

PRSA BUFFALO NIAGARA 2020 CHAPTER BOARD BALLOT

*Chapter elections will be held at the Annual Meeting Celebration in mid-November. Details and registration coming soon at prsabuffaloniagara.org. **If you are unable to attend the meeting, complete this proxy form and email it by November 18 to the Nominating Committee at prsabuffaloniagara@gmail.com.***

Listed below is the slate for our 2020 chapter board:

PRESIDENT-ELECT (1-year term, but a three-year commitment) Yes No Other **Lori A. Allan** serves as director of communications and development at the Charter School for Applied Technologies where she is responsible for the school's communications strategies including brand awareness, enrollment marketing and advertising campaigns, digital communications, social media platforms, special events and media relations. A senior communications practitioner, she previously held positions at Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions, the Orchard Park Central School District and Child & Family Services. Lori has completed board terms as treasurer and assembly delegate for the PRSA Buffalo Niagara chapter, in addition to her service as co-chair and chair of the Excalibur Awards committee. A recipient of the PRSA Rising Star Award, Lori has been recognized with both Silver and Gold Excalibur awards in Newsletters, Newspapers and Magazines. She is currently treasurer of the WNY School Public Relations Association and a former board member of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Outside of the communications world, Lori is an avid champion of ending Alzheimer's, working to raise money for the WNY Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association in honor of her late father.

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE (3rd year of 3-year term) Yes No Other **Joyce Ramirez** is a Public Relations Account Executive at Tipping Point Communications in the Buffalo, N.Y. office focusing on client and project management, media relations, special events, and social media. She has over 10 years of experience in the field of healthcare focusing on community relations, public relations, strategic planning, marketing and program development. Prior to Tipping Point Communications, Joyce was the Director of Marketing for American Family Care in Connecticut, responsible for brand management, business development and community outreach for four urgent care locations. In addition, she was involved in a national rebranding, pioneering and implementing the change within the region. She holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Mass Communications from Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y. Having the passion for non-profit work, Joyce is President of Beta Sigma Alpha Charitable Fund and Annual Campaign Chair/Board Member of the YMCA Delaware Family. She is also involved with St. Mary & St. Moses Coptic Orthodox Church serving as a volunteer and the Assistant Director of the annual play. Joyce currently lives in the village of Kenmore with her husband.

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE (3-year term) Yes No Other **Cassandra Kubiak** currently serves as the e-communications committee co-chair for the Buffalo Niagara chapter. She works as a Digital Communications Specialist at Goldberg Segalla LLP. As a member of the Brand Management Department's Communications team, Cassie is responsible for the firm's social media channels and blogs, social media analytics reporting and implementation of new social media and digital communications strategies and technologies. Cassie has been a member of PRSSA since her sophomore year at The Ohio State University, in which she graduated in 2017 with a bachelors in communications. Cassie went on to receive her masters degree in digital communication from Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

ASSEMBLY DELEGATE (3rd year of 3-year term) Yes No Other **Grace Gerass** is currently a director-at-large, membership chair and PRSSA Liaison committee member for PRSA Buffalo Niagara. She works as a content developer for the University at Buffalo Office of Donor and Alumni Communications, where she's

responsible for planning, creating and implementing content that supports the Division of University Advancement. Grace graduated from SUNY Fredonia in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in public relations and minors in business administration and leadership studies.

The following individuals were previously selected to serve on the 2020 PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter Board.

PRESIDENT (1-year term) Michael Freedman is the director of enrollment marketing, advertising, and communications for Niagara University. He has been a member of the PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter since 2009, serving as treasurer in 2017 and 2018 and as a member of the chapter's E- Communications Committee since 2012. A recipient of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Spotlight Professional Award and a member of Niagara County's inaugural 12 Under 40 class, Mike is a member of the marketing/communications committees for Leadership Niagara and the Heart, Love and Soul food pantry. Prior to joining Niagara, where he is also an adjunct professor and co-advisor of the Public Relations Student Society, Mike served as director of communications at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute and Artpark. He holds a bachelor's degree in communications from SUNY Geneseo and an MBA in strategic marketing from Niagara University.

