

## Featured Column: A Research Crush



*APRA-Wisconsin member Dehnel Petre is a research analyst at Marquette University, where she has been employed since 2007. She holds an M.A. in Creative Writing from Northwestern University and a B.A. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.*

At Marquette University, among a regional focus on Milwaukee and corporation and foundation research, I am also the researcher for three colleges, one of them being the College of Business Administration. As a prospect researcher with degrees in English and Creative Writing, there are times when doing research for the College of Business can feel a bit repetitive. I've never taken a Business class in my life (not sure if I should admit to that or not), and frankly I find the whole enterprise of owning companies and making millions or billions of dollars somewhat boring. Prospects, for the most part, tend to come out wearing the same rating and touting the same interests (golf, anyone?) I find that more often than not, I'm writing something along the lines of: *John Smith grew up in a small town in Northern Wisconsin and worked his way through college, paying his tuition and learning the benefits of hard work. After graduation, he bought a business, made it profitable, sold it and started another – effectively becoming master of a small universe and then of a much larger universe. Hooray!*

This was my view on prospects for the College of Business until I was asked to look into a person who would eventually be granted the honor of becoming my ultimate research crush. (Research crush definition: Not all that different from a first crush on, say, Han Solo or Luke Skywalker – or, for you less Star Wars-inclined, one of the Beatles, a New Kid on the Block, or Johnny Depp. You see them (or read about them) and find yourself oddly attracted to them for one reason or another – despite the fact that this will forever be an unrequited kind of relationship.) Of all the people I've researched over the past three years, who would have thought that my (research) crush would have been on an alumnus of the College of Business? Out of this pool emerged a lovely 78-year-old gentleman who resides in New York City, who is not only a “master of his own universe” but also a really cool guy! Now, anytime anyone wants any research on “Arnie,” I am the first to volunteer.

Arnie, in addition to his master-of-the-universe qualities (owning businesses, sitting on corporate boards, blah, blah, blah), has been on the boards of several well-known arts organizations that include a modern dance company, several theatre companies, a well-known literary magazine (that I used to subscribe to) and a few art museums. He's also a board member of a foreign film forum, and runs in the Chicago marathon every year – and did I mention that he is 78?!?! He is married to the woman credited with saving a beloved national institution, and who has written several books on architecture and historical buildings. I love this man – and his wife – in a very research-y way. If someone asks me to “pull the research” on him, I take this as an opportunity to dive into the web of articles about him and his wife and pore over the call reports in his record to make sure we have everything captured. It never gets old.

So, Arnie is my first official research crush. In prospecting meetings I'm his biggest cheerleader, getting a little giggly and schoolgirl-ish when I offer: *What about Arnie?!* He's on my short list for almost anything from business to theatre for an event or meeting anywhere close to New York City. Alternately, I can become protective of Arnie if he's mentioned for something I'm not crazy about: *Oh, no, I don't think Arnie should be put on that list. I'm not so sure Arnie would support that. That's not really up Arnie's alley* (if only Arnie know how tight we were).

And what has this research crush done for me? Perhaps nothing other than teach me a lesson that there are multi-dimensional people in the business world, and they don't all fit into the stereotype that I have in my head. And I've pretty much become an encyclopedia for all things Arnie. And what has it done for Arnie? Well, he's never ignored by his alma mater....and I'm not a stalker.

## President's Column

A few newsletters ago, I wrote about being stuck at your desk, glued to the computer screen – unable to interrupt, much less abandon, a research quest. In this column, I would like to encourage you to think outside the cubicle. There are as many reasons to leave the office, even in the middle of a Wisconsin winter, as there are resources beyond the internet.

Here at Marquette, the prospect research team has a history of getting out. In 2007, the team inaugurated CIRCLES Research Days, which grew out of Marquette's signature CIRCLES program (industry-focused regional networking events). The first research day was held in Chicago, and subsequent research days were held for Milwaukee and New York. The team (5-7 researchers) met with representatives from individual industries for an hour or two each. The research team had prepared specific questions, but found that the conversation flowed naturally, and sometimes to places no one had expected, as the interviewees were excited and honored to share both their knowledge and personal experiences.

In March 2011, Nicole Kurowski, who supports Marquette's fundraisers working in the East Coast region, had the opportunity to travel to Charlotte, NC, for individual meetings with eight prospects (seven alumni and one parent). The alumni ranged from the Class of '72 to the Class of '01, and their industries ranged from real estate to health care to banking. The prospects welcomed the opportunity to talk about their career paths, how they got to where they are today, and what they felt had made them successful. Charlotte was hit hard by the Great Recession and was still recovering at the time of Nicole's trip, so the conversations were also about the current economic climate. Each of the prospects had opinions of when and how things would get better, which they shared enthusiastically. Nicole was joined on this trip by the fundraiser who serves the Charlotte area, and they both found that they learned from each other. In a whirlwind of visits spread across a wide geographic area over two short days, Nicole quickly realized the reality of a regional fundraiser's role: it is not cushy! Meanwhile, the fundraiser told her that she was able to ask questions that he never could.

