



**Roger Frizzell, '83**  
**Chief Communications Officer,**  
**Carnival Corporation**

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Roger Frizzell's career path has taken him to roles with well-known companies AT&T, HP, American Airlines and more before leading him to Carnival Corporation. Since 2013, Frizzell has worked as the chief communications officer for Carnival, handling public relations duties for the corporation and its nine cruise brands around the world. Frizzell, a 1983 University of Oklahoma graduate and four-time All-American wrestler, recently shared how his time on campus prepared him for his career, moments that have stood out to him so far and more.

**What is your favorite memory from your time at the J-school?**

I absolutely loved everything about my time at OU and journalism school. It was a special time to be competing in wrestling for the university and pursuing my degree, while also taking on PR, radio and newspaper internships. For me, it was even more

Over the years, I have been able to work with U.S. presidents such as Ronald Reagan and world leaders, such as the Queen of England, as well as countless celebrities like Oprah, top CEOs and business leaders, as well major media personalities on a regular basis, while also having the opportunity to regularly travel to countless countries throughout the world.

More importantly, I believe our work has made a difference and had a real impact, especially in crisis after crisis tied to airlines, the power industry and, more recently, the cruise industry.

On a personal level, my work to lead the PR campaign to secure the sport of wrestling back into the Olympic Games was one of the most meaningful because it allowed me to use my background and skills originally learned at OU to give back to a sport that has done so much for me and so many

enjoyable because my future wife-to-be was also in journalism, right beside me in several of my classes.

**Do you have a favorite faculty/staff member at the J-school?**

We were so fortunate to have such amazing professors at OU, but Professor (Mack) Palmer was the first to introduce me to the field of PR through his class. In the past, he had served as the top PR executive for American Airlines and told such intriguing stories that brought the PR field to life for me. Years later, I took over the very same role as the chief communications officer at American Airlines. Looking back, I have Professor Palmer and so many other professors at OU to thank!

**How did your career path lead you to Carnival Corporation?**

I started my career at AT&T and Lucent Technologies, followed by stints at Compaq, HP, PG&E and American Airlines before taking on a role to return the sport of wrestling to the Olympic Games.

When Carnival Corporation came calling about a newly created CCO position after it had experienced a few high-profile incidents, I felt it was a perfect fit and I jumped at the opportunity.

It was the best decision I ever made. The job is one of the top roles in PR, filled with amazing ships, exotic destinations, top celebrities and dignitaries from around the globe and, of course, more than its share of crisis to manage. I also have the privilege to work with one of the finest CEOs in the world.

**Describe your role at Carnival.**

In my role as the chief communications officer, I report directly to the CEO as part of the company's senior leadership team. An important part of my PR role is crisis management, along with the broader coordination responsibilities with our nine cruise brands around the world. My role includes PR, government affairs, the Carnival Foundation, our philanthropic arm, global marketing and advertising, as well as crisis management.

**What do you consider to be the most significant moments of your career so far?**

It seems in every job, there are those

others.

Looking back, it really has been a dream come true to be able to do something you love every day with people you admire and respect.

**How did Gaylord College prepare you for your future career?**

What I received at OU was the theoretical knowledge of the the field of public relations, but, more importantly, real-life experiences from my professors and internships (through OU) that allowed me to land a great job and hit the ground running after graduation. Today, Gaylord College in my view is one of the finest institutions in the country with outstanding faculty, tremendous facilities and support from the administration to take the program each year to new heights.

**What advice would you give to current students aspiring to a career in mass communication?**

Our students at OU have made a great decision to become part of OU and Gaylord College which already separates them from others. Today, even more than when I was at OU, Gaylord College is one of the very best institutions to study public relations and journalism, while also providing students with real-world experience through the student agency, internships and regular visits from leading professionals who are sharing their experiences with the students. Gaylord's dean, for instance, ran the top newspaper in Oklahoma for many years, and now he is passing this knowledge and experience on to the students and faculty.

**What do you do for fun outside of work?**

Even to this day, wrestling (and coaching) remains a passion for me. I also love the lake and being with family. We now have six wonderful grandchildren that are absolutely amazing. Dancing is another passion for me, from the country two-step to swing dancing and more.

To me, life has always been a complete blast and I've enjoyed every minute of it! When you love something -- whether it is what you do in your career or a sport like wrestling -- the work never seems like work. Instead, it is a passion that you love doing every day.

defining moments at a company when PR counsel and proactive action is most needed. I've certainly experienced my share of these in my career, as well at Carnival Corporation, especially with the global pandemic that shut down the entire cruise industry for well over a year.

I've been fortunate in my career to be at the right place at the right time to help drive global transformation tied to major technological changes on society in such industries as telecom, computers, transportation, gas/electric and hospitality.

**Are there any other organizations or projects you're involved with outside of your full-time job that you want to highlight?**

I am a member of Gaylord's Board of Visitors, as well as a board member of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. I also provide PR counsel to USA Wrestling. One of my favorite projects in recent years has been tied to various different PR classes at Gaylord, as well as the student agency that has taken on numerous campaigns for us over the years. These students bring a different skill set and a new way of thinking to our efforts that helps us to expand our boundaries.



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