

Communications and Public Relations Committee
2015 Annual Report

Submitted by: Katie Turner, chair 2013-14, 2014-15

June 1, 2015

2014-13 members:

Nancy Beach	Health Policy & Management
Jackie Copeland	Scholarships and Student Aid
Tammy Cox	Information & Library Science
Ronda Manuel	Arts and Sciences Foundation
Rushdee Omar	School of Law
Jackie Overton	Public Safety
Kelli Raker	Student Wellness
Anne Skilton	UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy
Charles Streeter	EO, Chair of the Forum
Matt Banks	Employee Forum

2014-15 members:

Nancy Beach	Health Policy & Management
Tammy Cox	Information & Library Science
Ronda Manuel	Arts and Sciences Foundation
Arlene Medder	Auxiliary Services
Jackie Overton	Public Safety
Kelli Raker	Student Wellness
Charles Streeter	EO, Chair of the Forum
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Accomplishments:

Maintained the Employee Forum's social media presence

The Public Relations and Communications Committee maintains Facebook and Twitter accounts. Our Facebook page currently has 158 likes. It has served as a platform for advertising events and publicizing archival materials about the organization. Our Twitter account (@EmployeeForum) has 747 followers, and we have 1,982 tweets since the account was established. The Forum has maintained an active presence through live-tweeting and promoting the Twitter account to staff through a day-long social media scavenger hunt in August 2014.

Hosted four social media trainings for staff

The committee, in partnership with the Education and Career Development Committee, hosted two Twitter Basics classes for staff in the fall. The classes were instructed by Professor Andy Bechtel (Journalism and Mass Communications) and took place on October 16, 2014 and November 11, 2014.

Due to interest in expanding social media course offerings, the Public Relations and Communications collaborated with APPLES intern Susanna Trotter and the Association for Women Faculty and Professionals to host two additional social media trainings in the spring. “Facebook, LinkedIn, and Your Personal Brand” and “Social Media Best Practices” were both well-attended. Graduate students Andrea Patino and Lu Wu hosted the lunch-time seminars on March 20, 2015 and April 24, 2015.

Redesign and rebranding efforts

In December 2013, the committee coordinated a redesign of the Forum’s logo and created a new brochure in collaboration with UNC Creative. In an effort to continue modernizing the Forum’s look, the committee’s chair, Katie Turner, and Forum Assistant Matt Banks, migrated the Employee Forum’s website into a new, more mobile-friendly WordPress template. Some of the new features include an events calendar, home-page Twitter feed and electronic newsletter access. The committee continues to oversee the website and ensure that it is updated regularly.

The committee also requested funds to create service pins with our updated logo on them. These pins were distributed at the April full Forum meeting to all of the delegates.

Hosted an ongoing monthly staff book club

The committee has hosted and publicized the following book club meetings with the assistance of Matt Banks and funds from the Staff Development Fund. The books touch on a wide array of issues that are important to staff including gender, race, class, medical ethics, state politics, moral courage, global issues and education, professional development and sexual violence. The following meetings occurred since last May and are scheduled through February 2016:

- May 30, 2014: Guests on Earth by Lee Smith
- June 27, 2014: I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban by Malala Yousafzai
- July 25, 2014: Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead by Sheryl Sandberg
- August 29, 2014: Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich
- September 26, 2014: The Round House by Louise Erdrich
- October 24, 2014: The Heart of a Woman by Maya Angelou
- November 26, 2014: The Ocean at the End of the Lane by Neil Gaiman
- January 30, 2015: The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt
- February 20, 2015: Tales of the City by Armistead Maupin
- March 27, 2015: Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity by Katherine Boo
- April 30, 2015: Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides
- May 28, 2015: The Reason I Jump by Naoki Higashida
- June 25, 2015: Sea of Poppies by Amitav Ghosh
- July 30, 2015: Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson (summer reading selection)
- Aug 27, 2015: Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Sept 25, 2015: Elizabeth is Missing by Emma Healey
- Oct 29, 2015: Empire Falls by Richard Russo
- Nov 19, 2015: I Totally Meant to do that by Jane Borden

- Jan 28, 2016: 1Q84 by Haruki Murakami
- Feb 25, 2016: The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace by Jeff Hobbs

The book club has had steady attendance, with some book selections attracting more participants than others. So far, Lean In has been the most popular selection, drawing staff members from across campus. The book club was recognized in the Daily Tar Heel in an article titled “UNC Employees Build Literary Connections” at <http://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2014/09/unc-employees-build-literary-connections>.

