



Fall 2010

Communicator vol. 8, no. 1

School of Communication

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/communication_news



Part of the [Communication Commons](#)

WMU ScholarWorks Citation

School of Communication, "Communicator vol. 8, no. 1" (2010). *Communicator: School of Communication Newsletter*. Paper 10.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/communication_news/10

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Communication at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Communicator: School of Communication Newsletter by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.





WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
College of Arts and Sciences
School of Communication

School of Communication

communicator

A Newsletter for Friends of the
Western Michigan University School of Communication

Dr. George and Louise Robeck Remember the Past and Give for the Future

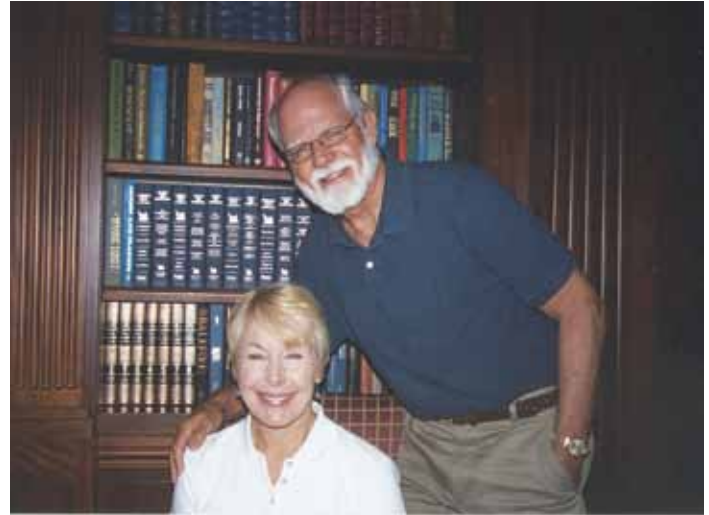
This spring, Dr. George and Louise Robeck endowed the School of Communication with a very generous gift of \$100,000. "I hope our gift will enhance the mission and reputation of the School of Communication by helping faculty to develop or improve courses, support research activity, or by providing travel funds for faculty to make presentations." They intend for the director of the school, Dr. Leigh Ford, to administer the funding with input from the entire faculty. "Over the years, I found that discretionary support beyond university or grant funding can make a difference for someone with a goal. I know that was the case for me," Robeck said.

Robeck joined the faculty of the School of Communication in 1968, teaching public relations, interpersonal communication, and mass communication. During his time at Western Michigan University, Dr. Robeck received a Teaching Excellence Award from the WMU Alumni Association, a College of Arts and Sciences Achievement Award for Service, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from InterCom, The Association of Professional Communicators, among many other awards. He served as chair of The "Western Herald" board of directors for more than 25 years, the School of Communication's internship advisor for nearly 25 years, and as faculty advisor for the student organization, Public Relations Organization (PRO) for nearly 20 years.

When he retired in 2002, Robeck decided to fill his time with volunteer work, serving numerous organizations related to helping people with disabilities, fair housing, humane animal treatment, and the arts. In addition, he continues to work as a consultant/trainer. "Retirement time commitment isn't much different from my years at the University with one major exception, I don't read student papers and essay tests," Robeck commented.

"An unexpected change for me has been in the area of the arts," Robeck said. For the past five years he's been a docent at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts (KIA), and he's also become involved with the new Richmond Center for the Visual Arts on Western's campus. He also has been surprised by his pottery skills. Two weeks after retirement, Robeck signed up for a ceramics class at the KIA, and since then, has been in the studios year round. "I'm now a part of a very talented and friendly group of potters from all over west Michigan."

"My hope is that this diversity will be embraced by the administration and faculty so that existing programs will expand and grow, and new areas of study will be encouraged. Perhaps one day the school will become a college."



Louise and George Robeck

Robeck remembers when the school was just a department, and becoming a School of Communication was a dream of the faculty. "I remember talk about a school in the 1970s, and as the diversity and strength of programs grew over the years, becoming a school grew to be a departmental objective. Finally, with work on the part of a lot of people, the effort paid off, just after I retired. So, while I've never been a member of the school, I am proud to have been part of its evolution," Robeck commented.

Robeck continued by pointing out the school's diversity in communication curriculum, "A major justification for becoming a school was the degree to which the department's programs reflected the diversity of the communication field. My hope is that this diversity will be embraced by the administration and faculty so that existing programs will expand and grow, and new areas of study will be encouraged. Perhaps one day the school will become a college!"

Robeck's wife, Louise, spends time with the Kalamazoo Literacy Council, a volunteer organization that provides literacy training for adult nonreaders. She has been a tutor since 1994, served as president of the board, and for the past five years has trained tutors and matched them with students.

