

Volume 28, Issue 2  
Spring 2020

Dispersing Public Relations  
into a Spectrum of Ideas

Fashion Institute of Technology  
[fitprssa.weebly.com](http://fitprssa.weebly.com)

**PRSSA**  
Fashion Institute  
of Technology

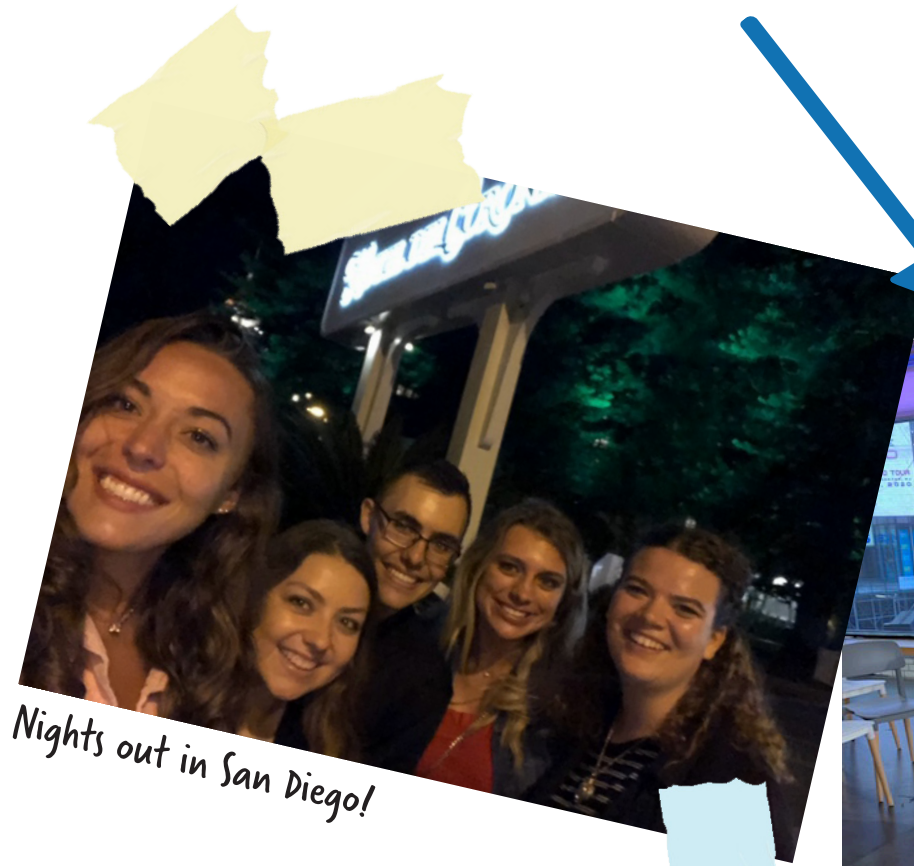
**PRISM**



# Looking back at our amazing year!



Good times at IC!



Nights out in San Diego!



PRSSA perks @ Good Morning America!



Adjusting to online meetings!



out and about at IC :)



Small Girls PR visits FIT PRSSA!

# When Your Last College Semester Coincides with a Pandemic

Katelyn Malecki

When I started classes in January, it's safe to say I didn't expect to return back home in March. As much as I loved getting two "spring breaks" during my last semester of college since we had a week off for professor training, that obviously doesn't outweigh the severity of the current crisis we're all facing.

It's certainly a surreal event to live through, and being a student during it seems even more surreal. Due dates still exist, class times have stayed the same, but we're not able to see our friends in the hallways or have in-person club meetings. It's a struggle to find motivation, and I feel a large part of it is because schoolwork can seem so trivial when you know there are essential workers giving their all to keep our world going as best as they can. Sometimes I wonder if I should be doing things to help, other than the required social distancing and lockdown rules. This time makes me question what my role is in society, but then I remind myself that my priority now is my schoolwork, and that that's okay.

