OM Week 2011 kicked off with one of North Carolina's most recognized communication consultants, Brad Crone, an alumnus of NC State with a degree in political science, who spoke to students about political consulting and effective communications.

Crone founded Campaign Connections in 1991, and he has produced high-quality mail, television, radio and other media for county commissioners, General Assembly members, city councilors and local officials across the state.

He has extensive experience in media consulting, campaign management and state government. He served as the publisher of the Thomasville Times, a daily newspaper in Davidson County, from 1989-1991. Before joining that publication, he started a weekly newspaper, the Clayton Star in Clayton, NC.

Crone also served as deputy press secretary to former U.S. Senator Lauch Faircloth during his 1984 gubernatorial campaign. He later served as special assistant to North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Graham. He has worked as a news editor for WPTF AM 680 and served as a consultant for WBTV in Charlotte and WLFL TV 22 in Raleigh.

Given his background, it should not be surprising that he focused his comments on writing. "How do you become a better writer," he asked. "You work out," he answered. "Take the talents you have and work to improve them so you have a competitive edge in the market place," he advised.

Crone believes today's generation has to work harder than any other because we are in such a deep debt hole as a nation. "My generation has failed to realize the amount of debt they have accumulated, and now it is your generation's job to pick up the pieces."

For more stories on other COM Week sessions, see pages 4–6.

CHASS ADVISORS NOMINATED FOR AWARDS

By Cassandra Miller

It takes a remarkable person to be a college advisor. Patience, caring, and passion are three words to describe advisors Sandra Stallings and James Alchediak, whose work to help students has been recognized by the university. Now Stallings and Alchediak have both been nominated for the Advising Primary Role Award and the Faculty Advising Award respectively, from the National Academic Advising Association.

Both nominees were picked through a rigorous nomination process. First, each department at NC State nominates advisors to represent the College for the University advisor awards. Dr. Victoria Gallagher, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies for The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS), wrote the nomination letters. CHASS then selected both Stallings and Alchediak, among others, to represent CHASS for the university awards. Then, a university advising awards committee selected the winning advisors, who will represent NC State at the national advising awards.
Academic scholarships are critical to any undergraduate program. They not only reward excellent student work but they also help to defer ordinary student costs related to the purchase of textbooks, room and board, and so on. In short, scholarships often provide additional rewards to students which academic departments (especially in troubled economic times like this) cannot.

When able, the Department of Communication is fortunate enough to offer several student scholarships that recognize meritorious academic and professional activities. These scholarships are funded through endowments and scholarship funds. Individual donations to any of these endowments are welcome. Student recipients are determined by faculty in the Department of Communication’s three concentrations after considerations of relevant criteria. All of them are awarded during the spring semester. The specific eligibility requirements for these scholarships can be found on the department website at http://communication.chass.ncsu.edu/undergraduate/scholarships.php.

I want to mention the names of these scholarships and to thank the donors:

- The William G. Franklin Scholarship was created by the former students of Dr. William G. Franklin to honor Dr. Franklin’s 24 years of excellent service, teaching, and mentorship.
- The Kara Ruth Medlin Memorial Scholarship Endowment was created by Thomas E. and Darlene W. Medlin in loving memory of their daughter, Kara Ruth Medlin, who was a junior majoring in Communication when she was tragically killed in an automobile accident.
- The Wally Ausley Endowed Scholarship Fund in Speech Communication was established to honor Wally Ausley for his many outstanding contributions to the community, the field of public broadcasting and North Carolina State University.
- The C.A. Dillon, Jr., Scholarship in Speech Communication honors C. A. Dillon, Jr., for his many contributions to North Carolina State University.
- The Joe S. Epley Scholarship Endowment for Public Relations and Communication rewards qualified students working in the Public Relations concentration in the department.
- The Long, Javidi, Prospects and PRSSA Scholarship also funds a scholarship (or scholarships) to encourage and reward deserving undergraduate students majoring in Service, teaching, and mentorship.
- The Nancy and Melinda Snow Scholarship was created by Nancy Hill and A. C. Snow to commemorate their daughter, Melinda.
- The Charlotte Ann & Thomas S. Elleman Endowment recognizes and awards students in the Department of Communication honors program.
- Our newest scholarship – the Rebecca and Ruth C. Leonard Scholarship Endowment – was established by a former faculty member and now emeritus professor, Dr. Rebecca Leonard. The scholarship honors Dr. Leonard’s mother, Ruth Cardon Leonard, who taught elementary school for 20 years.

