



**FLORIDA PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES FIRST OFFICIAL
FOUNDERS DAY DECEMBER 15, 2020**

*The Country's Oldest Public Relations Association Honors its Heritage on What Would Have Been
the 110th Birthday of Its Most Influential Founder, Lt. Col. John W. Dillin*

SARASOTA, Fla. (December 15, 2020) – Today, the country's oldest public relations association, the [Florida Public Relations Association \(FPRA\)](#), is celebrating its heritage on the birthday of one of its most influential founding members, Lt. Col. John W. Dillin. Today, Dillin would have turned 110 years old.

FPRA began in 1938 as the Florida Association of Publicity Directors. Dillin, who was the publicity director for the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce at the time, brought together seven additional public relations professionals from across the state to coordinate efforts promoting the state as a whole and giving better cooperation to the press. The group consisted of Frank Wright (Univ. of Florida), Dick Pope Sr. (Cypress Gardens), Wilton Martin (Silver Springs), Ross Allen (Silver Springs), Russell Kay (Florida Newspaper News), William W. Patterson (Florida State Chamber of Commerce) and M. Edward Bacon (Marine Studios). All were passionately aligned on developing a group of professionals who would leverage ethical public relations practices to battle illegitimate advertising media and “fly-by-night press agents” who were harming the state's reputation at the time.

Today, FPRA boasts more than 1,000 professional and student members across the state of Florida who represent a wide variety of industries from healthcare, non-profits and tourism to government, public relations agencies and more. All FPRA members are dedicated to the Association's continued mission of developing public relations practitioners who, through ethical and standardized practices, enhance the public relations profession in Florida.

The Association provides its members the following unparalleled benefits:

- Professional development
- Networking
- Leadership opportunities
- Recognition through the Association's annual [Golden Image Awards program](#), which honors excellence in results-driven public relations initiatives
- and Accreditation and Certification through the [Universal Accreditation Board's Accredited in Public Relations \(APR\) program](#) and [FPRA's Certified Public Relations Counselor \(CPRC\) program](#)

Public relations and marketing professionals can learn more by visiting www.fpra.org and can follow FPRA's Founders Day celebration on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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