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Newsletter

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Spring 2007

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School of Communication

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School of Communication communicator @ WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Spring 2007

Centennial Edition

School of Communication embarks on capital campaign: Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future, Our Next 100 Years!

Investments in Our Next 100 Years!

From humble beginnings in 1906 as the Department of Expression, 2007 marks the beginning of our second century! To celebrate this milestone and to ensure continued success in the next century, the School of Communication is embarking on a capital campaign: *Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future, Our Next 100 Years!*

To launch the campaign and ensure its ultimate success, we are gratified to announce three significant and generous gifts that have recently been committed to the School of Communication.

The leadership gift of \$500,000 from 1956 alumnus Jack Clifford will provide both immediate and long-term funding for three critical areas within the School: the creation of the Clifford



Media and Communication Resource Center in the newly renovated Brown Hall; an endowment to support and enhance the on-going activities of the Clifford Center; and an endowment for research and creative activities of our undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty.

Why make such a gift? Jack's response is, "I have had a long and rewarding career in the communication industry. I owe my successful career to

my start at WMU and now I want to give back. Over the years I have learned that few things in life give me a greater sense of accomplishment than helping young people grow."

Alumna Roz Abrams ('70) wants to help students. With her gift of \$100,000, The Roslyn M. Abrams Endowed Scholarship in Communication will help support up to four communication students each year who need financial assistance.

A sociology and speech major at WMU, Roz's gift is personal. "If I had not been given a chance to do something I did not think I could do, I would not have had such a blessed life." Her scholarship will be available to four students each year with a minimum GPA of 2.0 who have overcome socioeconomic obstacles or educational disadvantages.



Recognizing the varied needs across the School, Randy Doran ('83), has invested \$100,000 to fund and endow the creation of the Randall and Lisa Doran Conference Room in the newly renovated Brown Hall, and to establish, in partnership with Steve and Ann Rhodes (see page 2), a general endowment to promote, enhance, and

improve the School for our students and faculty.

Like Jack and Roz, Randy credits



much of his current success to the School. "My experience in Communication provided me with tools for working with others, such as listening, managing conflict, and getting work done in meetings."

Each of these benefactors hope their gift will inspire and encourage fellow alumni and friends of the School to make their own personal investments to the School, no matter what size or kind.

The Rhodes' Make a Gift; Northouse Creates Scholarship

In addition to the gifts listed above, the School has received a \$20,000 gift from Peter and Laurel Northouse to establish the Northouse Leadership Scholarship (see page 5). And, the School will receive a gift of \$100,000 from Steve and Ann Rhodes to create a School of Communication Endowment (see page 2).

The Director's Page

Second Century Capital Campaign

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The School of Communication will embark this year on a capital campaign entitled: Our Second Century—Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future, Invest in Our Next 100 Years! The goal of the campaign will be to build on the gifts the School received this year and to raise additional endowment-focused support that will help guarantee a bright future for the School of Communication.

Over the years WMU's School of Communication has become one of the best schools of communication in the Midwest, with excellent faculty, staff, and emeriti; great students; and alumni who have gone on to lead successful personal and professional lives. In 2006, the School celebrated 100 years of excellence.

But today, the School faces an unprecedented financial challenge, related directly to the reduction in state funding for public higher education. In the 1970s, state funding accounted for approximately 85 percent of WMU's

total general fund revenues; today, only 42 percent. This drastic cut in public funding means that the School needs to find other sources of support.

As the School enters its second century, there is an urgent need for permanent endowed funding to support the teaching and research missions of the School, to create scholarships to assist undergraduate and graduate students, and support and enhance facilities. In short, to continue to work toward becoming one of this country's premier schools of communication, the School needs the support of its alumni, emeriti, and friends.

More information about the School's upcoming capital campaign will be available later this year. However, if you have questions, would like to know more about how you can become involved in the campaign, or would like to talk about making a gift please contact Steve Rhodes at: steve.rhodes@wmich.edu.

The Rhodes' Make a Gift

With more than 30 years invested in WMU and the School of Communication, most recently as its director since 1999, no one knows the School's history of excellence, potential for the



future, or financial challenges better than director and professor Steve Rhodes. Since stepping in as director, Steve has worked with faculty, students, alumni, and emeriti to strategically position the School of Communication for growth in its academic reputation and to be recognized

as a WMU center of excellence. From his perspective as director, no one knows better the financial resources it takes to be a center of excellence.

And no one appreciates more the commitment of others. "I know what it is like to try and promote the School and the good work being done by our students and faculty without funding. And

I know what it is like for students and faculty to do without funding for crucial elements of their programs." In that spirit, Steve and his wife Ann have pledged a long-term gift of \$100,000 to the School of Communication. "We can think of no better way to thank those that have given so generously this year than to acknowledge their gifts by building on their investments." The Rhodes' gift will be given in partnership with the Doran gift to establish the Doran/Rhodes Director's Endowment to promote, enhance, and improve the School of Communication.

