It is rare to find a professor, colleague or friend who is strong, solid, and reliable, but also has the patience and kindness to stay after hours to help students with complex statistical programs, build our department’s graduate curriculum or share a round of golf. However, the students and faculty members who worked with the humble Dr. Bill Jordan know that this is just a part of the great man. As Dr. Jeffery Braden, Dean of CHASS, so eloquently said, “Dr. Jordan has been a transformative influence on the Department of Communication.”

The department honored Dr. Jordan and his 25 years of work with a retirement gathering of close colleagues and current and former students on October 12 at the University Club State Room. The room was full of laughter and smiles while everyone recounted fond memories of time spent with Dr. Jordan. His former students made it evident that he was more than a teacher — he helped mentor them through the challenges of graduate school. One former student, Kelly Martin, remembered her time with Dr. Jordan saying, “He is one of those special teachers who treat students as his number one priority.” Others spoke of his patience and how dedicated he was to not only the graduate program, but also to each student. Dr. Jordan took the time to get to know his students and reached out to make their experience at NC State fulfilling. Lecturer Chris Cummings recalled that Dr. Jordan helped direct him on new projects, which led him to new research in the communication field that he would have never discovered without Dr. Jordan's help. Dr. Jordan also recalled memories that meant the most to him, stating that each student has a special story and each made a particular contribution to graduate education at NC State. He made such an impact that the graduate class of 2006 honored him with the Outstanding Graduate Teacher award.

Some faculty members looked up to Dr. Jordan as a mentor. Whether he was planning to go crabbing along the eastern shores or hitting a round on the golf course, Dr. Jordan wouldn't hesitate to take time to help them navigate the academic gauntlet, and for many he proved to be a kind friend as well. Also, those who have seen the eight time hole-in-one golfer in action says his character is in full display on the golf course. Golf is a sport that not only demands skill, but also traits like honesty and patience. Dr. Jordan's colleagues attest that he was never boastful of his great talent; instead, he consistently played a good game of golf with the same humility that marked his professional life.

Dr. Jessica Jameson said it best: “It is hard to imagine the department without him. Dr. Jordan has been the heart and soul of the Department and this feels like the end of an era.” During his years at NC State, Dr. Jordan has reached out and influenced the lives of many. He has been more than a professor or department head, going beyond his prescribed duties to help anyone in need of assistance. Students and faculty are all grateful for his dedication to help build an outstanding department. Dr. Jordan will leave the Department with a legacy 25 years in the making that will continue to grow with each new student who benefits from his contributions.

As for his future plans, Dr. Jordan says this is the first time in his career that he has no agenda. He hopes to be able to spend time with his loved ones, especially his grandson. Dr. Jordan also holds the title of head chef in his household so he hopes to improve his culinary skills as well, and of course he wants another hole-in-one. Always humble in his words, Dr. Jordan said, "My only regret over the years is that I did not have more time to spend with students, faculty members and dear friends.”

Please see Dr. Ken Zagacki’s tribute to Dr. Jordan on Page 2.
Our front page features a story about Dr. Bill Jordan. I would like to underscore the main themes of that article with my own tribute to a revered colleague.

Dr. Jordan came to NC State from Texas Tech in 1984. He had been department head at Texas Tech. Dr. Jordan brought with him to NC State the reputation as a nationally known scholar in the area of interpersonal communication. He studied the role of language in the creation, maintenance, and deterioration of personal relationships. And he was known as a professor who motivated students to learn important communication theories by considering the relevance of these theories to everyday social practice. He was especially fond of helping graduate students with their research. In fact, he sat on numerous (too many to recount here) graduate committees precisely because he was seen by graduate students as someone who greatly improved their scholarly work.

Dr. Jordan made significant contributions in the realm of faculty service as well. In 1987 and under his leadership as department head, our department changed its name from the Department of Speech-Communication to the Department of Communication, a name change that more accurately reflected the larger field of communication’s transition away from an exclusive focus on the study of human “speech.”

Under Dr. Jordan’s leadership our department grew from approximately 240 undergraduate students when he arrived to approximately 1,000 when he stepped down as department head in 1995. During his tenure as department head he also helped to establish the department’s original five concentrations in Communication Disorders, Public and Interpersonal Communication, Theater, Communication Media, and Public Relations/Organizational Communication. Previously there had been just one curriculum. Dr. Jordan helped to supply both the theoretical and pedagogical justification for creating the five concentrations.

Under his leadership, Winston Hall underwent a major renovation and became the permanent home of the department. He also helped to formalize the department’s highly regarded undergraduate internship program by creating the position of Director of Internship Programs. This program built bridges between local community businesses and nonprofits and the department’s undergraduate students, an important practice which has continued up through the present day.

As department head, Dr. Jordan doubled the number of tenure-track faculty members and, consequently, the excellence of the department’s faculty improved substantially, especially in the area of faculty research.

Later in his career, as a senior professor, Dr. Jordan led the way in the development of graduate courses, which eventually led to the creation of a MS program in Communication. He became the department’s first Director of Graduate Programs, a post he held until 2007. During his time as DGP, Dr. Jordan helped to expand the graduate curriculum and recruited many high quality students into the MS program.

In short, Dr. Jordan was and remains respected by all who know him. He oversaw the department during an 11-year period of growth and complex challenges for our program while maintaining his reputation as a first-class scholar and excellent teacher. We wish him all the best in his retirement.

CHASS HOSTS PANEL DISCUSSION ON RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

By Nicole Hollingsworth

CHASS faculty members hosted a scholarly discussion on September 28th in response to recent religious events surrounding the Islamic Cultural Center in New York City, the threat to burn a Koran by a Florida preacher, and the increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes in America.

The three panelists included Dr. Kenneth Zagacki, Professor and Head of the Department of Communication, and Dr. Anna Bigelow and Dr. Jason Bivins, both Associate Professors in the Department of Philosophy and Religion.

In collaboration with Associate Professor Dr. Traciel Reid from the Department of Public and International Affairs, the panel focused on a variety of issues ranging from the value of religious diversity in modern society to the concerns that arise from multiple religious traditions interacting together in the public sphere. The Department of Communication’s role was to identify approaches proven useful in opening the communication lines between people with different religious perspectives.
Aclimating himself to the atmosphere of NC State, Chancellor Randy Woodson spent the afternoon of September 22 with faculty and students in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS). Beginning his visit by sharing lunch with members of the student body and then touring the different departments with faculty, the Chancellor wrapped up his day by attending a reception in his honor in Caldwell Lounge. His presence on campus and his availability to students and faculty has generated a new sense of access to the Chancellor.

In his desire to know the CHASS community on a personal level, the Chancellor began his tour with a casual lunch in the 1911 Building, sitting down and dining with both CHASS graduate and undergraduate students. Chancellor Woodson and the CHASS students shared personal stories and details about life at NC State. Woodson extended himself, reaching out and finding areas of commonality with each student present. He listened intently to the array of opinions presented by the students, seeking their ideas and input about possible improvements to CHASS and to the university.

Attending the lunch with the Chancellor was Carrie McGaha, a senior in Communication. “It was nice to meet and talk with Chancellor Woodson face-to-face,” McGaha stated. “He really seems connected with NC State students, and he truly values our opinions on how the university could improve.”

Seeking ideas and opinions is nothing new to Chancellor Woodson. He has traveled across North Carolina for the past six months to understand how the university’s influence can be more effective to meet the state's needs. As the newly appointed 14th Chancellor, Woodson came to NC State from Purdue University; his installation ceremony on October 26, 2010, had the theme of “Locally responsible. Globally engaged.” It was a weeklong celebration honoring the chancellor and celebrating his mission for the university.

Chancellor Woodson described the importance of improving NC State and improving the quality of its education, stating that his goal is that of making “NC State add value to your diploma.” After the lunch and before the reception in Caldwell Lounge in the evening, Chancellor Woodson met with members of the NC State faculty and continued his visit with tours of the different departments and buildings within the Court of North Carolina. He was able not only to familiarize himself with the physical campus but also with the NC State culture as he merged into the stream of students in the hallways and on sidewalks. It was a unique opportunity for the Chancellor to get a firsthand look at the community he governs.

