



PRSA Chicago December Career Contributions Winner

Jacob Voss, Loyola University Chicago (@vacobjoss)

Jacob is a driven student at Loyola University Chicago, graduating this coming December with a bachelor's degree in advertising and public relations, and a minor in Chinese studies. Having studied abroad in Beijing, China for the fall of 2015, Jacob excels at learning about and adapting to new cultures and situations.

Outside of the classroom, Jacob specializes in assisting companies with various aspects of communications, such as writing press releases and media advisories, monitoring traditional and social media, and researching target audiences. His strengths lie in his ability to effectively manage group projects and team strategy, as well as problem solve under pressure in a variety of situations.

His work experience includes being a media intern at Starcom, public relations writing assistant at the Mall of America, marketing and communications assistant for the Loyola Marketing and Communications Department, public relations assistant at Literacy Chicago, and director of the 2015 Chicago PRSSA Regional conference. He is the current president of the Loyola PRSSA chapter, and founder of Loyola's new student agency. In the future, Jacob will put his management skills to use at an agency or corporation that he feels passionate about.

2016 Holiday PR-ty

I have a very direct way of promoting my PRSSA chapter to potential new members. "Want a job?" I'll say. Then, whether they are interested in joining or not, they look at me with the "I can't really argue with that" look on their face. Seriously, if you need more members, give this method a try.

When attending this year's annual PRSA Holiday Party, I realized that this is how PRSA events could be promoted as well, for students, young professionals, and high level executives alike. I hate to give away my networking secret, but when you go to a PRSA event, it isn't hard to walk away with about 20 business cards and numerous job leads.

Now, of course this doesn't just come without some hard work, so I'll give you a few suggestions.

First, don't ever undervalue the benefit of having a professional mentor. Maybe even a few. When you run into your mentors at these sorts of events, they won't hesitate to mention you to everyone that they meet. They will probably even land you a job someday.

Second, understand that most of the people at the events want to talk to you as much as you want to talk to them. And if they don't, prove to them that they should. The kinds of people that show up to these events are reciters, high level executives and industry leaders - basically the people who can make or break your career.

Lastly, be confident. The fact that you are a student or a starting professional should make you all the more confident when approaching someone to speak. They will be impressed with your drive and willingness to put in the extra effort to expand your networks, and your ability to stand out.

In summary, if you are not someone who goes to PRSA events, those who do will undoubtedly have an advantage over you for the rest of your career.