With the launching of the Second Century Capital Campaign, Steve and Ann invite others to join them in making a financial commitment to the School. When combined with other gifts, no gift is too small. And, as can be seen with the Clifford, Abrams, Doran, and Northouse gifts, there are many ways to give and contribute – note for example the Yelsma gift on page 4. For information about making a gift to the School of Communication, contact Nick McLaren, Director of Development for the College of Arts & Sciences at: nick.mclaren@wmich.edu.

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Change of Scenery

Studio C Undergoes Major Renovations



Many media students remember Studio C as the Instructional Television classroom where they enjoyed many hours with classmates and professors such as Dr. Thomas Pagel and Dr. Jules Rossman. Historically, Studio C was the property of WMU's Media Services and only served as classroom space that the School of Communication "borrowed." Most recently, Studio C was under the management of the Office of Information Technology (OIT) – WMU's computer technology department.

In recent years, because of changing technology priorities for OIT, Studio C has been in a state of decline. To reverse this trend, WMU's School of Communication petitioned to have Studio C transferred to the School of Communication. This petition was granted and we have managed to secure \$200,000 for a badly needed upgrade. That is the good news.



During the summer of 2006, the classroom walls received new coats of contemporary green and teal paint, comfortable portable chairs, and new carpeting containing specks of multiple hues that pull the whole colorful, energetic design together. Classroom risers have cinema strip floor lighting, and two ceiling mounted flat-screen plasma monitors create a theatre-like experience. All of

the old control room equipment is gone. Now, a long console contains a new Grass Valley digital switcher, 3-D Chyron CG, 24-channel audio board, computerized teleprompter, wireless microphones, camera control units, DVCam and DVD record and playback decks, and a multitude of monitors.

The bad news is that the School of Communication is now responsible for the financial future of Studio C. As a result, we are seeking to establish an endowment that will guarantee that Studio C will always be a state-of-the-art instructional facility for our students.

Yes, those old water-marked curtains are still hanging in the background, as is the chicken-wired studio insulation, the cracked poured studio floor, and beat-up props. Future advancements in technology will require a system to link digitally with other nearby student production areas in Brown Hall.

The School of Communication is extremely proud of alumni who have used their experiences in Studio C to benefit their careers. With the hands-on experience our renovated studio now offers this generation of students, we're certain there will be even more student success stories to share!

Brown Hall Renovations Under Way



The renovation of Brown Hall appears to be proceeding on schedule. Construction fencing went up around the building this past fall; the interior has been gutted; and as the picture shows, the east side has been removed to make way for the new Clifford Media and Communication Resource Center and two new small lecture halls. The goal is to have the construction completed by Spring 2008. If that goal is met, the School of Communication will host a grand re-opening for all of our emeriti, alumni, and current students sometime in the late spring of 2008 –watch for future announcements.

Faculty News

Jocelyn Steinke Awarded Three-year NSF Grant

The National Science Foundation has awarded Western Michigan University's Dr. Jocelyn Steinke, an associate professor in the School of Communication, with a \$498,000 grant for her research project entitled, "Adolescents' Identification with Televised Portrayals of Male and Female Scientists."

The three-year grant, which began in September, examines portrayals of scientist characters in television programs popular among middle school-aged children. The research project will document specific attributes of television scientist characters, such as gender-stereotyped and counter-stereotyped attributes and attributes known to promote identification with televised characters.

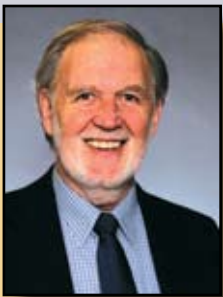
Middle school students' identification with characters that exhibit these attributes will be examined as they relate to the students' attitudes toward science, attitudes toward women in science, perceptions of gender roles, confidence in science, and future interest in science.

"The research findings will provide information

to support the development of programs in the popular media (television, films, computer games) in order to promote positive public images of scientists and engineers," Steinke said. This study also will provide new insights on the use of role models in the media to encourage more girls to enter careers in science, engineering, and technology.

The study will focus on scientist characters featured on 13 popular television programs: Dexter's Laboratory, Kim Possible, CSI, CSI-Miami, CSI-New York, Danny Phantom, The X Files, Bill Nye the Science Guy, MythBusters, Jimmy Neutron, The Simpsons, Friends, and DragonflyTV.

Other members of the research team working with Steinke on this project are Nancy Mansberger, an associate professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership; Brooks Applegate, a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology; Marilee Long, an associate professor at Colorado State University; and Maria Lapinski, an assistant professor at Michigan State University.



Paul Yelsma to Retire

Paul Yelsma, Professor in the School of Communication, came to Western Michigan University in 1975. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and M.A. degrees from University of Denver and University of Michigan, and his B.A. from the University of Denver. During his years at Western his research interests included: conflict management, marital and cohabitation communication, self-esteem, alexithymia, expression of emotions, intimacy, verbal abusiveness in intimate relationships, respect, and community service learning. He published works in *Communication and Health Outcomes* and numerous articles on diverse communication topics in the following journals:

Journal of Communication, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, Communication Quarterly, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Human Relations, American Journal of Family Therapy, Sex Roles: A Journal of Research, Psychological Reports, Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Sociological Spectrum, The School Counselor, and Journal of Social Psychology, as well as other publications. He taught undergraduate and graduate courses in the areas of small group, family, and interpersonal communication.