After reflecting on the Chancellor’s visit, Dr. Kenneth Zagacki, Department of Communication head, said, "I'm impressed with the apparent openness of the Chancellor. He seems to encourage a wide array of opinions and appears to take seriously the issues put before him. I'm also hopeful that he will make CHASS a central part of the University's mission by encouraging and rewarding the college's outstanding research, teaching, and service."

**DR. SCHRAG’S TAKE ON TEACHING DISTANCE EDUCATION**

With budget cuts and larger class sizes on the horizon, NC State continues attempts to facilitate the sought after small class feel. One solution, distance education, offers a unique alternative to the large lecture hall environment. In fact, Communication Professor Dr. Robert Schrag believes that distance education can offer a one-on-one feel to learning while not requiring the student to come to campus.

Dr. Schrag teaches on-campus classes as well as an increasing number of online classes. With growing class sizes, Dr. Schrag stated that the online option is “more personal than sitting in a large classroom. When a student logs in to my videos, it is just the two of us, interacting.” He explained that while it is unlikely that a student will participate in a large lecture-style class, the distance education model allows for students to stop, start, and send time stamped e-mails at any point in the lecture, thus creating a friendlier environment for discussion. Schrag also said, “Given fiscal realities, this is a good way to give the citizens of North Carolina the education they request with the limited amount of money they are willing to spend.”

Distance education may be economically advantageous, but it does not come without a cost. Dr. Schrag must spend more time on his distance education classes than he does on his seated sections, and this semester in particular he has spent up to eight hours a week in the studio recording lectures. Distance education requires research time as well. This past summer Dr. Schrag visited Germany and France to study, among other topics, European universities’ attitudes toward distance education. Despite a large time commitment, Dr. Schrag believes the benefits students receive to be well worth the effort.
GRAD STUDENTS CONDUCT RESEARCH ON COMMUNICATION AT WORK

By Alan Foushee

Have you ever thought about how to quantify listening as a method of communication within the workplace? Not only listening, but what about giving feedback, using facial expressions or any other number of communication behaviors? This idea is driving a group of graduate students to explore the role communication behaviors play in the workplace and how to best quantify them.

Under the direction of Dr. Joann Keyton, graduate students Jennifer Caputo, Sarah London, and Frances Fu are continuing research on communication in the workplace.

Phase one of the research, conducted by Chaofan Wu and Paromita Ghosh (both graduated with MS Communication degrees in May 2010), used organizational communication case studies to identify over 168 communication behaviors people use at work. Survey research found that 43 of these behaviors were used by over half of the participants in the study.

The current group has been working for almost a year on constructing a CWE, Communication Work Efficacy, or a scale to validate communication behaviors rather than perceptions about behaviors.

Since completing this phase, the team has moved on to phase three which will take a more qualitative research approach, using interviews to analyze and apply the CWE.

This research provides endless opportunities for application, as it can be applied across different industries and not just communication jobs. For example, results from this study can be applied in human resources to determine the potential of a prospective hire or provide a basis for a program to train employees on their communication behavior.

This case is another example of graduate students advancing their academic experience by applying what they learn in the classroom to the world outside. "Working on this research team has provided ample opportunities to apply the knowledge I have acquired in my course work in a practical way," Caputo said. Often the best way to learn something is to actively participate in that process."

London added that this research has enhanced what she is learning in the classroom, and that her research has provided growth by going far beyond the academic setting.

CHASS GETS READY FOR THE 2011 WOLFPACK SPEAKS COMPETITION

By Linda Battaglia

Each year more than 800 NC State students take COM 110, also known as Public Speaking. Through the class, students learn and practice techniques used to become a better public speaker. One student from each fall semester public speaking class is chosen to participate in the annual Wolfpack Speaks competition.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences hosts Wolfpack Speaks in February each year. "It was created to give students an interdisciplinary way to experience public speaking outside of the classroom," said Dr. Christina Moss, Director of COM 110 classes and Director of the Wolfpack Speaks Competition.

Students who are chosen are required to prepare a five-to-seven minute call-to-action speech. All nominated students compete in a qualifying round and the top six students from the qualifying round compete in the final round the next day. Students receive feedback on their speeches from the judges to help them continue to become better public speakers.

Each year the judges for the qualifying round are composed of COM 110 professors. The final round is judged solely by guest judges from the community. Cash awards are given to the top finalists of the competition.

In 2011 the fourth annual Wolfpack speaks competition will be held on February 2–3. Faculty, alumni and students are encouraged to come support the students who are participating.

Religious Diversity Panel

Continued from page 2

“By pointing out communicative strategies, people from diverse religious backgrounds can engage in the necessary dialogue needed for understanding each other's fears and concerns," said Dr. Zagacki. "By focusing on the small issues first, we can find areas of commonality and help to bring people together in a constructive way."

The panel was an open forum inviting audience members to direct their questions to the panelists. This was done in the hope of learning more about the students' perspectives on specific religious issues. Participants discussed and debated topics such as how religion is perceived in pluralistic societies and how those living in pluralistic societies interact with each other.

“The beauty of the discussion was the engagement that occurred between the students in the audience and the panelists," said Dr. Reid. "The benefit of the panel was to bring scholarly research into the suggestions brought up by the audience.”

Panelists wanted students to leave the forum with a better understanding of the importance of listening. "Talking does not always solve the problem," said Dr. Zagacki, “but with effective communication, opposing viewpoints can be presented in a way that helps one party be more sensitive to the concerns of the other."
DEAN PHILLIPS ASSUMES INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DIRECTOR ROLE

By Zac Ivey

The department’s internship program is in transition. After Jill Heaton’s retirement last summer, Dean Phillips assumed the role of Internship Program Director. “I am still learning the ropes, but I love being a part of steering students in the right direction for the right internship,” Phillips said.

Phillips believes having an internship today is more important than it was in previous years. “You have to be able to network and really do a great job so you can get a fabulous recommendation. The internship program gives students a taste of the outside world and the reality of what every day on the job looks like,” he said.

Jill Heaton gave Phillips some solid advice and helped him get acquainted with his new position. “She showed me the ropes. She showed me how everything works. If not for her I would have been lost,” Phillips said.

Danielle Stanfield, an NC State graduate in communication, volunteered to lead this effort. She works for S&A Cherokee, a public relations firm, and is the editor of Cary Magazine. Stanfield says that she is pleased more communication alumni are asking to become mentors. Communication alumni in various fields help students get hands-on job experiences, offer resume critiques, and offer counseling.

Stanfield said, “I love any opportunity to give back to the University and department that helped shape me as a communication professional. I want to guide students who are in the same position I was years ago, wondering how my communication degree would translate into the working world. The program will prove to be a vital part of the success of students entering the workforce and will be an advantage in a very competitive job market.” The internship program looks to have a very bright future thanks to dedicated people like Phillips and Stanfield.

ECOCAR BRINGS TOGETHER CHASS AND ENGINEERING

By Alan Foushee

When you hear about a technical project such as vehicle integration of advanced propulsion technologies, the first connection to the university to come to mind probably would be to the College of Engineering. While the Ecocar: The NeXt Challenge is indeed an engineering competition, it has drawn upon communication students to work on public outreach, a big component of the competition.

Under the direction of Dr. Ed Funkhouser, Brandon Stillwell, a first-year communication graduate student, has joined the team of mechanical aerospace engineers as the outreach coordinator. In the third year of a three-year competition, Brandon was brought on board to help catapult the team’s recognition and gain an increased awareness from additional media hits.

The Ecocar competition is an international contest that challenges 16 universities across North America and Canada to reduce the environmental impact of vehicles by making over and converting a GM-donated vehicle. The contest encourages energy diversity, while maintaining all of the consumer appeal of a vehicle, such as utility, safety and performance. Major sponsors of the project include the U.S. Department of Energy, the EPA, General Motors and the government of Canada.

Stillwell is responsible for properly communicating Ecocar’s messages to the public and creating awareness about the project. Stillwell has approached this challenge from three main areas: the use of mixed social media, a website and public outreach events. After returning from an Ecocar conference in Boston, he visited several undergraduate communication classes and recruited undergraduate students interested in the project to be a part of his own individual sub team, allowing undergraduate communication students to have a hand in the process.