These scholarships go a long way toward recognizing the academic achievements of our undergraduate students. We are deeply grateful to the donors who make them possible.

**Stallings and Alchediak**

Continued from page 1

Stallings attended Longwood University in Farmville, Va., and graduated with an undergraduate degree in theatre/speech. She continued her education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and graduated with a master’s degree in speech. Stallings’ job as an advisor at NC State includes advising both the freshman and senior classes as well as internal and external transfer students. In addition to her advising, Stallings also writes the online advising handbook for parents and current students. She edits and makes changes to the handbook every year in order to keep students current with changes to the degree audit. She said that she learns a lot from the students and tries to incorporate what she learns in her academic life. “I believe that quality advising begins with respect for each individual who comes to us for guidance.”

Alchediak attended Loyola University in New Orleans, La., and graduated with a degree in mass communication. For graduate school he attended Ohio University and graduated with a master’s degree from the School of Radio Television.

Alchediak is not only the sophomore advisor, he also teaches courses in media production. He loves to stay active in the department as a video producer as well as an instructor. “I feel privileged to work at the university level. I love the age group and the fact that students are continually searching for themselves. If I can help them in their quest, that’s all the better.”

Alchediak mentioned that being nominated is an ironic turnaround. “This nomination is a very nice gesture. It means quite a lot to me because of the process that involves asking students for letters of support, rather than the other way around. I feel fortunate to still be in touch with them.”

While the requirements of the position may sometimes seem overwhelming, Stallings and Alchediak take it in stride. Stallings said, “I just love seeing the success of individual students while getting to know them and sharing in their pride.”
Diversity is a word we have heard often around NC State’s campus. Dr. Jessica Moore said that the importance of supporting diversity is one of the reasons she decided to participate in the “It Gets Better” video project on campus.

The “It Gets Better Project” is a movement that was started in response to the recent suicides among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth. Due to bullying by their peers, many teens feel as if their lives will always be that way, but the “It Gets Better” project’s goal is for supporters from all over to tell them, via YouTube videos, that it can and will get better.

Dr. Moore, an assistant professor in the Department of Communication, was approached by Justine Hollingshead, the director of the LGBT Center on campus, to participate in an “It Gets Better” video featuring faculty, alumni, and students at NC State. Moore was happy to share her story as one of the LGBT faculty members, alongside allies such as Dr. Tom Stafford, vice chancellor for Student Affairs, and Chancellor Randy Woodson.

"Students approach me often and say, 'I'm gay and I'm scared to come out in class, but I want to communicate openly about my life experiences in my communication courses. Can you help me?'' Moore said. It was her hope that by participating in the video and sharing her story as a GLBT faculty member, students may realize that, regardless of the obstacles they are facing now and whatever their gender identity or sexual orientation may be, there is a whole community of supporters for them.

According to Moore, the purpose of NC State’s “It Gets Better” video is to reach out to those who are struggling. Indeed, she can personally relate to some of those struggles. “My journey to come out when I was in college was not easy,” she explained. “But today, I am proud to say that my wife and I have been together for over 18 years and life gets better for us every year.”

By participating in NC State’s “It Gets Better” project video, Moore is not only showing how struggling students can relate to someone who has overcome similar obstacles, but also how it truly does get better at NC State.

