



Public Relations Association of Mississippi
CENTRAL CHAPTER

**Three PRAM Central Members Representing Clinton and Madison Earn
Accreditation in Public Relations**

January 4, 2024

(Jackson, MS) -Three Central Mississippi Public Relations Practitioners, representing the Public Relations Association of Mississippi's Central Chapter, have successfully completed the examination for Accreditation in Public Relations, entitling them to use the APR professional designation. The announcement was made by the Universal Accreditation Board, a consortium of nine professional communication organizations that directs this competency certification program.

The Accreditation program aims to improve the practice of public relations by assessing competence in 60 areas of knowledge, skills and abilities associated with the profession. The Examination is designed for public relations professionals with at least five to seven years of job experience and/or a bachelor's degree in a communication field. Candidates who successfully complete the rigorous process, including presenting his/her portfolio to a Panel Presentation of three peers and sitting for an examination, are granted the APR.

"Earning the APR reflects a mastery of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to succeed in our increasingly complex profession," said Joy Carter, APR, chair of the Universal Accreditation Board. "Practitioners who achieve the designation are demonstrating their commitment not only to our profession, but also to a strong code of ethics and to the betterment of their organizations and clients."

"Our Chapter is incredibly proud to have three members receive this highest professional distinction in public relations," said 2023 PRAM Central President Jean Cook, APR. "Their commitment to excellence is truly inspiring. The APR process alone can take up to one year and demonstrates genuine dedication to the profession. We are honored to have Dr. Mignon Kucia, Chrystelle Thames and Jan Schaefer as PRAM Central members and congratulate each on this well-deserved achievement."

The examination is administered throughout the year at more than 300 Prometric Testing Centers. The Panel Presentation is conducted prior to the examination by a panel of three Accredited members of one or more of the nine organizations participating in the UAB. Professionals earning the APR must renew their credentials through continuing professional development, providing leadership to the profession and serving their local communities.

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Comments from the practitioners:

J. Mignon Kucia, Ph.D, APR-Professor, Mississippi College (resident of Clinton):

“I am grateful to PRAM Central and the Public Relations Society of America for providing this opportunity to learn and grow in my public relations knowledge and confidence. What I learned in this process will allow me to be a much more effective professor as I work to train the next generation of practitioners.”

Chrystelle Thames, APR-Communications Director, Mississippi Baptist Childrens' Village (resident of Clinton):

“The entire journey to my APR accreditation has been a true blessing. Our PRAM Central Chapter Accreditation Chair provided invaluable assistance throughout the process. The review of the content challenged me in the pursuit of excellence in my career. Our study group not only helped prepare me for the exam but launched a sisterhood with special people who also challenged me to be the best for my agency. I am grateful for the experience from start to finish!”

Jan Schaefer, APR-Communications Director, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (resident of Madison):

“Earning my Accreditation in Public Relations has been an amazing experience, and I am so proud to have achieved this personal and professional milestone. The process of preparing for the APR has allowed me to stay current on best practices and connect with a network of amazing, experienced mentors who have provided invaluable guidance. The APR is not just a credential to put behind my name. It validates my professional competence and represents my commitment to continuous growth in strategic communications.”

Media Contact: Jean Cook, APR-2023 PRAM Central President, 601-201-7157, jcook@mdek12.org

For more information about the UAB and the APR designation, visit praccreditation.org.

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