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In this issue:

- New Alumni Academy inductees announced
- Student collaborations in video media
- Faculty accomplishments and accolades
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As I write this note, the final group of new WMU students who will matriculate in Fall 2014 are beginning their orientation session. Many orientation leaders are School of Communication majors. These students represent us well across the campus community and their leadership in orientation is just one of the many ways the School of Communication contributes to a vital, energized university and community.

In 2013-2014, School of Communication students and faculty participated in many internal and external collaborations through their classroom activities and their research projects. Some of these collaborations are featured in this issue. We also highlight faculty, student and alumni accomplishments—all of which serve to enhance the already strong reputation of the School. Finally, we report the highlights of our Donor Appreciation event held in May. I think you will find that the thank you video featuring our students captures the spirit of gratitude we all have for the support of our many friends and donors.

In our last issue of the Communicator, I noted that many exciting and challenging events lie in our future. First, because we are able to feature only a sample of student, faculty, and alumni activities in each issue of The Communicator, changes in our communication practices are coming (see page 4). Second, in 2014-2015 the university will undergo an academic program review and planning process whereby a full review of all academic programs will be undertaken. We approach these reviews with confidence. Our school enrollments continue to be strong across our seven majors and two minors. When coupled with our graduate program and our contributions to general education, we remain one of the largest departments at the university and one of the most visible as a result of faculty research productivity and campus involvement. We consider this review an opportunity to step back from our busy day-to-day activities in an effort to evaluate ourselves. The central questions we will address in the review are, first, are we meeting the needs of the 21st century student? And second, are we being responsive to changes in the discipline and in the broader community? In this review our three determined criteria will be sustainability, reputation and opportunity.

Leigh Ford
9.23.2013
SoC Updates

A banner year for School of Communication graduate students

A number of School of Communication M.A. students have been accepted into some of the top doctoral programs in the country. Set to begin their doctoral studies in the fall 2014, our Master’s graduates and their future doctoral institutions include:

- Dana Borzea (West Virginia University)
- Andrew Gambino (Penn State University)
- Seseer Mou (North Dakota State University)
- Nathan Swords (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)
- Deirdre Zerilli (University of Missouri-Columbia)

Katelyn Sandor (pictured below) set a unique precedent this academic year by earning both the Graduate Teaching Effectiveness Award and the Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award for her contributions in the SoC program.

Recent M.A. graduate Samantha LoBue is planning to move back to her home town of Long Island, New York to pursue a career in event planning. She’ll also be working as a visual coordinator and choreographer for a high school marching band.

Graduate Bethany Bohlen recently accepted a position as a ministry intern at InterVarsity USA, in Columbus, Ohio.

Channels, modes and media

The SoC is making changes to improve our communication connections in fall 2014:

The re-designed SoC website will launch in fall of 2014, offering a more user-friendly site that will be accessible and readable on your mobile devices.

The Communicator will be shorter, sent more frequently, and accessible and readable on mobile devices.

You now can follow SoC events, updates and announcements on the SoC Facebook page (Friend us and/or like us) and look for last minute School updates via Twitter.

If you have events, updates or news items you’d like to see spotlighted, please contact us. Today’s highly mobile population means we can lose track of you. Alumni can update contact information (email and address) easily here.

Announcements and additional information about undergraduate advising can be found on the SoC advising Facebook page: Facebook.com/wmucomadvising
School of Communication Scholar Spotlight

Each year the School of Communication is able to count an impressive number of departmental and university scholars, all of whom exemplify high scholastic achievement, program-defining leadership, community contribution and a desire to develop a broad-reaching knowledge in their respective area of communication study.