Dr. James Hughes discussed the Cyborg Buddha Project at NC State University Feb. 22, 2011. With a large classroom full of students and faculty, Dr. Hughes’ presentation left the audience asking questions and wanting more.

Dr. Hughes directs the Center for Ethics and Emerging Technologies (IEET) and the Cyborg Buddha Project. He is also a bioethicist and sociologist at Trinity College in Hartford, CT where he teaches health policy and serves as Director of Institutional Research and Planning.

After traveling to Sri Lanka at the age of 23, Dr. Hughes decided to convert to Buddhism and became ordained as a monk. He then served there in a monastery for four months. Little did he know that this decision would fuel his career and beliefs for the rest of his life.

Dr. Hughes addressed the Cyborg Buddha Project’s primary focus – “to promote discussion of the impact that neuroscience and emerging neurotechnologies will have on happiness, spirituality, cognitive liberty, moral behavior and the exploration of meditational and ecstatic states of mind.” In other words, technology gives us power, which creates more social responsibility.

He argues that emerging technologies for cognitive and physical enhancement should be made available to people as widely as possible. He's enthusiastic about the possibilities for genetic, robotic, artificial intelligence, and nanotechnologies (the so-called "GRAIN" technologies), and believes that the benefits of these technologies generally outweigh the risks.

Dr. Hughes concluded his presentation with a Q&A session and was also available for two small-group discussion opportunities the next day. More information about IEET and the Cyborg Buddha Project can be found on IEET’s website at www.ieet.org.
Silent anticipation filled the Erdahl-Cloyd Theater Thursday night, February 24, while students, staff and community members gathered to hear Dr. Minnijean Brown Trickey, member of the Little Rock Nine, address the struggle and opposition toward equality and social justice in today’s society.

Trickey drew in her listeners with her welcoming attitude, requesting audience members to move towards the front of the room, saying, “I’m hoping we can have a conversation.” Trickey told the audience about the struggles she faced while attending Little Rock High School (LRHS), describing the first days of the integration as “raucous and violent, in plain view for the world to see.”

Trickey showed a video of the chaos outside of LRHS during its integration and said, “We should be shocked more often, may we all be shocked by truth.” It was this “it’s about all of us” mentality that became the message of Trickey’s lecture. “We have to make demands of our society to be correctly informed,” said Trickey, stressing the necessity of today’s young people getting involved and engaged in history.

When explaining why she continues to teach and discuss social injustice, Trickey cites the importance of having an authentic discussion about the current climate of equality in our society.

“It’s not about me, the reason I tell this story. It’s not about color, and it’s not about race. It’s about why am I putting up with these conditions,” said Trickey.

It was Trickey’s comic relief and banter that kept the heavier parts of her lecture from weighing down the audience. When a student asked how LRHS feels about her now, she replied, “They hate me, and I’m proud of it. I love it.”

Trickey’s insightful discussion inspired those lucky enough to attend, including Allison Hofmann, a sophomore studying Nutrition Science, who said that she connected most with Trickey’s ideas of “having one mind to collaborate and be the change we want to see in the world.”

Trickey now teaches nonviolence workshops and travels the world as a motivational speaker. When asked about her experience at NC State, she responded in her humble manner by saying, “My experience here has been rich and wonderful.”


PUBLIC RELATIONS WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON GLOBAL CAMPAIGNS

By Alyson Stanley

The International Public Relations workshop was presented by the Center for Global Public Relations on Friday, Feb. 25. Dr. Dean Kruckeberg, Dr. Alan Freitag and Dr. Ashli Stokes from UNC-Charlotte discussed planning and managing public relations campaigns internationally. All three professors are involved in their school’s study abroad program and also in their Center for Global Public Relations.

Dr. Kruckeberg spoke first and stated that each culture has something to offer to public relations scholarship and practice. He also encouraged students to keep up with global current events.

