



**2008 APOLLO AWARD FOR COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP
NOMINATION FORM
PRSA - NASHVILLE CHAPTER**

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name Larry Hollon Title General Secretary (Chief Exec.)
Company/Organization United Methodist Communications
Address 810 12th Ave. S. City Nashville State TN Zip 37203
Phone 615-742-5400 Fax _____ E-mail lhollon@vmcom.org

REASONS FOR NOMINATION (Please use a maximum of 2 additional pages as needed.)

1. Describe how the nominee has exhibited an understanding of the importance of public relations and communications.

Attached

2. How has the nominee supported the public relations function in his or her organization?

Attached

3. How has the nominee supported his or her community through sound public relations practices?

Attached

4. List specific examples of actions this nominee has taken to demonstrate leadership in communications, either internal or external to his or her organization.

Attached

5. List nominee's specific achievements, awards or honors relevant to this award.

Attached

NOMINATED BY (Please indicate how you know the nominee.)

Name Diane Denton Company/Organization United Methodist Comm.
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SEND ENTRIES TO:

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DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: OCT. 1, 2008



1. Describe how the nominee has exhibited an understanding of the importance of public relations and communications.

The Rev. Larry Hollon is leading The United Methodist Church into a new era of life-changing communications with the world. As the chief executive of Nashville-based United Methodist Communications, Rev. Hollon is responsible for creating messages for more than \$40 million in cable, broadcast and other media advertising that have helped to give Methodists the highest positive rating among U.S. denominational and spiritual groups (Gallup Poll, March 27, 2008). Branded under, "Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors. The people of The United Methodist Church," the denomination's commercial messaging offers a voice of hope and reassurance, and has become one of the nation's most visible voices in times of distress. Rev. Hollon's first-hand experience documenting African children dying of malaria was the impetus leading to the denomination becoming a founding partner with *Sports Illustrated*, NBA Cares, and the United Nations Foundation in *Nothing But Nets*, an initiative that has raised more than \$200 million to purchase lifesaving, malaria-preventing bed nets. His advocacy for social justice, and a reasoned, rationale news media, is voiced in the hundreds of postings on his blog, "Perspectives."

2. How has the nominee supported the public relations function in his or her organization?

Since becoming General Secretary of United Methodist Communications in 2000, Rev. Hollon has revamped and restructured the 100-person communications agency, using it to position the church to become an influential voice through paid and earned media strategies, and to train United Methodist agencies and congregations around the world to effectively share their stories. He established a new denominational public information office that enables The United Methodist Church's voice to be part of the public media discourse in international, national, and local news media markets. The denomination's Web site, www.UMC.org, and United Methodist News Service, a groundbreaking, award-winning, multi-media convergence of video, print, Web, and audio, shares stories of United Methodists making a difference around the world. For the past five years, he has led a special initiative to train communications professionals and volunteers in Europe, Africa, and the Philippines.

3. How has the nominee supported his or her community through sound public relations practices?

Rev. Hollon continually holds himself and his agency to the highest standards of ethics and accountability. Through his leadership, United Methodist Communications has invested heavily in training, not only for its Nashville staff, but also for communications professionals and volunteers around the globe as the church has entered the digital age of communications and public relations. He is active in Edgehill United Methodist Church and its ministry to Nashville's poor, as well as the National Council of Churches of Christ communications' enterprises and the World Association of Christian Communicators.

For Hollon, however, "community" expands to the larger global community. Before moving to Nashville, Hollon was an award-winning producer whose primary focus was on telling the stories of persons affected by poverty and living under conditions that place them outside the so-called mainstream culture. His work has taken him to more than 30 countries to collaborate on projects ranging from the stories of street children in Brazil to economic self-development in rural villages in Africa, and Hollon has become an activist for bringing conditions of better health for people all over the world.

Rev. Hollon's vision on global health issues played a pivotal role in developing a new global health initiative for The United Methodist Church aimed at combating diseases of poverty such as

malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis. Communication is the foundation for the major building blocks of the Global Health Initiative: raising awareness, health education, policy advocacy, fundraising and partnership building. Under Hollon's direction, United Methodist Communications' will develop communication strategies to raise awareness about global health-related issues in order to encourage people to get involved and take action. Hollon sees communication and technology as key solutions to improve health and living conditions by providing health education to promote health-directed behavior among individuals and communities in the U.S. and around the world—but in many places, the infrastructure doesn't exist. His dream is to build a global denominational communications network to distribute life-saving information through computer technology, radio, and cell phones.

4. List specific examples of actions this nominee has taken to demonstrate leadership in communications, either internal or external to his or her organization.

- Rev. Hollon's quick response during the 9/11 tragedy resulted in a large billboard being placed on the side of a building near the site of the World Trade Center. "Fear is not the only force at work in the world today," was printed with an image of praying hands. It earned worldwide news coverage.
- The United Methodist Church's messages of hope, compassion were the first commercials broadcast after 9/11 on cable and broadcast networks.
- In 2003, Rev. Hollon successfully challenged Reuters' initial banning of United Methodist commercials on its Times Square billboards in New York. An estimated two million persons walked past the billboards every day in the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas, where the church displayed messages related to holiday giving. His advocacy led Reuters to change its policies barring faith groups from advertising on its billboards.
- Rev. Hollon organized the church's response to the 2004 East Asia Tsunami by putting together the denomination's first Web-based disaster relief drive. He and a skeleton staff organized the effort during the Christmas break at United Methodist Communications. It brought in more than \$60 million.
- After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, he oversaw United Methodist Communications' coverage of the humanitarian disaster and its affect on churches and congregations. More than \$120 million was raised in a disaster relief effort under girded by United Methodist Communications.
- Through his personal efforts, in 2007, a church-owned and operated community radio station was established in Liberia, West Africa, where radio stations were destroyed in a long civil war. Community radio is vital in Africa, especially in areas where the population has no other means of getting information.

5. List nominees' specific achievements, awards or honors relevant to this award.

As director of communications for Church World Service of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., Hollon won numerous awards for video and film production including a national EMMY nomination for the "Share the Joy" radio and television campaign. His production "The Jewel Reclaimed" about reconstruction in Cambodia after the fall of the Pol Pot regime received the CINE Golden Eagle award and was distributed internationally. His video, "Hope is the Last Thing to Die," telling the stories of street children in Brazil, was used extensively to support human rights reform in Brazil on behalf of abandoned, homeless children and raised over \$250,000 for children's programs in its first year of screenings. As a producer of multicultural programming he has been selected to screen productions at the annual meeting of the Public Broadcasting Service.