In recognition of his retirement Paul and his wife, Julie, have created the Yelsma Small Group Communication Endowed Scholarship. During his career, Paul has taught thousands of students in his Group Problem Solving Class. This scholarship will be given to students who recognize the importance and value of small group communication.

Faculty News

Machiorlatti and Farrugia's Documentary to be Featured on DocuPyx

The new documentary broadband channel, DocuPyx, featured the short documentary, "Copyright Culture (Remixed) Volume 1 & Illegal Art," produced by WMU's Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, associate professor and Dr. Rebekah Farrugia, assistant professor as one of five documentaries shown on the channel's debut in December 2006.

Copyright Culture (Remixed) explores who has the right to borrow, cut, copy, reproduce, and remix what content, under which circumstances, and according to whom. It is a volume set of three films and an hour-long documentary that explores the impact increasingly restrictive copyright laws are having on fair use and the creation of culture.

Volume 1 of the set focuses on two artists in New York City whose paintings are inspired by other people's art, photography, and creative work; and explores fair use and freedom of speech. Volume 2 is an experiment

on fair use in the narrow issues explored by American media. Volume 3 follows a traveling art exhibit and explores the grey areas of copyright law and fair use.

The set is also being shown at the Hawaii International Arts and Humanities Conference and the University Film and Video Association Conference.



Northouse Creates Scholarship

In addition to the gifts from Jack Clifford, Roz Abrams, Randy and Lisa Doran, and Steve and Ann Rhodes, the School has received a gift from Peter and Laurel Northouse. In partnership with Sage Publications, they have given \$20,000 to the School of Communication to establish the **Northouse Endowed Leadership Scholarship**. This gift will provide a \$1,000 scholarship in Fall 2007 for juniors or seniors seeking a degree in communication who have a GPA of at least 2.75 and who demonstrate good citizenship in the classroom and the University.

Peter has been a professor in the School since 1974 and he is a scholar with an international reputation for his work in Leadership and Health-Communication. He has been involved in teaching and conducting research on leadership for more than 30 years. While he has done basic research in both of these areas, the largest proportion of his work has been directed toward writing discipline-related books that have had great impact on our discipline.

His book *Leadership: Theory and Practice* is currently in its fourth edition and is widely recognized as one of the major texts on leadership theory. It is used at over 250 colleges and universities, including West Point Military Academy and the Canadian Forces College. It has been translated in several languages including Arabic, Chinese, French, Korean, and Swedish. The book received the 2004 book of the year award at Sage Publications and is one of the best selling books in the country on leadership.

What's Happening ON CAMPUS

Emmy Award Winning Alumnus Ed Gordon Speaks on Campus



Some of Ed Gordon's other notable works that have garnered the admiration and respect of viewers and colleagues include:

- The infamous O.J. Simpson interview
- An exclusive interview with pop superstar Janet Jackson about her secret marriage and painful divorce
- No-holds-barred, headline-making interviews with controversial Senator Trent Lott and embattled singer R. Kelly

As the keynote address for the School of Communication's centennial celebration, Ed Gordon spoke on "The Politics of Participation: Engaging Minorities and the Disenfranchised in the 21st Century."

In addition to being the keynote speaker, Gordon was also inducted into the School of Communication's 2006 Alumni Academy and was recognized as a College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Achievement Award recipient. Gordon was a hit with the crowd as he joked about his times at Western, before moving into the point of his address — "every person counts, no matter what your background, when it comes to voter participation." He went on to address issues facing today's voting public including the misbelief that our votes do not matter. Gordon also addressed the inability of many Americans to identify with today's politicians.

Known for his stellar interaction with newsmakers from the worlds of politics, entertainment, and sports, his name is synonymous with the "big" interview.

Making a Name for Himself...

As a contributing correspondent for the CBS news magazine "60 Minutes" he added to an already impressive resume. Gordon's diverse style also makes him one of the most versatile people in broadcasting. Gordon also made a name for himself in radio as host of "News and Notes with Ed Gordon," the daily interview/information program on National Public Radio.

Gordon distinguished himself during two stints at BET. He had many roles at the network including host of "BET Tonight," anchor of "BET News," and creator of his signature "one-on-one series Conversation" with Ed Gordon. Over the years, Gordon has covered many of the world's most defining events. From the freedom of South Africa's Nelson Mandela to the beating of Rodney King to upheaval in Haiti and Cuba, he provided comprehensive coverage. Ed Gordon also provided up-to-the-minute reports on many other domestic and international affairs, including the tragic September 11 attack on America.

Gordon is president of the Gordon Media Group, a multi-service production company. Detroit-born Gordon earned his bachelor's degree in Communication and Political Science from Western Michigan University.