The Director's Page

This Year at the School of Communication



Greetings!

As I write this note, I find myself reflecting on how quickly this first year of my term as director has passed. For all of us, the rapid passage of time is highly correlated with our very busy personal and professional lives, but I hope you will find some time to review this edition of the "Communicator" for the latest updates on the students, faculty, and alumni of the School.

Our School mission statement begins: "We are committed to the research and advanced study of the art and science of communication in a way that integrates theory and practice." In this issue of the "Communicator" we feature the School's ongoing commitment to collaboration and community engagement, activities that involve that very integration. Highlights include reports on several class projects where students worked with the community or engaged in activities with others that crossed disciplinary boundaries. We also include stories of individual student projects and accomplishments where students moved their work beyond the classroom. We believe strongly that these opportunities to engage with the community have practical value for our students, as well as providing them with exposure to the complexities of working across boundaries.

Finally, as we speak with and engage the community, we are mindful that many in our country have faced challenging economic circumstances this past year. The School of Communication has not been immune to those challenges. We work hard every day to effectively manage the resources we have and we are grateful, especially in these difficult economic times, for the support of the many friends, faculty, emeriti, and alumni who have donated to the School to support its mission. These gifts remind us of our obligation to stay connected to our past, to remain steadfast in our values in the present, and to keep our hopes focused on the possibilities for connection and creativity that the study and practice of communication represents.

Tenure & Promotion



Dr. Autumn Edwards was approved for tenure and promoted to associate professor in the School of Communication. Edwards began teaching and conducting research at WMU in 2005, and is currently the director of the Center for Communication Research. Edwards currently is working on an introductory communication textbook as well as conducting research on peak communication experiences. Because of her significant research contributions and dedication to the School of Communication, Edwards has proven to be a valuable addition to the faculty.



Marilyn Kritzman, faculty specialist II, has received tenure. Kritzman received her M.A. from WMU and joined the School of Communication faculty in 2002 as the coordinator of undergraduate advising and internships. Before joining the School of

Communication, Marilyn worked in several positions at WMU in both the Division of Student Affairs and in various positions in residence life. Marilyn also works with WMU's campus employees dispute resolution services program and was named Outstanding Academic Advisor by the Michigan Academic Advising Association in 2009.

Sabbaticals

Dr. Mark Orbe will be on sabbatical in the fall to work on a new book about perceptions of the communication competence of President Barack Obama; and Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti will be on sabbatical for the academic year, 2010- 2011, with plans to work on her documentary about First Nation women filmmakers.

INSIDE

**FACULTY
NEWS**
3

**IN THE
COMMUNITY**
4-5

**STUDENT
AWARDS & HONORS**
6-7

**STUDENT
HIGHLIGHTS**
8

ALUMNI ACADEMY
9

**ALUMNI
NEWS & UPDATES**
10-11

UPCOMING EVENTS
12

communicator is published annually for alumni and friends of the WMU School of Communication Editor, Leigh Ford, Ph.D. (269) 387-3133 leigh.ford@wmich.edu

Contributing Writer,
Layout & Design:
Catherine VanDerMaas

Faculty News

Christian Wins College of Arts & Sciences Achievement Award

Journalism Associate Professor Sue Ellen Christian has received a College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Achievement in Teaching Award for 2010. Before coming to WMU, Christian spent 12 years as a professional journalist, writing for the "Chicago Tribune" for most of that time. In 2001 she joined the faculty, bringing her professional credentials to the instruction of School of Communication journalism students.

Since that time, Christian has become a vital part of the School of Communication faculty. Dr. Leigh Ford, director of the school, states, "As her colleague, and now as the director of the school, it has been one of my great pleasures to hold conversations with Ms. Christian about the state of journalism and the future direction of journalism education, as we agree on the centrality of a free and vital journalistic enterprise to a functioning democracy. Christian works every day with her students to help make that ideal a reality through her focus on the complexities of a multicultural society, through engaging her students with the community, and through her use of innovative strategies to tell people's stories."



Sue Ellen Christian (center) networks with a student and alumnus Paul Klapproth during the fall 2009 Lunch with a Com Grad event.

Crisis Communication Specialist Joins Faculty

The School of Communication welcomed a new professor to the faculty in fall 2009. Dr. Patric Spence's, assistant professor, research interests focus on risk and crisis communication, specifically audience perceptions of emergency messages produced from government or news agencies, and how they motivate the public to take action.

His research also focuses on under-served populations, focusing on race and class issues surrounding the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. Spence's work recently has been cited in the National Consensus Statement on Integrating Racially and Ethnically Diverse Communities into Public Health Emergency Preparedness, released by the Office of Minority Health, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Spence also works with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is a research affiliate with the Center for Rebuilding Sustainable Communities after Disasters at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, a research partner with the National Center for Food Protection and Defense, and is a Next Generation of Hazard and Disaster Researchers Fellow. Welcome Dr. Spence!



