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GET
LOUD



JULY 27 | 28



PRSA
Sunshine District

Presented By **MUCK
RACK**



Welcome Letter From SunCon23 Chairs

Although Miami has always held space in the American psyche, thanks to dramatic, often controversial reasons, it seems the Magic City is more popular than ever. Would you have believed it if someone told you in 2016 that South Florida would see a great migration with people from all over the country, jumping at the opportunity to live here? That Miami would become a Tech Hub, and that a technology company, Kaseya, would sponsor the Miami Arena? Who would've guessed that the Miami Heat and the Florida Panthers would get to the NBA and Stanley Cup finals at the exact same time, and that the best-ranked soccer player, Lionel Messi, would come to play for Inter Miami CF?

Those are only a few of the more notable changes you're sure to notice as after seven years, PRSA Miami and PRSA Greater Fort Lauderdale bring the Sunshine District Conference, SunCon23, back to Miami. As communication professionals, we embrace being in the middle of the fray, telling stories for the ages, and working to ensure their accuracy. The SunCon23 program is designed to inspire, guide, and prepare communication specialists to succeed during this historic, yet exhilarating moment in Florida history.

Our keynotes will help attendees make an even greater impact as PR professionals by sharing strategic, long-term leadership techniques as well as best practices for adapting to changes in Florida's media and political environments. The breakout sessions will delve into an array of topics, including the best ways to navigate mind-bending industry transformation, crisis management techniques, and using innovation to your advantage.

Miami is The Backdrop. Fort Lauderdale Set The Stage. PRSA Made It Happen.

SunCon23 draws from the deep well of professional involvement in the PRSA Sunshine District. Dedicated volunteers representing all seven of Florida's chapters have pitched in from across our glorious Sunshine State. Jacksonville, Tampa Bay, Orlando, the Gulf Coast, and Palm Beaches — all working with Miami and Fort Lauderdale, supported by PRSA National. Beyond the organizational support, we're honored to have both the PRSA National Chair and National Chair-Elect present at SunCon23.

SunCon23 presents yet another opportunity for attendees to meet this moment in time and those yet to come. Yes, it's hard to help others prepare for crisis. Yes, our industry is in flux. Yes, you must take artificial intelligence with a grain of salt and a side of ethics. Now that you're in Miami surrounded by friends and colleagues and armed with tools to amplify your message, as only top PR professionals can, it's time to GET LOUD!



Carthy Frye-Thomas
SunCon23 Co-Chair &
PRSA Miami President



Victor Aimi, APR
SunCon23
Co-Chair



Hugo H. Ottolenghi
PRSA Greater Fort
Lauderdale President



Jennifer Dunn, APR
PRSA Sunshine
District Chair

SunCon23 Committee

Allison Collett, SunCon23 Communications Chair
Maureen Gonzalez, SunCon23 Programming Chair
Lauren Leetun, APR, Sunshine District Chair-Elect
Annabel Beyra, APR, Sunshine District Immediate Past Chair
Kate Smith, Sunshine District Communications Co-Chair
Chelsea Eagle, Sunshine District Communications Co-Chair
Denise Graham, Sunshine District Treasurer
Justin Herndon, APR, Sunshine District Radiance Awards Co-Chair
Kerstin Sachl, Sunshine District Radiance Awards Co-Chair
Jaylen Christie, Sunshine District Radiance Awards Co-Chair
Victoria Verdeja, PRSA Miami President-Elect
Heather Radi-Bermudez, APR, PRSA Miami Immediate Past President
Erika Mayor, PRSA Miami Committee Member
Julie Lugones, PRSA Miami Committee Member
Stu Opperman, APR, PRSA Greater Fort Lauderdale Immediate Past President
Paola Iuspa-Abbott, PRSA Greater Fort Lauderdale Programming Chair
Alexandra Medina, PRSA Miami Committee Member

Keynote Speakers



Jennifer R. Hudson, APR

Founder & President, ThinkBeyond Public Relations

Jennifer is on a mission to change the world one PR professional at a time. As a strategic communications consultant, advocate, trainer, mentor, and speaker, her superpower is helping PR leaders step boldly into their roles as the trusted advisors that every organization needs. Jennifer is a certified mentor and coach with The Venture Mentoring Team, Radical Partners, and 1909 Accelerator. She is accredited in public relations (APR). She is a past president of the PRSA Greater Fort Lauderdale chapter, a current Universal Accreditation Board member, and a National Association of Women Business Owners member.



Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA, Chair

Chief Communications Officer, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

A 2023 PR Week Top Woman in PR, Michelle Egan has applied her strategic communication skills to advance the reputations of government, nonprofit, and private sector organizations for three decades. Her career includes public relations positions at Junior Achievement, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, the Anchorage School District, and Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. As Chief Communications Officer for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, Egan directs internal and external communications for the company charged with operating the TransAlaska Pipeline System. APR accredited in 2001, Egan volunteered with PRSA for 20 years and was president of the Alaska Chapter in 2016. She joined the PRSA Board of Directors in 2018 and served two terms as Treasurer. Egan's committee service includes the executive, finance, human resources, and CEO search committees.



Gregory Galant

Co-Founder and CEO, Muck Rack

Gregory Galant is the co-founder and CEO of Muck Rack, the public relations management platform that helps thousands of organizations including Google, International Rescue Committee, Golin and Duolingo find the right journalists to pitch, report on media coverage and prove the value of their work. He is also the co-creator and CEO of The Shorty Awards, which honor the best of social media, and launched The Work Remotely Forever Pledge, a commitment by business leaders who promise not to force their employees to work from an office. Since launching, more than 75 companies have signed on.

Breakout Speakers



Joseph Abreu
APR, PRSA National
Chair Elect, Chief
Communications
Officer, Clerk of the
Court & Comptroller
of Lee County



Dori Alvarez
AVP of
Communications,
Baptist Health
South Florida



**Leslie Anne
Frye-Thomas**
Author and
Advocate, Reel
Stories Creative



Demi Bakatselos
Social Media and
Digital Strategist, JM
Family Enterprises



Jay Berkowitz
Founder & Partner,
Ten Golden Rules



Angela Betancourt
Founder & CEO,
Betancourt Group



Melissa Cortina
Associate Vice
President, Boden
Agency



Diana Dwyer
Director of Corporate
Communications,
Broward Health



Patrick Gevas
Vice President,
GreenRoom Agency



Marcia Gomez
President, Blank Canvas
Communications,
and University
of Miami Faculty



Mike Jachles
Chair, South Florida
Media Coalition



Susan Lomax
Associate Vice
President of Corporate
Communications,
Royal Caribbean Group



Kyle Parks
Co-Founder
& Principal, B2
Communications



David Quiñones
Senior Vice President
of Editorial & Content,
RockOrange



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Kerstin Sachl
Vice President,
Communications
& Public Relations,
Marriott International



Virginia Sheridan
Managing Partner,
Finn Partners



Allan Siegel
M.S., APR
(Retired)



Jennifer Smith
Vice President of Corporate
Communications &
Marketing, Broward Health



Cristina Vite
Media Relations and Digital
Media Manager, Lockheed
Martin Missiles and Fire Control



Pat Warner
Vice President,
Finn Partners



David Zapata
CEO & Founder,
Zapwater
Communications, Inc.

Media Panel Journalists & Editors



Sergio R. Bustos, News Director
for WLRN - South Florida



Lance Dixon, Audience
Engagement Producer at
The 19th*



Katherine Kallergis, Residential
Bureau Chief for The Real
Deal - South Florida



Alexis Muellner,
Editor-in-Chief for Tampa Bay
Business Journal - Tampa



Jim Saunders,
Executive Editor of News
Service Florida



Jeff Steele, Freelance Writer with
Forbes.com, Multi-Housing News,
Commercial Property Executive,
Units, Modern Luxury and NAR
Publications, among others

Agenda

JUL 27 5:00-7:00 P.M.

Welcome Reception

Enjoy an evening of networking with friends

Small bites, wine, and beer

Location: Hall 244 A & Terrace

JUL 28 8:00-8:45 A.M.

Breakfast

Continental buffet

Location: Hall 244 A & B

JUL 28 8:50-9:50 A.M.

Opening Keynote

Program: Why PR Pros Must Step Up to Transform Their Careers
- and Our Industry

Speaker: Jennifer R. Hudson, APR

Location: Hall 244 A & B

Public relations expert and noted thought leader Jennifer R. Hudson is unparalleled in her ability to help PR professionals amplify their business success by becoming strategic communications strategists.

In her SunCon23 keynote, Hudson will inspire attendees to see themselves at the center of all things communications. She will demonstrate how to embrace communications planning and messaging frameworks, empowering PR professionals to develop greater confidence as they demonstrate the true power of public relations. Highlighting real-life examples and cases of transformative campaigns and corporate cultures, the keynote will show attendees firsthand how to fully step into their PR superpowers.

