



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 22, 2011

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GW Assistant VP Michael Akin to lead Reingold's new community and governmental relations division

Washington, D.C.—Communications and marketing firm Reingold has hired the George Washington University's Michael Akin to head its newly created community and governmental relations division. A major thrust of Akin's work at Reingold will be working with universities, institutions and businesses and their surrounding communities to build stronger relationships between these sometimes opposing entities. Akin also will focus on helping businesses interested in locating or expanding in Washington, D.C., to navigate government and earn community buy-in for proposed projects.

Akin will leave his post as GW's assistant vice president for government, international and community relations to join Reingold in May. Named GW's first director of community relations in 2004, Akin has achieved outstanding success in fostering positive relations between the university and its neighbors, city officials, community leaders and stakeholders.

Reingold collaborated with GW in 2004 to position the university as a community asset and neighborhood partner. Because of exponential growth, at the time GW faced classic "town-gown" frictions and was even dubbed "the university that ate Foggy Bottom" by *The Washington Post*. Five years later, as a result of the community outreach and strategic communications push spearheaded by Akin, the university was named one of the nation's Top 25 "neighbors" in Savivors of Our Cities' 2009 Survey of College & University Civic Partnerships.

Reingold will join only a handful of firms across the country working to help universities and other institutions build mutually beneficial partnerships with the communities they inhabit through strategic communications, branding and website development—as well as policies for responding to community needs and concerns.

Akin says Reingold's approach will be unique. "A lot of firms are hired to advertise the good things their clients do, but strong community and government relationships demand more than touting good works," Akin says. "Instead of simply telling everyone that a university or business is a good neighbor, Reingold can help it *be* a good neighbor."

Akin's experience gives Reingold an amazing opportunity to expand its professional offerings and provide more comprehensive services to clients, said Reingold Principal

Kevin Miller.

“Michael has successfully established an expertise in community and government relations and will offer insightful leadership as we continue to grow this side of our communications practice. We look forward to the opportunities this will bring to Reingold and to the growth and development of the Washington, D.C., metro area,” Miller said.

At GW, Akin also led the Community Core Group, a multidisciplinary planning group of senior GW officials tasked with ensuring coordinated, comprehensive community outreach efforts. His community activities, which will continue at Reingold, include serving on the Advisory Board of the Greater Washington Urban League, as member of the Cultural Tourism DC Board of Directors and as president of the board of directors of St. Mary’s Court, a nonprofit corporation that operates a residential living facility in Foggy Bottom for senior citizens or individuals with accessibility needs.

Reingold is a woman-owned, one-stop communications and marketing firm with more than 25 years of experience crafting campaigns for causes that matter. The firm unites strategic planning with compelling messages and award-winning design to advance new ideas, engage audiences, and shape public opinion.