone to read through your plan (preferably someone outside your major) to look for spelling and grammatical errors.
- ♣ Format your plan so it is easy to read – maybe add some section headings and bullet points.
- ♣ Think about your target audience.
- ♣ Do not forget to include a budget. (This is the reason most people get docked points in the plan portion of the application.) If you don't know how to formulate a budget, ask someone for guidance.
- ♣ If you decide to include advertising in your plan, remember to budget for the cost to design the ad and determine the cost to purchase ad space in a publication.
- ♣ Remember to include at least one quote in your news release.
- ♣ Ask for help. If you don't really understand something on the application, ask a professor or call a Minnesota PRSA Student Relations committee member.

Applications can be sent by fax, courier or postal mail to:

Tracy Carlson
Padilla Speer Beardsley
1101 West River Parkway, Suite 400
Minneapolis, MN 55415
Phone: 612-455-1717
Fax: 612-455-1060

Please complete the following application completely, including sections A through D.

Good luck!