Provided live-blog coverage of Employee Appreciation Day

The committee helped publicize Employee Appreciation Day on its website through a live-blog. The posts are archived at forum.unc.edu.

Published InTouch, the Employee Forum monthly newsletter

The committee published three issues of InTouch in The Daily Tar Heel in the fall, summer and spring of 2014. The issues covered the following topics: the UNC data breach, alternative-academic (alt-ac) concerns, bylaws revisions, staff book club announcements, employee awards, interviews with staff members, ConnectCarolina changes, the implementation of a new EPA non-faculty salary structure, staff benefits, the Carolina Campus Community Garden, same-sex spouse benefits, the revised Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct, and Employee Appreciation Day.

In January 2015, the committee began publishing InTouch electronically and distributing it to all staff via email as a monthly publication. All issues can be accessed at <http://employeeforum.unc.edu/news-and-events/newsletter/>.

The switch to an electronic, monthly publication has saved thousands of dollars in publication costs and has achieved a more streamlined communications strategy. Electronic articles can be posted on our website and easily inserted into our newsletter template. Those stories can be more easily shared on social media since they each have dedicated urls.

Some of the feedback we’ve received from staff regarding the new format is excerpted below:

“I really liked the new newsletter format! Can you tell me which platform you use to create it? I’m looking for new ideas for the monthly newsletter I manage for the MBA Program. Thanks!”

“The format IS great and I have heard great things in my department. Matter of fact, the lady who does our CAP program newsletter is probably going to be contacting you also.”

“As I read this newsletter- from top to bottom- I kept thinking how interesting it was and how there was so much information and stimulation. I kept thinking that I’d never had that experience and surely I’d read the Forum mailings before but typically they were something that as I had many deadlines and other priorities, that were often deleted without reading. So had I been missing something this interesting? When I got to the bottom and read your “Do you like the new newsletter?” I felt relieved. I don’t know if this wayous the very first one of it’s kind, but it is very well done and I wanted to let you know.”

The MailPoet newsletter also allows us to track our open and click rates. Below is a table showing the percentage of people who have opened the newsletters by month:

Newsletter	Opened	Opened and clicked	Total Opened + Clicked
January/February InTouch	14.8% (1,232)	7.76% (644)	22.6% (1,876)
February/March InTouch	13.7% (1,142)	5.8% (480)	19.5% (1,622)
March/April InTouch*	16.8% (1,397)	7.5% (620)	24.3% (2,017)
April/May InTouch	15.42% (1,273)	6.84% (565)	22.3% (1,838)
May/June InTouch (as of 6/1)	14.22% (1,174)	7.82% (646)	22% (1,820)

*Updated the listserv with a more current list of staff

Topics that the electronic newsletters covered include:

- Wellness tips for the new year
- Ted Shaw's visit to the February Employee Forum meeting
- The January 2015 food drive to benefit Inter-Faith Council
- The Forum's launch of Professional Development Grant Program
- Matt Brody's departure from UNC Chapel Hill
- Chair's statement on the Board of Governor's actions with regard to review of Centers and Institutes
- Staff spotlight on Stone Center employee Clarissa Goodlett
- Feature on Love your Library Month
- Carolina Community Garden expansion
- Adjunct Walkout Day protest
- March Forum meeting focused on shared governance
- Staff spotlight on administrative assistants
- Higher education panel recap
- University Day at the NC legislature
- Earth Day in the Carolina Community Garden
- Coverage of the Chancellor's Cup Golf Tournament
- Coverage of Anne Litwin's visit to campus

The newsletter also regularly includes Forum events, announcements and information that is generally helpful to staff across campus.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Public Relations and Communications Committee,

Katie Turner