Dr. Peter Northouse

Books

Dr. Sandra Borden co-edited "Ethics & Entertainment: Essays on Media Culture and Media Morality," and co-authored "Making Hard Choices in Journalism Ethics: Cases and Practices."



Northouses Support Scholarship

In late spring 2010, Dr. Peter Northouse, and his spouse, Dr. Laurel Northouse provided a generous gift of \$10,000 to support the Peter and Laurel Northouse Endowed Leadership Scholarship Fund. Sage Publications matched this gift with another \$10,000 in acknowledgement of Northouse's nationally and internationally recognized books on the study and practice of leadership. When combined with previous gifts from the Northouses and Sage, this scholarship fund now totals \$40,000.

The fund is designated to support several annual scholarships for undergraduate students who exhibit good citizenship in the classroom through their participation, community mindedness in class, and their general contributions to the well

being and learning environment of the classroom.

The faculty, staff, and students of the School of Communication offer their gratitude to the Northouses and Sage for their generous donations and the commitment to the future of the School these gifts represent.

Edwards on Web

A video of Dr. Chad Edwards currently is featured on the Admissions page of WMU's website. Edwards was awarded a 2009 Distinguished Teaching Award by WMU. The video may be viewed at (<http://www.wmich.edu/admissions/faculty-profiles.html>)

Communication in the Community

In the past year, communication students and faculty have found exciting and interesting ways to highlight the connections between the study of communication and the greater community.

Collaboration with Dance

On campus, students and faculty had the opportunity to put their film and media skills to work by engaging with the Department of Dance in a collaboration new to Western Michigan University. February's Winter Gala Concert featured "Romance sans Parole," a classical duet of onstage dancers and the use of a large, movable, rear projection screen which allowed the characters in the dance to exist both onstage and onscreen at the same time. The onscreen portion consisted of edited footage of the dancers from different camera angles. The high definition video was shot by communication students, Derek Wilds, Chris Raby, Jake Durrett, Meghan Tkachuk, and recent graduate Brian Lane. The project was led by video producer and professor Jennifer Machiorlatti. David Curwen, associate professor of dance, conceptualized the idea and also choreographed the dance sequences.

Investigating Race

In May, community members gathered at the Multicultural Center at the Trimpe Building on WMU's campus, to have a panel discussion focusing on experiences with race and ethnicity. The panel was part of a joint community collaboration between Donna Odom, president of the Southwest Michigan Black Heritage Society, and Sue Ellen Christian, associate professor of journalism at WMU. The panel showcased the work of

Steinke Launches Website with Research from National Science Foundation Grant

School of Communication's Dr. Jocelyn Steinke and her research team have launched a new website based on their research from a National Science Foundation grant. Stereotype Stompers is intended for teachers and students and features information regarding media influences on the choice of science careers. The website's goal is to increase awareness about possible stereotypes that negatively affect middle school aged children's perceptions of scientists, and therefore the likelihood of choosing a career in science. Visit www.stereotypestompers.com for more information.



Film, Video, and Media Studies students shoot video for "Romance sans Parole"

WMU journalism students, local high school students, and Kalamazoo College students who produced a video about local resident's experiences with race. Students had the opportunity to use their journalism skills in the real world by interviewing local residents and creating in-depth profiles to piece together a story about race in Kalamazoo.

The goal of the project is to raise awareness among community members about the varying racial and ethnic experiences in their own community, while simultaneously providing students' with an opportunity to apply their skills to real world issues, learn more about journalism, diversity, and community in the process. The students work can found at www.raceexhibit.org. A booklet of photos and interviews also will be available online in the near future. The panel discussion was part of a larger exhibit at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum titled, "RACE: Are we so different?" which is free and open to the public from Oct. 2 through Jan. 2, 2011.

"Participating in the project turned out to be a life-altering experience for many of the students. They felt that what they learned from the subjects they interviewed was so much more than they could ever have gotten from a textbook or a class discussion."

*-Donna Odom
Southwest Michigan Black Heritage Society*

Communication Class gets Hands-On Consulting and Diversity Training Experience with Stryker

Dr. Kathleen Wong's Com 4800 class, Applied Projects in Organizational Training, received an unusual class assignment last fall when they were given the opportunity to consult with and develop a diversity and inclusion awareness training session for over 100 managers from Stryker Corporation in Kalamazoo, Mich.

The 26 students in Wong's class gathered at Stryker in November to facilitate the training sessions. Each student was responsible for facilitating their own group with training content that was developed in accordance with Wong, who researches the topic and has conducted diversity training in the past. Current and significant theoretical and applied research was used to develop a module based on the needs of Stryker employees. Those needs were determined earlier in the semester when students had the opportunity to visit Stryker and interview the managers to collect information about what they perceived to be pressing issues in the organization.

