

Communication Alumni Newsletter

Summer 2011

Annual Communication Alumni Reception to Be Held October 21, 2011

Come join in the fun, mingle with former professors and classmates, and perhaps do some networking. During Homecoming Weekend, the School of Communication will host a reception for alumni of its undergraduate and graduate programs on **Friday, October 21, 2011** in the Rotunda of the Harry Jack Gray Center at 5:30-7:30 pm.

This year we feature a Faculty Showcase between 5:30-6:15 where you'll get brief updates about exciting research projects and teaching innovations of School of Communication faculty.



Communication Alumni Reception 2010

Be sure to mark your calendars and reply when you receive an invitation from the Office of Alumni Relations.

Yet Another Winner

The School of Communication has had a remarkable number of faculty members win awards for excellence in teaching. We are thrilled to have had still another award recognizing the outstanding teaching that goes on here.

Dr. Mark Cistulli, Assistant Professor of Communication, has been selected as a 2011 winner of the University of Hartford Award for Innovations in Teaching and Learning. His work with students, especially in the advertising competition classes, has been remarkable. His focus is always on student success. We hope he will take a minute and feel the well-deserved glow of recognition.

Award Winning Students

This spring the following School of Communication awards and scholarships were given to the following students:

The Emile H. Gauvreau Scholarship was given to Lily Bodenlos, Gregory Prus, and Larisa Woykovsky.

The Ellen Abrams Memorial Scholarship went to Vanessa Leveille.

All of these students represent the best in success both in and outside of the classroom. These generous scholarships will help them to complete their studies.

Among our graduating students, awards were presented to
Darren Duncan - best advertising/PR student

Andrea MacDonald - best Human
Communication student



Jeremy Stanley - Massaro Award for Excellence in Newspaper Journalism
 Pamela Topolska - best Media student
 Darren Duncan, Andrea MacDonald, and Sarah Squires - all won for best undergraduate student in the study of communication.

On the graduate level, three M.A. students won awards.

Alicia Linder won for Best Teaching Intern
 Alana Ledford won for Best Part Time Graduate Student
 Evan L. Kropp and Alicia Linder both won for best overall graduate student.



This spring saw the induction of another class of Communication Honor Students. New undergraduate inductees into the Communication Honors Society include:

- Craig Gardner • Gabriela Negron • Natalie Yubas

New undergraduate inductees into Lambda Pi Eta, the national Communication Honor Society, include:

- Megan Bassick • Lily Bodenlos • Reyna Boucaud • Samantha Carlson • Lauren DeLisi • Sarah Hoyng • Danielle Huppke • Lauren McGrath • Paige Patunas • Charles Paullin • Jordan Quimby • Ileana Russo • Jessica Rutledge • Sarah Squires • Sarah Wilson • Larisa Woykovsky



Congratulations to all of these fabulous students.

Recent Graduates on the Move

We always love to hear from our alums. Each summer brings news of some recent graduates who have found good jobs or new positions in graduate schools. Yes, the economy is having a difficult time rebounding from a lengthy, difficult, and world-wide recession. So it is more exciting than ever to hear that our recent graduates are getting dream jobs. A couple of quick stories to share:

Liane Bacciotti wrote to Professor Randy Jacobs to report that she just got a job with a media firm in Manhattan. Not only that, she was surprised to discover how valuable the class she took with him was. Liane wrote "I never thought I would have to worry about cpp, cpm or hut ever again after [the] class ended, but it helped me tremendously in both my interview and my training. Again, I just wanted to thank you for helping me understand and enjoy this side of the business, I really appreciate it!"

Steph Dilorio ('11) landed a job at a top ad agency, Hill Holliday in Boston, following her presentation in Mark Cistulli's Ad Competition class this past spring. She works on the TJ Maxx, Marshalls, and HomeGoods accounts, and is expanding her portfolio all the time. She writes that her work there is "just like working on jpenney for the advertising competition class. I am on the 36th floor near the windows with a beautiful view of the bay, Fenway Park's famous CITGO sign, and the Prudential building. I am in charge of the billing, competitive reports, budget summaries, communication with the clients, and more within the media world. . . I am truly thankful to have had the opportunity to partake in the advertising competition. It certainly brought me to where I am today. I am very happy that I took advantage of what the University of Hartford has to offer, especially the School of Communication. Working at a big agency like this is very much like the advertising competition, except with A LOT more



Steph Dilorio in her new digs.

people than we had of course. Always researching, keeping up with the new stuff coming out, talking about competitors and how we can make impressions, etc. Dr. Cistulli was right!"