Dr. Freitag has visited 60 countries and had great observations to share with the students. He stated that we should be focusing our public relations responsibilities on emerging responsibilities, and we should not get too engaged in things that may be gone in the future. His example was Twitter. He challenged students to study abroad, seize opportunities and be a bold public relations leader.

Dr. Stokes gave students a first-hand example of global public relations by looking at a case study – the BP oil spill and international issues management. She said that it is important to never ignore publics when dealing with a public relations problem, which, she said, is something BP did when handling their situation.
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT RESOLUTION PANEL SPARKS DISCUSSION

By Madeline Newberry

Dr. Jessica Jameson, associate professor in the Department of Communication, invited four panelists to discuss conflict management resolution with students on Feb. 22. Topics discussed included conflicts in the workplace and with personal relationships and how to appropriately mediate conflicts as a third party with or without mediation certification.

The panel was a diverse group who provided a first-hand take on conflict within the workplace. In most cases of conflict, the law must be involved. Don Overby, a Wake County Administrative Judge, and Dawn Bryant, director of Education and Clinical Services and a police attorney for the Raleigh Police Department, were able to provide a different perspective within the court system that offered attendees a good understanding of what type of conflicts to look for, avoid, and properly mediate with the correct training.

Bryant said that “People don't know how to talk about what's wrong, and they don't know how to figure out a way to resolve conflict. They think that if they call 911, someone will just come and handle it.” She also talked about proper ways of mediation within a domestic dispute and in some cases where a third party is needed that doesn’t always have to be someone in the court system. In order to efficiently manage conflict in any situation, both parties must be willing to reach a consensus, rationalize the situation, and then take steps to prevent the conflict in the future.

Conflict management isn’t always black and white. Dr. Kathleen Sturgis, executive director at American Leadership School, talked about a growing conflict with customer support technology and the world’s evolution into making everything online. She works for a company called American Support that virtually offers billing services, tech support and customer service call center operations and management. The company is in over 28 states, and Sturgis said that they manage conflict by “providing proactive training to employees, utilizing solid communication systems (via chat rooms, Skype, Twitter, etc.) and by being aware of the ‘nimbleness philosophy’ of the company — realizing that things change overnight and the importance of keeping up-to-date research on trends in virtual conflict.”

Mark Morris, a Professor of Law and Director of the Dispute Resolution Institute at North Carolina Central University, spoke about dispute resolution and how to train students to operate effectively in a legal environment and said that law students must have a growing understanding that there are “always different ways of doing things and handling situations.”

The discussion concluded with a question and answer session.

STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH

By Kathleen Beaver

Several students presented research projects at the forum, including graduate students and recent graduates. The topics of presentations varied from projects focusing on organizational assimilation in nonprofit organizations to the relationship between NFL teams and stewardship.

Graduate students Sarah London and Bomi Roberson presented their research project based on organizational assimilation in nonprofits. Roberson, a nonprofit employee, spoke on how work group size correlates with job satisfaction and assimilation.

Master’s graduate Meghnna Tallapragada presented on the relationship between journalists and PR practitioners, with a focus on the social media website HARO (Help a Reporter Out). Other presentations included master’s student Kim Burke’s presentation on NFL teams and stewardship with social media, with a focus on social media promoting fan growth.

The forum closed with Dr. Joann Keyton and a team of students presenting a project based on communication and work efficacy. The project has been in the works for two years and Dr. Keyton took on several students to assist with the research. Students Nicole Benson, Chelsea Burnette, Lindsey Lynch and Stephanie Raney presented on the research project and spoke on their different views of the project.

INTERNSHIP PANEL INFORMS

By Ian Peterson

A panel on February 23 provided an “insiders perspective” on the importance of internships.

Panel participants included Rachel Dickens from the North Carolina Museum of History, Wil Glenn with Wake County Public Affairs, Brian Van Norman, an account executive at Raleigh communication firm Articulon, and Cassidie Blackstock, the managing supervisor and intern supervisor of Fleishman-Hillard public relations firm.

