



2006 DPA Communicator of Achievement

Karen Galanaugh, APR

Karen Galanaugh, APR, is a 25-year veteran practitioner of public relations and owner of Galanaugh & Company Public Relations and Marketing Communications, based in Wilmington, Delaware. Named the 2006 Delaware Press Association Communicator of Achievement, she is the first public relations professional to have received DPA's highest honor.

Karen provides counsel and strategic communications for businesses and individuals. She has worked with Alan Dershowitz, Christopher Reeve, and with the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games. National clients have included Tandberg Worldwide (video conferencing technology in Norway), HNC Software, Retek Retail Software Solutions, Frontier Media, and Hyperon/Brinks Internet Security. In Delaware, clients include Christiana Bank & Trust Company, CBIZ Business Solutions, Bastianelli Group, MySherpa Computer Technology Services and the Brandywine Zoo.

She is accredited by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) with earned and tested recognition that signifies an experienced, knowledgeable and ethical PR practitioner. Over the past 12 years, she has served in numerous capacities in the Delaware Chapter of PRSA, including a two-year term as president. She was the Professional Liaison to Public Relations student chapters in Delaware, and she was honored with the "Educator's Achievement Award" for working with college students who wish to pursue careers in public relations.

Contributions to Civic and Cultural Organizations

Karen also has contributed her professional skills to civic and cultural organizations over several decades. As a founding board member of the Delaware Art Museum Expressionists Club, she organized activities to increase museum membership of young urban professionals and introduced film series and themed art events. Prior to moving to Wilmington, she founded the Blooming Grove Historic Commission, a New York organization that inventoried historically significant structures and landscapes for preservation, raised money to preserve and restore them, and worked to educate the community about the importance of historic preservation. She was recognized in 1985 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as the "Most Effective Community Organizer" for her long campaign to preserve a Frederick Law Olmsted landscape and historic hospital complex in White Plains, New York.

Prior to starting her PR business in New York, Karen worked on the production crews of feature films and television commercials and also on the editorial staffs at Scholastic Publications and OMNI/Penthouse Publications.

Karen's volunteer work over the years includes co-founding the Animal Welfare Project, an organization that finds homes for animals and raises money to certify "Animal Cops," and working with the Reins of Life Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program for children and young adults with special needs, where she volunteers as an equine handler. She served for four years on the board of the National Transplant Assistance Fund, a trusted resource in the transplant community that raises funds for support, education and expertise for transplant and catastrophic injury patients, their families and communities, and conducts public education campaigns on the importance of organ donation.

Award-winning Work

Karen has won many first place awards in the NFPW Annual Communications Contest in the categories of Speech Writing, Website Writing, Information for The Media, Radio Campaigns, Print Advertising, Direct-Mail Marketing, and Public Relations and Marketing Campaigns. She was enthusiastic about hosting the 2003 NFPW "Brave New Media World" Communications Conference in Delaware and contributed hundreds of hours of her time and professional expertise to help insure its success. As chair of the PR/Promotion Committee, she created a timetable and coordinated the development of brochures and publicity, beginning more than 18 months in advance, and arranged nationwide press releases

focused on Keynote Speaker Jim Axelrod, of CBS Evening News, and on Delaware's U.S. Senator Joe Biden, the featured speaker at the NFPW President's Roundtable Discussion. She was an active force in the pre- and post-conference tours, and throughout the entire event she provided visual documentation of each day's activities to the delight of the participants.

"I'm too young to be awarded a 'lifetime' achievement honor!" was Galanaugh's "complaint" during her acceptance speech. "However, now that I'm older, I better understand how George Burns felt when I first sat down with him for an interview for Penthouse Magazine. He said, 'Honey, why would Penthouse be interested in me? I'm so old I can remember when the air was clean and sex was dirty.'"

Upon accepting the Communicator of Achievement award, Karen joked, "You guys must be dredging the bottom of the barrel here for a press association to give its highest award to a PR practitioner . . . given the stereotypical antagonism between the two." She continued, "It makes this honor even sweeter."