



PRSA Pittsburgh Black Excellence Award

Amount

This award's recipient will receive \$2,000, an amount made possible by our generous sponsor [Burson Cohn & Wolfe](#).

Objective

While the practice of public relations in the United States has undergone dramatic changes, a lack of diversity in the communications profession still persists. Many studies indicate that the industry still struggles to attract young Black professionals to public relations careers.

The city of Pittsburgh doesn't have a great track record either. Just last year, Pittsburgh was labeled [the worst city in America for Black people](#) by local writer Damon Young and the [worst city for Black women to live in](#) by the city's Gender Equity Commission. So, it's not surprising that the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#) found that Black people are rapidly [leaving the city](#). PRSA Pittsburgh has had its own struggles attracting, retaining and developing Black PR leaders. Our membership is only 2% Black. Over the last five years, our Board has only had three Black members. We can do better. We must do better.

We need to do more to show talented Black communications, public relations and marketing students that there is a home for them here in the Pittsburgh PR community. We need to show them that we see, hear and need them. We need to do more to identify, hire and develop these future leaders.

That's why we've created the PRSA Pittsburgh Black Excellence Award. Through this award, we aim to recognize Black men and women for outstanding academic achievement, commitment to the practice of public relations and commitment to the city of Pittsburgh.

Each year, PRSA Pittsburgh will award \$2,000 to one (1) new graduate who is of African-American/Black ancestry and working in the PR, marketing or communications field in the region. All applicants must have graduated from an accredited four-year college or university located in the U.S. in the last three years and accepted a communications/PR/marketing position in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Application

PRSA Pittsburgh has developed the following application that all potential applicants must complete and submit before the **November 27** deadline.

- A completed entry form.
- A typed, one-page letter of recommendation from a PRSA member or an individual associated with the communications profession (corporate, agency, government, higher education or nonprofit).
- A 500-word personal essay or a video on why diversity matters to the public relations industry and the significance of having a diverse workforce in the public relations industry.



- In addition, please provide an answer to at least one of these topics below:
 - What is the role of communications professionals in helping companies and the city do better when it comes to racial equality?
 - What Black communications role models do you look up to in this industry and why?
 - What recent multicultural communication efforts have helped to bridge the gap between the community and your college/university or new place of employment?

PRSA Pittsburgh's Diversity & Inclusion Committee will serve as the review committee for this award.

Please make sure all materials are error-free and thoroughly proofread. All application materials must be submitted to renaissance@prsa-pgh.org by **November 27**. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.