What's ^{ON} Happening **CAMPUS**

Join the School of Communication
for its fourth annual
Tailgate at the Tower
Sprau Tower Plaza/Brown Hall area

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, October 20
10:30 to Noon
Food • Fun • Friends

WIDR Goes to New York

This past November, two members of the WMU student radio station WIDR participated in a unique event in New York City called College Music Journal Bash. This event consists of panels of music and film industry experts, broadcasting workshops, as well as music showcases every afternoon and evening. Through the support of donations from School of Communication alumni, WIDR members Allie Gruner and Ryan Shields were able to attend three days of this festival to learn some tricks of the trade from industry insiders as well as get a feel for many up and coming bands.

Allie says, "It was an eye-opening experience to watch college radio be so important to both the independent and commercial radio markets that they put on an entire festival devoted to the medium." Gruner and Shields really enjoyed hearing about how other stations functioned and were able to bring some new ideas back to WIDR.

PRO Takes Annual Networking Trip to Chicago



On March 30, WMU's Public Relations Organization (PRO) took a trip to visit several public relations firms in Chicago. Nineteen members went on the trip to two public relations firms. The first firm visited was Arment Dietrich. This is a small firm specializing in hospitality public relations. PRO also had the opportunity to visit this firm during their 2006 trip and got to experience the feel of a smaller firm and also do some great networking that led to a job offer for one of last year's participants.

The second firm they visited during this year's trip was Fleishman Hillard. This is a large international public relations firm specializing in health care, public affairs, financial relations, and consumer marketing. Fleishman Hillard provided a great contrast to the smaller firm and the students even got to participate in a brainstorming session for one of the firm's clients.

Trips like these—often made possible by alumni donations—provide students with a great opportunity to network with public relations professionals, some of whom are WMU alumni. The trip also gives them a better sense of what their jobs might be like upon graduation.

Student

WMU Team Wins Regional Qualifier for National Ethics Bowl



WMU's Ethics Bowl team won the regional qualifier for the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Competition during the spring semester. The students participating in the bowl included Natalie Kaftan of DePere, Wisc. (interpersonal communication and vocal performance), Shawn Myers of Jackson (biomedical sciences and psychology), and Jennifer Praner of Battle Creek (biomedical sciences).

The first Upper Midwest Regional Ethics Bowl was held at Harper College near Chicago, Illinois. WMU was undefeated after three preliminary rounds and had the highest score of any of the 14 teams participating. This ensured the trip to nationals and also allowed the team to compete in the championship match, which it won over the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). The other teams that qualified for nationals besides WMU and IIT were Loyola and Northwestern.

This is the first time that the ethics competition has been a tiered event, with regional competitions around the country to determine the 32 teams that

will compete in the national contest. The National Ethics Bowl Competition was held in February in Cincinnati, Ohio as part of the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics.

The team's faculty sponsor is Dr. Sandra Borden, associate professor of Communication and co-director of WMU's Center for the Study of Ethics in Society. The coaches are David Charlton of Kalamazoo, an M.A. student in comparative religion; Brennan Jacoby of Clark Lake and Joshua Upson of Galesburg, both M.A. students in philosophy. The team is sponsored by the Ethics Center with financial support from the Lee Honors College and the School of Communication.

Ethics Bowl provides an opportunity for students to practice applying the moral theories and argumentation principles that they learn in their ethics classes. They receive 15 case studies in advance involving ethical issues in a number of practical contexts, including engineering, law, medicine, personal relationships, school, and politics.

During a round, each team takes turns presenting its position on a case and critiquing the other team's position on a different case. Teams must answer questions about their positions from a panel of judges. Judges assign scores based on logical consistency, clarity, focus, and thoroughness.

WMU has competed in the Ethics Bowl contest every year since it expanded from an intramural event at IIT to a small regional contest involving a handful of colleges in 1994 (an event WMU won). The competition went national in 1997. WMU's best national showings were third out of 14 teams in 1998 and fifth out of 26 teams in 2000.

Awards

School of Communication Recognizes its Outstanding Students

School of Communication Award Recipients

Congratulations to the 2006 School of Communication Scholars:

2006 School of Communication Scholars

Andrew Raklovits; Interpersonal Communication
Donna Schnake; Organizational Communication
Emily Walker; Journalism
Jessica Walker; Organizational Communication

2006 WWMT – Freedom Broadcasting of Michigan Scholarship

Paul Fishwick; Film, Video, Media Studies
Katie Webb; Broadcast & Cable Production
Anthony Magiera; Film, Video, Media Studies
Shanna Roggow; Film, Video, Media Studies

2006 Dennis W. Archer Scholarship

Gregory Jones Jr.; Film, Video, Media Studies
Jason Leverett; Journalism

Jerry P. Colvin Scholarship Recipient sponsored by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters

Adam Bodnar; Public Relations

WMUK Scholarship in Radio

Allison Gruner; Film, Video, Media Studies
Caitlin Nunes; Film, Video, Media Studies

WMTT Scholarship in Broadcasting

Laura Henderson; Media Studies
Justin Mayle; Film, Video, Media Studies
Nathaniel Abernathy; Film, Video, Media Studies
Jillian Kurtz; Film, Video, Media Studies
Raymond Venezia; Film, Video, Media Studies

Jules Rossman WIDR Scholarship

Allison Gruner; Film, Video, Media Studies

Berrios is Presidential Scholar



The School of Communication named Natalia Grace Berrios as its 2006 Presidential Scholar recipient.

