

# PRAM

MISSISSIPPI BEACH

—Established 1993—

[prambeach.org](http://prambeach.org)

# ImPRessions

October 2008

Mississippi Beach Chapter  
Public Relations Association of Mississippi

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## Next PRAM Meeting

12 noon

Monday, October 6

Sunset Room

Great Southern Club

(15th floor, Hancock Plaza,

Downtown Gulfport)

## October Meeting Focuses on PR Education

Regardless of how many years you've been working in public relations, it's never too late to explore going back to the classroom or learn what it takes for today's students to earn a PR degree.

At the Oct. 6 meeting of PRAM, representatives from the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast and Tulane University will discuss their schools' public relations degree programs. PRAM will also announce the recipients of its two 2008 scholarships during the meeting.

Representing Southern Miss will be Dana Coleman, assistant professor of mass communication and journalism who oversees its PR program on the Coast.

She has served as president of the Pine Belt Chapter of PRAM in Hattiesburg and state president of PRAM. Coleman has more than 16 years experience in public relations in various industries including agen-

cy, radio, print media, health care, retail, independent consultation and the utility industry.

Paul Greenberg, Tulane's program director of media arts and journalism, will come to Gulfport from the university's main campus in New Orleans. The university's Biloxi campus boasts a growing PR program and is a co-sponsor of PRAM's Lunch 'n Learn seminar series.

Greenberg is a working journalist with 25 years experience in news reporting, feature writing, advertising and new media publishing. While working as a full-time writer for the Times-Picayune, he also had work published in other newspapers, local, regional and national periodicals and journals, and Web sites.

The Mississippi Beach chapter of PRAM will meet at noon, Monday, Oct. 6, at the Great Southern Club in downtown Gulfport.

## Fall School Supplies Drive Wraps Up in October

We will be continuing with our fall school supplies drive in October. Students in grades K-5 attending Pass Road Elementary, Central Elementary and Gaston Point Elementary schools in Gulfport will be the recipients of the donated supplies. Thanks to those members who brought supplies to our September meeting.

If you would like to participate, please bring in your donation of school supplies to our Oct. 6 PRAM meeting. The list of needed supplies includes items such as: #2 pencils, crayons, white school glue, glue sticks, spiral bound notebooks wide-ruled, notebook paper wide-ruled, kindergarten writing tablets

and book bags. Also needed are \$10 and \$15 Wal-Mart and K-Mart gift cards, to provide to mothers with children in special education classes who sometimes need to purchase special items not on the basic supply list.

If you have any questions about this or other upcoming service projects, please e-mail Lauren at [lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov).

### Newsletter contributors:

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## President's Letter

Dear PRAM members,

From school supplies to scholarships to seminars, education is a key part of the public relations profession here on the Coast this fall.

We're wrapping up our drive to support local elementary schools so please remember to bring your donation to next week's meeting.



We're also supporting education at the college level by awarding scholarships to two promising PR students. Our chapter has given scholarships since 2001, and this year, the board voted to bump up the amount from a total of \$1,000 to \$1,500 in recognition of our 15th anniversary. Please join us at the October meeting when we'll honor our deserving recipients and hear about local PR degree programs from Tulane and Southern Miss.

And then there's the matter of your own continuing education. We've expanded our November meeting into a half-day seminar to give speaker Ed Schipul, a web guru from Houston, more time to share his expertise in blogs, social media, and all that other new stuff we're trying to figure out. Several members are already bloggers, Facebook friends, LinkedIn connections, and Twitter followers, but advising our bosses and clients on how to go beyond the gadgets to strengthen relationships with our target audiences is a completely different issue.

With autumn also comes the nominating process. If you're interested in getting more involved with PRAM and possibly serving on next year's board, give me a ring or send me an email. I'd love to hear from you.

Yours in PRAM,  
Kristie Aylett, APR

## Weaving the Social Web

### Social media seminar to follow November meeting

The Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama used a text message to announce Joe Biden as his VP pick. Facebook now boasts 100 million active users. Technorati is tracking over 112 million blogs, and your boss is asking your opinion about starting one.

Confused by the ever-evolving social aspects to Web 2.0 and wondering about the role PR practitioners are playing in it?

Then clear the afternoon of Monday, Nov. 10, on your calendar and plan to attend PRAM's half-day seminar, "Weaving the Social Web." The seminar will follow our regularly scheduled chapter meeting at the Great Southern Club.

The seminar will be led by Ed Schipul, founder and chief executive officer of Schipul – The Web Marketing

Company ([www.schipul.com](http://www.schipul.com)). His presentation will focus on how public relations professionals can adopt the latest technologies, such as RSS, blogs, podcasting, social networking sites and wikis, to engage in a conversation with their audiences and outpace the competition.

Fees:

Lunch only = \$17

Seminar only, members = \$25

Seminar only, non-members = \$35

Lunch/seminar, members = \$40

Lunch/seminar, non-members = \$50

Lunch/seminar, students = \$25

Seating is limited so reservations will be taken for the seminar. A registration form has been posted to the chapter Web site at <http://prambeach.org>.

## What Nigerians Teach Us About Media Relations

### Six rules for perfect e-mail pitches

By Jim Ylisela - [jimy@ragan.com](mailto:jimy@ragan.com)  
Courtesy of [myragan.com](http://myragan.com)

Nobody pitches like the Nigerians.

They steal into your e-mail in the quiet of night and wait for you to begin your day. They are earnest and friendly and write with a great sense of urgency. But they are also quite patient and most appreciative of your time.

I call them the Nigerians, because they're the ones who started the relentless stream of e-mail pitches that arrive in my inbox and yours, begging us six ways to Sunday to accept the millions of dollars that could be ours if only we would take a moment and contact them.

Often imitated but never duplicated, the Nigerians scam like nobody else. And in every seemingly irritating e-mail, they conduct a clinic for anyone who pitches to media.

Consider the qualities that make up a good Nigerian e-mail con.

1. Persistence. If you're in media relations, you get used to reporters saying no to you. A lot. They'll discard your pitch without a word, ignore your phone calls and brush away all manner of appeals—until

the one time you hit on something that touches a nerve or, truth be told, fills a need.

In media relations, you can't let the chorus of "no" deter you. It doesn't matter how many reporters you pitch if one says yes, and so it goes with the Nigerians. They'll ask thousands, if not millions of people if they can just please transfer large sums of cash into their bank accounts, because it only takes one poor bastard to make their scheme fly.

2. Exclusivity. It's what every reporter wants, and if nothing else, it's what the Nigerians promise even as they're promising exclusivity to the first taker.

But the Nigerians go one better. Their e-mails promise exclusivity and, just in case you're skeptical, they seal the deal with secret information. In a recent pitch, the chief accountant of the Federal Republic of Nigeria offers this bit of inside dope: The crate he's sending us contains "money," but is labeled "diplomatic documents belonging to my client (that's you)." Where do I sign up?

To read the last four "rules," click here to visit [myragan.com](http://myragan.com).