“There are many positive outcomes of this project,” said Stillwell “It gives our engineers a chance to display their mechanical skills on a national level. Through this project, this community is able to learn about green technologies and sustainable vehicles and the future of the automotive industry.”

Dr. Melissa Johnson, Director of Graduate Studies, saw this as one of the many opportunities open to graduate students to supplement their classroom learning.

“Our students are really maximizing their experiences with faculty on research and applied communication projects,” said Dr. Johnson.

Stillwell will be hard at work even as the semester draws to a close. “Part of my duties are to get a minimum of ten media hits originating from my efforts, design an influencer campaign, design a consumer campaign and update a website and several social media sites,” said Stillwell.

For more information on the team or the project, visit the website at www.ncsueneecocar.com or find the official website at www.ecocarchallenge.org.
The Ph.D. Program in Communication, Rhetoric and Digital Media (CRDM) is gaining visibility and sparking the interest of many potential students. Since the program’s start five years ago, the number of applicants has continued to increase. From 2009 to 2010, there was a 60 percent increase in submitted applications. Due to the influx of submissions, the admission process has become more competitive. In addition to gaining visibility nationally, the program is recognized internationally. Of the 41 current CRDM students, five are international students, hailing from Canada, Chile, Pakistan, and Brazil. Three are Fulbright Scholars.

Not only is the program diverse in students, it is also working hard at “incorporating an intellectually diverse group of faculty,” said Program Director Dr. Steve Wiley. This year, four new professors joined the program, contributing expertise in journalism, film studies, and social science research on communication. The new faculty members are Dr. Andrew R. Binder, Assistant Professor of Communication, who has researched news media and public perceptions of science; Dr. Jessica L. Moore, Assistant Professor of Communication, who specializes in relational development, persuasion and technology; Dr. Ora Gelley, Assistant Professor of English, whose work focuses on film theory and the cinema of Italy, Turkey and other countries; and Dr. Cat Warren, Associate Professor of English, whose work is in science journalism, women’s studies and cultural studies.

The CRDM Ph.D. program sets itself apart from other doctoral programs because it focuses on digital media and new communication technologies and because it does so from an interdisciplinary perspective. The trend in higher education is toward interdisciplinary theory and research, according to Dr. Wiley, and the CRDM Program was designed from the beginning to combine the theoretical perspectives and methods of rhetoric and composition, social science of communication, and media studies. The program’s focus on digital media and communication networks has also helped position it as an especially relevant degree, considering the increasing importance that society places on communication technologies such as social media, cell phones, and video games.

As CRDM enters its sixth year, the program is carrying out a major internal assessment. Current students and faculty are participating in focus groups and a survey. Based on the results of the study, they will discuss the program’s strengths as well as its challenges and areas for improvement. The assessment will be used in the spring of 2011 and will determine new directions for the CRDM doctoral program.

Dr. Wiley was also the Interim Director of CRDM for the 2009-2010 school year when he took the position temporarily while the previous director, Dr. Jeremy Packer, was on leave. Dr. Jason Swarts, Associate Professor of English, will direct the program beginning in fall 2011.

The resounding sentiment expressed by the organization of successful professionals is a desire to “give back” to NC State and the department as a form of gratitude to honor how the program has positively affected their lives.
COMMUNICATION CONVOCATION HELPS NEW MAJORS CONNECT TO DEPARTMENT

By Kerry Lynch

ew majors in the Department of Communication were treated this past semester to the 2010 Communication Convocation, a new feature in Professor Ed Funkhouser’s Communication Theory class. The convocation provided new communication majors an introduction to the department as well as an overview of the benefits of having a communication degree.

Another purpose was to formally introduce new students to the department and its faculty. A growing concern of the faculty is that its undergraduates are disconnected from the department. Consequently, they established this convocation to reach all incoming new majors and help them identify with the department.

Dr. Jessica Jameson, Associate Head of the Department of Communication, said, “There is a need for more students and faculty interaction. Distance between students and faculty is one of the downsides of being at a larger university, so we need to work harder and create these networking events.”

Dr. Jameson initiated the event with a presentation highlighting the original ideas behind the convocation and explained exactly what one can do with a communication degree. Approximately 12 faculty members attended the event, each introducing themselves to the new majors and giving information on the various classes they teach. Guest speaker Kathy Sturgis, Executive Director of the American Leadership School, said, “Communication is the foundation from which organizational processes and relationships are built.” Throughout her speech Sturgis demonstrated how her three communication degrees have allowed her to succeed in the professional world. This networking event offered a unique opportunity for new majors to preview their new department and its faculty team.

NEW COMMUNICATION HONORS PROGRAM PROMOTES ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

By Kristen Beattie

The NC State Department of Communication honors program has recently undergone some important changes. Dr. Daniel DeJoy, department honors program director, believes the revisions will allow students to engage in challenging academic work as they interact with a variety of department faculty.

The previous honors program required each candidate to write an extensive research paper under the mentorship of a department faculty member. As part of the program, students proposed a unique nine-hour course sequence, including a cognitive course, an honors seminar, and either an independent study or an honors option course. Each course was intended to contribute to the design, execution, and write-up of the student’s original research. To be eligible for the program, a student needed to attain at least a 3.25 overall GPA and a 3.5 major GPA.

The new honors program involves taking three courses during the senior year. A candidate may take three courses at the Master’s level or two Master-level courses and an honors option course either at the 300 or 400 level. Because of the increasingly vigorous workload, a student must have at least a 3.5 overall and major GPA. In addition, the Department of Communication offers honors candidates the opportunity to apply for the Accelerated Bachelor/Master Program, which requires a student to take two graduate level courses during the fall of their senior year and two additional graduate level courses during the spring. Students who are accepted into the Accelerated Bachelor/Master Program and complete the four graduate courses would be able to complete a Masters degree in Communication at NC State the following academic year.

Dr. DeJoy said, “A student with a good academic record who is possibly considering graduate school could benefit greatly from the new honors program.”

COURSE NUMBERING SCHEME REVISIONS ARE ON THE WAY

By Andrew Langley

Have you ever wondered why courses are numbered the way they are? Dr. Jessica Jameson, Associate Head of the Department of Communication, and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee understands that course numbering is a vital part of helping students determine the order of classes they should take. Students often take courses that best fit their schedule, and the logic of the recommended course sequence is not always clear. The department offers three main concentrations: Communication Media, Public Relations/Organizational Communication, and Public and Interpersonal Communication. Any changes to courses in these concentrations must be approved by the Communication curriculum committee, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum committee and finally, the University Courses and Curriculum Committee.

The students’ feelings about these courses are very important to Dr. Jameson and the committee, and finding new ways to hear feedback from them is a challenge in itself. Sandy Stallings is one of the committee’s most valuable assets in obtaining student input. As Director of Advising, she counsels all of the freshmen and senior communication majors and she always “has her finger on the pulse,” Dr. Jameson said. As an example of why course numbers matter, the committee recently decided to change the number for COM 486 (Communication Research Methods) to COM 386 (this change has not yet gone into effect). The committee hopes that by changing the number, students will take the course earlier in their sequence, more easily connecting the material to COM 240 and preparing students for the advanced research projects required in 400-level courses. By renumbering this course, “students will feel more comfortable taking it earlier. We hope this will help them in the long run,” said Dr. Jameson.
VIRTUAL COMPUTING LAB EXPANDS MATH OPPORTUNITIES

By Caroline Linker

Dr. Sarah Stein is the Principal Investigator (PI) of “Scaling Up STEM Learning with the VCL,” a $1.79 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant awarded in 2009, under the division of Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST). The main objective of the project is to improve math learning in rural North Carolina high schools and to increase interest in the pursuit of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers in the future.

Dr. Stein, together with her Co-PIs, Dr. Eric Wiebe (Friday Institute for Innovation in Education), Dr. Karen Hollebrands (College of Education), Dr. Henry Schaffer (Office of Information Technology), and Jen Ware (her CRDM doctoral research assistant), are bringing together multiple pedagogical and technological programs to aid 9th and 10th grade math students and their teachers.