JULY 28	Pro Track	Industry Track	Innovation Track
10:00-10:50 A.M.	Crisis Case Study	Aerospace/Defense	PR & AI Panel
11:00-11:50 A.M.	AP Style Refresher	Tourism Panel	Social Media & PR
12:00-1:50 P.M.	Radiance Awards Luncheon Keynote		
2:00-2:50 P.M.	Crisis Panel	Healthcare	DEI



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JUL 28 10:00-10:50 A.M.

Professional Development Track Breakout Session I

Program: **Weathering the 24-Hour News Cycle: Unveiling Waffle House's Crisis Management Playbook**

Speaker: Pat Warner

Location: Hall 221

Pat Warner, FINN Partners Vice President and the former Waffle House Director of PR & External Affairs, will focus on his time at America's favorite breakfast chain and the exemplary PR crisis skills and communication strategies he helped develop. In an insightful discussion that unveils the secrets to managing communications in today's fast-paced 24-hour news and social media cycle, find out how Waffle House became a beacon of crisis management excellence and explore its proactive approach, quick decision-making, and effective communication, making it a trusted source of guidance for its communities and PR professionals worldwide.

JUL 28 10:00-10:50 A.M.

Industry Track Breakout Session I

Program: **The Sky's the Limit: Uniting Departments through Powerful PR in the Aerospace and Defense Sectors**

Speaker: Cristina Vite

Location: Hall 223

Cristina Vite, media relations and digital media manager at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, the world's leading aerospace and defense company – will explain how she coordinated across departments and integrated marketing tactics. She spearheaded high-profile media opportunities, such as hosting U.S. President Joe Biden at a Lockheed Martin facility and giving Emmy-winning correspondent for CBS News Sunday Morning, David Martin, a tour of the plant producing the military equipment that Ukraine is using to aid its defense against the Russian invasion.

JUL 28 10:00-10:50 A.M.

Innovation Track Breakout Session I

Program: **What You Need to Know to Navigate the Intersection of PR and AI**

Speaker: Panel

Location: Theater (Level 1)

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues its rapid advancement and permeates all aspects of society, PR professionals must understand and know how to adapt it into their PR practices. This thought-provoking panel of esteemed experts will dive into the intricate relationship between PR and AI, exploring the current applications of AI in PR and unveiling its potential benefits and drawbacks:

- (Moderator) Melissa Cortina | Associate Vice President, BODEN Agency
- Angela Betancourt | Founder & CEO, Betancourt Group
- David Quiñones | SVP, Editorial & Content, RockOrange
- Jay Berkowitz | Founder & Partner, Ten Golden Rules

JUL 28 11:00-11:50 A.M.

Professional Development Track Breakout Session II

Program: Boost PR Lab AP Style Refresher, sponsored by Ottolenghi Media

Speaker: Marcia Gomez

Location: Hall 221

AP Style refresher reviews basic AP style guidelines, including treatment of numbers, addresses, capitalization, punctuation, quotes, and datelines. It also reviews best practices for headlines/subject lines and titles.

- How much do you know? Group test
- Attendees will have a refresher on AP Style guidelines, including capitalization rules, punctuation review, and headline best practices.
- New AP changes and updates

JUL 28 11:00-11:50 A.M.

Industry Track Breakout Session II

Program: Exploring New Horizons: Unveiling Trends and Insights in the Future of Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism

Speaker: Panel

Location: Theater (Level 1)

In the face of unprecedented challenges, the hospitality, travel, and tourism industry has underscored the pivotal role of strategic PR in driving its recovery and future prosperity. This distinguished panel of experienced travel professionals will explore the burgeoning trends shaping the consumer and travel sectors for the foreseeable future, extending beyond 2023:

- (Moderator) Virginia Sheridan | Managing Partner, FINN Partners
- David Zapata | CEO & Founder, Zapwater Comms
- Susan Lomax | AVP Corporate Communications, Royal Caribbean Group
- Kerstin Sachl | Vice President, Communications & Public Relations, Marriott International Caribbean and Latin America (CALA)

JUL 28 11:00-11:50 A.M.

Innovation Track Breakout Session II

Program: Social Media and PR Integration: Maximizing Impact through Collaboration!

Speaker: Demi Bakatselos

Location: Hall 223

Demi Bakatselos, a seasoned social media pro, will explore the powerful synergy between social media and PR and how they work together to enhance brand visibility, engagement, and reputation management. Join us for an exciting session of learning about social media insights, best practices, and real-world examples of successful integrated campaigns. Discover how social media and PR, two dynamic disciplines, continue to complement each other presently and in the future, leveraging their respective strengths to achieve greater brand exposure, stakeholder engagement, and organizational success.



