



## **2023 Rowan PRSSA National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition Package**

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## Letter to PRSSA Chapter Leaders

February 7, 2023

Dear PRSSA Chapter Leader,

The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) prides itself on philanthropic activities that promote the well-being of our communities. To continue this tradition, the Anthony J. Fulginiti Chapter of PRSSA (AJF-PRSSA) at Rowan University invites you to participate in our National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition.

Cystic fibrosis is a progressive, genetic disease that attacks young people, contributing to lung infections and limiting the ability to breathe. This competition asks PRSSA chapters to use their public relations skills while helping to enhance and extend life for those living with cystic fibrosis.

Through this competition, PRSSA chapters will create a campaign and host an activity, either online or in person by May 15 (submission deadline) focused on cystic fibrosis awareness and research. The top four chapters will receive a cash prize at the National PRSSA Conference in the fall of 2023.

Awareness of, and support for, cystic fibrosis research is deeply meaningful to Rowan's AJF-PRSSA chapter. We held our first event for CF in 2013 after the passing in 2012 of Colette W. Bleistine, a former Rowan student and PRSSA leader. Each year, our chapter holds an event or activities to help raise money and awareness in the Rowan community. Colette's parents formed the Colette W. Bleistine Paying It Forward Foundation, which has donated more than \$50,000 in past years to scholarships, students in need and cystic fibrosis research.

We encourage you to compete in the National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition. Together, we can make a difference. Just imagine the impact your chapter can have. If you plan to take part, let us know as soon as possible, and start planning. Please contact Suzanne FitzGerald, chapter advisor at [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Suzanne D. FitzGerald, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA  
Professor, Ric Edelman College of Communication and Creative Arts  
Rowan University  
301 W. High St., Glassboro, N.J. 08028

## **PRSSA National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition Goals and Objectives**

### Competition Goal:

Raise national visibility for cystic fibrosis through PRSSA chapters across the country.

### Competition Objectives:

- Increase awareness of cystic fibrosis and the struggles patients face.
- Promote strong public relations and leadership skills, and commitment to community service, among PRSSA chapters nationwide.
- Raise money for CF research with as many students as possible taking part in the competition.

## 2023 National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition Guidelines

\*\*\*Please send all submissions digitally to [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu). This will allow us to evaluate and provide feedback promptly.

1. Chapters must conduct an activity between, now and May 15, 2023. This can be online or in person. The target audience should include (but not limited to) local community members, students, faculty, and staff.
2. The campaign goal is to spread awareness of cystic fibrosis and its effects as well as fundraise for CF research.
3. Award packages must include:
  - A three-page (maximum) summary (typed, double-paced, one-inch margins)
  - Primary and secondary research
  - Summary of activities
  - Evidence of cystic fibrosis promotion
  - Campaign evaluation
  - Supplemental information: (15-page limit)
    - Invitations
    - News Releases
    - Advertising (e.g. flyers, publicity)
    - Photographs
    - Media kit
    - Screenshots from social media promotions
    - Budget
    - Any other materials that provide value to your campaign
4. Please submit your package (18-page maximum) as a single PDF file by May 15, 2023 to [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu). You will receive a confirmation email within 48 hours of submission.
5. First, second, third place and honorable mention winners will receive recognition and awards at the prestigious 2023 PRSSA National Conference, the largest gathering of PRSSA chapters around the country.
6. Packages will be judged according to extent of influence, creativity, execution, publicity/promotion, research, professionalism, supporting materials.

**Details and Deadlines at-a-Glance**  
**PRSSA National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Campaign**

- The Cystic Fibrosis national competition will take place in the spring semester of 2023..
- Registration for PRSSA chapters who want to compete is due March 15, 2023.
- Chapters must hold their activities or campaigns in spring semester 2023 and and must confirm their participation with Suzanne FitzGerald at [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu).
- Completed competition packages must be submitted by May 15, 2023
- PRSSA chapters must submit portfolios including all elements of research, planning, communication, and evaluation phases of their awareness campaigns. A panel of Rowan students, faculty, and professionals will evaluate the portfolios and select first, second, third and honorable mention recipients.

