

Congratulations to the Recent Graduates...Now What?

On Demand Video

Hosted by: The George Washington University

Master's in Strategic Public Relations



EVENT OVERVIEW

Join the conversation and hear from successful leaders who've used their Strategic Public Relations degree and certificates from GWU to unlock their career potential. We'll hear from emerging leaders who are going beyond traditional public relations methods to accomplish their communications and career goals. Our panel will share their tips and tactics for your communications career journey.

HOST:

Lawrence J. Parnell, M.B.A., Associate Professor and director of the George Washington University

Master's in Strategic Public Relations program

GUESTS:

- **Remmington F. Belford, MPS** – Communications Director at The Congressional Black Caucus
- **Gary Klasen** - President at Klasen Communications / GWU faculty
- **Aaron Pickering** – EVP and Global Head of Purpose, Headstand / GWU faculty
- **Chelsea Ritchie, MPS** – Head of Digital Advocacy in Public Affairs at the International Copper Association

ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS



**Lawrence J. Parnell, M.B.A.
(HOST)**

Lawrence J. Parnell, M.B.A. is an award winning Public Relations professional and academic who is an Associate Professor and director of the George Washington University Master's in Strategic Public Relations program. He has served in this role for 12 years and has built the GW Master's program into one of the best known and admired programs in the US. Professor Parnell also serves as an Adjunct Professor of Strategic Communications at the GW School of Business.

He also operates *Parnell Communications*, a strategic communications and leadership training advisory firm. In this role he advises government, corporate and non-profit organizations on executive development and strategic communications.

Prior to coming to GW, he had a successful 32-year career in the private and public sector. He has worked in government, corporate and agency settings and in national, state and local political campaigns. He was recognized as PR Professional of the Year (2003) by *PR Week* and was named to the *PR NewsHall* of Fame in 2009. The GW Master's program was named the "Best PR Education Program" for 2015 by *PR Week*.

He is a frequent author and speaker on communications strategy, crisis and issues management, leadership skills and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) at industry conferences and universities around the world. He is quoted often on communications management and crisis communications by the national, business and trade media.

He is the co-author of a leading public relations textbook – *"Introduction to Strategic Public Relations – Communicating Effectively in a Socially Responsible World"* from Sage Publishing. In its first year, (2018) the text was adopted by over 30 leading undergrad PR programs across the country. The second edition of the text, titled: *"Introduction to Public Relations"* was published in October 2020 by Sage Publishing. He also contributed as a co-author of a chapter on CSR in the book *"Nation Branding and Public Diplomacy"* (Peter Lang Publishing) published in 2017. He is active on Twitter at @gwprmasters and on Face Book and Linked-In under his name.

Remmington F. Belford, MPS



I am a trusted high-impact strategic communication, and public affairs practitioner. I have cultivated a diverse network of relationships throughout the country, and proficiently crafted innovative narratives covering issues ranging from higher education to foreign relations. Additionally, I am an innovative digital content producer well versed in many facets of digital communication. I have extensive on the record experience, developed comprehensive marketing and communication strategies, mastered the importance of timing and setting, responded efficiently to crises and setbacks, overseen teams of diverse communications roles and managed a substantial communications budget.



Gary Klasen

Gary Klasen is the president of Charlotte-based Klasen Communications, which emphasizes internal, external, strategic and community-focused communications.

Klasen has significant corporate, small business and agency

experience, beginning his career as a newspaper writer and editor. Early in his PR career, he was director of internal communications and the CEO/executive speechwriter at Sears.

He joined the automotive space and defense company, TRW, as a communications director and later worked for Eaton, an industrial manufacturer. His Eaton position grew from vice president of external communications to also leading internal communications and then global corporate communications for the \$20 billion power management company.

Klasen's promotions at Eaton came during and after receiving his master's in strategic public relations from George Washington University in May 2011. He currently teaches GW's graduate PR class in Crisis and Strategic Issues Management.



Aaron Pickering

Aaron has 15 years' experience helping brands and nonprofits build emotional connections with consumers and create award-winning campaigns to drive social impact and action to curb climate change. He has advised major consumer and B2B brands – from Mars and Target to New Balance, CVS Health and PwC – on ESG programming, and how to authentically establish and communicate brand purpose as a differentiator. He formerly headed up marketing and communications for Dean Kamen's STEM organization, FIRST Robotics. Previously, he was Senior Vice President, Corporate Responsibility & Reputation at Cone Communications, a Porter Novelli agency. Aaron instructs

communications and corporate social responsibility at Lasell University and the George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management, where he earned a Master's in Strategic Public Relations focused on driving behavior change and shaping public opinion.



Chelsea Ritchie, MPS

Chelsea Ritchie has a unique global perspective. Her parents are from Guyana in South America, and she lived abroad at a young age, before settling in the outer echelons of Los Angeles. In 2008, Ritchie moved to Washington, D.C., and spent twelve years working with prominent public figures, nonprofits, manufacturers, Am Law top 20 Law Firms, and Fortune 100 Firms. As a digital and political strategist, Ritchie specializes in online advocacy to incorporate traditional government relations with digital.

Currently, Ritchie serves as the Head of Digital Advocacy in Public Affairs for the International Copper Association (ICA). In this role, she develops and spearheads the global public affairs digital strategy in Asia, Europe, North and South America. Ritchie's operations on all channels—including website, email, and social media—strive to improve policy relationships and improve the organization's copper mining reputation. Specifically, as a member of the public affairs and reputation building teams at ICA, Ritchie works to amplify lobbying, policy activities, and policy positions for China's 14th five-year plan (FYP), the European Green Deal,

and the U.S. infrastructure and clean energy legislation.

Before ICA, Ritchie was the former Government Relations Director for Kellen Company. She represented several association clients on legislative and regulatory matters at the federal and state levels in this role. Notably, Ritchie and her clients mobilized to assist with the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, working with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to allocate funding and receive manufacturing donations to replace the corroded lead pipes. In 2015, she focused on chemical management reform, working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and lawmakers to pass the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety (LCSA) for the 21st Century Act and amend the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).

While working at various law firms, including Mercury Clark & Weinstock and Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, she worked on the Affordable Care Act and the implementation of Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. At Bancroft PLLC, she worked with former Solicitor General of the United States, Paul Clement, and worked on *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, the extradition of Chen Guangcheng to the United States, and Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in Congress and at the Supreme Court.

In 2018, Ritchie received the 30 Under 30 Emerging Leader Award for her work in politics and the Caribbean community. In 2019 and 2020, Ritchie and her digital team received three social media awards for ICA's Climate Week NYC campaign and website design awards for SustainableCopper.org and CopperAlliance.org.

Ritchie received a Bachelors's degree from the American University in International Studies, specializing in Asia policy, with a Minor in Chemistry. She received her Master's from the George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management in Strategic Public Relations.

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