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JUL 28 12:00-1:50 P.M.

Radiance Awards Luncheon Keynote

Program: Build, Influence, Evolve: The Pillars of the 2023-25 PRSA Strategic Plan

Speaker: Michelle Egan, APR, Fellow PRSA, Chair
Introduced by Joseph Abreu, APR, Chair-Elect

Location: Hall 244 A & B

National 2023 PRSA Chair and one of the 2023 PR News Top Women in PR, Michelle Egan has worked to gather learnings from PRSA member interviews, surveys, focus groups, and sessions with non-member industry leaders to formulate a new PRSA strategic plan with three pillars:

- Build: Invest in establishing the next generation of ethical, diverse, and highly skilled communications professionals.
- Influence: Publicly champion ethical practices and professional standards in public relations by leading and convening commentary, discussion, and debate on issues.
- Evolve: Provide modern tools, content, and opportunities to advance the mission of PRSA into the future.

JUL 28 2:00-2:50 P.M.

Professional Development Track Session III

Program: Crisis Communications in the Modern Era: Pre-Planning, Relationship-Building, and Message Management

Speaker: Panel

Location: Theater (Level 1)

Step into crisis communications with a captivating panel session dedicated to unraveling the significance of pre-planning, fostering strong relationships, and executing effective message management. Tap into the minds of seasoned crisis professionals who have successfully navigated the treacherous scenarios during and after the global COVID-19 pandemic:

- (Moderator) Mike Jachles, South Florida Media Coalition
- Kyle Parks, Co-Founder & Principal at B2 Communications
- Patrick Gevas, VP at GreenRoom Agency

JUL 28 2:00-2:50 P.M.

Industry Track Session III

Program: Marking your Milestone

Speakers: Jennifer Smith and Diana Dwyer

Location: Hall 221

Broward Health had a storytelling problem; the community had become unfamiliar with the brand and range of services provided by the local health system, composed of four hospitals and over 50 ambulatory locations. Internal and external stakeholders needed to be reintroduced to one of the nation's 10 most significant public health systems and educated on Broward Health's role within the community. The communications team used the system's 85th anniversary as a catalyst to segment audiences, create a strategic communications plan, measure the outcomes, and segue results into future campaigns.

JUL 28 2:00-2:50 P.M.

Innovation Track Session III

Program: **Beyond Rainbow Capitalism: From Pride and Prejudice to Authentic Relationship Building**

Speaker: Leslie Anne Frye-Thomas

Location: Hall 223

Leslie Anne Frye-Thomas details how she raised \$60,000 in cash and in-kind donations for the Stonewall National Education Project in three months. This includes securing all partners, sponsors, presenters, and vendors and managing all outreach for the multi-day, nationally televised educational conference. Beyond logistics, she describes why she targeted each sponsor and how she created a plan to amplify sponsors and authentically engage the LGBTQIA+ community well beyond rainbow capitalism.

JUL 28 2:50-3:00 P.M.

Power Break

Location: Hall 244 Foyer
Pick up a snack!

JUL 28 3:00-3:30 P.M.

APR Introduction

Speaker: Allan Siegel, M.S., APR (Retired)

Location: Hall 244 Foyer

Learn how to earn your APR while you enjoy coffee and R-PIE.

JUL 28 3:30-4:30 P.M.

CLOSING KEYNOTE PANEL

Program: **Forging Stronger Bonds: Enhancing Collaboration Between PR Professionals and Journalists in the Digital Age, sponsored by Top of Mind PR**

Location: Hall 244 A & B

In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving media landscapes, it has become imperative for PR professionals to understand the changing needs and preferences of journalists. As they navigate the growing influx of information and news sources. Top journalists and editors will shed light on the strategies, best practices, and emerging trends that can foster stronger relationships between PR professionals and journalists, ultimately leading to more effective communication and storytelling:

- (Moderator) Gregory Galant, Co-Founder, and CEO of Muck Rack
- Alexis Muellner, Tampa Bay Business Journal Editor-in-Chief - Tampa
- Sergio R. Bustos, News Director for WLRN - South Florida
- Katherine Kallergis, Residential Bureau Chief for The Real Deal - South Florida
- Jeff Steele, Freelance Writer with Forbes.com, MHN, CPE, Units, Modern Luxury and NAR Publications, among others
- Jim Saunders, Executive Editor of News Service Florida
- Lance Dixon, Audience Engagement Producer at The 19th*

JUL 28 4:30 P.M.

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