As we get closer and closer to the last day of classes, I realize I'm about to end the chapter of my life that's included my college years. While this isn't how I imagined it would be ending, there are some positives to being home, and I know I'm not the only college senior who's about to enter a changed world. While no one knows what the summer will be like, or what next year will be like, I'm choosing to stay as positive as I can be and have faith that it'll turn out well. That's about all we can do right now.



Working from home

# The Do's and Don'ts of Interviewing

Mariah Murphy

Applying for your first job can be a fascinating thing to do. Millions of people around the world frequently do this. However, I had terrible experiences during my primary interviews. I was starting a journey to develop new skills (when I did land a job), and as a young person, the pathway to discovering exactly where my interests were. After a while, it became clear which applications should be filled out. And I developed skills which eventually got me jobs which I liked. Even though my current position, which I held for almost three years, did not relate to my course of studies, it prepared me for my dream job, which is just on the horizon after graduation.

The following tips will take you one step closer to your dream job. There are some unexpected challenges you may have to face when interviewing, such as surprise questions. And that is okay because if you want something, like a job, risks must be taken.

My first interview experience for an actual job was with Aldi supermarket. I thought I did a good job. I was able to answer most of the questions right away but didn't get a callback like I expected to. I think it was because I did not have any experience working in a supermarket or anywhere. Some employers take having work experience seriously, and sometimes you just got to have faith that you will gain your job experience somewhere else.

This disappointment did not discourage me from applying to the same company a second time, and I thought I would do better the second time around. I was recovering from the stomach virus, so I could not prepare the way I wanted and was not that enthusiastic during the interview as I usually would be.

On successful interviews, I have had before I could already guess that I did a great job answering questions because the meeting went smoothly. The conversation between the interviewer and me went on for more than 5 minutes. I did not get the position, though, because my schedule with school interfered with me working there. Even though I did not get the job, I still got to experience having a great job interview, and that made me motivated to pursue other job opportunities that I was too afraid to do before. A few points to remember when going for an interview are...

–Have your resume on hand, along with a list of questions, references, and written work, if applicable, to give the interviewer.

–Answer questions to the best of your ability, and if you don't know the answer, take a moment to think about it.

And now I graduate, not only from college but with lots of experience under my belt. Not only from school but from interviewing and work experience while hitting the books. These skills I happily share with you.



PRSSA Member Mariah Murphy

# FIND A REASON TO SMILE

## Lauren Schinkel

During this unique time that has never happened to us before, I think that it is really healthy and beneficial to take a moment to breathe and think about what to be grateful for. Although this situation is really hard to deal with, and everyone around us is going through something different, we should all find a reason to smile.

As we are experiencing these emotions, it has been refreshing to see what companies are doing to stay connected to their people. For example, the telecommunications company, AT&T has been doing a wonderful job in helping its customers and community. According to AT&T's article "AT&T Consumer: Connected Together," the company explains what they are doing to support their community.

For example, AT&T is doing great things such as waiving charges for people who are unable to pay their bills and giving unlimited data to schools for 60 days. It is so important for companies to be responsive and understanding during this pandemic. For the companies that are practicing this, it will definitely help their brand image for the present and future. As we are all living through this eerie time, we should all be there for one another and come out of this stronger than ever.



# RESILIENCY IS KEY

## Taylor Terry

As our semester comes to an end, I wanted to take this time to reflect on our first PRSSA meeting at the beginning of the Spring Semester. While our Spring Semester was cut short in regard to COVID-19, Fatou Barry, founder of PR Girl Manifesto and inspiring leader within the realm of Integrated Marketing Communications, left PRSSA on an inspiring note that has stuck with us all semester. Barry emphasized to us at our first meeting that we should redirect our futures, especially during challenging times like these. While we may not have in person meetings, our chapter has moved onto hosting virtual to continue our efforts and maintaining positivity.