Representative School scholarship recipients for 2014 include:

Pasha Shipp, 2014 School Scholar

Elizabeth Blasko, 2014-15 Northouse Scholar

Bryleigh Loughlin, 2014 Presidential Scholar

Nathan Frisbie, 2014 School Scholar

Brandon Paschall, 2014-15 Abrams Scholar

Michelle Mayfield, 2014-15 Northouse Scholar

Maxwell Hahn, 2014 WMUK Scholar

Felicia Weathers, 2014-15 Abrams Scholar

Scott Shank, 2014 School Scholar
When Professor Kathy Wong told her Communication 4800 class there would be no textbook, some students didn’t know how to take the news.

“We were surprised,” said recent graduate Elizabeth Bandico. “We thought, ‘How will we study without a textbook?’” However, her worries were quickly diminished. “It was one of the best learning experiences I’ve had and it was way different than any class I’ve ever taken.”

Com 4800, a capstone course for organizational communication majors, may focus on a wide range of specialized organizational topics. This particular course centered on conflict management.

Wong first taught her students the theories and research behind conflict management and then worked with them to design a workshop for sixth graders at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, located in Kalamazoo.

“I wanted to give my students an experience that would allow them to take what they learned in our class and apply it in real context -- to become facilitators of conflict management,” said Wong.

Wong worked with teachers at Maple Street Middle School to pair the students in the COM 4800 class with a mix of sixth grade students from varying backgrounds. Once grouped, the WMU student facilitators used the curriculum prepared in class to engage the students.

Using role-playing, reflection and writing, the communication students were able to teach the sixth graders how to express their emotions more effectively and to listen actively.

“The goal is not conflict resolution, but conflict management,” said Wong. “There will always be conflicts of some type, so you can’t just eliminate them, you have to learn how to manage them.”

The sixth grade students at Maple Street Middle School channeled their energy into the workshops and during the process were able to open up about their experiences and feelings, said Bandico and Wong.

“They were great listeners,” said Bandico. “And they were really into what we were trying to bring to them. The vast majority of the students wanted to be there, talk to us and know more.”

During the workshop, sixth grade students opened up about the conflicts they have to manage in their own lives, expressing feeling frustrated with their structured schedules, not feeling like they had the opportunity to socialize and maintain friendships. Some students expressed feeling the pressure of responsibilities at home as well as at school.

“Myself, the teachers and my students were surprised by how open the students were and we were affected by what they had to say,” said Wong. “Some of these kids are really going through a lot.”

Overall, said Wong, the course was a success. Both sets of students were excited to work with one another. The facilitations allowed Wong’s students to develop their ability to teach and recognize effective active listening and communication strategies and the Maple Middle School students learned some conflict management skills.

“One student said, ‘I’ll probably still misbehave, but now I won’t be so mad if I get in trouble,’” said Wong, laughing. “It seems that they learned what we wanted them to learn.”
School of Communication professors Sue Ellen Christian and Jennifer Machiorlatti often discussed the possibilities of collaboration with one another’s advanced courses.

During the spring semester of 2014, that discussion turned to reality when Christian’s JRN 4100 Specialized Reporting class and Machiorlatti’s COM 4570 Advanced Video Production class joined forces to research and produce a video illustrating the results of the WMU Campus Climate Survey, compiled and released in spring, 2013.

This campus-wide climate survey was sent to 5,615 participants across many campus constituencies such as WMU students, administrators, staff and faculty. The study’s goal was to discover the perceptions and experiences of diversity and inclusion on campus.

Increasing diversity and inclusion efforts on campus is one of the University’s priorities and is a key topic for Christian and Machiorlatti in their instruction and research and creative activities.

“Every semester that I teach the JRN 4100 capstone reporting course, I focus on some issue surrounding diversity because it is an ongoing and critical issue in any community, including ours,” said Christian.

Even though the focus of the collaboration is new, the idea to combine classes in order to execute a large-scale project is not.

“I collaborated before,” said Machiorlatti. “But for this project it was primarily campus and community oriented.”

Over the course of five weeks, journalism and video students worked for hours outside of class time to interview sources in the community and on campus. Executive Director of University Relations Cheryl Roland also visited the combined classes for an in-class press conference focused on the University’s perspective on these issues.

