

Letter from the President

Rachel
BENAVIDEZ



Around this time of year, I begin reflecting—taking stock of what’s been done, what’s left to do, and what’s possible before the clock strikes 12.

This year, a long-held truth became even more clear, with recent conversations about the future of our city and the importance of collaboration and consideration of differing viewpoints. Sometimes we need a reminder that every great community is built on connection—and connection begins with communication.

As communicators, we are more than messengers. We are finding meaning. We help people understand the world around them, find common ground, and take action toward something better. Leadership often starts there—with a clear message, an informed perspective, and the courage to start a conversation that others might avoid. That’s the quiet power of communication: it doesn’t just tell stories; it shapes direction.

In times of change or challenge, people look for clarity and reassurance. They look for someone who can translate complexity into understanding, disagreement into dialogue, and uncertainty into a path forward. That’s leadership. And that’s what communicators do every day—whether we’re guiding a team, advising a client, or speaking on behalf of an organization that serves the public good.

As the year winds down and we prepare to close another chapter of PRSA San Antonio, I’m reminded how vital it is to pause and connect with the community we’ve built together. The conversations we’ve had, the lessons we’ve shared, and the relationships we’ve forged are all part of the leadership fabric that makes our profession stronger.

Join Us November 19: Members-Only Annual Meeting and Board Election

I hope you'll join us for our Annual Members-only Luncheon and Board Election on Tuesday, November 19, at Paloma Blanca on Broadway. This is a special opportunity for members to come together, reflect on our year, and elect the leaders who will guide our chapter into 2026.

The event is free for members, and I encourage you to register early—space is limited, and this year's gathering promises to be especially meaningful.

We're honored to welcome San Antonio's former Mayor, Ron Nirenberg, as our guest speaker. Now serving as the Calgaard Distinguished Professor of Practice at Trinity University's Department of Communication, he brings a unique perspective on the intersection of communication, leadership, and public service. Few people understand as deeply how messages—well-crafted or misguided—can influence policy, shape communities, and unite or divide us.

His conversation will be a reminder that words matter, and that the way we communicate can chart the course for meaningful change.

The Power of Service and Connection

As we look ahead to 2026, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors and committees. Your time, insight, and energy are what make PRSA San Antonio not just a professional organization, but a true community of practice. You model leadership through service—an act that strengthens our entire profession.

If you've ever considered getting more involved, I encourage you to take that step. Serving within PRSA is more than a résumé line; it's a way to give back to the field that shapes so much of our civic, corporate, and cultural life. The more we invest in each other, the more capable we become as a professional community.

As we close the year, I invite you to reflect on the ways you lead—formally or informally—and the impact your voice has on those around you. Communication, at its best, builds awareness, deepens understanding, and moves people to act. That's not just our craft—it's our calling. Let's keep leading with purpose, together.

Rachel

Don't miss our PRSA-SA Members Only Meeting Wednesday, November 19th!

Your vote. Your chapter. Your leadership.

Join us Wednesday, Nov. 19, PRSA San Antonio's **Members Only** Annual Meeting and Board Election. Meet the 2026 Board nominees and cast your vote for next year's leadership. Free for members. Seating is limited. Register now at [PRSanAntonio.com](https://www.prsanantonio.com)



PRSA

San Antonio Chapter



**WED.
11/19**

**ANNUAL LUNCHEON &
2026 BOARD ELECTION**

**FREE EVENT FOR
CURRENT MEMBERS**

11:30 AM TO 1:00 PM
PALOMA BLANCA
5800 BROADWAY



REGISTER TODAY

[PRSANANTONIO.COM](https://prsanantonio.com)

MEMBERS MEETING



Dawn Robinette, MA, APR, Fellow PRSA

This month, we're thrilled to shine the spotlight on Dawn Robinette, MA, APR, Fellow PRSA. She is the Founder of Tale to Tell Communications, a PRSA member since 2001, part of the San Antonio Chapter since 2008 and has a long history of leadership and service.