In addition to being selected as the 2006 Presidential Scholar for the School of Communication, Berrios won multiple awards including the Freedom Broadcasting of Michigan Scholarship in 2005, the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award, and the Lee Honors College Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award for her video documentary, "La Familia Berrios."

In December 2005, Natalia traveled with Dr. Farrugia and Dr. Machiorlatti to New York as a production assistant on a documentary. During that time, she learned valuable technical skills and gained production experience.

Natalia plans to attend graduate school in the fall and eventually acquire her doctorate so that she will be able to help others in the ways that her professors here at WMU have helped her. She would especially like to thank Dr. Lipkin, Dr. Machiorlatti, and Dr. Farrugia for having such a positive impact on her education. Natalia says, "One day I hope to have as positive an impact on students as these professors have had on me."

Alumni of DISTINCTION

Six Inducted Into Alumni Academy

SIX WMU ALUMNI OF DISTINCTION WERE INDUCTED INTO THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION ALUMNI ACADEMY. THE SIX JOIN 29 OTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN HONORED BY THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION.

Denise Fleckenstein **BA, Communication, 1976** **MA, Organizational** **Communication, 1982**

Denise is the director of planned giving for Cranbrook Educational Community, an internationally renowned center for the arts, education, science, and culture in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

She began her career at the Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce managing a monthly business newsletter and working with committees on small business issues. In 1979, she defined her career path and began a financial services marketing career at Educational Community Credit Union.

In 1999, Denise decided to pursue a completely different profession as a nonprofit fundraiser. She became interested in the specialized field of planned giving while working for Matrix Human Services and then the University of Detroit Mercy. Denise became the director of planned giving for Cranbrook Educational Community in 2003, where she manages the program and solicits gifts for all divisions of the community.

Denise serves on the board of The Children's Center in Detroit. She also serves as vice president for The Planned Giving Roundtable of Southeastern Michigan, a trade group for estate-planning and nonprofit planned giving professionals. She is a speaker and advocate for the Leave a Legacy Program for Southeast Michigan.



Previous Alumni Academy Inductees

2002

- Carl Botan
- Roger Mattens
- Laurie Stewart

2005

- Susan M. Bunda
- Edd Snyder
- Paul Klapproth
- John Greenhoe
- Larry Winston

2003

- Kyle Caldwell
- Jack Clifford
- Morris Davenport

2004

- Randy Doran
- Todd Hufford
- Tsutomu Kanayama
- Brent L. Larson
- Gregory A. Moorehead

A complete listing of past Alumni Academy Inductees and more details about this year's inductees can be found on the School of Communication Web site, www.wmich.edu/communication.

ming to investigative reporting, documentaries, and features. In the process, she was honored with awards from United Press International, the Associated Press, and numerous regional and local broadcast agencies.

Cynthia has served as a visiting faculty member at Grand Valley State University, teaching communication, and as president of the West Michigan chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators and American Women in Radio and TV. She currently is past president of the West Michigan Chapter of the American Marketing Association.

A member of an entrepreneurial family, Cynthia is the founder, owner, and president of a media company—Cynthia Kay & Company. After her award-winning 13-year career in broadcasting, Cynthia formed her company in 1984. It was incorporated by the State of Michigan in 1987.

In 2005, Cynthia was honored as the Top Woman-Owned Business in her category by the Grand Rapids Business Journal and her company was named "Small Business of the Year" by the Grand Rapids Area Cham-



Cynthia Kay **MA, Communication, 1977**

Cynthia Kay received her masters degree in communication from Western Michigan University and her undergraduate degree from Michigan State University.

As a professional broadcaster, Cynthia did it all; from anchoring, producing, directing, and hosting specialty program-

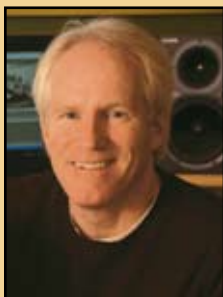
ber of Commerce. In 2006, Cynthia was named one of the 50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan and her company was named one of West Michigan's 101 Best and Brightest Companies.

Bob Hercules
BA, Communication,
1979

Bob Hercules graduated from WMU with a degree in Telecommunications and a minor in Creative Writing. He was General Manager of WIDR in 1977-78; a disc jockey and talk-show host at WIDR from 1976-1981; and a feature writer at the Western Herald from 1977-1979.

