

► PR Personality Profile

PR With Spirit... And Spirituality

When Gerry Harrington accepts an Award for Excellence at the **Religion Communicators Council's** DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards ceremony in Dallas this Thursday (March 30), it will be a confirmation of his distinctive approach to public relations. As founder and president of **New Spirituality Communications** in Kingston, NY, Harrington proved it is possible to successfully combine practices that many people view as contradictory as the sacred and the profane: spirituality and PR.

Having run his PR agency under the moniker of **Harrington Associates** for

16 years, he rebranded the company as New Spirituality Communications in 2004 as a reflection of the theological changes in his life. But he makes it clear he is not running a "Christian" PR firm, or one that focuses solely on a religious denomination or theological issues.

"Religion is a formal way of approaching and expressing one's connection to the divine," says Harrington, who was formerly an executive producer at CNN. "Spirituality is the feeling one has. It can exist within

religion, but religion is not necessary to be present to have a spiritual experience."

Harrington, whose award honors his creation of a 40-page keepsake program for the international conference "Seeds of Transformation: Toward a Spiritual Renaissance in a Time of Fundamental Change," experienced a personal spiritual transformation in 1998, but only gradually incorporated it into his business. "It was more in the margins of my professional work," he recalls. "I wanted to bring it out of the margins and into the center



Gerry Harrington

of my professional life."

At his agency, Harrington promotes companies and nonprofits that adhere to a spiritual mission, such as **Blue Dolphin Publishing** and **The Hoffman Institute**. Even clients that may not seem particularly spiritual to an outsider have resonance with him – case in point, the **Ulster Performing Arts Center**. Where is the spirituality?

Says Harrington: "Art is a spiritual expression." To which we say: Amen! **PRN**

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