Over the last several months, we have focused on resources here in Milwaukee, specifically places where we could find historical information that isn't available from our desktop. We visited the Milwaukee County registrar of deeds and probate offices, archives and records at the Milwaukee Public Library and the Milwaukee County Historical Society, the Streets of Old Milwaukee at the Public Museum, and Forest Home Cemetery. We were over the moon looking at original plat maps, on which Bill O'Brien showed us the mansions, neighborhoods, and streets that made way for the Marquette campus we know today. Then there were the archives of deeds and mortgages, which, for one building, represented a century of home ownership. Julia Dimick walked us through the actual probate file of a Marquette benefactor, which helped us understand why their philanthropy might not have passed to the next generation. At the museum, we saw recreations of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century businesses that formed our community's identity and commerce, many of which continue to do so today. As we wandered through Forest Home, the final resting place of hundreds of Milwaukee's leaders, we read and talked about people we sometimes only knew as street names. And at each of these places, we read the donor walls.

This fall, we embarked on road trips to get to know the landscape of our community. Milwaukee is a city of neighborhoods, many of which have distinct cultural identities and grew up around specific companies and industries. Every month or two, we explore a different neighborhood, and on our large research team, we are blessed with many local experts. Julia Dimick guided us through Milwaukee's North Shore, which many of our local highly-rated prospects call home. Bill O'Brien led us through Milwaukee's port and Bay View – one of Milwaukee's oldest neighborhoods, yet also home to more coffee roasters than anywhere else in Milwaukee. At the port, we drove past huge piles of salt, Milwaukee's smallest public park, and nearby, a sustainable agricultural facility located in an old factory. I was the tour guide for another of Milwaukee's historic working-class neighborhoods, Riverwest, which still has its share of corner bars but is also home to emerging small businesses, non-profits, young families, artists, and hipsters. For this spring, we are planning tours of Racine and Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood.

This year we have also been meeting with local leaders to learn about their experiences of and visions for Milwaukee. Through these meetings, we have learned about the transformations taking place in the former brownfields of Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley, about the growth of the Water Council, and about the manufacturing skills gap. We have also learned what these community leaders are passionate about, and what they love about the place we all call home.

We have found that, just like digging in, getting out can make us better at what we do. It can expand our universe while providing important context, it can ground us by connecting us to others who care, and it can remind us why we are engaged in our chosen work.

-Sarah Bernstein, Marquette University



## Save the Date – Coming Soon!

**Spring Meeting: Friday, April 26, 2013**  
**Ripon College, Ripon, WI**

Sara Root is Assistant Director of Development Research at Grinnell College in Des Moines, Iowa, where she has been employed since 2007. Sara previously worked in banking as a personal banker and training and development officer. She is a member of APRA-Great Plains and holds a B.S. in Animal Science from Southern Illinois University.

Sara will present “Green Acres: Farm Land Evaluation and Assessment,” which she has also delivered at the APRA International Conference. If you have specific questions about this topic that you would like Sara to address, please email them to Sarah Bernstein at [sarah.bernstein@marquette.edu](mailto:sarah.bernstein@marquette.edu).

Our meeting host, Lisa Ellis of Ripon College, and event coordinator, Kate Mason of Meriter Foundation, deserve our gratitude for their efforts to produce another high-quality event for APRA-Wisconsin. As the date draws nearer, additional details will be posted to the APRA-Wisconsin events page at [www.apra-wi.org/events.html](http://www.apra-wi.org/events.html). Our fall meeting will be held at Marquette University, with the date and speaker to be announced.

-Andy Caldie, St. Norbert College

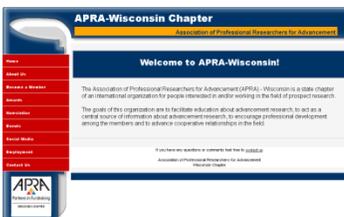
## Chapter News and Meeting Highlights

At our chapter business meeting in September, APRA-Wisconsin voted to approve numerous changes to its bylaws. The biggest change was our decision to eliminate the Communication Coordinator position (the only appointed board position) and redistribute the tasks associated with that position to other board members and volunteers. Other changes included adding volunteer management to the Vice President’s position – including website management, newsletter production, graphic design, photography, and other jobs we have yet to imagine. We also added some items to the Events Coordinator position to formally recognize the many tasks needed to effectively facilitate our events. The bylaws are available on our website at [www.apra-wi.org/images/APRA\\_WI\\_Bylaws\\_10.1.2012.pdf](http://www.apra-wi.org/images/APRA_WI_Bylaws_10.1.2012.pdf).