Working from home

I believe that as a PRSSA chapter that we have learned together that the best way to overcome challenging times is through positivity and redirection. Despite lacking the ability to communicate in person, I have learned that these are the moments where we should tap into our resources and do the best we can with what we have.

It has been inspiring to end the semester with our members who still take the time to come together and share industry insights and personal stories. This experience has taught us that we do not have control over crises, but we do have control over how we handle these situations. As long as we remain resilient, we can do anything.

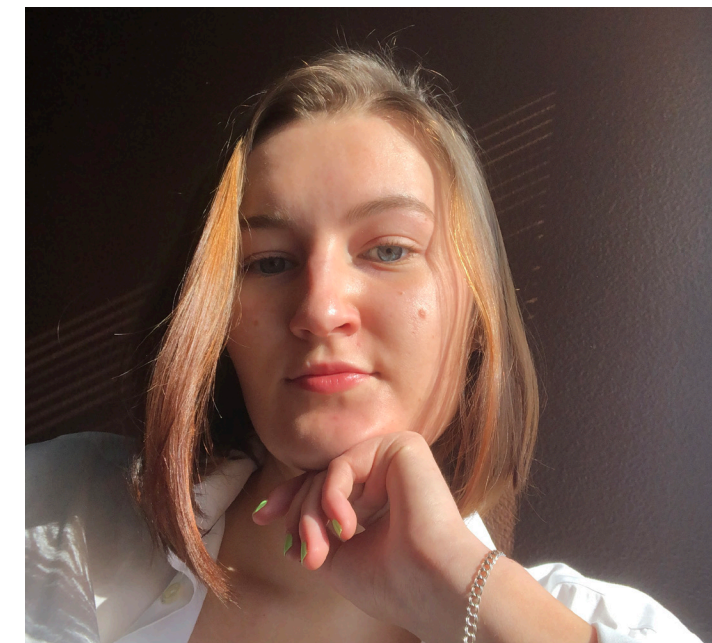
# How I Balanced School and Work in a Remote Environment

## Miranda Howell

It's no secret that this abrupt change we have all experienced this semester has been far from normal. With little time to prepare and for some of us, this was the first time we have had to take classes online. I am going to share a few of the ways I have tried to stay sane while navigating online classes and working remotely.

The weekend before all of our classes debuted on Blackboard Collaborate, I flew home to Portland, Oregon and have been operating on East Coast time on the West Coast ever since. This means putting my adding and subtracting skills to use and waking up before the sun.

One tool that has been vital to coordinating everything from classes to work meetings to personal appointments is Google Calendar. With this I have been able to block out my time dedicated to my classes and my working hours along with outside club meetings.



PRSSA Member Miranda Howell

The time difference gets a little tricky, so communicating clearly to professors, supervisors and my classmates was super important so that I was able to advocate for myself in this rather unique situation. I found it was super important to make sure that these people were aware and updated on my availability and how that converted between time zones.

Another thing that I found that was integral to sustaining sanity during this time was to unplug at the end of each work and school day. It is much simpler to cut ties with work obligations when those two environments take place in separate locations. I made a point to shut down the technology, resist the urge to check email and take much needed breaks when doing homework.

It can be draining to keep that constant surge of motivation everyday to be engaged in classes, then 'go to work' then attend another class and then end the day with online homework. As a known multitasker and list-maker, I found myself putting these skills to extra good use. By outlining each task I needed to accomplish in a day, including self care like \*cough cough\* eating and sleeping, I reminded myself what I was capable of accomplishing and also reminding myself to care for my well being.

# How PRSSA GOT ME MY INTERNSHIP

## Lauren Westerheide

Attaining an internship, especially as a sophomore can seem like a very daunting task. You can't even apply for most internships unless you are a Junior or Senior in college, which made the search very limited. This was the case for me, I was applying for so many internships and felt like they all led to dead ends, which was very discouraging.