Armed with weeks of preparation (Wong commented that students asked to stay late in class on two occasions to prepare for the training) communication students entered the corporate world to test their abilities and skills in a truly hands-on experience. One hundred and ten managers across three divisions (medical, corporate, and craniomaxillofacial) attended two sessions, a general information session conducted by Wong, and smaller group sessions facilitated by students. Topics included



Dr. Kathleen Wong (Left) with her Communication 4800 class at Stryker

issues such as the differences between in-groups and out-groups, unconscious decision making based on physical appearance, categorization of people, inclusion and exclusion, gendered thinking and perceptions, and how to be a better communicator.

After the training, students received excellent feedback on both the usefulness of the sessions, and the effectiveness of the facilitation. But they weren't quite done yet. Wong also wanted the students to experience 'real-world' consulting. Students also were responsible for conducting post training follow-ups in which they created reports from the evaluations. By the end of the semester, students had created a full consulting report.

"It was a win-win situation," Wong said. She felt that the managers benefited from the material, but also were happy to help students get real world experience. Students also benefited from getting a taste of corporate culture and enjoyed engaging with populations outside of the classroom.

Local Independent Film to Premier at Moondance Film Festival in Colorado

"The Lake Effect" will premier at the Moondance Film Festival in Boulder, Colo., on Sept. 26th, and has already received The Spirit of Moondance Award (best feature film by a female director).

Several students and faculty were involved with the film. "The Lake Effect," a dramedy about delicate family relations which takes place in Southwestern Michigan, was produced by Kalamazoo native Jennifer Westin. The film was shot in 2009 in Kalamazoo and surrounding areas and included landmarks such as Bell's Brewery, Heritage Guitars, Fenn Valley Winery, and

Sherman's Ice Cream.

Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, associate professor, was the first assistant director for the film, and the crew included several student interns:

Andrea Flader, B.A., '09, Production Intern
Elizabeth Ellen Quinlan, Production Intern
Lisa Bridenstine, Sound Intern
Brian Lane, AC (Assistant Camera) Intern
Phillip Wright, Art Intern
Michael J. Markel III, Public Relations Intern

Student Awards & Honors

Communication Students Inducted into National Honor Society

On April 16 the School of Communication held its annual honors ceremony and induction into the Eta Rho chapter of Lambda Pi Eta, a national communication honor society for undergraduate students. Fifty-three Western Michigan University students were inducted during a mid-day ceremony at the Bernhard Center on WMU's main Kalamazoo campus. Friends, family, and faculty mentors looked on as students were awarded emblems by Dr. Leigh Ford, director of WMU's School of Communication, and Virginia Gregory, communication instructor and faculty advisor for Lambda Pi Eta.

Undergraduate communication majors at WMU are eligible to join the chapter if they have completed at least 60 credits of coursework, with 12 credits in communication. They also must have achieved a grade point average of 3.0 or higher overall, and 3.25 or higher in their communication courses. More than 1,000 students are enrolled in one of the seven major programs and three minor programs offered by the School of Communication, one of the largest departments in WMU's College of Arts and Sciences. Only the top five percent of Western's communication students are selected to join the honor society.

A list of the students can be found in the Insider at http://www.wmich.edu/cas/pubs/insider_online/.



Students Receive Academic Honors

The School of Communication announces the recipients of its 2009-2010 scholarships and academic awards. On April 16 these recipients were honored at a ceremony held in the Bernhard Center. School of Communication students who have achieved excellence in the classroom and in campus and community activities were recognized as follows:

WMUK Scholarship in Radio

Jeremy Lwande
Andrew Minegar

Jules Rossman Scholarship

Robert Carter
Reena Pandit

Burke Scholarship

Eric Woodyard
Trevor Smith
Ashley Wioskowski

School of Communication Scholars

Jake Durrett
Eric Pacifici
Zachary Spencer
Philip Swanson

Excellence in Classroom Leadership Award

Jeremy McAdow
Morgan Schut
Jvon Rayford
Joseph Pehrson



Angela Beck, second from left, with some of her students at the Nicaragua Christian Academy Camp where she taught English.

Presidential Scholar in Communication

Angela Beck graduated in June 2010 with a double major in Organizational Communication and Spanish. During her time at WMU, Angela completed an internship at the Douglass Community Association in youth development, in addition to numerous volunteer experiences on and off campus. Locally, Angela was the training and development coordinator for WMU's Spring Into the Streets community service day, a student leader of Campus Crusade for Christ, and has volunteered for Drive Safe Kalamazoo, the Hispanic American Council, and the Dream Center of Kalamazoo. Angela also has worked with Youth with a Mission in Mexico and with the Nicaragua Christian Academy between semesters. Additionally, Angela served as a co-facilitator for the First Year Experience Seminar and as an ambassador during Fall Welcome Week. This fall we welcome Angela as a teaching assistant and full time student to the School of Communication M.A. program.



