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Profile of Thomas K. DeLapp President, Communication Resources for Schools

A veteran of the communications industry with over 35 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, Tom DeLapp draws on a wealth of expertise and a national reputation as one of the premier school public relations professionals in the country. Mr. DeLapp is a highly sought after keynote speaker and workshop presenter on communications and education trends. He delivers an average of 50 training programs per year for individual school leaders, management teams, and district employees.



His consulting practice, Communication Resources for Schools, was founded in 1996. The firm specializes in providing communications counseling, communication planning, reputation management, public engagement, publications production, and crisis communications assistance for public school districts, county offices of education and educational organizations. Over the past decade, Mr. DeLapp has developed consulting relationships with and served as a communications counselor to over 400 school districts and educational organizations in California, eight other states across the country, and the province of British Columbia.

The principal objectives of his firm are to cultivate a communicating culture in schools, enhance the communications capacity of school leaders, build stronger community ties to education, and develop sustainable public relations/ communication programs for school districts.

Summary of services performed by the firm since 1996:

- Communication audits/needs assessments conducted in 30 school districts. Retainer services as the contract public information officer for 20 school districts. Communications, public awareness and marketing plans developed in over 40 school districts. Writing and designing community newsletters, annual reports, staff bulletins, e-newsletters, brochures, and video projects for over 100 districts.
- Crisis communications counseling and assistance in labor negotiations, personnel actions, campus crime situations, natural disasters, district unification or attendance boundary disputes, campus health and environmental concerns, explaining budget reductions, and winning facilities bond/parcel tax elections. Mr. DeLapp served as a communications advisor for the Jefferson County Public Schools during the Columbine High School tragedy. He has been on the front line in six teacher strikes and has assisted dozens of school districts in dealing with other high profile public education controversies.
- Over 500 training workshops and presentations to district leadership teams and staff on media relations, community relations, public engagement, communications planning, confrontation & crisis management, marketing, customer service, accountability, and educational performance/student achievement. Since 1989, over 50,000 educators have attended Mr. DeLapp's speeches, seminars and training programs.

Prior to founding Communication Resources in 1996, he spent eight years as Assistant Executive Director for Membership/Communications with the Association of California School Administrators, the statewide professional organization representing over 15,000 superintendents, principals, administrators, confidential employees, and classified managers in California's public schools. In that capacity, he was responsible for ACSA's strategic communications, marketing, membership development, publishing, media relations, crisis communications

assistance, awards programs, television and radio public service announcements, video and audio projects, speech writing, and the award-winning public image campaign, "Educating California." He was responsible for a monthly magazine, weekly newspaper, and marketing materials for over 150 ACSA products, services, and programs. Under his direction, the association developed a very sophisticated, state-of-the-art desktop publishing system that put ACSA within the top 10% of the country's newspapers in pre-press technology. During his tenure with ACSA, Tom traveled over 500,000 miles within California meeting with school district leaders, local association chapters, and educational organizations.

Prior to joining ACSA in 1988, Mr. DeLapp and his partner managed for ten years their own public affairs communication and publishing firm in Sacramento serving clients in the public and private sectors, including state agencies, trade and professional associations, lobbyists, businesses and the California Legislature. His company had the dubious distinction of publishing 70% of California legislators' constituent newsletters. He is a former director of the University of California Student Lobby, General Manager of California Research (a capitol-based consulting firm), and Editor of the Public Employment Relations Reporter, State Mandate Reporter, California Finance Report, Prop. 13 Impact Reporter, and Campaign Law Reporter newsletters.

Mr. DeLapp is a product of the public schools in Los Angeles, graduating from Westchester High School in 1969. He received his undergraduate degree in 1973 in American History from the University of California, Irvine, where he served as student body president and chairman of the statewide UC students organization. In that role, he got to discuss the needs of public education with Governors Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown at meetings of the UC Board of Regents. Mr. DeLapp received the Outstanding Senior Award from UC Irvine in 1973.

He was a founding member and served four years on the steering committee of the Principals Public Relations Network of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. From 1998 to 2001, Mr. DeLapp served as a member of the executive board of the National School Public Relations Association as Vice President of the Southwest Region. He is a past-president of the California School Public Relations Association and has served as a member of NSPRA's Emerging Issues Committee and Communications Accountability Project steering committee. Tom helped found and develop the curriculum for the NSPRA New Professionals Program that provides orientation and training for beginning professionals in the field of school public relations. He has authored articles on reputation management, strategic communication and labor negotiations for NSPRA publications. He is a frequent presenter at NSPRA's annual seminar and at state chapter conferences around the country. In 2004, he was recognized as Outstanding Communicator of the Year by CalSPRA. In 2006, he was awarded NSPRA's Barry Gaskins Legacy Mentor Award recognizing his many contributions to and support for the school public relations profession.

Tom has been a life-long active volunteer in his community. As a youth, he earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. While still in high school, he was named by the Los Angeles Area Council to be the primary coordinator (senior patrol leader) of the county-wide Cedar Badge Youth Leadership Training Program for local BSA scout troops. During his four years leading that program he oversaw leadership training for nearly 800 of his fellow Scouts. In 1995, Tom was awarded the Silver Bear Award of Merit recognizing his many years of volunteer/leadership service as an adult Scout leader in the Rio Del Oro/Golden Empire Council. Tom also served as the first youth member of the Board of Directors of the Westchester YMCA (Los Angeles). He has been a member of the University of California, Irvine Alumni Association Board of Directors and was one of the founders of the annual University of California system-wide Alumni Legislative Action Day. Tom is currently helping to organize an educational foundation supporting his community's public school system, the Rocklin Unified School District.

Tom married his high school sweetheart Jan, who teaches early childhood education at American River College in Sacramento. Their daughter Kathryn is a graduate of the Hartt School of Performing Arts at the University of Hartford in Connecticut. She is pursuing a career in musical theatre in New York City. In 2006, their son Kevin was awarded his PhD from Duke University and is now a Professor of Philosophy at Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina.