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Ocala PR Professionals Bring Home Golden Image Awards

Ocala, FL (August 11, 2011) – The Ocala Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) made a presence at FPRA's 73rd annual state conference in Naples, Fla., this past week by bringing home six prizes for excellence in public relations. The Ocala Chapter also earned statewide recognition for providing premier service to its members.

During the gala Golden Image banquet, a total of 70 awards were presented in three professional categories: Public Relations programs, printed tools of PR, and Audio/Visual Tools of PR. Ryan Gerds, APR and Dan O'Connor of Munroe Regional Medical Center took home a Golden Image Award and a Judge's Award for their VIP Patient Care campaign. Gerds and Mike Robertson received an Award of Distinction for MRMC's 2010 Community Report. Lila Ivey and Jennifer Rogers of Hospice of Marion County earned an Award of Distinction for their direct mail appeal campaign. Peveeta Persaud, Miranda Iglesias, Chief Bart Walker and Maggie (the dog) received an Award of Distinction and Judge's Award for Maggie's "Get Down. Get Out. Get on the Phone!" public safety announcement.

Laura Byrnes, APR, who steps down as Ocala chapter president later this month, also received the state President's Award for Member Services.

Those attending the four-day conference were Laura Byrnes, APR, communications manager, Workforce Connection; Allison Campbell, executive director, The Hope Foundation; Selma Canas, marketing coordinator, Small Business Development Center; Amanda Cebula, community relations coordinator, Webster University; Ryan Gerds, APR, public information officer, Monroe Regional Medical Center; Lila Ivey, community outreach director, Hospice of Marion County; Christy Jergens, public information officer, Marion County Board of County Commissioners; and Mike Robertson, marketing and public relations director, MRMC.

The Florida Public Relations Association, founded in 1938, is the oldest professional association for public relations practitioners in the nation. The Ocala FPRA Chapter was established in 1980 and is one of 15 professional chapters in the state. FPRA is dedicated to developing public relations practitioners who, through ethical and standardized practices, enhance the public relations profession in Florida.

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