With the elimination of the Communication Coordinator board position, Michelle Schultz, Prospect Research Specialist at the Aurora Health Care Foundation, concluded her service to the APRA-Wisconsin Board. Michelle served as Communication Coordinator since March 2010. She made significant contributions to our communications, particularly with her graphic design expertise, which she brought to bear on our meeting reservation forms and agendas. I encourage all of you to join me in thanking Michelle for her service.

-Sarah Bernstein, Marquette University

## Website Update



Catherine Garvens, our new volunteer webmaster, recently redesigned the look and feel of the APRA-Wisconsin website at [www.apra-wi.org](http://www.apra-wi.org). While its resources and functionality remain the same, the site is now more vibrant and easier to navigate. Many thanks to Catherine for her hard work and innovation! If you have feedback or comments regarding the website, feel free to email Catherine at [catherine.garvens@supportuw.org](mailto:catherine.garvens@supportuw.org).

-Sarah Bernstein, Marquette University

## Membership Update

APRA-Wisconsin concluded 2012 with 46 members – a record level of membership, at least in recent years! Eleven new members joined in 2012, though three of those were taking over institutional memberships from members who moved on to new roles. Membership renewals for 2013 are slowly trickling in, and we are still accepting renewals as well as new members. If you know of others in our profession who may have an interest in joining APRA-Wisconsin, feel free to forward me their contact information at [marianne.suess@supportuw.org](mailto:marianne.suess@supportuw.org). I would be happy to provide them with more information about our chapter.

*-Marianne Siess, University of Wisconsin Foundation*

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## Call for Volunteers

As APRA-Wisconsin prepares for another promising year, members have several opportunities to help maintain our momentum by volunteering for the three committees listed below. I would like to especially thank all of last year's committee members, who are welcome to volunteer again this year or in the future.

**-Nomination Committee:** Recruits potential board members, presents a slate of candidates, and oversees the election. Four board positions will be open in 2013: Vice President, Events Coordinator, Membership Secretary, and Elected Board Member.

**-Scholarship Committee:** Requests and reviews applications for the APRA-Wisconsin Scholarship, which funds professional development activities such as the APRA International Conference.

**-Presidents Award Committee:** Requests and reviews nominations for the annual APRA-Wisconsin Presidents Award, to be presented at the Spring 2013 meeting.

If you would like to serve, please email [andrew.caldie@snc.edu](mailto:andrew.caldie@snc.edu) with your preference. Thank you for your consideration!

*-Andy Caldie, St. Norbert College*

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## Updates from APRA International

I have some exciting news to share – an additional benefit to your Chapter membership now being offered by APRA International. APRA International will soon commence distributing the *Connections* newsletter to all members – whether you belong to an APRA Chapter or to International, or to both. As long as APRA-Wisconsin has your current email address and membership registration, you can look forward to *Connections* arriving in your inbox on a quarterly basis. For those of you who have been regular readers of *Connections*, you will also notice something new when the next issue arrives – it will have a more magazine-like look and feel, and will be easier to access, navigate, and print.

As I announced at our September meeting, APRA International has launched a new committee to work on Chapter-International Relations, and I have been invited to serve on this committee. At this point, the committee has met only once, on Halloween, and is just starting to gather ideas. The wider distribution of *Connections* is just the first outcome of this new focus. Please share your thoughts and ideas with me!

### Upcoming Conferences & Symposia

#### [MARC: APRA Mid-Atlantic Researchers Conference](#)

March 6-8, 2013, Fairfax, Virginia (Mason Inn Convention Center & Hotel)

Keynote Speaker: Elizabeth Crabtree, Assistant Vice President for Strategy and Resource Development, Brown University, and past president, APRA International

#### [APRA Campaign Symposium \(at MARC\)](#)

March 6, 2013, Fairfax, Virginia (Mason Inn Convention Center & Hotel)

#### [APRA 26th Annual International Conference](#)

August 7-10, 2013, Baltimore, Maryland (Baltimore Marriott Waterfront)

*-Sarah Bernstein, Marquette University*

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## 2012-2013 APRA-Wisconsin Board of Directors

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**Past President (2001-2002, 1995-1996)**, Gail Anshus\*, (414) 476-6117, [ganshus@wi.rr.com](mailto:ganshus@wi.rr.com)

**Past President (1997-2000, 1993-1995)**, Cynthia Bertsch\*, retired, (920) 960-9223, [cebertsch@charter.net](mailto:cebertsch@charter.net)

**Past Recording Secretary (2008-2012), Past Secretary/Membership Secretary (1999-2005)**, Linda Gage\*, Blackhawk Technical College, (608) 757-7739, [lindagage1017@att.net](mailto:lindagage1017@att.net)

**\*Board Member Emerita**