Paige Patunas ('11) is a Marketing Assistant at Pearson Publishing Higher Education in New York doing marketing for arts, religion, philosophy, anthropology and music.

Current School of Communication Junior **Andrea Wojcik** is an intern at Marquee, a weekly music magazine, in Boulder, Colorado this summer, working for **Brian Johnson ('91)** Publisher. He reports that "I have four interns this summer...my biggest group ever... and Andrea, is the cream of the crop and simply killing it for me. What are they putting in the water in Connecticut, and why do the kids from Colorado not understand sentence structure? Thank you, sir. Thank you. Any of your students are welcome here whenever they want."

Spencer Kimball ('00, M '02) is a political consultant and attorney in Boston. He is an adjunct faculty member at Emerson College and Northeastern University. His article "Listening to President Obama: A Short Examination of Obama's Communication Practices" appears in the June '11 issue of American Behavioral Scientist.

Erica Cohose ('04) is Executive Director of Sales at Paper Magazine in New York.

Noah Elgart ('08) is manager at H&K Cinema Corp. operator of 25 theaters in the New York region.

Donna Oakes ('09) is Account Coordinator at Creative Media Marketing in New York.

Lindsay Jaffe ('10) is a sales associate at Brides Magazine, a Conde Nast publication, in New York.

You may have seen this in the recent University of Hartford Observer. Desi was a guest this past year in Prof. Jassem's Community and Alternative Media class.



Women in the Making

Desi (Desirée) K. Robinson '07 (A&S) hosts the New York-based radio show *Women in the Making: Tomorrow's History Today*

(WIM). The program, which Robinson also created, highlights the views, questions, goals, and accomplishments of today's young women within existing environmental, emotional, and social contexts. As the latest example in the edutainment genre, the hour-long show features a young guest paired with an adult "shero" mentor, from community leaders to celebrities to politicians.

When she thinks of her own mentors, Robinson notes, "The University of Hartford is a very special place to me. In addition to the academics and understanding the evolving craft of journalism and communication, I learned much about the person I continue to strive to be."

WIM airs every second Wednesday on WBAI Radio, 99.5 FM, and streams live at www.wbai.org.

Deconstructing Media

This summer the School of Communication multimedia lab in Hillyer is coming apart. These photos show a bit of the progress as the lab is dismantled, rewired, and better-equipped and rebuilt in time for the fall semester. Look for the update in our next newsletter.



Faculty News

Professor Lynne Kelly has just returned from a very successful spring semester sabbatical during which time she worked on a number of interesting projects, including a project with **Dr. Aimee Miller** on the communication of relational aggression among college women and three projects focused on communication technology use in interpersonal relationships.

Professor Paul Siegel recently published the third editions of his textbooks, *Communication Law in America* and the companion *Cases in Communication Law*. The books are used primarily in undergraduate and graduate journalism programs nationwide, but also the occasional law school. For the first time electronic versions of the books are an option, which link directly to Siegel's web site— www.paulsiegelcommlaw.com – where readers will find over

50 video clips from movies and TV shows that led to law suits, as well as other supporting materials. Paul is just starting a sabbatical and will be working on a book on First Amendment issues in the gay rights movement.

Professor Roger Desmond taught a course "Investigative Reporting" in the fall of 2010. Students in the course completed a final project investigating puppy mills and animal abuse in the greater Hartford area using Freedom of Information laws as well as police and animal welfare agencies and documented that several retail pet stores were selling puppies imported from puppy mills in several states in violation of Connecticut laws and some retailers had unsanitary conditions for housing other types of animals.

A number of faculty have had recent publications and conference presentations including, but not limited to:

"The Benefits of Early Parental TV Mediation on Young Adults' Critical Media Skills." - (**Roger Desmond** and **Robert Duran**) - Presented to the 2011 International Communication Association conference.

