



Communications
EXCELLENCE
Awards Program

2012

The COSPRRA Communications Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding communications and public relations work by schools, school districts and educational agencies and associations. Top award winners will receive face-to-face recognition before their Board of Education. The program is designed to recognize excellence in every aspect of public relations planning, implementation and evaluation. The program features three award areas: Medallion, Golden Achievement, and Publications and Electronic Media.

Postmarked deadline for entries:
February 24, 2012

Colorado School Public Relations Association

www.cospra.org

2012 COSPRA

Communications EXCELLENCE

Awards Program

The COSPRA Communications Excellence Awards Program recognizes outstanding communications and public relations work by schools, school districts and educational agencies and associations.

Medallion Award

This award is for comprehensive, well-planned public relations programs that address internal and external audiences with a mix of effective methods. Entries should summarize the scope of the public relations program, including goals for the program, projects and activities and types of evaluation used to monitor success and the program results.

A comprehensive public relations program is defined as the overall plan for a district, school or agency, or a plan for a specific comprehensive program.

Each entry is judged against the criteria and other entries.

Golden Achievement Award

This awards program is for projects that represent an aspect of the overall public relations program. Entries are judged against the criteria—not other entries.

Publications and Electronic Media Awards

This awards program is for the entry of individual publications and electronic media productions. Awards are earned according to type of publication or electronic media entry. Each entry is judged against the criteria and other entries. Judges will select up to five Awards of Excellence and five Awards of Merit per category for each enrollment group.

Eligibility

The Communications Excellence Program is open to Colorado and Wyoming public schools, school districts and educational agencies.

Contest Period

All entries must have been completed between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011.

Entry Fees – Per Entry

Unfortunately, purchase orders and vouchers can not be accepted.

Medallion Award

(Comprehensive communications program)

\$40 COSPRA member/\$50 non-member

Golden Achievement Award

(Communications projects)

\$25 COSPRA member/\$35 non-member

Publications and Electronic Media Award

\$25 COSPRA member/\$35 non-member

Note: An institutional membership does not allow schools within a district to submit entries as members. Non-member schools are required to pay non-member fees.

Judging

Professionals in communications and public relations outside the Colorado and Wyoming area will serve as judges. Criteria are based on industry standards and professional judgment.

Entries without entry fees will not be judged.

Deadline and Payment for Entries

Entries with the correct entry fee must be postmarked by February 24, 2012.

Make checks payable to COSPRA and send with entries to:

Devra Ashby
Colorado Springs School District 11
COSPRA Communications Excellence Program
1115 N. El Paso Street, Room 205
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

Number of Entries

Individuals may submit multiple entries, but may not submit the same entry in more than one award category.

Inappropriately labeled entries will be placed in the appropriate awards program or program category by the awards coordinator. If a limited number of entries is submitted in any one category, COSPRA reserves the right to combine or eliminate categories.

Awards

Winners and their superintendents will be notified by mail in mid to late April, 2012.

A member of the COSPRA Executive Board will present Golden Achievement Awards, Medallion Awards and Awards of Excellence in Publications and Electronic Media at a Board of Education meeting in the winning entries' districts. Details will be included in the award notification.

Additional certificates and plaques can be ordered through COSPRA.

**If you have questions call: Devra Ashby at
(719) 520-2286**

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Winners of the Medallion Award will receive a plaque.

Examples of Medallion Award entries:

- a public relations plan for an organization-wide volunteer program
- a public relations plan for a bond/mill election
- a public relations plan for changing school or district boundaries
- a public relations plan for an organization-wide parent involvement program, etc.

An organization-wide program is larger than a project. (Projects should be entered in the Golden Achievement Award category. See project examples in that category description.)

In this highly competitive award category, entries will be judged against other entries as well as the quality of programs and how well they meet the criteria.

Medallion Award

CRITERIA

1. **Research and analysis.** Entry demonstrates a clear distinction between objectives and goals and the difference between strategies and tactics. Entry demonstrates an objective interpretation of research data upon which goals, objectives, strategies and tactics are determined.
2. **Planning.** Entry demonstrates a comprehensive public relations plan that reflects the organization's needs including appropriate sequencing of plan elements.
3. **Audience identification and communication.** Entry identifies appropriate audiences and the concerns of each. Entry demonstrates a prioritization and sequencing of communications to the different audiences and tailors message to each identified audience.
4. **Evaluation.** Entry demonstrates if, and the extent to which, the results or outcomes of the public relations programs were accomplished. The entry includes the program's informational, motivational and behavioral objectives and how they were measured using qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

