



Sierra Nevada Chapter

# 2011 SILVER SPIKE AWARDS – CALL FOR ENTRIES SIERRA NEVADA CHAPTER OF PRSA

## OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Silver Spike Awards honor the best work of Northern Nevada's public relations practitioners and are sponsored annually by the Sierra Nevada Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. The Silver Spike Awards competition is open to any individual, company, association, or government agency. Public relations, advertising and marketing agencies may also submit entries on behalf of their clients.

## SILVER SPIKE AWARDS CATEGORIES

Entries are submitted under two main categories: **Public Relations Programs** and **Tools and Tactics**. Details on entry judging criteria as well as entry categories follow. If a campaign is submitted in a Public Relations Program Category, only two individual components of that campaign may be entered in a Tools and Tactics Category.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS EVALUATION

Judges will evaluate the following PR Program entries utilizing four criteria.

- **Research:** How was the research planned and how effective was it in identifying the program needs and opportunities?
- **Planning:** What pre-work was done to establish goals, objectives, target audiences, tactics and desired results?
- **Implementation:** Quality of program materials, activities and techniques; allocation of resources and budget; adherence to professional public relations standards.
- **Evaluation:** How did it go? How do you know? Results.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM CATEGORIES

#### **1. Special Events & Observances, Budget under \$10,000**

Programs to commemorate anniversaries, to conduct special organizational or public events, or to observe local, national or international celebrations. Total budgets/costs not to exceed \$10,000.

#### **2. Special Events & Observances, Budget \$10,000 to \$25,000**

Programs to commemorate anniversaries, to conduct special organizational or public events, or to observe local, national or international celebrations. Total budgets/costs not to exceed \$25,000.

#### **3. Special Events & Observances, Budget over \$25,000**

Programs to commemorate anniversaries, to conduct special organizational or public events, or to observe local, national or international celebrations. Total budgets/costs exceeded \$25,000.

#### **4. Internal Communications**

Programs to heighten internal efficiency, increase understanding of key business issues and/or improve relations with employees through enhanced communications.

## 5. Ongoing Programs

Programs to establish or maintain an organization's reputation, stature or relations with its publics.

- 5-A) All-inclusive Budget of \$25,000 or Less; or
- 5-B) All-Inclusive Budget of More Than \$25,000

## 6. Community Relations

Relations to improve an organization's image and/or relations with communities in which it has an interest, need or opportunity. The organization itself benefits from this program.

## 7. Marketing Communications

Programs to publicize, promote or introduce products or services.

## 8. Emergency or Crisis Programs

Programs undertaken to deal with an event that has had or may have an extraordinary impact.

## 9. Overall Campaign

This campaign can include marketing and advertising, but judges will focus on the presentation of the PR plan and related components. Although entries will be rewarded for media impressions, the judges will also consider campaign goals, the creative thought put into developing the plan and ultimately, how successful the plan was in achieving those goals. Enter as either:

- 9-A) All-inclusive Budget of \$25,000 or Less; or
- 9-B) All-Inclusive Budget of More Than \$25,000

## 10. Investor/Donor/Targeted Audience Communications

Programs directed to shareholders, donors or other targeted audiences. Does not include internal communications. Internal communications programs may be entered under category No. 4.

## TOOLS AND TACTICS EVALUATION

Judges will evaluate the following Tools and Tactics entries using the following criteria., though individual categories may be weighted differently during the judging process (i.e. less weight given to "budget" of written news releases than to publications).

- **Objective:** What were the specific objectives of this entry?
- **Audience:** Who were the target audiences and why?
- **Budget:** What was the budget? Were there any budget constraints?
- **Creativity/Quality:** Did the messages tie to the objectives? Was the tool imaginatively used to achieve program goals?
- **Results:** How well did the entry achieve its objectives? Provide evidence that the objectives were met.

## TOOLS & TACTICS CATEGORIES

### 1. Special Purpose Videos

Video programs produced to inform and/or promote, intended for a specific target audience and/or purpose.

