

Walking the beat

On top of my duties for University News, I am also completing my master's degree in public policy here at RIT. In the latter capacity I was asked to give a presentation based on my thesis research at the 2009 annual conference of the International Association of Science, Technology and Society. The event was the scientific society's 24th annual conference and featured presentations from numerous researchers from around the world as well as a number of individuals from RIT.

While the invitation did give me a chance to publicize my own work, it also allowed me to hear the presentations of numerous researchers at RIT who are conducting projects in the fields of environmental science, sustainability and energy policy. In fact, I found myself taking notes during the talks and going up to professors and students afterward to learn more about their work. I next hope to assist several of the researchers in getting press for their efforts both in local and national outlets.

The experience further stressed to me that the most important component of good public relations is information. If you do not know about a topic how can you hope to publicize it? Therefore, as public relations representatives it is imperative that we attend conferences, visit with professors, talk to students or, in the words of my colleague Mike Saffran, "walk the beat" by engaging the people we cover on a daily basis. This is an easy and effective way to gather the information necessary to generate good publicity for our colleges and for RIT as a whole.