My first internship was last year, as a freshman, and I, fortunately, did not have to go through the internship search process because it was through a study abroad, and I never knew how long and frustrating this process actually is. Until one day, I got an email from FITPRSSA announcing that Base Beauty Creative Agency was looking for a PR intern! I immediately jumped on this amazing opportunity because not only was it for PR, but also within the beauty industry! I will be going into Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing for my bachelor's degree and this industry will always be my top choice. Upon further research on the job description, I found out it was paid! Which is almost unheard of, and I was by no means expecting to get paid as a sophomore.

After applying I eventually endured three separate interviews for this position and after a few weeks, I was officially an intern. I could not be more thankful for PRSSA and how this amazing club is able to bring so many opportunities to its members. Just being a member has so many benefits and I am so happy I joined PRSSA during my first semester of freshman year.



Base Beauty Creative Agency Keychain

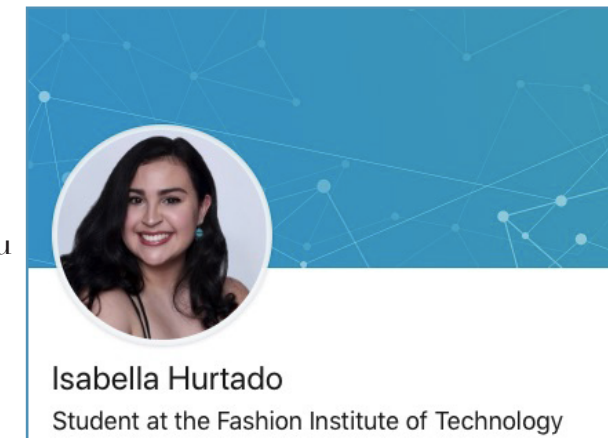
# THE POWER OF LINKEDIN

## Bella Hurtado

Ever heard the saying, "It's not what you know, it's who you know?" Well, LinkedIn seems to be the perfect marriage that bridges together who you know as well as what you know. A LinkedIn profile can display work history, educational background, and personalized posts and articles. That being said, LinkedIn allows users to share what they know with who they know (voila!). LinkedIn is the perfect platform to become familiarized with your industry and stay up to date on industry trends. Since you can use multiple filters to specify what you are interested in, LinkedIn allows users to join a variety of groups and connect with a myriad of individuals to stay updated in the ever-changing world.

LinkedIn has many features that range from creating posts to direct messaging professionals to even getting personal recommendations. There even is a space for endorsements, which is a great way to showcase your skill set. Since there are so many different features to LinkedIn, professionals can connect to build

their network. Networking is one of the most important things for an aspiring professional, which means LinkedIn is a professional's best friend. With so many different elements to LinkedIn, it is the perfect breeding ground to develop your career. Since users can update their profile as frequently as they like, LinkedIn offers recruiters and potential employers an inside look into one's career. One's profile can greatly benefit an individual; it can open up the door for multiple opportunities for career growth. Moreover, LinkedIn also has an area where you can search job openings, which is super beneficial for finding specific jobs in the industry of your choice. All in all, LinkedIn is the perfect platform to use to connect to



# SENIOR SEND-OFF!

Every year, FIT PRSSA Graduating Seniors are encouraged to write about their experience within our chapter. “Even though we’re saddened by the thought of never meeting again every Thursday from 1-2 PM, we know the adventures that await us will build new memories.”

Congratulations to the Class of 2020!

We will miss you and wish you good luck in your future endeavors!

## Marissa Jones

Becoming involved in PRSSA has been one of the best decisions I have made while at FIT. After transferring from another school, I wanted to make the most of my experience at FIT. I wanted to learn, grow, make friends, and have fun. I met many new friends in PRSSA that helped me ease into a new school and guided me through new classes and my first internship.



PRSSA Member Marissa Jones

Although some things change each year, PRSSA has remained a consistent part of my life in college. Every Thursday we had the pleasure of getting together, hanging out and learning something new. I always appreciated this time together and took it as a break from everything else going on during the week.

