

University Relations
Unit Annual Report
2002-2003

Personnel

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Judy Riley | staff, campus communications coordinator (full time) |
| Seth Flynn | student, work-study/web coordinator [shared Seth with Judy Korn in External Relations/Fund Development] p |
| Sarah Huseby | student, work-study/office assistant |
| Jackie Thrasher | student, worked on a part-time volunteer basis for the experience |
| Sue Dieter | managed the office during the coordinator's personal leave |

Purpose

University Relations serves as the public relations, news service and media relations office for the Morris campus. The office works in cooperation with the External Relations offices of Alumni Relations, Fund Development, and Special Events to build and maintain a favorable image for the University with both internal and external audiences. The office provides a variety of services to a diverse constituency.

Function

University Relations is a unit of External Relations, which also includes the Offices of Alumni Relations, Fund Development and Special Events.

The office compiles, writes and coordinates placement of articles in the all-University publications and electronic media produced on the Minneapolis campus -- Brief, Kiosk, M, E-news and Minnesota magazine -- in addition to national publications such as The Chronicle of Higher Education.

The coordinator pitches stories to statewide media, including the Minneapolis Star Tribune and St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The coordinator serves as the news liaison between the campus and Minnesota Public Radio, for which UMM is an institutional sponsor.

The coordinator serves as a liaison between UMM and a variety of other print and broadcast media, pitching stories, coordinating news conferences, linking media with faculty and staff spokespersons, coordinating interviews, preparing information packets, and tracking down general information for stories about the campus.

Office work-study students prepare and distribute countless releases to students' hometown media about students' campus involvement, admission, honors and achievements.

The coordinator works with the Chancellor to produce an occasional "Chancellor's Column" on specific topics that affect UMM and area communities. The coordinator disseminates these to area newspapers for publication.

The coordinator works with the Office of Student Activities to develop a weekly radio program of campus events on local radio, KMRS. The program airs during halftime of the football season and weekends throughout the rest of the academic year.

The coordinator works with the program director at local radio, KMRS, and campus personnel to provide KMRS with guests for its daily interview program, "Community Connection."

The coordinator produces weekly issues of the official campus newsletter, Weekly Bulletin.

The coordinator writes and edits a weekly column of UMM events, UMM Preview, which is distributed to west central area newspapers.

University Relations provides some photo coverage by the coordinator and a student photographer.

This year, the responsibility as editor for Profile, the publication for alumni and friends of UMM, was transferred from the University Relations communications coordinator to the communications staff person in Fund Development.

University Relations works with other campuses of the University of Minnesota, institutions of education at all levels, and many off-campus businesses and organizations to answer questions, provide information, and serve as a liaison between UMM and non-UMM constituents.

The office coordinates several large special events that bring visitors to the campus, bring the campus to external audiences, enhance the visibility of the campus and generally advance UMM and its mission (see list below under Narrative and/or Statistical).

University Relations assists off-campus groups with requests for use of campus facilities. This assistance takes the form of meeting and touring the facility with the group, providing rental rates and policy information, discussing physical room setups, coordinating campus units to provide requested setups, and compiling and disseminating billing and payment information.

Evaluation

The office workload continues to increase and expectations of the campus community with regard to this office remain high. To the extent possible, the coordinator has initiated some measures in an effort to decrease the workload of this office that is sorely understaffed. Measures include:

- 1) Transferring to Student Activities the coordination of room setups for on-campus groups who use the Student Center;
- 2) Distributing the Weekly Bulletin via campus e-mail only;
- 3) Discontinuing the annual printed Student-Staff Directory with the option to use existing on-line resources for student, staff and faculty directory listings;
- 4) Subscribing to a news distribution service (Minnesota Link) for disseminating large volume news release mailings such as the semiannual Dean's List and annual Commencement list to students' hometown media;
- 5) Coordinating and maintaining an e-mail listserv of regional and statewide media, ethnic and specialty publications, calendar of events outlets and community friends of UMM, among others, to which news about UMM is disseminated.

Due to the aspirations by the campus community for greater visibility for the campus, it is recommended that additional full-time staff be added to the office.