Panelists emphasized the need to stand out from the sea of available students for any particular internship.

How do you stand out? “Do your homework on the company. Know about them before you go in to interview. When writing your cover letter show that you know what you’re talking about,” said Blackstock.

Cover letters and resumes seemed to be the main concerns of both students and panelists. “Change your resume and cover letter for each job you apply for,” said the panelists. If part of it doesn’t apply to the new job, they warned “leave it out.”

Overall, the panelists provided students with a realistic “to do” list of what it takes to be competitive in today’s job market.
A panel of professionals shared their experiences and insights on career opportunities in health communication during Communication Week 2011.

**Nonprofit Leaders Tell All During Panel Session**

By Shain Collins

Communication Week 2011 rolled on as representatives from multiple in-state nonprofit organizations spoke at the Park Shops on Tuesday, Feb. 22.

Speakers included David Laxton, communication director of the Autism Society of NC; Mary-Kate Keith, director of development and communications for Meals on Wheels; Emily Bruce, director of development for Marbles Kids Museum; Mark Hensley, program operations and fiscal manager of Benchmarks; and Amy Bryson, communications director for NC Association for Long Term Care Facilities.

The distinguished panel began by each describing their personal background and how they came to be involved with nonprofit organizations. Some members studied nonprofit work in college, while others followed a desire to work passionately for a cause they truly believe in.

Bruce of Marbles Kids Museum explained how vast the opportunities are in working with nonprofit organizations.

“Nonprofits are great because you can pick and choose based on what you are passionate about,” she said.

The panel members described some of the challenges and successes they experienced in their careers.

Members like Hensley of Benchmarks, an alliance of human service agencies, explained how having a business-minded approach in a nonprofit realm can be a challenge, but rebranding his company was his biggest success.

In addition, panel members addressed specific strategies they use in nonprofit communications. Topics of discussion included gaining public awareness, advocating through local legislators, building a recognizable brand with a logo that represents your mission and targets your audience, and building a donor base through fundraising.

As we are in the midst of an ever evolving, technologically charged society, another topic addressed across the panel was the importance of social media.

Certain members like Laxton noted how sites such as Facebook and Twitter are crucial to their growth as a nonprofit organization.

According to Bryson of the NC Association for Long Term Care Facilities, “Social media is the best way to gauge feedback and get involvement.”

Hensley reminded the group the importance of social networking. “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know,” he added.

“Be outgoing, be honest, and build relationships with people to spread your cause,” offered Mary-Kate Keith from Meals on Wheels.

The message of the night was clear. When working in nonprofit communications, you are given the opportunity to help bring awareness to a valuable cause by connecting with the people around you.

**Panel Explores Opportunities in Health Care Careers**

By Brittany Waddell

As part of Com Week an informative panel on career opportunities in health communication took place. Three professionals comprised the panel: Christine Rogers, communication manager for North Carolina Healthy Start Foundation; Heather Monackey, senior public relations specialist for WakeMed Health and Hospitals; and Heather Gill, director of operations for the National Lung Cancer Partnership.

Nonprofit and for-profit markets were represented, but all shared similar experiences in the field and contributed ways for candidates to stand out among the crowd when applying for jobs or internships. Writing skills are typically mentioned as the must-have skill, but the panelists said social media skills are also near the top of the list. The current economic situation has seen many organizations turn to social media to reach their audiences. “Because of recent layoffs, social media is an inexpensive way to continue to tell our story,” said Monackey.

When considering options for certifications that can further one’s career in health communication, Christine Rogers suggested getting a master’s degree in public health. When pursuing a master’s in this field, one will learn grant writing, as well as how to sell a lifestyle. “When selling a lifestyle, you see the value over time, not immediately,” said Rogers.

A common misconception about working in the communication department of a hospital is that it strictly deals with health issues. This is not so, according to Monackey. “It is very business oriented. I deal with advertisements, accounts and social media for the hospital as a whole.”