As the students worked on their projects, they found their respective disciplines were related but also different in important ways, as the creative impulses of the film, video and media studies students met with the fact-based approach of the journalism students. At the same time, each class was able to learn something from the other. Blair Yankey, a journalism student whose group covered diversity satisfaction, says he learned new media skills while working with the video students.

“I learned a bit more about the functions of a camera, and I also got to see a little of how they edited video to create our documentary,” said Yankey. “The video students were definitely needed as we, journalism students, couldn’t have completed this project so well alone.”

Yankey also felt the video students learned how to conduct an interview and some news writing from the journalism students.

Another journalism student, Abigail Williams, who was the producer of her group, says what she learned from the project as a whole was awareness.

“I learned that even though we all look different on the outside, we’re all the same on the inside,” she said. “Most of us want to be heard and I feel like that was the message that came through each project.”

By the end of the semester, the collaborations produced six non-fiction narratives that are 5- to 8-minutes long. The documentaries report on six key areas: what diversity means to people, equity, disability, campus-community relations, and what actions are being taken by the university based on the survey results.

The videos produced by the students will be submitted to various national competitions, including the Media That Matters Film Festival and the Broadcast Education Association’s student contest.

View the projects: JournalismAtWMU.com/campus-pulse-measuring-diversity-inclusion-campus-community/
News

School of Communication students declare, ‘I am CAS!’

What better way to illustrate the benefits of a College of Arts and Sciences education than to take to the “streets” of WMU and ask students, faculty and staff what they love most about the CAS?

That was the idea behind the “I am CAS” promotional contest this spring semester. The rules were easy: Participants were asked to write down one or two sentences about how the CAS shapes their lives and then take a photo of themselves in front of CAS visual displays that were put up in Brown Hall.

The results were inspiring and many School of Communication students rose to the challenge to explain how SoC programs and faculty in particular have benefitted them. Not surprisingly, Casey Blair, an organizational communication major, walked away with one of the two top prizes.

Here’s what just a few of our students had to say about their experience:

“Being a part of CAS has opened many doors for me to gain experiences in both fields I am studying and in areas that do not pertain to my majors, but simply help me to experience more of life. My professors here not only help me understand vital material, but they have given me invaluable direction on how to get the most out of each and every day and discover what will ultimately lead to a personally successful life.”

Casey Blair | Organizational communication and Spanish Winner of the “I am CAS” caption contest.

“CAS has not only given me the confidence to deliver a great speech, it has given me a set of goals and standards to look for in future employers. In my organizational communication class I gained skills in branding myself to make sure I am unforgettable and marketable.”

Colleen McChesney | Organizational communication

“I am a teller of stories. I ask the hard questions. I give voice to the silenced. I am a journalism student at Western Michigan University. I am CAS.”

Elisia Alonso | Journalism

Find the complete library of entries on the College of Arts and Sciences Facebook page
Faculty Spotlight

Research, updates and awards

It’s been an eventful year for Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, who was promoted to full professor in April of 2014, received a College of Arts and Faculty Achievement Award in Teaching in February 2014 and recently premiered her documentary “Peace During War” at the Waterfront Film Festival in late June.

Faculty Achievement Award
The CAS Faculty Achievement Award is given annually to professors in the College of Arts and Sciences nominated in various categories. These awards recognize the exemplary efforts of a professor whose work strengthens the vision of the college as a whole.

‘Peace During War’
Machiorlatti directed “Peace During War” and co-produced the film with Michael Wilder and Yafinceio Harris, the two men whose experiences on the streets of Kalamazoo anchor the film.

“Peace During War” tells the story of Wilder and Harris as they navigated a life of violence as gang rivals. To find their way out of a life of crime and into a life of personal and spiritual growth, both men reconciled their differences and turned to different outlets and support systems.