Currently, Bob is an independent filmmaker, producer, director, and co-owner of Media Process Group—a Chicago-based television production company. Bob's work has been seen widely on PBS, the Discovery Channel, the Independent Film Channel (IFC), The Learning Channel, and through television syndication nationwide. His most recent film, "Forgiving Dr. Mengele," won the Special Jury Prize at the 2006 Slamdance Film Festival; was shown at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival and most recently in Kalamazoo—it is currently in limited theatrical release.

A resident of Chicago, Bob has served on numerous boards for nonprofits such as the Chicago Public Access Corporation and Deep Dish Satellite Television—the country's first grassroots satellite public access network. Currently he serves on the Advisory Board of Columbia's Television Department and is an active member of the Democratic Party of Evanston.



Suzanne Geba
BA, Communication,
1973

Suzanne Geba has anchored the evening news at 24-Hour News 8 for 25 consecutive years. A native Detroit, Suzanne first worked at WOOD-TV after graduating from Western Michigan University. Between 1974-78, she honed her skills at every newsroom job, becoming the first woman to anchor an evening West Michigan newscast in 1976.

But that was not the first time Suzanne was first. In 1971, she and another female student were

the first women to report and deliver the news at WMU's campus station, WIDR, and in 1972, she was the first woman to report and anchor the news at WKNR-AM/WKFR-FM in Battle Creek.

Suzanne received the Silver Circle Award from the Michigan chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for more than 25 years of service in broadcasting, and an Emmy from the Detroit chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Suzanne helped found American Women in Radio and Television in West Michigan. She currently sits on the Board of the Coffee Dunkers of Grand Rapids. She also served on the Western Michigan University Alumni Board of Trustees, as treasurer of the board of her church, and as vice president of the Press Club of Grand Rapids.

Richard Merpi
BS, Communication,
1975

Richard Merpi has been producing and directing video and live productions for more than 30 years. He has worked with Fortune 500 companies, public and private institutions to communicate their message and market their products.



Rick launched his career while at Western Michigan University. In 1971, he was disc jockey and program director at the student-run radio station, WIDR, where he formatted the station and staged live WIDR events in the city of Kalamazoo. While a full-time student, he was hired in 1972, by WKMI-AM in Kalamazoo as an on-air personality.

As technology in his industry evolved, Rick established his own business and worked in every medium: film, video, cable, CD-Rom, DVD, live satellite. He was among the first to develop video news releases; he created an interactive computer bidding system for nonprofit fund raising; large-screen computerized walls for the office furniture industry; and blended live events with multimedia technology to maximize impact for grand openings of businesses, convention centers, and hospitals.

Rick is involved in his community. He built and operated a restaurant in the historic Gaslight Village of East Grand Rapids. He currently serves on the board of the East Grand Rapids Recreation Department.

Keeping up with Emeriti Where are they now?

Jules Rossman

My 26-year career at Western began in 1963 in the Broadcasting area of the then Department of Speech and Theater, working with my late beloved colleague, mentor and friend, Dr. Robert Franklin Smith. Dr. Smith unexpectedly passed away a few years after my arrival. Dr. Zack York was the department chairman. The broadcast area then consisted of one faculty member (R. Franklin) and three courses, Radio Production, Broadcast Journalism and Introduction to Broadcasting. Classes were offered in East Hall, and in white World War II shacks near the football field. The radio studio was a small room and production facilities consisted of one turntable, one microphone and an old reel-to-reel tape recorder. Due to lack of space, my office was in a converted closet with room for a desk, two chairs, and a walled bookcase.

Experience in commercial television allowed me to add various courses in television production, scripting and others. The very basic TV Production studio was housed in a room at the back of the old Waldo Library. WIDR was still Inter Dormitory Radio, located on the top floor of the old Maybee Music Hall. Until his unfortunate death, Dr. Rad Kuykendall was the WIDR advisor for many years. His tireless dedication eventually resulted in WIDR's FM license granted in the 1970s. Dr. Barry Sherman was the advisor for several years until he moved to the University of Georgia. I replaced Dr. Sherman and kept the position until my retirement. Upon retiring, several students established a scholarship in my name, which is awarded every year to the outstanding WIDR staff member. I also received the Advisor of the Year Award from the university.

There was a major expansion and change beginning in the 1970s and 1980s. As the department became the Department of Communication, the



Broadcast area became the area of Mass Communication. Additional faculty beginning with Dr. Tom Pagel in the 1970s allowed us to expand our offerings in various areas of Mass Communication Theory, Advanced TV Production, performance courses, and more. I was also able to introduce courses in Broadcast Sales and Programming. Two modern TV studios were constructed in Dunbar Hall, and two modern radio production studios in Brown Hall. With additional faculty, and video and film production facilities, we began offering courses in film and video production. By the time I retired, our area of one faculty

member and three courses had grown to a faculty of seven, a public relations program, several major areas of concentration, and almost 20 courses. During those years I also enjoyed serving as departmental advisor. A number of our students have gone on to success in broadcasting and related fields. These include Tim Allen, Jim Hickey (ABC TV News) Tom Decerhio (TV commercial producer and director of the film "Celtic Pride") Suzanne Geha (news anchor, Grand Rapids) Michael Petok (TV producer of the Bernie Mac TV Show) and others. Two years ago, 15 of my former students and I had a reunion in Las Vegas. It was a blast!