The NSF grant was an outgrowth of Dr. Stein’s participation in the development at NC State of the Virtual Computing Lab (VCL) over the last six years. The VCL is used to bring multimedia mathematics software over the Internet into 9th and 10th grade geometry and algebra classrooms in rural counties in North Carolina. The VCL is known as a cloud computing solution. It provides software remotely via the Internet instead of installing the math program directly on student laptops, thus avoiding conflicts with other software and removing from the users the burden of upgrades and other difficulties associated with maintaining personal computers.

The NSF grant required investigators to take existing innovations in teaching and computation and develop a model for improved high school learning that could be adopted by other regions in North Carolina and the nation. Along with the VCL, the project engages high schools that are part of the 1:1 Laptop Initiative funded by the NC legislature, in which all NC students will have access to a laptop throughout their public school education. In addition, the project draws on the state’s K-12 Internet Connectivity Initiative, and also calls on professional role models from industry and academia to talk to students about careers that use mathematics and help them see the application of math in real world problems.

Bringing the mathematics software into rural counties means serving a student body without the advanced technology environment of the more affluent counties in North Carolina. The team designed the project to serve schools with a heterogeneous population, particularly those with a high percentage of racial minorities and less affluent economic circumstances. In the four rural counties being served, the African-American, Latino/a, and Native American student numbers are significant.

As a communication scholar, Dr. Stein initially became interested in working with the VCL team because of the opportunity to work in an interdisciplinary environment with researchers from computer science, engineering, and the central information technology division at NC State. The NSF project brings close collaboration with researchers from education innovation and practices.

Dr. Stein’s particular interests from the outset have been in the cultural attitudes and assumptions about new technologies and how those technologies are being used and integrated into people’s lives. Dr. Stein’s scholarly work on the NSF project focuses on the communication barriers that exist between the high school technical staff and the teachers, and their impact on the successful integration of technology and improved learning outcomes. Her research has found that while technical difficulties are believed to impede technological change, the barriers are more likely to be cultural and communicative. A finding from the NSF project implementation in support of this is the instance in which a teacher uses the geometry software to teach her students but does not use it as designed to be a student-centric and collaborative learning tool. Follow-up assessment of the usefulness will find no beneficial change, but will not dig deep enough to reveal whether the software was used in an effective way.

Sarah Stein, Ph.D.

DR. KOSENKO’S ‘MEASURING MEDIATED UNCERTAINTY’ SELECTED AS TOP PAPER

By Melinda Howard

Dr. Kami Kosenko, Ph.D., is going to be packing her bags and taking a trip soon. She will be attending the National Communication Association Conference to present her research paper. This is not the first time that Dr. Kosenko has been recognized for her work. In April of this year she had a piece published in the Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care.

Dr. Kosenko has two more papers that have been accepted by a journal. But this research paper is different from the others mentioned above. Her fiancé was one of the co-authors. In November, Dr. Kosenko and her fiancé, Dr. Ryan Hurley, traveled to San Francisco to present their paper titled, “Measuring Mediated Uncertainty: Scientific Uncertainty in Online Cancer News.”

Dr. Kosenko, Dr. Hurley and their advisor Dr. Dale Brashers wrote the paper on the way journalists write about cancer in the news and how journalists portray things related to cancer as being uncertain. They earned a Top Paper Award for their work.

According to Dr. Kosenko, receiving this award was even more rewarding because “They submitted their paper to one of the bigger sections at this conference.” So Dr. Kosenko, Dr. Hurley and Dr. Brashers had more competition. All their hard work paid off and earned their paper national recognition in the process.

Kami Kosenko, Ph.D.
Dr. William J. Kinsella, an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, was chosen last year as a Fulbright Scholar, which enabled him to spend four months in Germany studying and researching the status of nuclear energy in Germany from a social science perspective. Germany presents an interesting case as a phase-out plan has been implemented to eliminate nuclear power plants by approximately the year 2022. However, this plan is being reconsidered and Germany has now voted to extend the life of these plants. Through interviews, field observations and analyzing textual materials, Dr. Kinsella was able to conduct research and gain valuable insights in many fields, including science and technology policy, organizational and environmental communication, public policy, and others.

Dr. Kinsella was able to gain valuable knowledge and experience that can be applicable to his teaching in both organizational and environmental communication. With regard to teaching organizational communication, he recognized that within organizations there are many people and perspectives involved to determine how to manage problems. And there are many factors at hand such as technical complications, political controversies and challenges for safety — all of which must be addressed. Within environmental communication, his research allowed him to realize that there are many controversies in this field and that citizens need to be well-informed on the subject so that they are better able to make decisions for themselves on the matter of nuclear energy.

Dr. Kinsella was extremely grateful for his time spent in Germany which enabled him to work as a visiting scholar at the Institute for Nuclear Energy and Energy Systems at the University of Stuttgart. He also had the opportunity to conduct insightful interviews, participate in a three-day conference on risk analysis, receive an eight-hour tour of a nuclear power plant, and visit Gorleben, which is an underground salt mine being considered as a potential final disposal site for Germany’s high-level nuclear waste. Dr. Kinsella said that his trip to Germany was amazing on both the professional and the personal level, and he would love to have the opportunity to go back.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CONCENTRATION COORDINATOR

Dr. Kelly Albada is one of three concentration coordinators in the Department of Communication. She is in charge of the Public and Interpersonal Communication concentration, which is far from a simple task. As a coordinator, she helps to oversee the Public and Interpersonal Communication curriculum, creates a proposed schedule of course offerings each semester, consults with faculty who teach courses within the concentration, meets with students who want to know more about the concentration, and represents the concentration during departmental discussions of curriculum revision.

A typical day in the life of Dr. Albada can be fairly unpredictable. “I don’t know that being the concentration coordinator means there are a set of specific activities that you do every day—it depends on the amount of curriculum revision we are engaging in at that period of time and whether we are working on the schedule,” said Dr. Albada. “I spend a fair amount of time responding to the problem of the day.”

“I help create the schedule of courses at the beginning of each semester. It’s kind of crazy how early we have to start planning the schedule. For example, the fall semester for 2011 will be created in January,” said Dr. Albada.

One of the most challenging aspects of Dr. Albada’s role involves creating and revising the semester schedules. “I have to consider the requirements, the availability of faculty to offer the courses, current enrollments in the concentration, the offerings of the other concentrations, as well as avoid course conflicts and respond to students and faculty interests,” said Dr. Albada. During course registration, she will log on to MyPack Portal and see what is going on with course enrollments. She says the peak of her workload occurs during registration when she has to make important decisions regarding class offerings, class cancellations, seat caps, and instructor assignments.

Another challenging task is dealing with course substitutions. For instance, she sometimes has to come up with course substitutions for graduating students who need a course that is not being offered before they graduate or who cannot take a required course for some other reason. “I try to be fair to that student and understand his/her needs, while considering all of the other students. In making substitutions, you have to maintain the integrity of the program,” said Dr. Albada.
Dr. Albada is also asked to approve transfer student requests for course credit. For instance, a student may take Interpersonal Communication at UNC Wilmington, but seek credit for our COM 112. Students, and sometimes their parents, typically come to her when they have burning questions related to specific courses, possible careers, or the concentration itself.

Dr. Albada wears many other hats within the department. She balances her position as a concentration coordinator with her job as a teacher, researcher, scheduling officer, and a member on many departmental committees. "Most professors have positions that break down into 40 percent research, 40 percent teaching, and 20 percent service — the challenge is striking a balance, so that one area doesn’t suffer. Each week doesn’t break down so clearly, but at the end of year, we are expected to perform in each of these areas."

Another example of the need to look carefully at how the technology is actually being used is the inadequate Internet connectivity in the more impoverished areas of the study. Evaluations of learning outcomes indicate that the technological initiatives are making no difference in improving learning outcomes in those areas, without adequately understanding the significant divides between those with sufficient computational resources and those without.

Dr. Stein’s work helps to realize the mission of NC State to extend the research and innovation generated by the University to benefit the people of North Carolina. It also deepens the larger discourse about the digital divide and the potential for information technology to enhance educational goals.