Together, Harris and Wilder now run an organization called Peace During War, and pursue a common mission to show kids the reality of gangs, guns and violence and encourage a path of education and enrichment.

The film production team included School of Communication students, several of whom were awarded College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Awards for their work as production manager, cinematographers, production assistants and content editors.

The Waterfront Film Festival has been voted one of the top five independent film festivals in the country by the Screen Actors Guild of America Magazine.

For more information, visit Peace-DuringWar.com.

Q and A with interim Student Internship Coordinator

Spring 2014 was Jordan Tyler’s first semester as interim student internship coordinator for the School of Communication. Tyler, a WMU School of Communication alumnus (M.A. ’13), took some time to talk to us about his experience so far:

How’s your experience been so far?

My experience as the coordinator for student internships thus far has been fantastic. I can honestly say I love what I am doing and couldn't ask for a better environment to be working in while serving this role.

Has your experience as a WMU student helped you as coordinator?

My experience at WMU has definitely helped me in this position. As a former communication student, I can relate to students in many ways, having gone through similar experiences throughout my academic career. I have had the opportunity to be a student, a teaching assistant, adjunct professor and staff member in the School of Communication, all of which have molded me into the professional I am today.

What's a challenge or reward of the job?

I am continuing to reach out to students and build relationships, but this is also one of the biggest challenges to my job. Trying to find a universal platform to reach students and spread information can be difficult. However, through creating PowerPoint presentations, informational videos, printed handouts, and social media outlets I am able to reach a different audience.

It is the combination of these efforts as well as responsiveness that have the biggest impact.
Teaching awards, publications, promotions and recognition -- the faculty at the School of Communication continue to develop professionally, creatively and personally.

**Dr. Autumn Edwards** and **Prof. Sue Ellen Christian** have been named as recipients of the WMU Distinguished Teaching Awards, to be awarded in October of 2014 at the Academic Convocation. This marks the first time in the history of the University that two colleagues from the same department have been awarded the Distinguished Teaching recognition in the same year.

**Dr. Richard Gershon** has been elected Vice President of the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate.

**Dr. Autumn Edwards** has been granted sabbatical leave for the Fall 2014.

**Dr. Julie Apker** was accepted as a member of the 2014-15 Academic Leadership Academy. The academy is a learning community of selected faculty at WMU that meets year-long to engage with invited speakers, work through literature on leadership together, discuss specific situations in which leadership skills are used, and develop, implement, and troubleshoot leadership projects.

**Dr. Steven Lipkin**’s screenplay ‘Tunnels’ finished as a semi-finalist in this year’s StoryPros International script-writing contest. To finish as a semi-finalist, Lipkin’s screenplay placed in the top 80 screenplays, out of 1,100 entries. ‘Tunnels’ was also selected as a finalist in the New Hope Film Festival script competition.

**Dr. Keith Hearit** was named the new Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in July.
Alumni Spotlight

Highlights and news

SoC alumnus Eric Woodyard, an award-winning Flint Journal sports reporter, was nominated for two journalism awards this year. Woodyard also visited campus spring semester to speak in several communication classes about his work at MLive and his autobiographical documentary, “Flint Made Me,” which was featured on Black Entertainment Television’s website in part to help Woodyard start a $500 scholarship for Flint students.

The National Disability Institute awarded alumna Lucia Rios (B.A. ’02) the grand prize in the 2013 National Disability Institute My American Dream – Voices of Americans with Disabilities Video contest.

Glen Dillon, alumnus, accepted a position as Assistant Director of Student Media at WMU for the newly formed student media group. In his new role, Dillon will advise the newly integrated, three-student-run media groups: WIDR, the Western Herald and YBOT.

