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Martin Waymire Wins “Best in Show” in Annual PR Awards Competition

Michigan Truth Squad Captures Top Award

LANSING, Mich. — Lansing-based Martin Waymire Advocacy Communications today won “Best in Show” in the annual PACE awards competition for the Central Michigan Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (CMPRSA).

The PACE (Planning, Action, Communications Evaluation) Awards luncheon was held today at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Lansing. Awards were handed out to a variety of mid-Michigan PR firms, practitioners and other organizations.

Martin Waymire won the competition’s top award for campaign excellence (for the third time in the past six years) for planning, creating and managing The Michigan Truth Squad in 2010 on behalf of The Center for Michigan, an Ann Arbor-based “think and do” tank founded by Phil Power in 2006. The Michigan Truth Squad is a web-based public service (www.mitruthsquad.com) that features political journalists examining the truth and accuracy of campaign ads and other public communications from political candidates, parties and officeholders. The journalists, called “Truth Squad referees,” examine the political communications and “call fouls” on those that are misleading, false and inaccurate. The Truth Squad was launched in July 2010 to provide a public service to Michigan voters and the news media. The Truth Squad blended social, earned and paid media strategies and tactics to exceed all performance metrics, achieving:

- 193,652 page views (exceeding the contract performance metric of 50,000 page views by nearly 400%)
- 237 media stories — mentions in newspaper editorials, features and other news stories, blogs, and columns (exceeding the contract metric of 35 media stories by nearly 700%)
- 227 “tips” from Truth Squad tipsters (exceeding the contract metric of 100 tips by more than 120%).

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“To the best of our knowledge, the Truth Squad marked the first time a public relations firm in Michigan, and possibly anywhere, has worked as direct and active partners with the news media to deliver this type of public service,” said Center for Michigan Executive Director John Bebow. “The Michigan Truth Squad boosted the profile and reputation of The Center for Michigan. It struck a precedent-setting partnership between public relations and the news media, it exceeded all performance metrics and, most important, it performed the significant public service of helping Michigan voters become more informed and engaged in the 2010 statewide elections. As a former investigative reporter at The Detroit News, Detroit Free Press and Chicago Tribune, I can tell you I’ve never seen a public relations firm and the news media team up to perform such a significant and effective public service.”

Martin Waymire also won the top two awards in the competition’s Public Affairs category — a Pinnacle for the Michigan Truth Squad, and an Award of Excellence on behalf of the Michigan Lodging and Tourism Association for an advocacy campaign that helped win a funding increase from the legislature and governor for the Pure Michigan ad campaign.

“Our Martin Waymire staff is, in our opinion, the strongest collection of PR, social media, media relations and public affairs talent in the state,” said Martin Waymire partner Roger Martin, APR. “Nobody works harder and has more fun creating and executing winning public relations campaigns for a terrific list of blue chip clients.”

The Truth Squad continues to provide its public service under the guidance of The Center for Michigan and Martin Waymire.

Held annually, the CMPRSA PACE Awards are mid-Michigan’s highest honor of public relations activities and are awarded to practitioners who, in the judgment of their peers, successfully address a contemporary issue with exemplary professional skill, creativity and resourcefulness. More than 300 organizations have been recognized by the CMPRSA for excellence in public relations over the past two decades from nonprofit organizations, corporations and public and private agencies in Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Gratiot, Ingham, Jackson, Livingston and Shiawassee counties. Submissions are judged based on quality of research, planning, execution and evaluation.

This year’s PACE Awards was made possible through the support of area sponsors including Martin Waymire Advocacy Communications, Pace & Partners, Edge Partnerships, Marketing Resource Group, Truscott Rossman, and others.

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