Robinette was named 2020 Professional of the Year, later chaired the Individual Awards, stepped in as President-Elect, and went on to serve as Southwest District Chair in 2024 — becoming the first PRSA San Antonio member to serve at the District level and now, the first to be elected to the PRSA National Board!

Dawn's passion for storytelling and dedication to our profession shine through in everything she does and she's shared a ton of great advice and insight in our Q&A below. Don't miss it!



How has the industry evolved since you started your career?

I sent out my first press release via fax, and now you can direct message reporters through social media. But for all the technology changes, what we do is the same: we build relationships. No matter what tool we use, it's about strategically connecting with reporters, influencers and your audience.

What's an emerging trend that excites you?

Data, analytics and AI, but that must be responsible AI paired with human judgment. Used well, AI accelerates research, listening and content opportunities, freeing communicators to focus on strategy, insight, ethics and creativity. We have to be accountable and transparent, and strong writing and relationships will always set us apart.

If you could give your younger self one piece of career advice, what would it be?

No matter how good or bad the outcome of your efforts, always focus forward. Celebrate successes, learn from your losses and keep moving. If you let the quicksand of mistakes and "could have, should have, would have" suck you in, you're lost.

What advice would you give to someone entering the profession today?

You can never write enough. Master the fundamentals – writing, listening and judgment – then layer in analytics and AI fluency. Build a network through PRSA. Get involved, go to events, find a mentor and be one. Volunteer for projects that scare you a little. You grow where your comfort ends – dive in and don't be afraid to ask for help.



San Antonio Area Foundation

Supporting the Next Generation of Communicators

We're proud to share that the San Antonio Area Foundation serves as the Turn-Key Scholarship provider for the Marilyn Potts Scholarship Endowment Fund, established by PRSA San Antonio. This partnership helps us continue supporting the next generation of communications professionals right here in our community.

Since 1964, the San Antonio Area Foundation has been dedicated to closing opportunity gaps through impactful philanthropy. Their expertise and long-standing reputation make them a perfect partner for helping us manage and grow this important scholarship fund.

By working with the Area Foundation, our Chapter benefits from:

- Automatic 501(c)(3) tax status through a component fund
- A fully online scholarship application and management system
- Access to professional investment portfolios for fund growth
- Elimination of legal and administrative complexities
- Decades of experience and dedicated local expertise

The Foundation currently manages \$1.3 billion across 121 scholarship programs—awarding \$13.2 million to more than 1,400 students in 2025 alone and over \$100 million to students since its founding.

Jennifer Ballesteros, Executive Director of Scholarship and Relief Programs at the Area Foundation, works directly with our Chapter and shared some key trends in scholarship decision-making:

- Multi-year and flexible funding that helps students beyond tuition, supporting long-term college success
- Holistic review processes that consider a student's full story and not just grades or financial need

If you'd like to get involved, you can make a contribution online using the QR code. Every spring, the San Antonio Area Foundation also welcomes volunteers to help review scholarship applications — a rewarding way to make a direct impact on students' futures.





NAVIGATING & BENEFITTING FROM ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

It seems AI is everywhere these days, and many contend the technology could eventually replace many jobs, including those in the communications field.

But rather than be discouraged, communication students and professionals should embrace AI as a powerful tool to enhance skills, simplify mundane tasks and develop strategic abilities to set themselves apart.

According to an Evan Kropp, Executive Director of Distance Education at the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida, AI has the potential to fundamentally change strategic communication. In a university article, he writes AI provides access to real-time data and predictive analytics, enabling communicators to better adapt to a shifting global environment.

“One of the most powerful applications of AI in communication is audience segmentation and targeting,” Kropp writes. “By analyzing large datasets from social media and web traffic, AI can identify distinct audience segments based on behavior, preferences, and demographics. This allows communicators to deliver more personalized and relevant messages.”