After moving to Scottsdale, I helped establish the WMU Alumni group with several of my former students who live in the area. I keep busy with various projects involving my temple, an annual film festival, on the steering committees and doing publicity for various interfaith and social action groups, and get to the gym at least five days a week. Ernie Stech and I get together when he comes down from Flagstaff, and I'm in constant touch with Dick Dieker, Tom Pagel, and other faculty. Life is good and I look back at 26 wonderful years at Western.

Keeping up with Emeriti Where are they now?

Robert Smith

Although now retired from the School of Communication for more than a decade, Robert L. Smith continues to be extremely active in the community and the region, as well as the University. In 2004-2005 Bob not only returned to teach as an adjunct professor in the Department of Theatre, he also served as interim director for the Master of Fine Arts Program in Performing Arts Administration in the College of Fine Arts that same year. He continues to serve the School of Music as an adjunct professor, an appointment he has held since 1999, a role in which he assists the director of opera, both in the rehearsal hall and the classroom.

His retirement from WMU in 1996 notwithstanding, Robert pursues his passion for theatre, having directed 25 and performed in 13 productions since May 1996. In May 2006, his production of a recent British comedy, "Humble Boy," graced the stage of the downtown Epic Center Theatre for the Whole Art Theater, and last November/December his staging of Rodgers' and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" played to full houses for 16 performances at the Kalamazoo Civic Auditorium.

Over the past decade his directorial work includes highly praised productions of "Death of a Salesman," "Elizabeth Rex," "A Raisin in the Sun," "You Can't Take It With You," "A Woman Called Truth," "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Amahl and the Night Visitors" for the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, as well as a number of well-received productions for the Whole Art Theater, the Kalamazoo College Theatre Arts Department, the API Theatre, and the Marshall Civic Players.

Among the more highly acclaimed productions



he staged for these theatres are "The White Rose," "Inherit the Wind," "Wait Until Dark," "The Complete Works of Wm. Shakespeare (abridged)," "The American Dream," "The Bald Soprano" and "Return Engagement: Dorothy Upjohn Dalton in Kalamazoo."

As a member of Actors' Equity Association, the professional union, he also continues to perform occasionally, including portraying Frosch, the drunken jailer, in the 1999

WMU School of Music's highly touted Miller Auditorium production of the J. Strauss comic operetta, "Die Fledermaus," as well as playing the role of "Pops" Bailey in the University Theatre's 2004-2005 production of the musical, "The 1940s Radio Hour," in the Multi-Form Theatre. In 1999, he also received positive notices for his performance in the title role of the Whole Art's world premiere of Arnie Johnston and Deborah Percy's "Rasputin in New York." On Jan. 18, 2007, Bob enacted a leading role as a retired American diplomat in the premiere of a new play, "Language Lessons" by Joseph Zettelmaier, at the professional (Equity) Performance Network Theatre in Ann Arbor. The play ran 28 performances through the end of February.

Bob earned a Ph.D. in Theatre and Speech from Michigan State University in 1968 after starting the doctorate at Iowa. He came to WMU in 1964 as assistant professor of Speech and director of the University Theatre, a position he held until 1975. He also taught at Hope College, Michigan State, the universities of Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska; and at Bowling Green—where he received his B.S. and M.A. degrees.

Recent ALUMNI

*Cassie Haslett, B.A.,
Public Relations,
2006
Promotions Director,
Kalamazoo Kings
Professional Baseball
Team*



How has your degree been of value to you?

Having the opportunity to choose different classes helped me to get a well-rounded education. Within this past year, I can say that I have put my design, public speaking, broadcasting, and public relations courses to use.

Recommendations for current students:

Intern. Intern. Intern. The more experiences you have, the easier your transition from classroom to the work environment will be.

*Gerah Dutkiewicz,
B.A., Organizational
Communication,
2000
Marketing Consul-
tant for The Allegan
Group*



How has your degree been of value to you?

I use it everyday. Even on the days I'm not working. I feel that my degree not only gave me skills that I can apply on the job, but it gave me life skills. I am happy to report that I am one of those lucky people whose job is a perfect fit with my degree. I learned the basics in college, and now I'm building on those

basics and applying my education to real life and to my career.

Recommendations for current students:

Don't settle for a job you're unhappy with. A full-time job takes up too much time to spend doing something you don't like. After college, you'll probably have to try out some different positions until you find the right fit—so don't feel like a failure if you have to leave a position you don't feel right in. Of course, give things a chance, and don't expect to have your dream job right away. We all have to start somewhere.

*Paul Jackiewicz, B.A., Public Relations,
2004
Account Executive, Consumer Marketing
Group, Fleishman-Hillard*

How has your degree been of value to you?

