

## **Profile on Laura Kirkpatrick**

2009 was a banner year for the latest member to join the NAGC Board of Directors. While performing her duties as Public Information Officer for The County of Monmouth in New Jersey, Laura Kirkpatrick completed her Masters Degree in Corporate and Public Communication from Monmouth University in West Long Branch, NJ. Not only did she complete her degree, she accomplished it with a 4.0 grade point average and received the Award for Excellence in Graduate Scholarship. She was elected to the NAGC Board of Directors to serve as the Membership and Volunteer Director and was the winner of the Just One! Membership Campaign for 2009. Laura's election to the Board of Directors was her latest professional milestone and recognition of her contributions to NAGC.

When Laura joined NAGC in 2006 she immediately became one of the first members of the Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards Committee, where she contributed greatly to the continuous improvement of the Awards. She has judged the magazine, external and internal newsletter and science writing categories and been a member of the Blue Pencil and Gold Screen panel at the last two Communications Schools. Her election to the board was met with the same degree of enthusiasm; she attended the board meetings in Orlando and offered her invaluable input to the board's deliberations and discussions.

Laura has been a member of the county's Public Information Office since 2007. Previously she was the PIO for the county local park district for 20 years where most of her work involved promoting and educating residents about public recreation and parks. Most recently she was part of the team that worked on the first county-wide strategic plan in the State of New Jersey. In fact, her master's thesis looked at the public input process related to the development of that strategic plan. It is hoped that her county has paved the way for other counties to begin developing strategic plans as well. The recent H1N1 outbreak has kept Laura busy updating the public and reassuring them that the county is being proactive on the issue.

Laura's accomplished all of this while raising two children; a son who is a college junior at Embry-Riddle University and a daughter who is a high school junior already looking at colleges. She just celebrated her 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and credits her husband's on-going support and encouragement in making all this possible. Next time you see Laura, ask her how she did it or ask her what her next goal is? I'll bet she has one she is working on right now!