**AJF-PRSSA’s Tips for Success**

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
Plan ahead	Wait until the last minute
Ask questions	Send packages late
Proofread your package multiple times	Have numerous spelling/grammatical errors
Be creative. Make your activity individual to your school, not cookie cutter.	Simply follow other PRSSA chapters
Have fun	Lose sight of the overall cause

## **National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition Judging Form**

Extent of influence: 1-20 points

Creativity: 1-20 points

Execution: 1-15 points

Publicity/promotion: 1-15 points

Research: 1-10 points

Professionalism: 1-10 points

Supporting material: 1-10 points

## National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Competition Entry Form

If you plan to enter the competition, please submit this form on email to [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu).

### AJF-PRSSA

Attention: Suzanne FitzGerald  
c/o Ric Edelman College of Communication and Creative Arts  
Rowan University  
301 High Street  
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Include:

Name of PRSSA Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_  
University/ College: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Contact's Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Contact's Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser Contact's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser Contact's Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email [sparks@rowan.edu](mailto:sparks@rowan.edu) with questions and to notify us that you are providing payment and entering the competition.

## **Facts about Cystic Fibrosis and Rowan's History of Support for CF**

Cystic fibrosis, a rare genetic disorder, affects children in the United States. Most diagnoses occur before the age of two. National awareness helps to fund medical research for this incurable disease and empower those affected by it. Rowan's AJF-PRSSA chapter held its first event to support awareness of CF in 2013 after the passing of a Rowan student from the disease in 2012.

Each year, our chapter holds an activity or event to help raise money and awareness in the local community. Colette's parents formed the Colette W. Bleistine Paying It Forward Foundation, which has donated over \$50,000 in the past years to scholarships, students-in-need and cystic fibrosis research.

Founded in 1955, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation leads the world in awareness of the disease, research for the cure and financial support to make CF drugs widely available. The Foundation raises hundreds of millions of dollars for research and works to increase life expectancy in sufferers by decades.

### **Cystic Fibrosis Facts:**

- More than 30,000 people in the U.S. currently live with the disease.
- Doctors diagnose about 1,000 new cases each year.
- Most people, about 75 percent, receive their diagnosis by age two.
- The complicated disease can produce a variety of symptoms, and no two cases are the same.
- In the year of the Foundation's creation, a CF patient could expect to live a median of ten years.
- In 1955, no treatment for CF existed.
- In 2018, a CF patient could expect to live an average of 37 years, with death most often occurring from lung complications.
- With increased research and awareness, gene therapy appears to be a promising treatment and possible cure for the future.
- New drugs and antibiotics help patients manage their symptoms and increase life expectancy.
- In 2010, the Foundation raised \$175 million - a goal thought to be impossible for a healthcare nonprofit.
- Although donations and research funds remain in the millions, public awareness of the disease and its sufferers remains quite low.

*Additional information regarding cystic fibrosis can be found at <https://www.cff.org/>.*



## **Cystic Fibrosis Event and Fundraising Ideas**

We want your chapter to be as involved as possible in creating a special cystic fibrosis event or activity while raising money for CF research. We understand that it may not be possible to hold an actual event in light of COVID-19, but feel free to adapt any idea below and make it a virtual one or create a social media awareness or cause marketing campaign. The following are a few ideas your chapter can run with, or that might spark another idea all your own. These fundraisers can be held online, in your campus gym facilities or outside on your campus, with entry or sponsorship fees that will benefit CF. These suggestions are not your only options. We encourage you to be creative and design a unique event. Some ideas:

- “Band Together Against CF” with a Battle of the Bands Rock-a-Thon
- Dance-a-Thon
- Triath-a-Thon
- Jog-A-Thon
- Walk-a-Thon
- Wheel-a-Thon (take part by bikes, roller skates, skateboards, scooters, anything on wheels)
- Volleyball or basketball tournament
- Karaoke, amateur talent show, or fashion show
- A Jeopardy-like game or trivia night
- Dine-out for Cystic Fibrosis
- Social media campaign
- Cause marketing campaign
- Text message campaign
- Zoom competition or talent show

At the same time, you may want to contact local businesses to donate gift baskets and prize packs to be raffled off, including, for example:

- Food prizes/gift certificates from restaurants
- Gift certificates and merchandise from retail stores
- Haircuts or makeovers from local barbershops and beauty salons
- Free fitness sessions at the local gym
- Free car wash

Again, we want you to be creative and do what works for your chapter and community and ensures the health and safety of all students. Develop the best fundraiser for your campus and chapter and raise as much awareness and money as you can to support cystic fibrosis.