School of Communication alumni Kris Petro and Kellen Manley, founders of Tom Hanks Day, an international event centered on raising money for Lifeline Energy (Tom Hanks’ favorite non-profit dedicated to providing off-grid educational initiatives), started a Kickstarter campaign this April to allow anyone, anywhere to host their own Tom Hanks Day and give to Lifeline Energy. The group met their $9,000 goal.

Alumnus Bob Hercules was recently interviewed on CNN about his upcoming film about Maya Angelou, to release in 2015.

Journalism graduate Tim Murphy (B.A. ’86) was recently featured on MyWMU for his work as a radio personality and cookbook author. Murphy currently manages five radio stations in the Astoria, Oregon area and creates cookbooks targeted to hunters and anglers.

While rubbing shoulders with President Barack Obama, School of Communication alumni Aaron Ulrich and Brian Lane helped to produce a “Between Two Ferns” episode filmed in the Diplomatic Room of the White House. The episode, which was recently nominated for an Emmy, featured a Q and A between host Zach Galifianakis and Obama, was a Funny or Die production – the company at which Ulrich works.

School of Communication alumnus Keith Thompson, chief meteorologist at WWMT-TV in Kalamazoo, was awarded an Emmy in the On-Camera Talent category this spring.

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Alumni Spotlight
Alumni Academy Inductees Recognized

The School of Communication welcomed five new inductees into the Alumni Academy in 2013. Each new member brings a breadth of experience and dedication to the academy. The Alumni Academy’s purpose is to honor the achievements of alumni from our graduate and undergraduate programs. Inductees to the Academy all have distinguished professional careers and are actively involved in service and civic life.

Greg Busch (B.S., ‘91)
Greg Busch is Executive Vice President at GMR Marketing and a senior leader in the agency’s global consulting practice that specializes in sports sponsorship, from strategy and creative to activation and measurement. Since 1999 he has been involved in oversight of strategy development, property negotiation, agency integration and account team management serving GMR clients invested in every major sports property including the IOC and FIFA, as well as the NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, MLS, motorsports and college sports.

Ronald English (B.A. ‘77)
Ronald English is a director of the men’s basketball championships with the NCAA and is part of a team responsible for the planning and operation of the “March Madness” basketball tournament. English worked in media relations at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and at the Missouri Valley Conference before spending 15 years in championship-event administration with the Ohio Valley Conference.

Michael Evans (B.A., ‘92)
Michael Evans is the Executive Director of the Kalamazoo Literacy Council. At the Kalamazoo Literary Council, Evans is responsible for coordinating adult literacy programs and services. Aside from his work at the council, Evans is also the facilitator of the Adult Literacy Collaborative of Kalamazoo County and the Adult Learning Action Network of Greater Kalamazoo.

Ruth Heinig (WMU Professor Emeritus)
Dr. Ruth Beall Heinig joined the WMU faculty in 1964 and retired from the University in 1992 after 28 years of distinguished service. Heinig has received many accolades over the years for her contributions to her discipline, to the community, and to the university. She is the author of several books and she and her husband, Dr. Edward J. Heinig, WMU professor emeritus of education, co-chaired the University’s 2003 Centennial Celebration Committee.

Kate McCallum (B.S., ‘80)
McCallum's passion for the study of human potential inspired her to create the c3: Center for Conscious Creativity, a non profit think tank for socially beneficial storytelling and media creation located in Los Angeles. Through her work with the Center, McCallum has produced several events dedicated to creating a better future through arts and media, including workshops, screenings, classes, concerts, a writers’ conference and an annual symposium. McCallum has had a longtime behind-the-scenes production career in T.V. and film.

Read more about the 2013 Alumni Academy inductees, and explore their biographies online: http://wmich.edu/communication/alumni/academy.html
In May, the School of Communication faculty, staff, alumni and emeriti gathered to acknowledge and celebrate the $3.4 million in planned gifts, pledges, and monies received from generous donors over the last 10 years.