Sarah Stein’s NSF Grant

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COMMUNICATION STUDIES PLAN TRAVEL ABROAD TO BOTSWANA

By Natalie Griffith

In the summer of 2011, Dr. James Kiwanuka-Tondo will take students to Botswana, Africa, to study communication and public health. Botswana is a shining star of success in Africa due to the stability of both its political and cultural institutions, though it struggles with the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. This is the first summer study abroad communication program in the department that combines health, political, cultural and social issues.

"It's a great opportunity to learn the culture of people in Africa and analyze public health issues that African countries deal with," Dr. Tondo said.

From May 26 to June 13, 2011, students will study at the University of Botswana with a team of faculty from that university as well as from NC State. When their classes end, students will take part in a service learning project and immerse in the Khwai community culture in the Moremi Game Reserve from June 14 to June 24. The project will cover social, cultural, health, as well as environmental issues in this marginalized population.

Upon completion, students can expect to earn six credits for COM392/523: International/Intercultural Communication and COM 498/598: International Health Issues and Communication, as well as become familiar with Botswana’s national language, Setswana.

Students will also travel throughout the Moremi Game Reserve, Chobe National Park and finally to Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Dr. Tondo is exceptionally qualified to lead the program as a proud native of Uganda, Africa, and has been conducting research on health issues especially in Africa since 1991. He is very excited about the program and eager to introduce students to his home continent and the value of learning the relationship between communication and health issues.

Invested in the program’s success, Dr. Tondo has reached out to students from UNC Charlotte, East Carolina University, Western Carolina University, and Appalachian State University, and had a strong, positive response. The program welcomes students from universities at either the undergraduate, graduate or doctorate level who study communication, international studies or public health.

The program is particularly unique with its interconnected concentrations in communication, culture and public health. With such an experienced, passionate leader as Dr. Tondo, students will undoubtedly utilize the opportunity to create an invaluable experience living, learning and sharing with the communities of Africa.

For more information about this program or to apply, visit www.studyabroad.ncsu.edu.
ARTICLE FOCUSES ON JOURNALIST, PR PRACTITIONER RELATIONSHIP

By Ellen Ledbetter

Dr. Richard Waters has co-authored an article with Dr. Natalie Tindall from Georgia State University and Tim Morton, a former graduate student, on how technology and social media are changing the journalist-public relations practitioner relationship. Public relations practitioners too often send journalists poorly written press releases or send press releases to the wrong journalists. Journalists are using technology to reverse the media pitching roles. Instead of being pitched story ideas from many public relations practitioners, they are sending information requests to more than 35,000 public relations practitioners at once and having them compete for the journalists’ attention. This reversal of the traditional media relations process has been called media catching, and it is the basis of the article, "Media Catching and the Journalist-Public Relations Practitioner Relationship: How Social Media are Changing the Practice of Media Relations." The article was published in the Journal of Public Relations Research. It was a special issue on social media, and the article was chosen as the lead research paper for the issue.

Due to their frustration with public relations practitioners, journalists are now using a new service called Help-a-Reporter-Out (HARO). This online service started as a Facebook group and now is a combination of a listserv and Twitter updates used by more than 35,000 public relations practitioners. When journalists ask for information they need to help complete their stories, HARO is able to update and send specific information. The ability to break down barriers and directly connect newsmakers with sources has reduced the role of journalists as being passive recipients of news releases. "I was surprised that the research was chosen to be the lead article in the issue, and couldn’t be more pleased. What surprised me even more was coming back from summer break and finding postcards that were sent to my office address from public relations practitioners saying that it was one of the few public relations articles that truly reflected what they were doing in the real world," said Dr. Waters.

Dr. Waters’ research looked at which media outlets were using the service for information, what types of news stories they were writing, what the deadlines were, and the geographical reach of the media outlets. Over a period of six months, Dr. Waters and his research team looked at random samples of HARO listserv postings and eight months of HARO Twitter updates. More than 1,700 requests were included in the sample and each message was coded for about 25 different variables. "When I first thought of this research project, I had no idea how successful it would become. It started out as a side project because I found the HARO service intriguing professionally. But with two research articles published and more research projects coming, it really has been a great discovery," said Dr. Waters.

Since the publication of the first media catching piece, Public Relations Review has accepted another piece on the newly identified public relations trend. The second article looks at the role of deadlines and how public relations practitioners respond to journalists’ information request. Additionally, Dr. Waters is working with graduate students Kim Burke, Ilen Misaras, and Meghnaa Tallapragda to identify the best practices of media catching for public relations practitioners.

DR. KEYTON LEADS SEMINAR ON COMMUNICATING SCIENCE

By Lindsey Lynch

North Carolina State University offers seminars to train graduate school and postdoctoral students in skills they are not likely to find in their coursework. These skills prepare students for success in their current educational endeavors as well as their lives beyond schooling.

On September 20, 2010, in Talley Student Center, Dr. Joann Keyton spoke on Communicating Science to an audience of 70 students and faculty. As a scholar in this area, she wants people who aren’t scholars to be able to have access to her research. In the last 10 to 15 years she has made it a point to make her research findings applicable to everyday life.

“We get so narrowly focused on our own research and our experience that we forget that there are other people who need to know what we do,” she said.

“I hope that they became encouraged to talk to the public.”

She touched on aspects of communication such as scholars talking to scholars, scholars talking to others, and the best ways to improve stakeholder understanding. Students were urged to process what they heard with regard to their future professions and their current education.

“I hope that they became encouraged to talk to the public,” Dr. Keyton said. “They can do it, they just have to know how to do it, and I hope I have encouraged them to think of the public as one of their stakeholders.”
Every day people are exposed to hundreds of advertisements and different ways of viewing media content. Recent research studies investigate the relationship between how people’s thinking is provoked and how this content affects our decisions. Dr. Ryan Hurley studies these relationships in society.

Dr. Hurley works in what many communication experts refer to as the “dark world” of mathematics. He received his master’s degree in Speech Communication and then earned a doctorate in Health and Mass Communication. While completing his master’s degree at Kansas State University, Dr. Hurley realized he wanted to blend math and statistics with communication. At this point, Dr. Hurley shifted his career direction from public speaking guru to a health and media communication researcher.

Not only does Dr. Hurley teach a Communication Inquiry course at NC State, he also performs multiple research studies independently. Hurley says the main goal in his research studies is to understand how mainstream mass media influences our day-to-day behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. Hurley blends health in the mix of his studies because he believes that people rely on the media to tell them health information and to assist them in making life and death decisions. Dr. Hurley is involved in a variety of research studies about how the news media affects the thinking and behavior of its consumers.

Dr. Hurley has at least three different studies in progress and under revision. Each study consists of different variables, quantitative and qualitative measures, content analyses, experiments, and surveys.

One research study focuses on how aggregated news sources, such as Yahoo! News and Google News, as opposed to focus providers, such as CNN and MSNBC, present newsworthy stories about cancer.

The goal of this study is to find a difference in the content of these news sectors, while locating how they are presented to the news media and the potential effect this content could have on viewers. Another study that focuses on children strives to find the relationship between television enjoyment with the amount of violence and action contained in children’s cartoons.

A third project pertains to cancer news stories and how the information is presented online. This study performs a content analysis where it focuses on uncertainty management theory and how uncertainty of information can sway readers.
JEAN WANG ENCOURAGES SPRING 2010 GRADUATING CLASS

By Ridhdi Mehta

“Throw out a few bricks, hoping that some fine jade will follow.” While her address may have thrown out a few rough ideas, Yuanjing (Jean) Wang certainly struck a chord with the audience.

Wang, who delivered the commencement address at the Department of Communication’s graduation in May, was the first graduate student given the opportunity to do so.

Department Head Dr. Ken Zagacki explained why a graduate student was chosen to deliver the address: “I felt that it was useful for students to hear how their course of studies helps them understand the issues and challenges they face.” Wang was a member of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society and was nominated Outstanding Graduate Assistant of NC State. She also maintained a strong academic record and faculty respect.