## Example of Campus Media Coverage of Cystic Fibrosis Event at Rowan University

*The Whit* – Rowan University Student Newspaper

*“Dance Away Cystic Fibrosis” teaches people about dancing and disease*

**By**

**Jesse Mounce**

December 6, 2017



Left, right, back, right.

Students tried to mimic the dance instructor among tables covered in purple tablecloths and violet balloons anchored down by mason jars filled with lavender flowers.

Hosted in the Eynon Ballroom of the Chamberlain Student Center on Thursday night, Dance Away Cystic Fibrosis toted a purple color scheme. Purple occupies a special meaning for the event’s host, Rowan’s Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). Purple represents Cystic Fibrosis.

According to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the disease is “a progressive, genetic disease that causes persistent lung infections and limits the ability to breathe over time.” More than 70,000 people suffer from this disease worldwide.

This year’s Dance Away Cystic Fibrosis was the fourth annual event held in the honor of Colette Bleistine. Bleistine was a student at Rowan, where she was the vice president of Special Events for PRSSA. She died in 2012 after being placed on a double lung transplant waiting list in March of that year.

“We hold this in honor of her every year to raise money and to remember that she was someone who was here. She was a student. She was a part of our organization and she dedicated a lot of time to our work,” said Colleen Scott, senior public relations major and president of PRSSA.



From tables selling hot chocolate or raffle tickets to a Dine and Donate night at Chickie and Pete's, PRSSA held four fundraisers over the last month leading up to Dance Away Cystic Fibrosis.

Melissa Livingstone, the Dance Away Cystic Fibrosis Chair for PRSSA, said she started planning the event over the summer. Once she knew more about Colette's story, Livingstone spent the next three months developing the event and fundraisers that would help the club reach their goals. In addition to continuing to honor the legacy of Bleistine, PRSSA set a goal to donate \$500 to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Bleistine's parents attended the event, as they have for the last three years. After they received flowers and a card, Colette's mother, Nancee Bleistine spoke to the attendees about her daughter. She informed students about the Colette W. Bleistine Paying it Forward Foundation, which donates money to victims of catastrophic events and scholarships to students who have a passion for community service, just as their daughter did.

“She was very inspirational. People today still tell me about how when they are going through something they think about Colette and all that she endured, because she never complained,” Nancee Bleistine said. “In the midst of it, she still cared about people.”

After Nancee Bleistine's speech, the dance instructor, Kelsey Martino of Kelstar Kardio, brought students back onto the dance floor to perform a zumba style exercise.

The gathering attracted 40 people, creating a personal and meaningful environment.

“This is my first time at this event, but I love the energy here. I can tell the people who organized it were very passionate about the cause,” said Mavish Khan, senior journalism major. “I love seeing students come together in honor of a Rowan student.”

As the night came to an end, the club called raffle tickets and five lucky winners were awarded with prizes. The students and club members finally found out if they broke their donation goal.

PRSSA shared Colette Bleistine’s story and personality during their fundraisers. As of Thursday night, they raised \$534 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation—not accounting for the Chickie and Pete’s Dine and Donate.

“Two of her favorite quotes were ‘Life is too short to be anything but happy,’” Nancee Bleistine said. “And the other quote, which I think really suited her so well was, ‘Your problems are never bigger than your purpose.’”

*For comments/questions about this story, email [features@thewhitonline.com](mailto:features@thewhitonline.com) or tweet [@TheWhitOnline](https://twitter.com/TheWhitOnline).*