My core classes in public relations and journalism have been extremely valuable to me throughout my career. Journalism classes

helped me gain a better understanding of how the media works, which in turn allowed me to form better working relationships with them. Most importantly, my degree's emphasis on writing made for an easy transition to day-to-day PR functions like writing press releases, bios, backgrounders and program plans.

Recommendations for current students:

I would suggest students look for and obtain internships early and often in their college career. Public relations has many specialized niches and more experience gained in these niches can allow students to separate themselves from peers in the job market and better understand what sector they want practice in for their career. I would also suggest obtaining a minor in Spanish as many large companies are looking to increase their marketing efforts to Hispanic consumers. Most importantly, students should join an organization or extracurricular activity and assume a leadership role.



*Paul Jackiewicz (center)
interviewing Dwayne
Wade of the Miami Heat.*

ALUMNI *In the News*

Tim Terrentine **Douglass Community** **Association Executive** **Director**

On Sept. 5, 2006 Tim Terrentine started his new job as the executive director of the Douglass Community Association.

A 1997 graduate of Kalamazoo Central High School, Tim has held a number of positions in the Kalamazoo community, always trying to work with students.

He received both his B.A. in Family Studies, and a M.A. in Communication, from Western Michigan University.

He has really impressed the community with his efforts to make a better Kalamazoo for its youth. Tim has recently been featured in several articles in local news papers for being

a Kalamazoo native who has given so much back to the community.

Ron Boyd **WMMT Weather Caster**

School of Communication alumnus Ron Boyd was one of two recipients of this year's "Golden Word Award" presented by InterCom, a Kalamazoo-based association of professional communicators.

Ron has covered Michigan from one side to the other during his broadcast career. Before joining the News 3 staff, Ron worked as a weather caster at WJBK-TV in Detroit. A native of Detroit, Ron has a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication from Western Michigan University and is continuing his education toward a degree in meteorology. He is a member of the

National Weather Association and the National Association of Black Journalists, and is active in the Multiple Sclerosis Society and the United Negro College Fund.

Bradley Egen **Producer and Actor**

WMU alumni, Bradley Egen, played the role of both producer and actor in his latest film, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," which was released in early November 2006.

In addition, the "Ambrose Bierce" DVD was released at Wal-Mart, Target, Borders, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble and Blockbuster Video. It will also air in spring 2007 on cable TV.

Brad earned his B.A. in 1995 and his M.A. in 1997 in Communication from Western Michigan University.

Ron Dillard, B.A., English Education 2002, M.A. in Organizational Communication 2005
Claims Representative for State Farm Insurance — Fire Company

How has your degree been of value to you?

My degree has helped me personally and professionally. Most people either have communication problems or tend to believe they're a communication guru. Delving into this social science taught me that there were many things I did not know about my own communication. I've learned to apply

this knowledge in my current position at State Farm. It's amazing how simple communication cues assist me in calming a homeowner who has lost everything or in delivering not so good news in an empathetic way.



Recommendations for current students:

I would recommend that current students learn in the classroom as well as the real world.

Intern whenever possible. Get comfortable talking to people. Be sure that you know how to market your degree. Most people don't know what to expect from communication graduates. It's important that you recognize the importance and practicality of your degree. If you don't know, you certainly won't be able to convince the person interviewing you. Find a way to convince the powers that be that they need you. Cause them to wonder how they ever got along without a communication scholar on site.

Support the WMU School of Communication

Please fill out the form below and send it with your contribution to Western Michigan University, School of Communication, 1903 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5318.

☐ Enclosed is my gift of \$_____, payable to WMU Foundation for the School of Communication.

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- ☐ Other

Contributions to the Western Michigan University Foundation are tax deductible. You will receive a receipt for your contribution.



We want to hear from you!

Communication Alumni Needed for Mentor Program

Why You Should Join...

Think back to when you were a WMU student. Wouldn't it have been great to have a professional in your field to give career advice, or a resume critique? This is precisely what the Mentor Program through the Western Alumni Association does. It provides the means to help Western students get a leg up in the professional world.

Currently there are over 400 alumni mentors on the system and more join all the time. However, there is a need for mentors in the Communication field to join this network. Currently all seven colleges are represented, with the largest number coming from the Haworth College of Business. These mentors consist of Western Michigan University graduates from all over the country and the world. Thirty-two states, Washington D.C. and Pakistan are represented.

Can I Volunteer to Share Specific Types of Career-Related Information?

Yes. You can choose the type(s) of guidance you're willing to provide: employer information, career advising, regional information, resume review and mock interviews. You can also choose the type(s) of volunteering you would like to do: job shadowing, informational interviews, mentoring, classroom speaking, and internship sites.

How do I become an Alumni Mentor?

To become an alumni mentor, you must first be a member of the WMU Alumni Association. The next step would be to register to become a mentor on the Mentor Program Registration Page at www.wmich.edu/alumni. Once you have registered, you will be contacted by the alumni office with more information, including how to access the Mentor Program via the program entrance instructions.

Become an Alumni Mentor Today!

Western Michigan University
School of Communication
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