Gill emphasized that just because one works for a nonprofit organization does not mean that a person cannot make a living. “You are putting profit back into the organization,” Gill said.

Whether working for nonprofit or for-profit health organizations, all three participants encouraged students to gain experience through internships and different jobs once they graduate. They stated that although you can learn many techniques and skills while in school, the real knowledge comes from personal experience and learning to trust your instincts with on-the-job exposure.
CONTESTANTS VIE FOR WOLFPACK SPEAKS HONORS

By Rachel Huffman

Wolfpack Speaks, a public speaking competition, was hosted by the Department of Communication in Riddick Hall on February 10 to give Communication 110 students an opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a public forum. This event was the finals of the competition and included six speakers. The two-day event featured some 39 contestants.

The speakers were all enrolled in Communication 110, Introduction to Public Speaking, in the fall 2010 semester. These students were picked by their professors to perform their call-to-action speeches in the competition.

“The goal of Wolfpack Speaks is education. We want students of all majors to learn the skills of oration and rhetoric,” said Dr. Christi Moss, lecturer and director of all Communication 110 classes and coordinator of the event. “It is also about educating the public about what the students are doing in these classes.”

Meagan Proper, sophomore majoring in sport management, won the competition with an impressive call-to-action speech on spectator violence at sporting events. She was awarded a $150 scholarship for first place.

Luke Carter, senior in civil engineering, spoke on the advantages of the value added tax as opposed to income tax while Evan Wilkinson, junior in wood products, explained the dangers of the drug synthetic cannabis (otherwise known as spice).

The variety of topics reflected the different majors of the competitors. “It’s very important for the competition to include students beyond the majors of Communication,” said Moss. “It is part of our mission to have the lessons of public speaking reach students throughout main campus and Centennial campus.”

David Young of Edward Jones Investments sponsored the event.

DR. WATERS SPEAKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA, JOB MARKET

By Madeline Newberry

Dr. Richard D. Waters, assistant professor in the Department of Communication, led a seminar on the job search market and the importance of discretion in using social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace, to convince students how important their online image is to potential employers.

He said most people think that just by changing their privacy settings on their account will ensure privacy. This is wrong. Social networking sites such as Facebook give users a false sense of security. According to Dr. Waters, “Anyone who wants to see your pictures can look at them easily.” The most competitive jobs will hire hackers in their human resources department to screen your Facebook profile for any potentially negative information.

“Even if your site is restricted to friends, human resources practitioners can see everything,” said Dr. Waters. Take this into consideration before posting anything online. Just because you think it’s protected, doesn’t mean that it really is protected. “Don’t put anything on the Internet that you wouldn’t want your grandmother to see,” Dr. Waters said. “If you use discretion when posting on the Web, it will help you more in the future than you think.”

Dr. Waters talked about “personal branding,” which is “the process by which individuals and entrepreneurs differentiate themselves by identifying and articulating their unique values and then leveraging it across multiple platforms with a consistent message and image to help achieve a specific goal.” He said that the benefits of a personal brand are:

- Offers a strategic framework for managing your career
- Creates differentiation
- Improves confidence
- Increases your visibility
- Helps you achieve your goals

He also said that there are three keys to successful personal branding, which are clarity, consistency, and constancy. In order to stand out, you have to have a unique promise of value, walk your talk, and have constant visibility to your target audience. Remember that there are many people who have great resumes filled with qualifications. You have to find a way to stand out.

Everywhere you go online, when you sign up for something or write anything, you leave a digital footprint. In order to clean up your digital footprint, Dr. Waters said to put your name in quotations and Google yourself, remove any unwanted tags on pictures on Facebook, and come up with a one-line biography about yourself that makes you sound interesting and stand out. Make sure that your profile pictures say something positive about you and present yourself in a professional way. Be careful of your word use on comments and statuses, and always try to appear respectable. Remember: everything on the Internet can be seen, so make sure what people see about you is positive.
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ASSOCIATE HEAD FOR UNDERGRAD STUDIES

By Elizabeth Biggerstaff

How do you explain a typical day in the life of Dr. Jessica Jameson when no day is routine, when almost every day brings new challenges? As the Associate Head for Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Jameson is one of the “go-to” people in the Department of Communication. That translates into a day of meetings, phone calls, and emails as well as discussions with faculty, staff and students.

