

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Hennes 216-321-7774 or 216-978-2047 (mobile)
Barbara Paynter 216-227-0867 or 216-965-6543 (mobile)

**Hennes Paynter Communications and Stevens Baron Communications
Win “Best of Show” at the 2009 Public Relations Society of America
Cleveland Rocks Awards Luncheon**

Cleveland OH – [Hennes Paynter Communications](http://www.hennespaynter.com) and Stevens Baron Communications won the coveted “Best of Show” award at the [Greater Cleveland Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America \(PRSA\)](http://www.prsa.org) annual Cleveland Rocks Awards luncheon Friday, Dec. 4. The award recognizes an outstanding crisis communications program done for [King Nut Companies](http://www.kingnut.com). The two agencies together also won the Gold PRSA Award for Crisis Communications in Business Products & Services.

Both awards recognize their work assisting King Nut Companies with a peanut butter recall that attracted significant national media attention. King Nut distributed peanut butter manufactured by Peanut Corporation of America, and was the first company publicly-linked to a salmonella outbreak. King Nut immediately issued a recall and adopted a proactive communication strategy that, in the long run, protected the company’s reputation with customers.

“We are delighted to receive top honors,” said Barbara Paynter, partner with Hennes Paynter Communications. “We were actually surprised because this is the first time in the seven-year history of the Rocks Awards that a crisis communications project was recognized as ‘Best in Show.’ The fact that the judges recognized us is truly a testament to our firm’s passion for strategy and execution, demonstrating the effectiveness of a proactive approach during times of crisis.” Judging for the 2009 competition was done by the PRSA Nashville chapter to ensure unbiased results. To read the award application summation, please click here: <http://bit.ly/4SzEzS>

“Best of Show” is an especially important accomplishment for Hennes Paynter Communications as the criteria for the award set the highest standards for public relations professionalism, specifically acknowledging exceptional public relations programs incorporating reliable research, thorough planning, execution and evaluation. PRSA’s Greater Cleveland Chapter received 75 entries for the Rocks Awards – but only one entry was named “Best of Show.”

About Hennes Paynter Communications LLC

Hennes Paynter Communications, based in Cleveland, is one of the few firms in the U.S. focused exclusively on crisis communications and media training. Serving corporations, government agencies, nonprofits and individuals who are “on trial” in the Court of Public Opinion, Hennes Paynter Communications also offers litigation communication support, crisis communication plans and drills, and presentation training to clients. Recent clients include Avery Dennison, KeyBank, MetroHealth System, Akron General Health System, Cuyahoga Community College, Summit County Port Authority, The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Jewish Community Federation, John Carroll University, NASA, Westfield Insurance and many of the leading law firms in Northeast Ohio. **More information is available at www.crisiscommunications.com.**