GUIDELINES

1. Read the guidelines carefully. If you fail to follow the guidelines, judges will subtract points in judging or disqualify the entry.
2. Brevity, clarity of concept, good writing and evidence of objective evaluation of your program are factors judges use in evaluating entries.
3. District or agency entries must not exceed 12 single-spaced pages. School entries must not exceed five single-spaced pages. You may include charts, pictures or other evidence of your plan and its effectiveness; however, you can not exceed your total page limit for your entry.
4. Two copies of your program entry must be submitted with an entry form stapled to the front of each copy. Do not include three-dimensional objects.
5. Organize your entry carefully using the criteria listed above for this category.

ENTRY FORM (DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 24, 2012)

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 2012 COSPRA <i>Communications</i> EXCELLENCE <i>Awards Program</i> | Entry Title |
| | School district/organization name |
| Medallion Award | |

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Entry submitted by: _____

Phone: _____

Enrollment Category:
These categories apply to districts and individual schools:

1-299 300-999 1,000-1,999
 2,000-4,999 5,000+ Ed. Agency

Yes, I would like a critique for this entry.
(Include an additional \$15 per entry to be critiqued.
Make check payable to COSPRA.)

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This awards program is for projects that represent an aspect of the overall public relations program.

Examples of Golden Achievement projects include:

- back-to-school information campaign
- series of publications designed to accomplish a specific purpose
- campaign material to build understanding for schools
- series of media relations activities
- staff and student recognition programs
- school activities, programs or projects at shopping malls
- a marketing/e-marketing component dealing with pre-school
- community education

Each entry is judged against criteria—not other entries. Judges will select as many winners as effectively meet the award criteria.

Entries earning the Golden Achievement Award will receive a certificate suitable for framing.

Golden Achievement Award

CRITERIA

1. **Evidence of Need.** Evidence of the need or problem must be described and program goals must be stated and measurable.
2. **Planning.** Identified target audiences, involvement of others in the planning, variety of communication channels incorporated.
3. **Execution/Communication.** Timelines, implementation strategies and effective communication techniques.
4. **Evaluation.** Evidence that your program accomplished your stated goals.

GUIDELINES

1. Read the guidelines carefully. If you fail to follow the guidelines, the judges will subtract points in judging or disqualify your entry.
2. Prepare a one-page summary of the activity, project, publication or video specifically addressing the evidence of need, planning, execution/communication and evaluation.
3. Supplementary documentation is permissible, but is limited to three pages of newspaper clippings, letters, brochures, etc. Do not include three-dimensional objects. CDs or DVDs may be submitted for appropriate electronic entries.
4. Brevity, clarity of concept, good writing and evidence of objective evaluation of your project are factors the judges look for in winning entries.
5. Two copies of your program entry must be submitted with an entry form stapled to the front of each copy.

ENTRY FORM (DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 24, 2012)

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2012 COSPRA <i>Communications</i> EXCELLENCE <i>Awards Program</i> Golden Achievement Award | Entry Title |
| | School district/organization name |
| | Address: _____ |
| City, State, Zip: _____ | |
| Entry submitted by: _____ | |
| Phone: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I would like a critique for this entry. (Include an additional \$15 per entry to be critiqued. Make check payable to COSPRA.) | |

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Publications and Electronic Media Awards

This awards program is for the entry of individual publications and electronic media productions. Awards are earned according to type of publication or electronic media entry. Entries will be judged against award criteria and other entries. Judges may award up to five Awards of Excellence and up to five Awards of Merit per category for each enrollment group. Awards of Excellence will receive a plaque and Awards of Merit will receive a certificate suitable for framing.

Annual Report

Published once a year to summarize district accomplishments and to meet accountability requirements set by the state.

Calendar

Publication containing a schedule of dates for school year/school activities plus general information about the school or system.

E-Newsletter/E-Newspaper

External or internal electronic publication published regularly. At least two different issues of an e-newsletter/e-newspaper must be submitted on a CD or DVD to qualify as an entry.

Finance Publication

Publications developed to communicate and create understanding about how schools are funded, taxes, school and district uses of revenue, etc.

Handbook

An annual publication for students, teachers or parents with general information about the organization, its policies and protocols.

Identity/Image Package

A set of identification items that may include a logo, graphic elements incorporated into brochures, letterhead, apparel or other materials, a marketing statement, etc. that brands a district, school, agency or organization. Entry must include three or more related pieces to qualify.

