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Date June 25-27, 2025, Charleston 1700 MacCorkle Ave Se. Charleston, WV 25314

8am -5pm **Class # 25-529-03**

July 9-11, 2025, Elkins Randolph County OEM/911 194 Airport Road Elkins, WV 26241

8am-5pm **Class # 25-530-03**

Registration will be through Public Service Training-Charleston. Please follow the instruction sheet attached. Please contact Eva.Godbey@k12.wv.us with any issues creating your account and registering. If you have any questions about the class please contact Stephanie Rosier – stephanie.a.rosier@wv.gov

**Course Description**

To equip participants with the skills needed to be full or part-time PIOs, including oral and written communications; understanding and working with the media; and basic tools and techniques to perform effectively as a PIO, both in the proactive advocacy times and crisis/emergency response.

Prerequisites

IS0029.a: Public Information Officer Awareness. Please take note if you wish to take **PIO Advanced -388** it’s a requirement to have PIO 105 **All Hazards PIO** – L952 requires PIO 105 and ICS 300/400. We plan to offer these Fall of 2025.

**Teachers BIO**

Lauri-Ellen Smith, MPIO, APR \* lesmith@cat5communications.net \*(904) 219-0977

Lauri-Ellen’s experience in Government and Corporate PR includes serving as communications lead in more than 30 Incident/Unified Commands. Her career took a turn in the direction of emergency/crisis/risk communication and management, with her appointment as spokesperson for Super Bowl XXXIX (39) Safety and Security and lead PIO for the event.

She has “stood up” or run many Joint Information Centers for hurricanes and weather events; high-profile murder trials; industrial incidents; civil unrest/riot; and a campus shooting all during her 15+ years as the appointed press secretary to two elected Sheriffs in Florida and a Mayor in Mississippi. Her appointments have included: leading the PIO unit and serving as lead comms strategist/press secretary for the Sheriff of the nation’s 14th - largest law enforcement agency; serving as a city’s Community Relations Director on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; a Government Relations Officer and Emergency Manager for a state regulatory agency on the Gulf Coast. She has served three elected officials in six appointed positions in her career in the public sector; and three CEOs in the private sector.

Today, Smith is a crisis/risk communications strategist and media trainer for C-Suite members and both government and non- government spokespersons. She is also a designer of and trainer for emergency management tabletop exercises and a contract instructor for FEMA through its emergency management university program.

In her “prior PR life” Smith spent 10 years as the PR/Marketing Director for a large health system in Florida, also serving as their government affairs director and lobbying at the state and federal level. She most notably led communications during a rebranding and major expansion initiative and co-authored a “best practice” guide for communicating adverse medical incidents on behalf of the Florida Hospital Association.

Lauri-Ellen advises clients (government, first responders, healthcare, higher education, utilities, and private corporations) on their integrated marketing/communications and public affairs programming. She most enjoys developing tactical strategies and policy development/support; analyzing/supporting PIO staff’s functionality and JIC skills; training spokespersons; teaching social media best practices; and advancing common-sense social media policies that are enforceable and understood by employees.

She is highly regarded as an advisor on risk/reputation management and customer service trainer.

Smith serves on the Board and Executive Committee of PRSA's Public Affairs and Government Section. She is the 2015 recipient of the Lloyd B. Dennis Distinguished Service Award in Public Affairs, PRSA’s highest honor for PAO’s and PIOs. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the nationally ranked PR program at the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications.

Lauri-Ellen is a 2021 graduate of FEMA’s Master PIO (MPIO) program and now joins an elite group of the nation’s top emergency management crisis communicators – the first credentialled MPIO in her adopted state of Mississippi and was the first APR accredited in Florida under the Universal Accreditation Board in January of 1998.

**2nd Teachers BIO**

Dr. Joseph V. Trahan, III, APR, Fellow

PRSA

President & CEO Trahan & Associates

Media Relations, Crisis and Risk

Communications Expert Trainer

The New Orleans native has forty-four years of public relations/affairs experience

in governmental, association, and educational and non-profit public relations.

Additionally, Dr. Trahan is also LTC(R) Joe Trahan, United States Army Reserve

(USAR), former Commander of the 314th Public Affairs Operations Center

(PAOC) (USAR) located in Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. (LTC-USAR) Trahan has

successfully operated four Joint Information Bureaus (JIBs) and one Joint

Information Center (JIC) from 1991-94. Some of Dr. (LTC) Trahan’s JIB/JIC

Assignments were: Joint Logistics over the Shore (JLOTS)-1992; Presidential Task

Force Andrew-1992; The National Boy Scout Jamboree -1993 and the 50th

Anniversary of Operation Overlord-1994. Since 1998, Dr. Joe Trahan has superbly

Media Relations trained over 3,500 people yearly in: 46 US states, England,

Norway, France, Belgium, Paraguay, Mexico, Canada and The Netherlands.

Dr. Joe Trahan, APR graduated from Tulane University with a BA degree in

American Military History, a MA degree in Public Relations from Ball State

University and a Ph.D. in Mass Communication with an emphasis in Public

Relations and Advertising from The University of Southern Mississippi. Currently,

Dr. Trahan is The Past Chair of The PRSA Educators’ Academy. Finally, Dr. Joe

Trahan is an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America, a former

National PSA Board of Director and National PRSSA Faculty Advisor. He is a

2022 U.S. Army Ancient Order of St. Gabriel Awardee for a lifetime career of

outstanding accomplishments & achievements to the U.S. Army Public Affairs

Career field. He was inducted into The Rowan University Public Relations Hall of

Fame for lifetime distinguished contributions to The Public Relations Profession in

2019. He was inducted into The Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF) Hall

of Fame for bringing distinction to The Public Relations Profession in 2016. He

was awarded The Lloyd B. Dennis Award by PRSA in 2009 for Distinguished

Leadership in Public Affairs. Dr. Trahan is currently a FEMA Emergency

Management Institute (EMI) Certified Public Information Officer Instructor for The

Basic through The Masters PIO Courses.

Additionally, he is a FEMA EMI Executive Academy Instructor. Dr. Joe is the

Immediate Past. President of the Lookout PRSA Chapter. He’s also a longtime fan

of The World Champion New Orleans Saints!