I made so many fun memories that I will never forget and friends that I hope to keep forever!

Thank you to everyone for joining this special club and making memories with me. Thank you to Professor Elins for caring about our club so much and being so dedicated and helpful. I wish the future club members much happiness and success!

I'm so grateful for all the opportunities this club has given me. I got to travel to Austin and San Diego for National Conference, attend Regional Conferences, and connect with professionals in the industry and meet many other like-minded students. I loved serving as Treasurer for two years and helping the club in different ways. PRSSA has helped me to grow and develop many professional skills I can carry into any position.

## Gabrielle Orefici

Four years ago I was a confused freshman trying to adjust to my new, full-time life in the city that never sleeps. I made the mistake of not joining PRSSA full-time as a freshman, but I learned quickly, a more confident sophomore, that PRSSA was the place to be. Once I did, I never looked back. I came to a meeting in the fall of my sophomore year welcomed by a friendly face, Lauren Donadio (Class of 2019), who was the chapter secretary at the time. She made a point to get to know every member. I knew then I wanted to be a part of something that would be a space where I can grow professionally with friends I knew I would have soon created a forever bond with.

I realized I wanted to help and do my part in elevating the chapter. I ran for VP of Social Media and PR which I shared with Emma Norlin (Class of 2020) as we both studied abroad opposite semesters. Being hungry for more, I ran for chapter Vice President and was elected for my senior year.

It has been the most rewarding opportunity being able to be part of this community, and to help other undergraduate students navigate the professional space in Manhattan.

I have met and connected with dozens of guest speakers that have led to professional opportunities for not only me but other members as well; including building a network of the members who sit in Room D211 who are constantly looking to give each other professional opportunities. PRSSA meetings were the sunshine to any bad day, or week. I will truly miss spending Thursdays in Room D211, and all of the

underclassmen. I have learned and grown so much from taking part in PRSSA, it will forever remain a cherished time in my life. It was an honor to be part of PRSSA, thank you for everything.



PRSSA Member Gabrielle Orefici

# Danny Lynch

When I ended up applying and becoming accepted to what was at the time my dream school, the Fashion Institute of Technology, there was such a boatload of emotions that poured over me as I compartmentalized that this had somehow really happened and I had the opportunity of coming here. The next chapter.

Moving away to attend a university is not an easy endeavor for many, let alone moving to New York City after hailing from a small town in the West, rather than somewhere more adjacent like New Jersey or a Westchester town above the city. It's a big decision not without some sacrifices. But with it comes learning and new experiences! And that is what exactly ended up occurring and I couldn't be more grateful for that. When I discovered PRSSA as still a young and confused sophomore, I didn't fully know what I was joining other than I was welcomed by a group of passionate and enthusiastic individuals. Shortly thereafter, however, I was glad to discover that it offered so much more than being just a college club organization.

FIT PRSSA allowed me to be a part of a safe, supportive and empowering community, a place where one could come and feel inspired and motivated to discover and be curious about things. There are a variety of things I'm grateful for : from learning internship and career advice from fellow members as well as awesome guest speakers and panels, to the opportunity of attending conferences both regional and national one to hear from industry professionals, to just being able to make amazing friends and build strong relationships with them, my cup is filled. Thank you to all the wonderful individuals who've helped build and cultivate this chapter, and the amazing members who I've had the pleasure to get to know.



PRSSA Member Danny Lynch

Sending a very special appreciation to Professor Elins for continually being an inspiring, encouraging and supportive light I didn't know I'd be blessed to find at FIT. Thank you for being the best Professor, advisor, London mom, mentor and friend above all else!