Narrative and/or Statistical

A. External/Internal Relations activities:

1. Member, Administrative Committee
2. Member, Integrated Marketing group
3. Member, External Relations group
4. Member, Campaign Minnesota Committee
5. Member, Student Center Committee
6. Member, campus Energy Task Force
7. Campus representative to Morris Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Board of Directors
8. Chair, Chamber of Commerce Events Committee

B. Special Events

1. Campus exhibit at Stevens County Fair (due to personal leave of coordinator in fall 2002, the Admissions office temporarily assumed this responsibility), August 2002
2. Morris campus display as part of U of M exhibit at Minnesota State Fair, August 2002

3. Entertainment from UMM for U of M Maroon and Gold Day at State Fair, August 2002
4. Faculty-staff fall picnic (due to personal leave of coordinator in fall 2002, the special events coordinator temporarily assumed this responsibility). September 2002
5. President's State of the U Address broadcast to campus September 2002
6. Media and community relations for President Bruininks' visit to UMM, December 2002
7. Media relations for 25th Annual Jazz Fest [coordinated extensive coverage by MPR with reporter Maryann Sullivan and general manager Mike Olson in addition to regional and local coverage), April 2003
8. Media relations for former senator and gubernatorial candidate Roger Moe campus visit, presentation, and classroom visits April 2003
9. Coordinated area media relations with Minnesota Supreme Court communications director Chuck Tombarge Supreme Court visit to UMM and Morris Area High School, April 2003
10. Media relations for First Annual Small Towns Symposium – served on planning committee with Center for Small Towns staff (coordinated extensive regional and statewide coverage including on-air interviews with regional radio stations by Center for Small Towns staff), June 2003
11. Media relations and photography services for major campus events: Commencement, Student Honors and Awards Ceremony, Homecoming, World Touch Cultural Heritage Week, and Faculty-Staff Recognition Dinner, along with smaller campus events
12. Coordinates Morris area Business Expo (Chamber-sponsored; coordinator chairs the Chamber committee that coordinates this event; coordinator also oversees event setup on campus) during New Student Orientation, August 2002
13. Works with campus catering services to coordinate an average of 6-8 wedding events on campus each year
14. Coordinator chairs Chamber committee that coordinates City/Chamber (sponsored) Community Welcome Picnic
15. Coordinator chairs Chamber committee that coordinates Chamber Annual Meeting
16. Coordinator chairs Chamber committee that coordinates annual Chamber 400 ticket sales fundraiser

B. Publications and Advertising

University Relations produced, contributed to or assisted with the following:

1. Served on committee to restructure New Student Orientation newspaper; submits articles to Student Activities and works with Chamber to produce Chamber ads for the publication

2. 30 issues of the Weekly Bulletin, including four biweekly issues during the summer (during personal leave by coordinator, the web calendar coordinator produced an electronic version of the Weekly Bulletin and coordinated campus distribution of the publication).
3. Holiday ads in Morris Sun Tribune and KMRS-KKOK-KRVY local radio
4. Local and regional print and radio ads for First Annual Small Towns Symposium
5. Radio and newspaper ads for Spring Big Band Fundraiser at Lakeside Ballroom

C. News Service

Office responsibilities include coordinating and implementing a news service for the campus. Work-study student writers and the coordinator research, interview and write the news releases distributed by the office. The coordinator edits all material prior to its distribution.

University Relations wrote and distributed news releases [due to partial year personal leave of coordinator, it is difficult to determine exact number of releases sent] on general topics about UMM students, faculty, staff, events and programs, in addition to approximately 250 releases to students hometown newspapers announcing their graduation, 250 releases per semester to students' hometown newspapers announcing their selection to the Dean's List, and over 513 releases to students' hometown newspapers announcing their admission to UMM, campus participation, scholarships, honors and awards, and research. The hometown publicity was enthusiastically received and, as evidenced from newspaper clippings returned, printed by newspapers throughout the state and beyond.

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The communications coordinator scheduled monthly interviews by the chancellor and other faculty and staff with Morris radio station, KMRS, and scheduled monthly newspaper columns written by the chancellor for the local newspaper, the Morris Sun Tribune and other regional newspapers.

The office works with the web calendar coordinator to place news headlines on the campus web home page with a link to the University Relations home page and the entire news story.

D. Non-academic Scheduling

Coordinating the use of campus facilities by off-campus groups remains a function of University Relations. The office is responsible for compiling charges from all campus units, billing off-campus groups for use of campus spaces and equipment, for collection of these bills and for disbursement of incoming money to the appropriate departments via issuance of forms upon receipt of payment.

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Events included:

- Youth Health Day
- Vegetation Management Educational Workshop
- Rocket Camp (Camp Alpha
- 8 weddings/wedding receptions/dinners/dances
- Chamber of Commerce Business Expo
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Ag PAT Workshop
- Minnesota Farm Bureau

Major changes recommended/Plans for 2003-04

The office will address the following priorities for academic year 2003-04:

- 1) Develop a media relations/news service communications plan
- 2) Develop strategies to improve promotion of UMM with media:
 - increase visits to media outlets
 - follow-up calls to media on major news stories
- 3) Continue to maintain a frugal budget