GRETCHEN HIRT GENDRON, APR, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Gretchen Hirt Gendron, APR is an award-winning communications professional and mentor in the public relations field. Her professional designation demonstrates personal drive, professional acumen, a commitment to ethics and dedication to lifelong learning in the ever-evolving communications world.

Gretchen successfully earned her Accreditation in Public Relations (APR) from the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB), a consortium of nine professional communication organizations that direct this competency certification program. A graduate of Loyola University of New Orleans, Gretchen received her Bachelor of Arts in theater and mass communications with a concentration in public relations.

As the Director of Public Relations at Gambel Communications, Gretchen develops and executes strategies for clients representing a myriad of industries. She has handled media relations, community relations, social media, special events, crisis and issue management for a variety of accounts representing the nonprofit sector, hospitality and tourism, education, healthcare, arts and entertainment, retail, B2B and more. Gretchen has yielded millions in media impressions nationwide in publications including *The New York Times, Washington Examiner, CNN, Politico* and *Southern Living Magazine.*

Gretchen has always been invested in the community. She is a frequent speaker at local universities and professional organizations discussing topics including PR and social media; and is regularly seen on WVUE-TV (Fox8) sharing app trends and tips with viewers. Gretchen currently serves as past-president of the Public Relations Association of Louisiana (PRAL) – New Orleans Chapter and president-elect for the PRAL – State Chapter board. She has served on the Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF) board. She is on the Community Advisory Board for Loyola University of New Orleans' Quality Enhancement Plan; as well as an active member of the New Orleans Chamber and the Jefferson Chamber, serving on the Jefferson Chamber Foundation Board. Gretchen graduated from the 2013 Bryan Bell Metropolitan Leadership Forum, the 2014 Junior League of New Orleans' Get on Board Training Program, the 2015 Leadership Jefferson program and the 2016-2017 New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute (NORLI).

Gretchen was named a 2018 SPRF Senior Practitioner, a 2018 Spark recipient and the 2015 Rising Professional from PRAL; she was also the recipient of the 2015 Award of Excellence from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) – New Orleans Chapter. For her work in public relations, Gretchen has received a Silver Anvil Award from PRSA; as well as Award of Excellences, Lantern Awards, a Best in Show and Judges Choice from SPRF. She is also a recipient of the Best in Show from the New Orleans Addy Awards, a Telly Award, Flambeaux Awards from PRAL New Orleans, 1st Place Awards from the Press Club of New Orleans and a Platinum Award from the AVA Digital Awards. Gretchen has worked on projects with the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GiveNOLA Day), Entergy (NOLA Bike to Work Day), Companies With A Mission (Super Service Challenge), the Catholic Foundation (#iGiveCatholic), Louisiana Department of Education, the American Nurse Project, FilmWorks New Orleans, City Park (City Putt Opening), New Orleans Women and Children's Center, Ocean Conservancy, Canal Place, Jefferson Parish Schools, Restore the Mississippi River Delta and Preservation Resource Center, among many others.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Gretchen lives in the Marigny with her husband Tim and her cat Mō. Gretchen is passionate about serving the community and the world. Whether she is handling communication efforts for a nonprofit organization, serving at her local church, or volunteering around the globe, she loves giving back.