### 2. Writing

Written public relations projects created to meet a specific objective for a defined audience and/or purpose in the following categories:

- 2-A) News Releases
- 2-B) News Articles (by-lined or ghost written)
- 2-C) Speeches

### 3. Publications

Public relations publications including annual reports, brochures, magazines, and newsletters designed to inform and/or promote a communications message to a selected audience for a specific objective in the following categories:

3-A) Annual Reports

3-D) Magazines

3-B) Brochures

3-E) Newsletters

3-C) Additional Collateral

### 4. Internet-based Communication

Web sites, podcasts, blogs, RSS feeds or other Internet-based communication created to meet specific communication objectives for informational and/or promotional purposes.

### 5. Media Relations

Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations. Submit media events, press releases, media advisories, pitch letters, requests for coverage, etc., along with evidence of the resulting coverage and summary. TV coverage should be submitted on either a CD or a half-inch VHS videocassette and radio should be on either a CD or an audiocassette. **Please do not enter a single release, advisory, letter, etc. unless it represents the entire effort. Single releases, advisories, letters, etc. should be entered in category No. 2.**

## HOW DO YOU ENTER?

### FORMS/FORMAT

Materials entered must have been produced between September 2010 and September 2011.

Each entry must include a summary of the program, as indicated under Public Relations Programs evaluation and Tools & Tactics evaluation, and NOT EXCEED two (2) typewritten pages. Judges will disqualify entries if summaries exceed two pages. Including support materials is recommended, but should be limited to those that are essential in demonstrating the scope, nature and results of the entry. Entries should be placed in a folder or binder **not to exceed three inches in depth** and must be organized as follows:

- **Two copies of completed entry form**
- **Table of contents**
- **Program summary and overview with a clearly stated objective (2 pages maximum), broken down into the major individual judging categories. (see attached judging worksheet )**
- **Support materials and examples of work**
- **A brief (50-70 word) description of your entry, to be used in news release in the event your entry wins a Silver Spike**

### FEES

- The entry fee for PRSA members: \$40 for the first entry, \$30 for each additional entry.
- The entry fee for non-members: \$50 for the first entry, \$40 for each additional entry.
- Please make checks payable to PRSA-Sierra Nevada Chapter.
- A completed entry form should accompany each entry along with payment.

## **HOW DO YOU WIN?**

Selection of Winners: Entries will be awarded based on the following guidelines:

Only one Silver Spike will be awarded per category to the highest scoring entry over the minimum score of 85 for Public Relations Programs or 45 for Tools and Tactics. The only instance where two Silver Spikes are awarded is in the case of a direct tie.

- **Programs:** Entries must score 85 points or more to be eligible for a Silver Spike Award. If all entries in a category score below 85, no Silver Spike will be awarded.
  - All other program entries scoring 76 points or more may be awarded an Award of Excellence
- **Tools and Tactics:** Entries must score 45 points or more to be eligible for a Silver Spike Award. If all entries in a category score below 45, no Silver Spike will be awarded.
  - All other tools and tactics entries scoring 40 points or more may be awarded an Award of Excellence.

### **DEADLINE**

**ENTRIES ARE DUE BY 5 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2011  
ENTRIES RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED**

Please mail or hand-deliver entries to:  
Natalie Savidge/Anne McMillin  
1664 N. Virginia St.  
University of Nevada, Reno, Mail Stop 108  
Reno, NV 89557

### **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT**

Silver Spike Judging Chair  
Natalie Savidge  
775-784-4611 or 775-336-9923 (cell)  
[nsavidge@unr.edu](mailto:nsavidge@unr.edu)

Or

Sierra Nevada Chapter President  
Annie McFarland  
775-448-3561  
[Annie.McFarland@IGT.com](mailto:Annie.McFarland@IGT.com)

**Winners will be announced Thursday, November 17, 2011 at the annual  
Silver Spike Awards Dinner presented by the Sierra Nevada Chapter.**

**All finalists will be notified by telephone prior to the awards dinner.**