Krystal Bresnahan and Stephanie Rubl

Graduate Students Win All-University Honors

Two School of Communication graduate students have won the university's highest awards for teaching and research. Krystal Bresnahan received a 2009-10 All-University award for Graduate Research and Creative Activities. Stephanie Rubl received a 2009-10 All-University Graduate Teaching Effectiveness award. Krystal and Stephanie were among the awardees who gave brief presentations of their work on April 22. These awards are sponsored by the Graduate College and the Graduate Studies Council of the Faculty Senate. This is the second year in a row that M.A. nominees from the School have received both of these All University honors.

Grand Tour of Europe Experience

On April 9, Krystal Bresnahan, M.A. '09, was recognized for her poster presentation at the 4th Annual WMU Research and Creative Activities Poster Presentation. Forty-three graduate students and faculty members presented their work. Krystal received one of 15 awards for her poster presentation about "The Grand Tour of Europe Experience," a documentary exploring the everyday lives of eleven WMU students while they studied in Western Europe. This documentary is currently used as a recruitment tool for the Haenicke Institute for Global Education, Witte Travel Company, and also is displayed at the annual Study and Intern Abroad Fair.

Truman Scholarship Finalist

Jacqueline Luedtke, organizational communication major, was named a finalist in the Truman Scholarship competition. Recipients of this prestigious award have the opportunity to win up to \$30,000 for graduate studies. Luedtke, also a Lee Honors College student, was among 176 students who were chosen from across the nation as finalists, one of six from Michigan.

Phi Beta Kappa Inductees

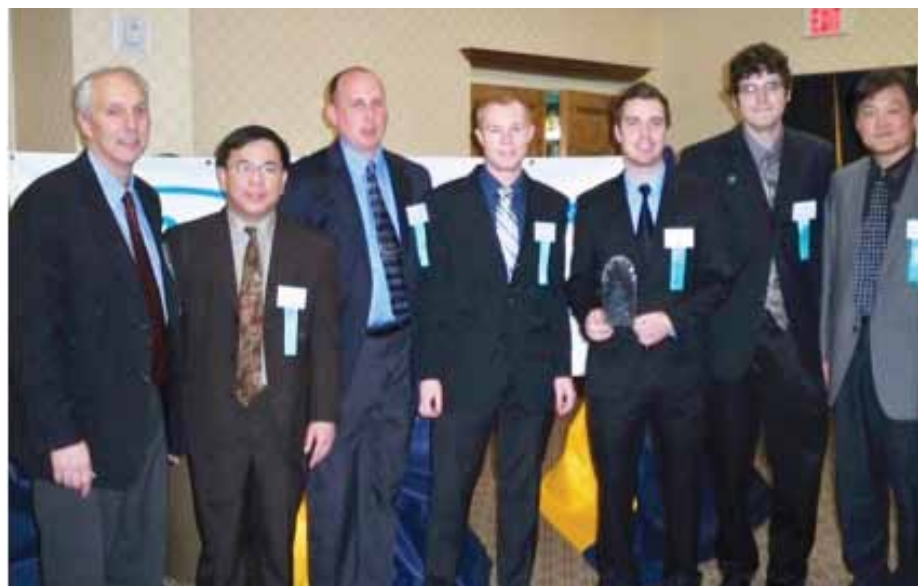
Each year, students with exemplary academic performance are inducted into the Theta of Michigan Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, an honors fraternity that selects only top students for inclusion. In the past academic year, nearly 70 WMU students were inducted, ten from the School of Communication:

Emily Beard
Angela Beck
Lisa Bridenstine
Caitlin Burt
Alysia Caringi

Hannah Dockweiler
Jacqueline Luedtke
Margaret Lukshaitis
Eric Pacifici
Craig Rogers

Students Win Two Years in a Row at ITERA

The 2010 ITERA Conference in Nashville, Tenn., (International Telecommunications Education and Research Association) was an exciting event for the four WMU students who won both the national case study competition and the individual best undergraduate paper award. WMU's Telecommunications and Information Management (TIM) program was selected, along with three other universities, for the final round of competition which took place in mid April. Members of the team included Chad Stec (CIS), Kurt Gillespie, (TIM), Greg Guyette (TIM), and Shane Mittan, (TIM) who won the individual paper contest. Congratulations students!