Kropp explains AI allows organizations to effectively reach people across languages, cultures, and platforms. But he also warns of the pitfalls, including ethical concerns about privacy, bias, accuracy, and transparency. When routine work is automated, communicators can spend more time focusing on the human elements of their job: strategic planning, ethical judgment, and creative storytelling. These are the skills AI cannot replicate and will become even more valuable in an AI-enhanced world.

Navigating AI is fluid and should be approached with discernment. Communicators can benefit from the most recent advancements in technology but not rely on it exclusively.

BENEFITS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Automation of routine tasks, such as press release first draft, transcribing interviews and building media lists.
- Enhance audience research, including the ability to quickly process and analyze large amounts of social media, web traffic and survey data.
- Content creation and ideation by acting as a brainstorming partner to help overcome writer's block and generate new ideas for campaigns, headlines, and visuals.
- Real-time skill development in the form of AI-powered communication coaches and writing assistants to provide immediate feedback on written and verbal skills, including tone, grammar, and delivery.

RISKS & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Possibility of algorithmic bias because AI is trained on human-created data and can amplify or perpetuate existing biases or stereotypes.
- Misinformation and deepfakes due to AI's ability of AI to generate realistic-but-fake text, audio, and images that pose a significant threat to trust and credibility.
- Data privacy concerns because AI tools require vast amounts of data to function effectively.
- Maintaining the "human touch" can be compromised with an over-reliance on AI by risking the creation of communications that feel impersonal and lack authentic emotional connection.

Marilyn Potts Scholarship Fund

PRSA San Antonio is proud to support the next generation of communication professionals through the Marilyn Potts Scholarship Fund.

Applications for 2026 will open December 1, 2025, and close February 24, 2026. Please share this opportunity with students who may qualify!

Application Requirements:

- Open to current high school seniors pursuing higher education or college students seeking a bachelor's degree Attend a four-year Bexar County or South Texas university
- Be a communications or related major (PR, journalism, digital media, etc.)
- Demonstrate financial need
- Hold a minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale)
- Enroll (or plan to enroll) in at least 9 credit hours per semester
- Reside in the U.S. and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- Submit a completed application with all required documentation

A heartfelt thank you to our 2025 donors for making this scholarship possible including: Scott Huddleston, Monica Faulkenbery, Lorena Pulido, and Teno Villarreal.

If you would like to help support future communication students, consider making a donation to the Marilyn Potts Scholarship Fund. Your contribution helps open doors and create opportunities for the next generation of PR professionals.

 [Click here to donate](#)

Bulletin Board

Career Opportunities



[The Center for Health Care Services -](#)

[Marketing & Special Events Coordinator](#)



[City of San Antonio - Communications Director](#)



[City of San Antonio - Communications Administrator](#)

Thank you to our Platinum Sponsor
for their continued support



**Fast-Track
A Grad's
Future!**

Give the Gift
of a PRSA
Membership



**Do you know someone who would be the perfect fit for PRSA San Antonio?
Encourage them to become a member today.**

Professional Development **PRSA Conferences & Webinars**



PRSA 2026 Counselors to Higher Education Senior Summit

MARCH 9-11, 2026 | ATLANTA, GA.

The Counselors to Higher Education (CHE) Senior Summit brings together communications, PR, and marketing leaders from college campuses across the U.S.

[Learn More](#)

About **PRSA San Antonio Chapter**

The mission of the San Antonio Chapter of PRSA is to advance communication professionals by providing career development opportunities and fostering a collaborative community where individuals can strategically and ethically practice effective public relations.

This year, the PRSA San Antonio Board of Directors' goal is to bring maximum value to PRSA Members.

To learn about PRSA-SA and how to get involved, email PRSA-SA 2025 President **Rachel Benavidez**

Have an idea for an article you'd like to submit to Byline? Or news to share? A promotion or a job change?

[**SUBMIT A BYLINE IDEA**](#)

[**PRSA SAN ANTONIO**](#)

[**CONTACT US TODAY**](#)