Wang’s remarks drew from her personal experience of being an international student and adapting to a new cultural environment. After arriving in the United States nearly three years ago, she recognized how easy miscommunication between intercultural exchanges can occur. Wang discovered “how important it is not only to facilitate the flow of information, but to also facilitate understanding and trust.”

“Ms. Wang was an excellent public speaking teacher. She gave students useful feedback, and we all came to respect one another,” said Linda Battaglia, a former student of Wang. “I think the entire class came to appreciate different perspectives and value different opinions.”

Conveying the same messages to the graduating class, Wang emphasized the importance of each individual having the power to change the world. Wang concluded that graduates who understand the importance of communication have “the ability to connect the globe.”

TEAM PROVIDES TRAINING FOR PEOPLE OF LEBANON

By Katie Nehm

The Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement is partnering with AMIDEAST, a nongovernmental organization (NGO), to host a training program for Lebanese NGOs this April in Beirut, Lebanon. Traveling to Lebanon are Dr. Richard M. Clerkin, Dr. Mary Tschirhart, Dr. Richard D. Waters and Mr. Khaldoun Abou-Assi, who is pursuing his doctorate at Syracuse University. The team will provide training that will cover fund development and marketing in a way that is sensitive to the people of Lebanon.

This trip is beneficial not only for the traveling team, but also for the NC State community. “My future students certainly will benefit from having a broader range of materials in lectures and presentations,” said Dr. Waters. “Ultimately, I’m also hoping to develop lasting connections that I can use to test some of the fundraising theories I have been working to develop in an international setting to see how well the principles behind fundraising apply to diverse environments.”

Dr. Waters will be drawing on his personal experiences as a professional fundraiser and public relations practitioner to train the Lebanese NGOs. Prior to becoming a professor, Dr. Waters was the Vice President of Development and Communications for a California-based nonprofit healthcare organization, and he managed the corporate solicitation efforts for the national Toys for Tots campaign. He will use his experiences in Beirut to gather valuable material that can be included in fundraising, marketing and public relations strategy classes.

The five-day trip is scheduled to take place in April, and will follow a two-track training program. Each track will have between 10 and 15 participants to ensure the instructors are able to provide specialized attention to all. The training will include traditional and modernized techniques, tools, and models that Lebanese NGO leaders can consider for their own use. The official program proposal says this workshop will “stretch their [Lebanese] understanding of what is feasible and likely to be most efficient and effective.”

Dr. Kenneth Zagacki, head of the Department of Communication at NC State, sees this trip as an excellent learning tool for faculty and students alike. These programs “enable students and faculty to study communication processes in international environments,” Dr. Zagacki said. “It creates opportunities for them to understand the breadth and depth of theories about communication.”
GRAD STUDENTS WORK ON ADVANCED SCHOLARS GRANT PROJECT

By Chelsea Burnette

In the fall of 2010, a group of North Carolina State University graduate students began working under the supervision of Dr. Kenneth Zagacki to complete a special project that focuses on new ways of conceptualizing public speaking.

Dr. Zagacki is a member of a larger group of faculty and administrators at NC State who are a part of an Advanced Scholars grant. The purpose of this grant is to find ways to both recruit and retain a diverse faculty and to train these faculty members into positions of administration at the university. As a part of the grant, each member must create a project that reflects the specific goals of the grant as well as incorporate the individual member’s interests.

“The purpose of my specific Advanced Scholars project is to explore a style of presentational speaking in diverse contexts and settings that draws upon existing literature in communication and gender,” Dr. Zagacki stated when asked about the project. “The purpose of invitational speaking is to promote growth and change for both speaker and audience.”

The main goal of this style of speaking, which is also known as invitational rhetoric, is to “encourage practitioners to choose communicative options that create an environment characterized by safety, value, freedom, and openness.”

For this project Dr. Zagacki has been leading a one-hour seminar of four graduate students, which include Brandi Moyer, Alastair Knowles, Jennifer Caputo, and Shari Oliver. All of the students read the short work by Sonja K. Foss and Karen A. Foss entitled, “Inviting Transformation: Presentational Speaking for a Changing World” and during each meeting the group discusses the text.

At the end of the semester all the students will create their own examples of invitational rhetoric, which will be presented during the seminar led by Dr. Zagacki. If the project is deemed a success, the presentations may be included in the Advanced Scholars’ panel.

Brandi Moyer, a member of the project group and communication graduate student at NCSU, described two major benefits of this project from her perspective. First, the discussions of invitational rhetoric during the seminar could be included in the public speaking curriculum. Second, the more people research and actively use invitational rhetoric, the more people learn about rhetoric in a general sense.

“Working with the members of the seminar has been a great opportunity,” she said. “It is always a good rule to step outside of what you know in order to let in new information that will help you grow as a scholar.”

CALEB VAN VOORHIS VIDEO MAKES NETWORK TELEVISION

By Jessica Swanner

Some students struggle to speak in front of their class. The Department of Communication has one student who has no problem connecting with over 450,000 people.

Caleb Van Voorhis, a sophomore in Communication Media at NC State, has been creating comical videos for entertainment since the end of his senior year of high school. He never expected one of his videos would make it onto a major television network and make him widely popular.

His video, “Silly Bandz Gangster Rap,” is a humorous rap about the new pop-culture phenomenon, Silly Bandz. ABC Nightline’s “Sign of the Times” featured a clip of “Silly Bandz Gangster Rap” in a September report on the popularity of Silly Bandz. His video was first posted on YouTube and seen on Wolf TV, where Van Voorhis is the station manager.

Still frame from Voorhis’ popular Silly Bandz rap video.

It seems strange that a video about glorified rubber bands could end up on national television, and Van Voorhis was just as surprised. While he is unsure exactly how ABC found his video, Van Voorhis does know it first drew the attention of the CEO of Silly Bandz when he posted it on the company’s Facebook fan page. The video was then featured on the sillybandz.com website. It has now become so frequently viewed that by just searching “Silly Bandz” on YouTube, his video is the first one that appears and has the most views at 452,497.

Van Voorhis’s Silly Bandz video has made him a YouTube celebrity and brought him fame that could lead to other possibilities. However, Van Voorhis intends on going into production and possibly producing commercials in the future. “I love being in front of the camera,” he said, “but it’s a hard field to go into.”
As summer faded and August rolled around, NC State students began to trade days at the beach for days in the classroom. For one student, however, summer drawing to a close brought the donning of a fire helmet. David Powell, a junior in Communication, has been volunteering with the Durham Highway Fire Department since he was 16 years old. “August is historically our busiest time,” said Powell. “I normally clock 24 hours a week during school months.”

When asked how he got into the job, Powell laughed and said, “I never really thought I could be a firefighter. A friend actually dragged me along and I sort of fell into it.” With the support of his parents, Powell began seriously pursuing his newfound passion and became the youngest recruit at the station.

Since he began volunteering, Powell has moved up in the ranks. When he was 18, he became EMT- and Firefighter-certified. Now 20 years old, he is working on his EMT intermediate certification and his truck driving license.

Although Powell is still one of the youngest at the station, he feels right at home and has become extremely close with his co-workers. “It’s like a brotherhood,” Powell said, “You have to know that the guy following you into a burning building will have your back.”

Colleagues only have good things to say about Powell. “David’s a great guy,” said Jon Laird, another NC State student volunteer. “He’s extremely dedicated to the fire department and passionate about serving the community. I would trust him with my life any day.”

So what is next for this heroic NC State student? Powell said, there are several paths he could choose. “I could do fire for awhile and move up in the ranks, but I definitely want to continue my education. We’ll see what happens.”

For Kim Anderson, a senior studying International Business Communication, the summer of 2010 held much more exciting travels than just a trip to the beach. Anderson, a native of Copenhagen, Denmark, came to the United States over the summer to stay with friends and explore New York. He is now enrolled in a study abroad program at NC State within the Department of Communication.

Since beginning the fall semester, Anderson has also joined the Taekwondo club, entered into a tournament against UNC, and began playing soccer for his dormitory team.

Along with becoming an active part of campus activities, Anderson has also been busy adjusting to the many differences between colleges in the United States and those in Denmark.

One of the most significant differences Anderson sees is the expensive tuition students and parents pay to attend colleges in the United States. “We get paid by the government to go to university,” said Anderson of schools in Denmark.