Left to Right: Dr. Richard Gersbon, Dr. Pairin Katerattanakul, Chad Stec, Shane Mittan, Kurt Gillispie, Greg Guyette, and Dr. Michael Tarn

Students *In the Real World*

Third Coast Media Festival



On April 29, the School of Communication hosted the second annual Third Coast Film and Media Festival in Brown Hall. The event featured 31 digital and 16mm short films, as well as audio and broadcast journalism projects and 3D digital animation. Dozens of students submitted films, which were selected based on their innovation

by Film, Video, and Media Studies faculty members, Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti and Dr. Heather Addison.

Communication students involved in the organization of the event were: Festival Director, Tyler Trierweiler; Assistant Director and Publicity Coordinator, Dain Evans; Webmaster, Jake Durrett; and Production Assistant, Alysia Caringi. A video for the website was produced by Joey McDaniel. More information about the Third Coast Film and Media Festival can be found at www.thirdcoastmediafest.com.

Film, Video & Media Studies Student Productions

Jake Durrett successfully completed a web video for the College of Arts and Sciences, mentored by Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti. The video was featured on the College of Arts and Sciences website.

Alysia Caringi produced a web video for the School of Communication that will be available for viewing this fall. Caringi was mentored by Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti.

Steve Ailes produced a web video for the Clifford Media Center that will also be available for viewing this fall. Ailes was mentored by Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti.



Jacob Durrett with mentor Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti.

Students Serving the U.S.A.

Ronald Lloyd Widerberg, a Film, Video and Media Studies major, was deployed for military service in Iraq this past spring. Ronald's unit is the 318th Public Affairs Operation Center and as a result has plenty of access to high speed Internet which he hopes to use to post video blogs about his experience. Check the School of Communication website for updates.

News Worthy

Student Writes Feature for SLAM Magazine

School of Communication student Eric Woodyard had the exciting opportunity of having a feature length article published in August's edition of "SLAM" magazine. The article featured basketball legend and Flint, Mich., native Terry Furlow, who played for Michigan State University in the 1970s, but was killed in a car crash before realizing his full potential in the NBA.

Woodyard, who is majoring in journalism, had long waited for the opportunity to write this feature story about Furlow, whom he had heard about while growing up in Flint. For this story, Woodyard had the opportunity to interview Greg Kelsner, former Spartan basketball player and current television announcer for the Detroit Pistons, and former Flint Journal Sports columnist, Dean Howe.

Environmental Reporting Web Site Launched by Students

The Green Scene, a new web site featuring a collection of environmental news stories from journalism students, can be found at <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~steinke/GreenScene/index.html>. The site features articles written by students in an Environmental Reporting class at WMU who covered local and global issues, such as the threat of Asian carp in the Great Lakes, the reduction of WMU Dining Service's carbon footprint, and the creation of fuel from algae.

Alumni Academy

School of Communication 2009 Alumni Academy Inductees

Judith S. Trent

B.A. '62

Dr. Trent is a professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Cincinnati. Her research interests focus on political communication, communication in presidential campaigns, and the campaign strategies and rhetorical style of women in elective politics.



The author, co-author, or editor of 23 books or book chapters, 39 academic journal articles and more than 200 presentations at state, regional, national, and international communication conferences, Trent is probably best known for her co-authorship of "Political Campaign Communication: Principles and Practices," the first book-length study of elective politics that utilized the principles and practices of communication to examine elective politics, currently in its 6th edition. A frequent media commentator during the 1992 through 2004 presidential campaigns, Trent has appeared more than 60 times as a political communication analyst for television and radio, and has had her research

cited in various newspapers including "The New York Times" and the "Washington Post."

Trent has extensive experience in university leadership posts and has served as the president of the Central States Communication Association (CSCA) and the National Communication Association (NCA). She also was the recipient of NCA's Distinguished Service Award in 2004 and was inducted into CSCA's Hall of Fame in 2006. In 2009 she was selected as a Centennial Scholar by the Eastern States Communication Association. Trent received both her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. In addition to her induction into the Alumni Academy, Dr. Trent also received an Alumni Achievement Award from the College of Arts and Sciences at WMU.

Michele Serbenski

M.A. '04



Michele is the vice president of Performance Excellence for the Bronson Healthcare Group, a nationally recognized healthcare system in Kalamazoo, Mich. Serbenski worked closely with others to lead Bronson to receive recognition as the only Baldrige healthcare award recipient in 2005. The Baldrige award is the nation's highest honor for organizational performance excellence awarded annually by the President of the United States of America. As a senior Baldrige Examiner, Serbenski now shares Bronson's story and assists other organizations in their pursuit of excellence. Serbenski worked in employee relations at Whirlpool Corporation for several years before coming to Bronson in 1994, where she has held various positions.

