

THINK FPRA!

Acceptance Speech by
2013-14 FPRA President Chris Gent, APR, CPRC
Delivered on Monday, Aug. 5, 2013

This year as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of FPRA, we continue a deep and rich tradition. Since 1938, this Association has existed for one sole purpose: to help its members do their jobs better.

It's fitting that we are here in the Tampa/St. Pete area for this celebration, because it was in Tampa at the Tampa Terrace Hotel where 50 members voted to form our Association 75 years ago. They made history and elected their first president, Lt. Colonel John W. Dillin.

I wonder what Colonel Dillin would think about our profession today. The tools we have to do our jobs are so much more than he probably ever imagined. But the core principles of our profession haven't changed much at all. I think *that* would make him very happy.

Today we celebrate past, present and future.

2013 has been a fantastic year for FPRA under the leadership of Jeff Nall, APR, CPRC. As we just saw, every member has much to celebrate. Congratulations to everyone and thank you for all of your work this year.

And now, we embark on a new year of leadership and growth. Where will the next year take us?

Those who know me know I work better with themes. I think they help provide focus. In reflecting on a theme for the next year, I considered many ideas, but the theme I have selected is simple. It's *Think FPRA*. Why you ask?

Because I want you, Florida's public relations professionals, to know that whatever you need to do your job better and advance your career can be found in FPRA.

If you desire professional development, *Think FPRA* for its monthly luncheon programs, workshops, webinars and white papers.

If you're looking to enrich your own personal development, *Think FPRA* for its leadership opportunities at the local and state level.

If you're seeking to grow professionally, *Think FPRA* and advance your career through accreditation or certification.

If you're looking for professional recognition for your work, *Think FPRA* and the statewide Golden Image Awards Program.

When you're looking for a library of resources, a job bank, or a speakers' bureau, *Think FPRA* and its full-service website.

If you would like to participate in the state's largest annual gathering of public relations professionals, *Think FPRA* and its annual conference.

If you're a student looking to build your portfolio, find an internship opportunity, enhance your leadership experience or learn about scholarships, *Think FPRA* and its 11 student chapters at universities and colleges across Florida.

Likewise, if you're a senior-level counselor and you're looking for professional enrichment, *Think FPRA* and our Counselors' Network.

Above all, when you're stumped on a project, need an objective opinion, or are searching for a printer who can work within your budget, *Think FPRA* and its nearly 1,200 members spread across the state.

Your membership in FPRA provides you with all the tools you need to do your job better. Your membership continues the tradition started 75 years ago by a man who had a dream and a passion.

I share that dream and passion for FPRA and our profession. We've come a long way in 75 years. It is my goal this year to do whatever it takes to ensure FPRA's continued leadership in our profession. I'm excited about the year ahead, and honored to lead this Association. Thank you!