Given the current circumstances of our world being turned upside down, I think it's important to reflect on the situation and reflect on past moments in history, as that can help inform us and provide a framework to examine the present. As in popular motivational fashion by some, I shall leave you wonderful and capable human beings with two profound and perceptive quotes from former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who led what arguably was an incredibly tumultuous time for Britain through WWII to eventual victory. He once said that "attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference," and "a pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

Ultimately, choosing FIT for my university studies and embarking on my journey with PRSSA and our chapter was the best decision I could've made, and despite setbacks, tears, and doubts I had along the way being there and in NYC, it all has coalesced and built me into a stronger person today. I'm more creative, more understanding, more resilient, more malleable to a net of challenges that may be cast my way into the sea of the future, and more appreciation for just remembering at the end of the day, outside of whatever career path that I embark into, my job is simple - to be an understanding, curious, and adaptable human being. Now, remember: Stay golden, stay true to yourselves, and what lights your soul on fire. All the love, my friends!

# Katelyn Malecki

Whenever you talk with someone about attending FIT, the topic of how hard it is to make friends almost always seems to come up. If I hadn't gone to the PRSSA table during the orientation club fair three years ago, I would've missed out on meeting so many amazing people.

I came to FIT as a transfer student without knowing anyone else who attended the school. The year prior, I was attending my community college in the Syracuse area, and had found that college became much more enjoyable as I got more involved on my campus. I planned to follow that same idea when I came to FIT, and I'm so glad I chose PRSSA as the club I would dedicate myself to.

As I went through my classes at FIT and participated in my first PR internship, I realized PR most likely wasn't going to be my dream career. While it might sound ridiculous that I stayed in a club with the words "public relations" in its title, I stayed because I had found an incredible group of people who had become my close friends.



PRSSA President Katelyn Malecki

I also found it to be a club where I could grow as a leader, starting as the PR lead for Mix and Mingle on Seventh, and working my way up to where I am as President now.

PRSSA is truly a special club on the FIT campus. It allowed me to travel to several conferences, meet great guest speakers, and participate in agency tours. This club educates you, encourages personal growth, and at the end of the day, it's a great place to meet lifelong friends.

I can't believe my time in PRSSA is winding down; I'll never forget seeing the bats in Austin or eating the best burrito of my life in San Diego. PRSSA has taught me that you truly get out of life what you put into it, and I am excited to tell anyone who'll listen how spectacular these three years have been for me. Thank you FIT PRSSA for giving me the opportunities I wanted, and the community I needed. You'll always have a special place in my heart.

## Kenyatta Cleveland

I don't even know where to begin to explain how much I love being a part of PRSSA. I joined my first semester at FIT which was Fall 2018. I knew that I wanted to join some type of club and be involved on campus.

Coming from my previous school I missed out on extracurriculars and meeting people outside of my major classes and I knew I did not want to make that same mistake here. I remember my first PRSSA meeting, I was so nervous because I did not know anyone there and I came to the meeting alone. The very first time everyone was so nice and welcoming that my nervousness went away instantly. I can honestly say PRSSA has changed my entire

college experience. I've learned so much about different industries and learning how to apply these skills during case studies that we've done. I've also made so many connections from the different PR professionals that came to meetings as guest speakers. PRSSA has given me a new perspective and really helped me figure out my career goals. I am so glad that I had the encouragement from other members to run for an E-Board position for the 2019-2020 school year.

Being not only a paid member but on the E-Board has helped me in so many ways, my college experience would not be the same without it. Although senior year did not end the way we wanted it too, I'm glad that I was able to be a part of such a special group of people. The memories and friendships I have created because PRSSA is something so special.

I'm so appreciative for these experiences and I know I have made friends for life. I'm grateful for the endless laughter that this special group has given me. I'm grateful that I had the op-



PRSSA Member Kenyatta Cleveland

portunity to travel to San Diego for international conference; it was my first time ever going on a school trip related and it did not disappoint. The guest speakers at the conference gave me an insight to what my future could be in this industry, and even offered mentorship.