"Mobile Phones in Romantic Relationships and the Dialectic of Autonomy vs. Connection." (**Robert Duran, Lynne Kelly, Teodora Rotaru**). Published in vol. 59 of the *Communication Quarterly*.

"Strategize - Implement - Measure - Repeat: Are we evaluating our way to PR accountability?" (**Susan Grantham** and Ed Vieira) - Presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

"Ex-spouses' relational satisfaction as a function of coparental communication in stepfamilies." (**Aimee Miller, Paul Schrod, & Dawn Braithwaite**) Published in vol. 3, *Communication Studies*.

"Jealousy experience and expression in friends with benefits relationships: Do reasons for involvement in the relationship matter?" (**Aimee Miller**) - Presented to the 2011 Eastern Communication Association conference.

Biron, J., & Miller, A. E. (2011, April). "Sexual communication between romantic partners influencing safe sex practices." (**Aimee Miller** and Joanna Biron) - Presented to the 2011 Eastern Communication Association conference.

"The Role of Reading for Children and Adolescents in a Digital Age," (book chapter by **Roger Desmond**) In Singer, D.G. & Singer, J.R. *Handbook of Children and the Media*, 2nd. Edition.

There have been a large number of faculty papers and articles that have been accepted for publication and presentation in the months to come. Look for news about some of them in our next newsletter.

Miller-what?

Professor Aimee Miller has had a busy summer. She's been teaching, working on several interesting research projects with students and colleagues, getting work accepted for publication, and, oh yes, getting married. She's now **Professor Aimee Miller-Ott**. We are all thrilled.

School of Communication and The Trauma Center

During the fall, 2010 semester, Prof. Bill Seymour taught a PR class in which his students worked with the Connecticut Children's Medical Center's Trauma Unit, helping them to develop a public relations plan. The Trauma Unit's leaders were so impressed with the students' work, they asked if the students would work with them to put the plan in action. They, with Bill Seymour's leadership, did just that. This past spring, the students developed brochures, news releases, video FAQs and a fundraising event for the Trauma Center. Congrats to all of them for work well done and for making a positive difference in our community.

Here's a link to students discussing the project on Hartford's FOX 61 TV
<http://www.ctnow.com/videobeta/9b346745-c38c-4d21-85d5-a5b4d1daff34/News/Fox-CT-Student-Project-Helping-Out-CCMC-Trauma-Center>

Brand Image Expert Speaks

Many of our courses feature guest lecturers from a variety of social science, marketing and communications disciplines. At the end of March, for example, Karen Tripp, head of marketing and communications at The Hartford Financial Group, addressed our graduate course in brand image taught by Claude Singer. Students heard Tripp describe the challenge of managing a 200-year-old brand that has faced a steady decline in public awareness and suffered serious blows during the recent recession. Tripp is responsible for re-establishing the market relevance and competitive appeal of The Hartford – a corporate name that is known for its stag logo. “Proud, confident, king of the forest – will the attributes of a stag motivate our customers?” Tripp asked. Tripp explained that she and her colleagues were in the process of defining and sharpening the promise inherent in The Hartford’s array of insurance and financial products. Sophisticated market research will shape how to interpret and express The Hartford across all media, including powerful new networking channels. Tripp’s presentation gave our graduate students real-life insights into the thinking of today’s communications executives – who, facing turbulent markets, exploit new media in the quest to build their brands.



Karen Tripp

Desmond and Grantham Take on New Roles

Professor Roger Desmond is our new Internship Director and Professor Susan Grantham is our new Director of Graduate Studies. Both have been heavily involved in these programs and both bring a great deal of expertise and enthusiasm to the position. Thanks to them for stepping up to these positions, and thanks for a great job to Professor Jack Banks and to Professor Grantham for serving as our most recent Graduate Director and Internship Directors, respectively.

Graduate Student Report

Alicia Linder is finishing her M.A. in Communication with the School of Communication and shares some of her observations.