He also says that in Denmark students are grouped solely by their majors and stay with the same group of approximately 25 students throughout their entire college career.

“We take the exact same classes, so you get to know people in another way than you do here,” said Anderson.

Anderson said he is enjoying the much warmer climate that North Carolina has to offer and certainly appreciates how much cheaper living is in the United States, although he does admit to missing traditional Danish cooking and candy.

When Anderson returns to Denmark to graduate this year, he plans to continue with school to complete a graduate degree.

Anderson is considering a career in politics after he finishes his education, although his plans are not certain.

Meanwhile, he will stay plenty busy exploring the United States and all that NC State University has to offer.
LPE PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

By Kerry Lynch

Lambda Pi Eta (LPE), the communication honor society, is promoting a variety of ways for their members to participate in research and service opportunities that will give members an edge over their peers in the job market. With the mission to recognize, foster, and reward outstanding scholastic achievement while stimulating interest in the study of communication, NC State’s Chapter of LPE aims to increase student opportunities to work with faculty in conducting research while also using their communication background to better serve the community.

The purpose of LPE is to promote scholarly student activity. Last year, students within the society fostered new student-faculty relationships through research collaboration. Although research remains important, LPE also emphasizes service projects that utilize the communication skills students are learning in their courses. By combining research and service, LPE hopes to provide its members with unique opportunities that make them competitive in the job market and attractive to graduate programs around the nation.

Although LPE has strict requirements, the hope is that by offering these new experiences, more communication students will strive to meet its requirements. Membership is by invitation only, and requires students to have completed 60 credit hours, a cumulative GPA of 3.0, a GPA of 3.25 in all communication courses, and 12 credit hours completed in communication courses. Students go through a rigorous application process and, if accepted, are formally inducted at an annual ceremony each November.

Dr. Elizabeth Craig, the faculty advisor for LPE and a past LPE member herself, states, “I think there are a number of benefits in being a member of LPE. The number one reason is the networking experience with fellow students and communication faculty. Other benefits include engaging in communication research and identifying needs in our community and understanding how we, as professional communicators, are uniquely qualified to address some of those needs.”

During the four meetings held every semester, students gain valuable experiences, such as networking and research opportunities. This past fall, LPE held its annual “Faculty Night,” where four professors from the department made presentations on various research topics. Members of LPE are also encouraged to present their own research through the LPE Forum. This past fall six members presented research on several topics.

The club also emphasizes service to the community. This usually occurs outside regular meetings. This year’s emphasis has shifted more to applying members’ communication knowledge to the real world. For example, current members are helping the Center for Student Leadership, Ethics and Public Service (CSLEPS) with an awareness campaign on campus.

With its new direction, LPE hopes to provide members with experiences that allow students to make connections between what they are learning in their courses, what they can achieve through research, and how they can foster change in their community.

PRSSA MAKES GREAT STRIDES THIS SCHOOL YEAR

By Annah Burns

The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) chapter at NC State has been making tremendous progress within the organization and the Raleigh community. During PRSSA’s first meeting of the school year, members anticipated the opportunities present throughout the year. These opportunities would give the students further insight into their career path of communications and public relations.

In September, PRSSA members were invited to sit in the press box and cheer on the Pack during their first home game against Western Carolina. This gave students a chance to see more than just the game — they were able to get a first-hand account of the huge public relations efforts behind it. Not only were PRSSA members allowed to see the behind-the-scenes activity of the football game, but they were also led on an interesting group tour of the Carolina Hurricanes Public Relations department in October.

The chapter is currently working with the Lonnie Poole Golf Course, a 250-acre course located on NC State’s Centennial Campus. The management and public relations team of the Lonnie Poole golf course approached PRSSA to help increase the course’s awareness and visibility within the NC State community, including alumni, faculty, and students. The goal is to create a public relations campaign for the golf course with members of PRSSA assigned to subcommittees. The subcommittee groups will focus on the creation of a brochure and an electronic press kit, establishing social media websites, hosting a Greek charity event, and promoting the course through advertisements. Each subcommittee within PRSSA has a proposal deadline to be approved and implemented by the management of the golf course.

The Lonnie Poole PR campaign gives students a chance to get real world experience by creating a public relations campaign and seeing their work used by the client. PRSSA will continue the Lonnie Poole Golf Course project well into the spring semester. The members will also host PR Day 2011 and other activities within the field of public relations.
FORMER STUDENT ZACH GALIFIANAKIS GETS HIS BIG BREAK

By Caroline Linker

What sounds like a dream come true for most young, aspiring actors and comedians is reality for Zach Galifianakis, a former communication major at NC State, who is climbing his way up the Hollywood ladder to fame and success, one joke at a time.

A native of Wilkesboro, N.C., Galifianakis aspired to become a successful actor his entire life, but instead of following his star-struck dreams, he decided to follow his father’s footsteps and become a student at NC State. During his college years, he pursued a degree in communication and film and participated in several campus theater performances. Leaving his university education behind in 1992, he moved to New York City to become the actor he always craved to be.

Galifianakis tried his luck at stand-up comedy for the first time in the back of a hamburger restaurant in Times Square during the early 1990s. By 1995, NBC scouts spotted his talent and Galifianakis became a regular in five episodes of the sitcom Boston Common. Slowly but surely, he began to make a name for himself in show business. Galifianakis co-starred in the 2001 movie, Out Cold, and became a regular in the Fox drama Tru Calling from 2003-2005. He has appeared numerous times on the Jimmy Kemmel Live! show and has made two appearances on the Comedy Central hit show, Reno 911!

After years of working hard to achieve his dream, Galifianakis hit the fame jackpot with the acclaimed movie, The Hangover, in 2009. This fall he starred in the film Due Date.

Galifianakis has had numerous supporting roles in recent blockbusters like G-Force, Youth in Revolt, and Up in the Air. He continues to dazzle the comedy scene with his performances in the Comedy Central show Dog Bites Man. On March 6, 2010, Galifianakis hosted the acclaimed comedy show Saturday Night Live.

In a recent interview he was asked who was his favorite professor while at NC State. His response: “I had a professor named James Alchediak who was the coolest, and I hope he is still there. I would like to bump into that guy one day.” Well, Zach, Professor Alchediak is still here and still cool. Come on by!

GRADUATE LANDS EVENT PLANNING JOB IN ALABAMA

By Nicole Medlin

From corporate picnics, meetings or award ceremonies to weddings, birthday parties and private dinners, alumna Caroline Jones Kennedy can do it all. Kennedy, who graduated magna cum laude in May 2008 with a BA in Interpersonal Communication and a minor in Women’s and Gender Studies, has been working in Huntsville, Alabama, as a facility rental coordinator for the Huntsville Botanical Garden since July 2009.

After seeing a posting on the garden’s website, Kennedy sent in her resume and cover letter. “I spoke with the hiring manager and basically sold my skills to her,” said Kennedy. After two interviews, Kennedy’s experience in sales and nonprofits landed her the job.

Kennedy’s responsibility is to rent out event spaces at the Huntsville Botanical Garden. “I am on the phone for almost half the day – I contact all vendors involved with upcoming events to coordinate scheduling, drop offs, pick-ups, equipment needs, staff needs, and space planning,” she explained. “The other half of the day is spent on meetings with clients, both existing and potential, to answer questions and sell future events.”

During the first six months of the last fiscal year, Kennedy exceeded Facility Rental’s income goal by 66 percent. “I very much feel like I ‘own’ the position by initiating changes in our procedures and always looking for ways to improve my department’s function,” she said.

Kennedy took the initiative to go after a job that she thought she would excel in and enjoy. “No matter what your job is, I believe it is important to ‘own’ it. Instead of going to work every day and simply executing my job description, I always strive to improve my performance as well as that of my department,” she said.
ALUMNI NEWS

ALUMNUS REVEALS IMPORTANCE OF EXTRA EFFORT

By Dwayne Dixon

Extra-curricular activities are a way for students to stand out from their peers, and for John Cooper “Coop” Elias, putting in that extra effort outside of classes earned him multiple awards, a rewarding career and ties to the University that will last a lifetime.