PAST PRESIDENT (1-year term) Stacy VanBlarcom, APR, is the communications manager at Liazon and 2019 PRSA Buffalo Niagara chapter president. As an accredited and established public relations practitioner, Stacy aims to exemplify the best of the profession, building relationships between organizations and their audiences that bring tangible benefits to all involved. An active PRSA Buffalo Niagara chapter member since 2006, Stacy previously served as chair and co-chair of the chapter's e-Communications committee, President-Elect, and Board Secretary. Stacy volunteers as a guest lecturer at several regional educational institutions and programs, and served on the PR Committee for The Steadfast Foundation's Catwalk for Charity for multiple years. Outside of the communications realm, she is also a teacher and professional Bgirl at Buffalo's only school dedicated to the art of Bboying and Hip Hop culture, Verve Dance Studio.

DIRECTOR AT LARGE (2nd year of 3-year term) Mike Barone is the owner and founder of Str84wrđ Communications. He has a quarter century of marketing communications experience, during which he has helped numerous clients and organizations in dozens of industries to improve and advance. He served as Director of Marketing and Communications for the State University of New York at Fredonia from 2008 to 2016, where he led or supported all of the university's marketing efforts, including its advertising, public relations, branding, marketing, crisis communications, digital media, publications, event management, fundraising and government relations activities. Mike also has more than 15 years of agency experience, including 13 years with Travers Collins & Company, where he rose from Account Coordinator to Vice President. There, he worked with dozens of private, not-for-profit and publicly held companies. He's earned numerous awards, including three "Best of Show" honors from the PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter. He's also a former President of the Buffalo Niagara Chapter, which honored him in 2011 as its Practitioner of the Year. In 2010, he was named to Business First's "Forty under 40" list. He holds a bachelor's in Communications from Cornell University and an M.B.A. from the University at Buffalo.

ASSEMBLY DELEGATE (2nd year of 3-year term) Matthew Biddle is assistant director of communications at the University at Buffalo School of Management. His work in public relations has been honored by PRSA, SUNYCUAD and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). A chapter member since 2014, Matt serves as chair for the programming committee. In addition, he is a freelance writer for regional publications, including Buffalo Spree and Buffalo Magazine. Matt graduated magna cum laude

from Ithaca College.

The following individuals were previously re-elected to serve a second term on the 2020 PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter Board.

LIAISON TO PRSSA CHAPTERS (*1-year term*) **Samantha Schlein** is the Technology Partner Engagement Manager at Garland Technology, overseeing relationships and communication with key alliance partners. Since joining Garland Technology, Samantha has implemented strategic initiatives to grow Garland Technology's partner ecosystem. She has 8 years of experience in public relations and marketing roles focused on a variety of capacities including media relations, marketing budget, brand research and creation, project management, and events and sponsorship management. Since joining PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter in 2017, she has sat on the membership committee and will serve her second year as PRSSA Liaison. Schlein is an active member of a variety of organizations and boards including 2019 Red White and Blue Gala chair and volunteer for WNYHeroes, Communication Chair of Fifty Fabulous Women Giving Circle, Communication Chair for Nickel City Jews, and volunteer for Jewish Family Service. She is a graduate of SUNY Fredonia, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations and in Audio Communications.

TREASURER (*1-year term*) **Marcene Robinson** is news content manager at the University at Buffalo and has more than five years of experience in the public relations field. A chapter member since 2013, he has served on the Board as Assembly Delegate in 2018 and PRSSA Liaison for three years. Marcene has received several awards, including gold Excalibur Awards in media relations in 2014 and 2015, as well as the Rising Star Award in 2018 from PRSA Buffalo Niagara. He graduated cum laude from the University at Buffalo with a bachelor's degree in English.

SECRETARY (*1-year term*) **Sarah Miller** is a marketing project manager at M&T Bank. She is the 2019 PRSA Buffalo Niagara board secretary, and a member of the chapter's Membership committee. Prior to joining M&T Bank, Sarah worked with tech startups and an advertising agency after working as a freelance marketing professional for five years. She received her Master of Science in public relations management from SUNY Buffalo State and was also an active member of the University at Buffalo's PRSSA chapter before graduating with her Bachelor of Arts in communication.

DIVERSITY CHAIR (*1-year term*) **Rene Petties-Jones** is the Community Engagement/Fund Development Director for the National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, Inc. She is active with the National NFJC as well as a mentor for other chapter members. Rene is an advocate for issues surrounding diversity and inclusion and currently serves as the chapter's Diversity Chair after being involved with the committee for many years. She recently received the May C. Randazzo Outstanding Practitioner Award from PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter. Rene is also a former member of the Buffalo News Diversity Advisory Board. Working as an educator, administrator, advisor, and public relations associate with a number of area non-profit organizations, over the years she has done numerous presentations and seminars to thousands on a variety of relevant topics.