“I am finishing my master’s thesis titled *Understanding Sexual Communication between Committed Romantic Partners and the Role it Plays in Sexual Satisfaction and Need Fulfillment*. This study, directed by **Dr. Aimee Miller**, examines how romantic partners and spouses communicate about sex and construct identities through this communicative process. I assisted and am still currently working on a textbook titled *How to Teach Introduction to Human Sexual Behavior* with a therapist with whom I interned this past year, and will be listed as the book’s second author.

During my two years as a graduate student in the School of Communication, I taught and served as a research assistant to faculty members in the School of Communication. I had the opportunity to make a total of seven conference paper presentations at local and regional conventions. I was also one of two teaching interns lucky enough to be funded to attend the National Communication Association Convention in San Francisco, CA, where I took three short-term courses. I was eager to travel this far distance to continue learning how to master my craft as an effective professor.

I took advantage of the School of Communication’s program flexibility by taking courses outside of my area of study which led way to a nice balance between requirements, my current interests, and my potential interests. Also, my desire to achieve hands-on experience at an internship site of my choice was encouraged, and counted as part of my graduate credit.

I will be teaching two courses in the School of Communication for the fall 2011 semester and pursuing a Ph.D. program to begin in the fall of 2012. Being a student in the School of Communication has absolutely been the best choice I have made throughout my academic career, and the experiences I have been through will directly position me as a top candidate among applicants for doctoral programs throughout the country. I am lucky to have worked with the faculty that I did, create the bridges that I have made, and cross into the next chapter of my education, well prepared.”

Communication Now, Yeah.

-Harvey Jassem

There is no better time than right now to be involved with the study of communication. My personal focus tends to be on regulatory and policy issues, especially as they pertain to emerging media and urban contexts. But everything is so intertwined these days. One cannot study journalism without understanding how people get and “get” their information. That is, how do people access information and news, and what meaning do they get from various types of “sources?” These are classic communication issues. Is a comment on Facebook more or less credible than one in a local newspaper? And what is a local newspaper these days anyway? How does citizen involvement in the production of news and information (through our own blogs or by sending our video to television stations or by our comments on stories that are posted online, for example) change the entire “news experience” for all of us?

How are the various legacy media affected by our changing media use patterns and by the new competition? Now that the New York Times is charging for more of its online content, will it be better able to afford news resources? How are advertisers responding to the fragmentation of our attention, our ability to customize our media experiences, or to their ability to target their ads? While public relations professionals were once in the business of trying to get favorable media attention, there are a host of additional options available to them as well.

Interpersonally, our heavy reliance on so-called social media changes who we communicate with and how. Our always-on phone presents challenges for those wanting privacy or a little down time. The communication rules and expectations that have been place-defined are all being reexamined.

These issues affect our personal relationships, our businesses, and even our democracy. Should we care about the proposed merger of media giants, such as AT&T and T-Mobile? Should we care about Google’s business practices and how it lists search results or treats our personal information? Should we care about the messages in media or whether the U.S. Supreme Court is or is not finding that video games are speech worthy of First Amendment protection? And what about the media hacking into our voicemail, is that something worthy of our attention?

As you might guess, my answer to all of these is a resounding “yes, we should care.” These issues and the many other related ones are thankfully complex and interesting. Hence, the research our faculty and students are doing is exciting and important. All of our skills are being retuned, as they must be. The School of Communication just started some new multimedia skills courses, has been revising existing courses, is rebuilding one of its computer labs this summer, just purchased a host of new video/audio equipment for students to use in their classes, and has exciting events and discussions with alumni and friends of the School. I can only hope that people in other disciplines are as challenged by timely issues as we all are. It is no wonder that Communication continues to be one of the most engaging and in-demand areas of study.

And a final word of thanks. I had the pleasure of serving as Acting Director of the School of Communication for the past six months while Professor Lynne Kelly was on sabbatical. We are all happy that the ever-productive and energetic Dr. Kelly is back now as our leader. And my thanks to everyone for your help this past semester. Now, on to teaching and researching, and working to make communication even better.

If you have any news you’d like to share, or if you’d like to be a guest speaker, or if you have internship opportunities for our students, please let us know. We enjoy hearing from you. To keep up with School of Communication happenings, you can also visit our website at <http://uhavax.hartford.edu/cmm>.

We hope to see you on October 21!