Marketing Materials/Campaigns

Materials to communicate a school or school district's special qualities that make it appealing to potential customers or employees. Publications, videos or other electronic applications are accepted in this category.

Newsletter/Newspaper

External or internal publication published regularly. At least two different issues of a newsletter/newspaper must be submitted to qualify as an entry.

Print Advertisements

Entries are accepted for printed advertisements that have appeared in newspapers, magazines, trade journals, billboards or other print media which are not published by the school or district.

Photography

Entries can be a single photograph or a group of photographs that have been published in print or on the Internet. Images are judged on overall quality, artistic presentation and "story-telling" effectiveness. Images should be submitted as a 4x6-inch or larger print.

Special Purpose Publication

One-time external or internal booklets, brochures, magazines, posters or other materials developed for a unique event, program, issue or other purpose.

Special Purpose Video Production

One-time external or internal video production developed for a unique event, program, issue or other purpose. Each entry limited to a single program, presentation or episode per DVD or CD. Video does not have to air through educational access broadcasting.

Television Programming

Original, locally-developed and produced programs or a program series that educates, inspires or informs the audience through educational access broadcasting. In submitting a series on a CD or DVD, at least two samples must be included. (This does not include news stories broadcast on local television network affiliates.)

Writing

Articles from newsletters, newspaper editorial columns, speeches, Web sites or other messages. Must be between 500-5,000 words in length and not student-written or professionally outsourced.

Internet/intranet Web site

Please include your Web site's address on your entry form. Special purpose or short-term Web sites are also accepted. Intranet entries must include password or other log-in information so judges can access your site. One Web site per entry.

Publications and Electronic Media Awards

CRITERIA

Publications

Entries will be judged on excellence of graphic layout and design, writing, content, message effectiveness, evidence of effective planning process, quality and clarity of goals, measurements and outcomes. Judges will consider information included in the entry form.

Electronic Media

Entries will be judged for professional quality. Programs for television must be of broadcast quality to communicate effectively. Web site entries will be judged on clarity of writing, appropriateness and freshness of content, graphic presentation, ease of use and download time. For all electronic media entries, judges will look for effective writing and messaging that's integrated with design or visuals. Evidence of effective planning process, quality and clarity of goals, measurements and outcomes will also be evaluated. Judges will consider information included in the entry form.

GUIDELINES

1. Entries compete against award criteria and other entries. Judges may award up to five Awards of Excellence and up to five Awards of Merit per category for each enrollment group.
2. Electronic entries must be submitted on CD or DVD.
3. Newsletter/newspaper entries must include at least two different issues to qualify as an entry.
4. Two copies of each entry must be submitted with an entry form stapled to the front of each publication or set of publications. Entry forms should be taped to the cover of any CD or DVD entry.
5. Student-written and/or produced publications are not eligible.
6. Each entry must include a completed statement of research, development and results form.

Submission of any entry shall constitute entrant's representation that all material is original and/or free from unauthorized use of copy, design, art and/or photographs from other sources.

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Publications and
Electronic Media
Awards

Entry Title _____

School district/organization name _____

Award Category:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Print Advertisements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-Newsletter/E-Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Purpose Publication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance Publication | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Purpose Video |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handbook | <input type="checkbox"/> Television Programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identity/Image Package | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing Materials/Campaigns | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet/Intranet Web site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter/Newspaper | URL: _____ |

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Entry submitted by: _____

Phone: _____

Enrollment Category:

These categories apply to districts and individual schools:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-299 | <input type="checkbox"/> 300-999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1,000-1,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2,000-4,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5,000+ | <input type="checkbox"/> Ed. Agency |

- Yes, I would like a critique for this entry.**
(Include an additional \$15 per entry to be critiqued.
Make check payable to COSPRA.)

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS

Research and Assessment

Define the purpose and goals of the publication or project:

How did you identify the problem or goals of the publication or project?

Analysis and Planning

Primary target audience:

Secondary audience (if applicable):

How was the project communicated or presented to the target audience(s)?

Were there other communication efforts used to support this project? Explain.

This project was produced:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In-house | <input type="checkbox"/> Out-sourced |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Combination of in-house and out-sourced. | |
- If out-sourced, please explain the role of the contractor in the project:*

Budget for the project:

Frequency of publication or project:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly | <input type="checkbox"/> Annually | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Evaluation and Results

What were the specific and/or measurable objectives of the project?

What were the results of the project?