Serbenski is the president of the Ministry with Community board of directors, a local non-profit which provides food, daytime shelter, and other basic services to central Kalamazoo's homeless, poor, mentally ill and hard-to-serve adults. She holds a B.A. in Journalism from Boston University and was named by Business Review as one of Western Michigan's Top Business Leaders Under 40 in 2005.

Ronald Jarvis

B.S. '93

Jarvis began his career in sales development. In 1994 when he joined Patton Industrial Products, he excelled in sales (Salesperson of the Year 1994, 1995) to become



an internationally known sales executive who was instrumental in the company's growth and gain of market share in the industrial fastener field. Jarvis gained recognition in his field with a collaborative, results-oriented approach that exceeded customer expectations. He became director of sales in 1996 and vice president of sales in 2001. Ron left Patton in 2009 and is now the director of new business development at Class C Components, Inc. in Ramsey, Minn.

Ron also has taught technical seminars at National Fasteners Distribution Association Conventions and is an active member in the American Marketing Association where he has been featured as a keynote motivational speaker. Serving on the Nicols Ridge Home Owners Association board as vice president, Jarvis is also a board member at Bracketts Crossing Country Club. Jarvis is a veteran of the U.S. Army, 101st Airborne Division.

Alumni Academy Inductees
cont. from p. 9

Angela (Nowak) Jacobs

B.S. '92



Jacobs currently is the senior associate director for talent development for alumni relations and development at the University of Chicago.

Jacobs has previous work experience in various public and private industries where she gained extensive knowledge in communication, human resources, and organizational development, among others. She began at the University of Chicago as a recruiter in the human resources management division before becoming an executive recruiter for alumni relations and development. Jacobs also served as an intelligence analyst for the United States Army.

Jacobs has impressive volunteer experience as well, including membership on the board of directors for BUILD (Broader Urban Involvement In Leadership Development) since 2009, the human resources committee from 2008 and the fun(d) committee in 2007. Jacobs also volunteered with the Greater Chicago Food Depository, is an active member of the WMU Alumni Association, including involvement as an alumni admissions ambassador, and sits on the School of Communication's External Advisory Board. Jacobs received an M.B.A. from the Keller Graduate School of Management in 2004 and is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR).

A Lost Boy who Found Hope

In 1987, civil war in Sudan forced thousands of children to flee their homes, becoming known as the lost boys and girls of Sudan. Thon (William) Chol, one of those lost boys, went on to receive a bachelor's degree in 2006 and a master's degree in 2008 from Western Michigan University.

When most boys are six years old, they are occupied with learning how to ride a bike, or some other form of play time. But when Thon Chol was six years old, he was forced to flee his hometown after witnessing the deaths of his father, most of his family members, and many other people in his village.

Thon, who now goes by William, was born in Jonglei State, Sudan, in 1983. In early 1987 many children, like Chol, were forced to flee and became known as the lost boys of Sudan. Civil war had ended the life they knew and many attempted to reach Ethiopia in an attempt to live. Thousands faced dehydration, famine, and frequent attacks from wild animals and soldiers on this journey. Of those who made it, Chol and many others were forced to return. In 1991, Chol returned to Sudan because of ongoing war in Ethiopia and then made his way to Kenya, where his life began to change.

"God blessed me with resettlement through the Lutheran Immigration Refugee Services (LIRS), and the United States Government. I subsequently ended up in foster care in Bethany Christian Services in Grand Rapids, Mich., where I was treated with respect, dignity, care, and love," said Chol.

In 2006, Chol earned his B.A. in Organizational Communication, with a minor in Social Work and went on to complete an M.A. in Social Work, with concentration in Policy, Planning & Administration in 2008, both from WMU, with honors.

After graduation, Chol accepted an internship with the U.S. Senate in Washington D.C, where he was exposed to democratic principles and attended senate hearings and briefings, also serving on the legislative subcommittees on human rights, foreign policy, immigration, and foster care/adoption. In 2008, he was featured on World Refugee Day under the sponsorship of Senator Carl Levin.

After completing his internship, he accepted a position with the District of Columbia Government, where he works for the Child and Family Services Agency as an Educational Resource Specialist. He provides resources and knowledge about post secondary education options for youth. "I love what I do," Chol said. He currently is married and lives in Silver Spring, Mary., with his family.



Thon (William) Chol on Capital Hill

UPDATES

Katherine De Wolfe Pavelich, B.A. '06, currently is working as the director of membership, sales, and marketing for Westwood Golf Club in Houston, Texas.

Denise Fleckenstein, B.S. '76; M.A. '82, is the new Director of Gift Planning for the United Way of Southeastern Michigan where she will be creating, building, and implementing a planned giving program from the ground up. Denise also is a member of the School of Communication External Advisory Board.

