



MEMBER REBECCA HART, APR SPOTLIGHT: *Public Relations Consultant*

This is the first in a series of Spotlights written by communications students from the University of North Florida. Many thanks to Bobbi Doggett, our student liaison, for helping make this happen.

By **Angela Kilpatrick**

Rebecca Hart, APR, is an accomplished public relations practitioner and businesswoman. In March 1999 she distinguished herself as an Independent Public Relations Consultant. As a consultant, her main goals are to help businesses establish credibility, increase awareness and build a competitive advantage.

"I feel like I have a mission to educate companies about the benefits of public relations — that it's a long-term investment, and that strategic planning is a key success factor," Rebecca said.

Rebecca graduated from the University of Florida with a B.S. in Telecommunication. She started in Gainesville at a radio and television station with a variety of responsibilities. She then became Communications Coordinator for the ATP Tour. From there she moved north to Chicago, where she was the project manager of IBM Sports. Her next step was to manage multi-million dollar accounts for the integrated communications department as an account executive

for DDB Needham in Chicago. Upon her return to Jacksonville, she accepted a position as an account group supervisor of public relations at the Robin Shepherd Group.

Throughout her 11 years in the public relations industry, Rebecca has received many prestigious honors such as the Dick Pope All-Florida Image Award for Best Public Relations in Florida. Her most recent award, for the second time, was the Grand All-Jacksonville Golden Image Award for Best Public Relations Program in Jacksonville. She has received a total of seven local Golden Image Awards and four regional Silver Quill Awards.

Among all these accomplishments and responsibilities, Rebecca is still adding to her list of duties. She is the universal accreditation chairperson and a national assembly delegate for PRSA. She is involved in the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), is a public relations and marketing board member of the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. and is a founding member of

the Public Relations Counselors Group. But first and foremost is her family, and especially her son, who keeps her priorities in order and gives balance to her busy life.

When asked where she sees herself in five years, Rebecca replied, "My natural inclination is to grow, grow, grow. I could have said yes to all the business I have been approached about, hired 10 people and have quite a viable agency now, but I have to remind myself that's not the season of life I'm in. It's all about the owning up to your choices. I count my blessings everyday, because I'm able to choose the work that's fulfilling to me."

Angela Kilpatrick, a senior at the University of North Florida, is an active member of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) and will graduate UNF in August 2000 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications.