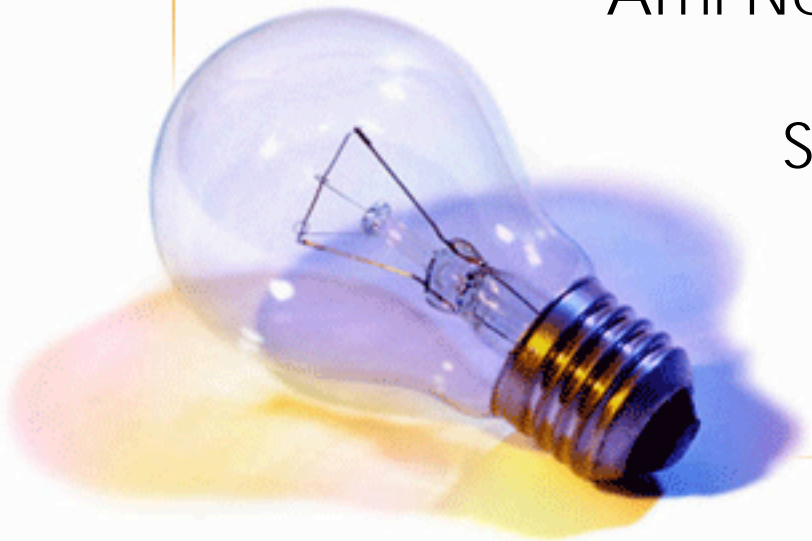


# Nonprofit Public Relations Careers: Special Challenges & Rewards

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## About Us

### **Ami Neiberger-Miller, APR**

- Communications director for Sister Cities International.
- Works as a consultant for the communications department at the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
- Co-owns a PR & design practice specializing in nonprofit PR called Steppingstone LLC.

### **Sheryl Thomas**

- Communications intern for Sister Cities International.
- College student with experience in writing and organizational leadership.



## Overview

- Nonprofit PR: Myths & Reality
- Our Reality – Sister Cities International
- Our Reality - Nonprofit Internship – A Student's Observations of Working in a Nonprofit
- Our Reality – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Special Challenges in Nonprofit PR
- Internship Opportunities



## Myths About Nonprofits

- Only activists, hippies, wash-outs, or idealists work at nonprofits.
- Nonprofit PR jobs are easier to get and not as challenging.
- The "Automatic Reward."
- All they want are volunteers.
- You won't make any \$ and will have to live with your parents for the rest of your life.



## Nonprofits - Reality

- More than 1,000,000 nonprofit organizations in the USA employ more than 10,000,000 people (7% of the workforce).
- 35,000 nonprofits in the USA have full-time staffs of 10 or more people.
- Includes organizations dealing with education, religion, art, culture, politics, community development, health, social services, advocacy, business and labor relations, science, research, youth development, membership interests.



## Nonprofits - Reality

- Mission-focused people find their way to nonprofits, but so do many other types of people.
- Although collaboration is highly valued in the nonprofit sector, there can still be personal agendas and office politics within nonprofit organizations.
- Nonprofit PR jobs are just as picky about hiring as private industry, although they may be more open for entry-level employees.
- Although salaries remain lower (25% differential is common) than private industry, many nonprofits offer excellent employment benefits.
- Career advancement is viable.



## Our Reality - Sister Cities International

- Arrive at the office at 8am. Check Google news. Answer email.
- Field call from reporter researching a story.
- Review bids and order new folders from the printer.
- Call graphic designer, forward publication draft to staff.
- Spend a few hours working on a book we are producing for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Weigh in with other staff about emcee choices for a gala at the Annual Conference in July.
- Issue a press release about Sister Schools Initiative. Spend 2 hours pitching and sending out.
- Sign invoices for processing. Make sure the folders won't bust the budget.
- Get an update on the web upgrade project from the tech director and a contractor.
- Leave the office at 5:45. Washington Post reporter calls cell phone at 6pm needing information immediately.



## Our Reality – Nonprofit Internship

- A Student's Observations of Working in a Nonprofit
  - Office environment
    - Common goal
    - Team attitude
  - Job satisfaction



## Our Reality – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

- Don't Believe the Type – PSA campaign with the Ad Council to keep children safer online.
- Follow-up with reporters writing about online safety.
- Contact PSA directors about using PSAs.
- Talk to a group of youth about how they can help the campaign.
- Request new ad sizes for a magazine from the Ad Council.
- Write a magazine story.
- Send out pitches for three magazines.
- Make sure website changes did not break any links.



## Nonprofit PR – Special Challenges

- Mentoring – you will often need to look outside the organization to identify a professional mentor.
- PR budgets may require creativity – you may not have money for tasks that would be standard in the private sector.
- Limited career advancement – may require you to leave the organization for a larger one.
- Results & Accountability – it can be harder to quantify change in people's lives.



## Internship Opportunities – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

- Communications Assistant
- Follow-up with PSA Directors for a national Ad Council campaign to keep kids safer online called “Don’t Believe the Type.”
- Unpaid internship.
- Summer and fall 2006 are available.
- Reimburses parking or metro expenses.
- Go to [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org) – Click on About Us, Internships.



## Internship Opportunities – Sister Cities International

- Communications Intern
- Hands-on PR experience – news release writing, newsletter articles, editing, website work.
- Next opening is fall 2006.
- Deadlines: spring (November 15), summer (March 15), fall (July 15)
- Offers a stipend.
- Located in Washington, D.C.
- Go to [www.sister-cities.org](http://www.sister-cities.org) and click on About Us, Employment



## To Contact Presenters

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