Matthew G. Lawrence, B.A. '10, has been hired to serve as a press assistant in the White House Office of the United States Trade Representative.

Christopher W. Tremblay, B.A. '94; M.A. '99, has been named executive director of enrollment management and interim Director of financial aid at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, where he also is a doctoral student. In the past year, he has co-authored a one act musical titled "FONTS!" which premiered at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill in Canton, Mich., in January.

Kristen M. Benvenuti Pytel, M.A. '03, is a Juris Doctorate Candidate (as of Dec. 2009) at Wayne State University Law School. She also serves as the senior associate editor of "The Journal of Law in Society" and is a student attorney for the Small Business Enterprises and Nonprofit Corporations Clinic.

Todd Hufford, B.A. '94. After several years at Biggs/Gilmore in Kalamazoo, Mich., Todd has joined The Kellogg Company as manager of DTC/Natural Efforts in the E-business Department.

Natalie Lowman Boyd, B.A. '06, and her husband Justin (also a WMU Alumni) quit their jobs over a year ago to travel the world and write about their experiences, first on <http://www.nomad-backpackers.com> and then several other travel websites. She currently is pursuing an M.A. in Education.

R. David Eick, B.B.A. '72; M.A. '73. After working for more than 30 years in senior advertising roles, Eick opened his own business in 1999. He currently publishes "Xology Magazine" in Southeastern Michigan for Automation Alley.

Diane Bogush, B.A. '73, After working as a professional illustrator, Bogush has become a special education teacher in California.

Kellen Manley, B.A., '06, has accepted the position of digital media specialist for the Fetzer Institute in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Laura Reardon-Murphy, B.A. '00, is currently a senior project manager for the McKeeman Communications Group, Inc.

Timothey R. Terrentine, Sr., B.S. '04; M.A. '06, has accepted a position with Southwest Michigan First as associate vice president where his duties will focus on partnerships with regional companies to reduce poverty through economic growth and job creation.

Since 2006, Terrentine had served as the executive director of the Douglass Community Association in Kalamazoo, Mich., where his work resulted in significant growth including the on-site addition of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Kalamazoo. Additionally, he saw Douglass through its transition to an association with greater relevance in the community and a greater ability to empower the populations it serves. Terrentine also is a member of the School of Communication's Alumni Academy, 2007, and a member of the External Advisory Board.

Lunch with a Com Grad



Students and alumni gather in the Clifford Center of Brown Hall for lunch during Homecoming week.

Each year during homecoming week the members of our External Advisory Board travel to campus for an annual meeting. Last year, as part of that meeting, the School of Communication hosted an informal luncheon which gave the board members the opportunity to interact with some of the School's top scholars.

Lunch with a Com Grad is a new annual event that benefits both students and the External Advisory Board by giving them the opportunity to interact in an informal setting. Students had the opportunity to network and learn more about the career paths available to graduates of our program, while board members were able to gain insight into the School's student population.



Tim Terrentine, center, networks with fellow alumnus Edd Snyder, right, and student Zachary Spencer, left, at Lunch with a Com Grad.

Western Michigan University
School of Communication
312 Sprau Tower
1903 W. Michigan Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5318

NONPROFIT
ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
KALAMAZOO, MI
PERMIT # 478

Return Service Requested

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.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Work Ph.: _____

Home Ph.: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Degree: _____

I am a(n):

Communication Graduate

Friend of the School of
Communication

Other

[Click here](#) to make an electronic gift

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

We want to hear from you!

Upcoming Events

We are coming to Detroit!

Curious about the status of your alma mater and your former classmates and professors in the School of Communication?

We in the School of Communication are curious about you, and want to hear your stories. So, we invite you to attend a gathering for southeastern Michigan School of Communication alumni exclusively.

When: Thursday, September 9, 2010

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

*Where: WMU Metro Detroit Regional Center
32820 Woodward Avenue, Royal Oak*

*Hosts: Leigh Arden Ford, M.A.'93
Director, School of Communication
Dorilee Schieble, Director of Development
College of Arts and Sciences
David Cessante, B.A., '95*

Please RSVP by September 3:
by email, leigh.ford@wmich.edu, or by phone, (269)387-3133

College of Arts and Sciences Homecoming Tailgate Party

The School of Communication will participate in the College of Arts and Sciences Homecoming Tailgate. Come join us for refreshments and reconnect with fellow alums!

When: Saturday, October 2, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Tailgate area on the grounds of the College of Health and Human Services located on Oakland Drive.

Please RSVP at www.wmich.edu/cas

Tell Us Your Story! The School of Communication wants to know what you've been up to since graduation! Tell us your story, including degree and graduation year at leigh.ford@wmich.edu

Find us on [Facebook!](#) Stay updated on SoC events and news