Elias, 23, is an NC State alumnus who graduated in 2009 with a degree in Public Relations and a minor in Journalism from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee, Elias moved to Raleigh in 2005 to attend NC State University.

As a freshman and sophomore, he participated in a work-study program in the Department of Communication office. “I really liked working there,” said Elias. “I think that helped me develop better relationships with my professors than most students were able to.”

The extra activities he was involved with outside his work-study earned him multiple awards, such as the Matthews Medal, an award given to select students who demonstrate a great level of leadership and commitment. He also received the Gold Crown award for the publication of one of the best yearbooks in the nation, the Agromeck.

“I started as a writer and eventually worked my way up to be editor during my senior year. I learned a lot through that experience, and it was a really great thing to be able to work on because it produced a tangible product that I will always have to remember my time at State,” he said of working on the Agromeck.

In addition to writing, sports have always been one of Elias’ passions, especially college sports. He was very active in the Student Wolfpack Club, and he became president of the club during his junior year. He was somewhat reluctant to move from the collegiate realm to that of pro sports after graduation, but he landed a promotions internship with the Carolina Hurricanes, where he worked his way up to become their marketing coordinator.

Elias' position with the Hurricanes was not easy to acquire. Doug Warf, the Hurricanes’ Senior Director of Marketing and also a department alumnus, said, “Coop’s work ethic was the predominant trait that helped him earn a position…it was clear that Coop realized that education does not stop when you receive your diploma.”

While Elias has moved on from college life to an exciting career of his own, he clearly has many things that tie him to NC State University. Much of his success today can be attributed to the activities and relationships that came from his time as a student. “I always feel like I am going to be connected with my college,” he said.

PAUL JONES LANDS PRESS OFFICE JOB FOR THE N.C. STATE FAIR

By David Sterling

Following an internship at the North Carolina State Fair and his subsequent graduation in 2009, Paul Jones has gone on to work for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services full time. Working in the press office is a year-round job, and Jones, along with his team, promote the State Fair.

This year Jones helped head up the social media efforts of the fair promotion through outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and Flickr. The press office is also in charge of maintaining Deep Fried @ the N.C. State Fair, the official blog of the N.C. State Fair press office.

Jones points out that unlike normal news outlets, "Social media is more of a conversation than trying to push out the facts," and in a sense, he said, it is much like story telling.

"State Fair is not something we have to sell, but we are concerned with finding those stories that make the fair slightly new and slightly different." This is not the first time the State Fair has used social media to get the word out; however, the impact has grown over the past few years. The 10,000 Fans of Summer was a campaign on Facebook this summer that hoped to increase the size of their audience with the basic goal of building awareness about the State Fair. Jones added that there is a significant increase this year in the online participation as they went from about 5,000 fans to more than 28,000.

The impact of social media on the State Fair is hard to measure, but there are definite indications from the level of involvement in these online communities that suggest social media has a positive and contributing effect on the promotion of the State Fair.
ALUMNA ADDRESSES TEEN SUICIDE IN HER RECENT BOOK

By Sammie Vong

The loss of a child is an almost impossible reality to grasp. Grief, sadness, and questions overcome the parents, family and friends. Department of Communication alumna Carolyn Zahnow is making a pro-active effort to help prevent teens from taking their own lives.

Zahnow has recently come out with her first self-published book, “Save the Teens: Preventing Suicide, Depression and Addiction,” which addresses this difficult subject and others.

After graduating in 1997, Zahnow embarked on a new life in Flower Mound, Texas, with her husband and her son, Cameron. After her son's death in 2005, Zahnow and her husband decided to move back to the Raleigh area where Zahnow grew up.

She kept a journal of her ups and downs during her first year of grieving the loss of Cameron and conducted extensive research on topics such as suicide, teen depression and meth. She decided a book would be a great way to work toward prevention and education to decrease teenage suicide rates and make parents aware of possible depression and substance abuse. Zahnow's book includes her son’s poetry and artwork as a way to illustrate his depth of depression, along with a very truthful, open account of her own experience with her son.

Along with working 40-plus hours a week at her job doing event planning and public relations, Zahnow is active in informing parents and teens about suicide. It’s hard to get parents to recognize this problem, but Zahnow said, “I hope parents will re-connect with their teens so they'll know what to look for in terms of depression in their kids.” She wrote her book to make parents aware and let teens know there is hope and bountiful options for help.

For more information on her book and mission to save teens, visit www.save-the-teens.com.

HEATHER GILL DISCUSSES TRIALS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

By Stephanie Lowder

“A learning process.” This is what Heather Gill, a former NCSU student with a major in interpersonal communication, said about her Raleigh-based business, Focused Videography. After Gill graduated in 2007 she began her career working for a start-up business and experienced first-hand how difficult starting a company can be. With the help and skills of her fiancé Bo, their small business got off the ground in 2009.

Gill focuses most of her time on cultivating relationships with her clients to build trust and promote the company. People skills and organization are essential for anyone starting their own company, according to Gill. She urges students and young professionals to find a mentor early in their career to help teach life skills.

Gill advises future graduates to be creative. She emphasizes that getting a dream job is not likely right after graduation, so try and think outside the box. Gill suggests volunteering to gain extra experience in your field of choice. For those interested in the entrepreneurial field, she said research is an important starting point, but you need to “make sure you keep things small and focus on one task at a time.”

Focused Videography is a blend of Heather and Bo’s passion for media and communication. Overall, Gill claims that anyone who wants to start their own business must find what they are passionate about and then let the process naturally evolve.
GRADUATION NEWS

HEIDI SULLIVAN NAMED SPEAKER FOR FALL GRADUATION

By Katie Nehm

After taking classes for 18 years at NC State, Heidi Sullivan is ready to graduate. Not only is she ready to graduate, she’s also ready to do so in a “really cool way.”

The department nominated Sullivan as the speaker at this fall’s main graduation ceremony in the RBC Center. She was chosen, in part, because of her perseverance in overcoming barriers and her "can do" attitude. Sullivan joined the Wolfpack nation in 1992 by taking one class per semester. “It was only $187.50 for five credits when I started,” Sullivan said. She became a student through a non-degree program, and after a few classes, was told she could apply as a first-year student. Fast forward and she is now finishing her degree in communication with a concentration in communication disorders.

Outside the University, Sullivan has been a contracts administrator for BASF for six years. Sullivan says she had to work school into her life. She is doing paralegal-level work, but would like to earn a certificate to back it up. In order to pursue that certificate, she first needs a bachelor’s degree and from there she can apply to Meredith College’s paralegal program for entry this fall.

One important aspect of Sullivan’s 18-year-long trek for formal education is her desire to pay it forward. Many people have helped her either financially or by just offering a friendly hand. She wants to help foster learning for others. She said, “I have seen a lot of life in those 18 years. I’ve gotten married, had a child, lost a parent and went through a career change. I know I can use my experiences to help others.”

What’s next? She plans to pursue a Ph.D. in speech language pathology and then help those with cochlear implants. She is likely to succeed, no matter how long it takes.

GRADUATION FOR COM STUDENTS PLANNED FOR DEC. 18

By Keeshan Ganatra

CONGRATULATIONS DECEMBER COMMUNICATION GRADUATES!

The Department of Communication graduation ceremony will be held Saturday, December 18, at 2 p.m. in Carmichael Gymnasium following the University graduation ceremony at 9 a.m. in the RBC Center. Approximately 84 undergraduate students will be recognized, including 21 students from the Communication Media concentration, 17 students from the Public Relations and Organizational Communication concentration, 24 students from the Public and Interpersonal Communication concentration, and 1 student from the Communication Disorders concentration. Students who finished their degrees in Summer Sessions I and II will also be recognized. Students graduating cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude as well as students with memberships in Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Beta Kappa and Lambda Pi Eta will be recognized. A member of Lambda Pi Eta will announce the faculty member chosen by the graduates to receive the Outstanding Professor Award. The faculty will choose a recipient for the Outstanding Graduate Award. Joining the fall semester undergraduates are 2 students receiving their master’s and 2 students receiving their doctorates. Each master’s student will be greeted by his/her committee, and Ph.D. students will have their hoods presented.