Even though this is the end of my time as a member of PRSSA I will never forget it. Being a member of this group was the best thing I could have ever

done and I'm so sad that it is over. I hope to stay in contact with everyone, and to get together as often as we can no matter where life takes us. I just want to say thank you to every member that I've ever interacted with. You are all the nicest, most caring people I have ever met, and I love each and every one of you. Thank you so much for having me and helping me through college.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING PRSSA MEMBERS

Prof. Roberta Elins, PRSSA Faculty Advisor

Dear Seniors,

We have a record number of PRSSA members graduating this year. While you may not be "walking" on May 20, 2020, there will be a Commencement Ceremony in the fall, and I will be there to cheer you on.

I know that in the current pandemic and economic climate, you are concerned about when and where your "working life" will get started. Rest assured that you will get jobs. You're smart, resourceful and exceptionally well trained through your FIT education. If I can be a resource in that job search, you know you only have to reach out to me.

Our graduating E-Board Members may have had the semester cut short, due to COVID-19, but they "kept calm and carried on" and kept on meeting throughout the semester. They made sure to take care of all the club requirements, so that PRSSA is in compliance and in good financial shape. Well done all of you. A particular shout out to President Katelyn Malecki and Treasurer Marissa Jones for making this all happen. Katelyn has been a fantastic President, surrounded by an excellent E-Board.

Congratulations (in alphabetical order) Kenyatta Cleveland; Marissa Jones; Danny Lynch; Katelyn Malecki; Mariah Murphy; Emma Norlin; Gabrielle Orefici; Jennifer Rodriguez and Hannah Waters.

Some of you have been students in my classes. I have traveled with so many of you to PRSSA International Conferences in Indianapolis, Boston, Austin and San Diego where you won "Star Chapter" Awards. I have traveled to National Assembly in Seattle (Emma) and Miami (Hannah) where you represented PRSSA@FIT as a delegate. I lived in the same house in London with Danny for five weeks last summer, when he was part of our London Internship Program. In short, I have had the pleasure of getting to know both in and out of FIT.

Graduation means the end of your time as a student at FIT, but I hope it's the beginning of our staying in touch for many years to come.



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020!

Professor Roberta Elins

# NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

This has been quite the memorable semester to say the least. As I write this, we are in the midst of a global pandemic that has interrupted life as we once knew it. Commencement is postponed and our time on campus has been cut short. Time is just about the only constant right now, and my day to day has been spent finding different ways to fill it. I miss FIT and New York City more than I could ever imagine, and I've never felt more grateful for all of the experience

I've had there so far.

This is the first issue of PRism to be released online only, and I'd sincerely like to thank all of the writers who contributed to this one-of-a-kind issue. To all our members that have joined us for Zoom meetings or for our in-person meetings throughout the year, thank you-- we cannot wait to see you all again soon. To our seniors, we will miss you dearly and wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavors. Can't wait to see you all at the Alumni panel next year, congrats!

I am counting down the days until I can be back on campus with all of you again. Stay safe, stay home, stay healthy, and please keep in touch. Have a great summer :)

Best,

Sam Kushner and Bella Raykhman

## EXECUTIVE BOARD 2019-20

### Vice President

Gab Orefici

### Secretary/Historian

Danny Lynch

### President

Katelyn Malecki

### Treasurer

Marissa Jones

### VP of Chapter Development

Taylor Terry

### VP of Social Media & PR

Ava King

### Creative Directors

Samantha Kushner  
& Bella Raykhman

### Event Coordinators

Bella Hurtado  
& Kenyatta Cleveland

### Faculty Advisor

Professor Roberta Elins

## EXECUTIVE BOARD 2020-21

### Vice President

Miranda Howell

### Secretary/Historian

Shelby Silva

### President

Taylor Terry

### Treasurer

Alexis Keith

### VP of Chapter Development

Gabrielle Hernandez

### VP of Social Media & PR

Lauren Westerheide

### Creative Directors

Lauren Schinkel

### Event Coordinator

Bella Hurtado

### Faculty Advisor

Professor Roberta Elins