The celebration marked the close of the Leadership 100 campaign and featured the unveiling of a special brushed steel plaque in the Clifford Media Center (photo above, with the donors), now standing as a permanent symbol of gratitude to the people who helped the School of Communication meet its fundraising goal.

Faculty and students expressed their gratitude for the commitments and support of undergraduate scholarships, funding for faculty pedagogy and research and sponsorship of the dedicated spaces where SoC students and faculty can work and learn together in Brown Hall.

During the event program School Director Dr. Leigh Ford also announced new commitments for scholarships and a planned gift for the School of Communication Director’s Fund.

A highlight of the evening was the announcement of an endowed fellowship honoring Dr. Shirley A. Van Hoeven. This graduate fellowship will support the recruitment and retention of outstanding students who will continue the tradition of excellence in graduate education initiated under the leadership of Dr. Van Hoeven. (see page 15 for further details).

As we continue into another decade of giving, there are many opportunities to show your support. See our giving page for more information.

Watch this student-made video of School of Communication students thanking donors.
Thank You

To the following financial supporters of the School of Communication, we express our deepest gratitude for your generous contributions from June 30, 2013 to July 30, 2014!

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Sandra Lee Brinn
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Robert & Carolyn Witte
Phyllis Joy Youga

What’s in a name?

The School of Communication has been extremely fortunate in the generosity of its friends and supporters. Many alumni and emeriti faculty have established endowments to support specific needs in the School or to honor excellence in our current students and faculty.

For example, our named School of Communication scholarships reward academic excellence (Anne Linsdau Presidential Scholarship Award) or leadership in the classroom (The Peter and Laurel Northhouse Endowed Leadership Scholarship) or communication skills (The Paul and Julie Yelsma Endowed Scholarship). Other endowments support faculty research, travel and pedagogy or assist with space and equipment needs (The George and Louise Robeck Endowed Fund; The Rhodes/Doran School Director’s Fund). While each of the gifts have been named for and supported and sponsored by these individuals, the funds themselves are not limited to these donors alone. Indeed any donation to these funds serves to increase the overall support such a fund can provide. View our giving opportunities here.

If you are interested in establishing a student scholarship such as one targeted to freshmen who wish to major in communication and who compete in the WMU Medallion competition or a scholarship targeted to students in the School who would like to participate in our Study Abroad experience, please contact Dr. Leigh Ford.
Support the WMU School of Communication

Two ways to contribute. Please:

Click here to make a gift,

Or 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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I am a(n):

☐ Communication Graduate
☐ Friend of the School of Communication
☐ Other

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

Community
Advancing the School of Communication

We continuously look for ways to advance the research and instructional goals of the School of Communication to meet the needs of our faculty and students in the 21st Century (our second century!).

Graduate Fellowship Announced

The faculty, emeriti, alumni, and friends of the School of Communication announce the establishment of the Dr. Shirley A. Van Hoeven Graduate Fellowship. This fellowship honors Dr. Van Hoeven’s 31 years of extraordinary service to the School of Communication and to Western Michigan University.

During her forty years at the university, Dr. Shirley A. Van Hoeven taught, advised, directed and otherwise influenced the lives of thousands of students, particularly at the graduate level. Her contributions to graduate education in the School are immeasurable. Dr. Van Hoeven served as the Director of the Graduate Program in the School from 1979 through her retirement in 1999. Under her leadership the faculty built a large master’s program serving both full time and part time students. During the 1980s and 1990s many professionals in the community and across southwest Michigan benefited from the tireless efforts of School faculty and Dr. Van Hoeven to provide a high quality graduate education experience.

Funds generated by this endowment will support graduate recruitment and retention efforts in the School. Student awards from this endowment may include travel and research grants, technology grants, and annual scholarships. The fellowship’s goal is to provide support to outstanding students who will continue the tradition of excellence initiated under the leadership of Dr. Shirley Van Hoeven.

If you would like to support graduate education in the School and honor Dr. Van Hoeven, you can donate, here.