With hundreds of students enrolled in the communication major, and many others who want to know more about the major and what it can offer, Dr. Jameson is a living encyclopedia of knowledge about the department, its many courses, requirements to enroll in and succeed in the department, the prowess of the faculty, and the successes of alumni.

One of her major responsibilities is to improve the curriculum. One key activity for Dr. Jameson is to review the curriculum and schedule meetings for revisions. Meetings, of course, occupy a large portion of Dr. Jameson’s time. She meets with students regarding classes or research projects, and she often meets with faculty regarding various academic and personnel issues.

Dr. Jameson enjoys her position because of the collaborative work with others. When asked about the stress that is inherent in her job, Dr. Jameson said, “I sometimes take on too much work, creating my own stress.” Because her job is a large part of her life, she often takes on new tasks because they will help students or will make the department more effective.

"I’m not the only faculty member with a busy calendar. We are part of a bustling and thriving academic community. It’s actually a good feeling to be near the center of our department’s mission to deliver quality undergraduate and graduate education for students who desire greater knowledge and expertise in human communication and communication technologies,” she said.

CROASMUN LAUNCHES NEW INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

By Caroline Gilbert

Anita Croasmun, an instructor of Interpersonal Communication, spearheaded the establishment of a new independent film festival. Open to the public and free of charge, the PRAXIS Film Festival was held for the first time on January 28-29 at Wayne Community College in Goldsboro, NC. Croasmun’s vision was made possible through the financial support of The Foundation of Wayne Community College, contributions from a diverse group of talented filmmakers from around the world, and the generosity of various acquaintances and fellow NC State employees.

“PRAXIS represents the practical application of ideas. Independent filmmakers know that the ideas that end up on film depend on practical matters like how much cash and credit they have, how many friends can help, and who will show their film. Independent filmmakers create and market their work on a minimalist budget. So PRAXIS is committed to supporting the independent filmmaker by providing a venue for film artists to get their work seen,” Croasmun explained.

A life-long personal interest and passion for film drove Croasmun to take on the festival’s production in March of last year. She handpicked all 14 films — most of which she discovered last November at the Cukalorus Film Festival in Wilmington, NC — on her own. The films showcased at the PRAXIS event included short, long, and feature-length narrative films, as well as documentaries; featuring a mix of genres and wide range of ages among filmmakers.

PRAXIS was also central to the technical aspects of the production and photographing the event, while Croasmun designed and created the festival’s website herself. She credits the banner photograph posted on the official website to “photographer extraordinaire” Dr. Ed Funkhouser, associate professor of communication.

Croasmun always admired Dr. Funkhouser’s photograph of NC State’s auditorium seating. Croasmun, who believes that imitation is the highest form of flattery, imitated Funkhouser’s style as she took a picture of the Wayne Community College Auditorium where the film festival was held.

Croasmun is already preparing for the 2012 PRAXIS film festival. She is hoping to include films from Department of Communication students, and she is working toward more student involvement in the production of the festival.

She is confident that the festival will be a success. How could it not be? Croasmun has the resource of the department backing her up.
DEPARTMENT FACULTY ACTIVE IN COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERISM

By Cathy DiGrazio

Professors Jessica Jameson and Kami Kosenko and Ph.D. student Fredessa Hamilton Cobb are well known for their work in the Department of Communication at NC State and easily recognized by faculty and students alike. But, did you know that in addition to their valuable contributions at school, they also put in countless hours giving back to the community through community service? These communication professionals work in diverse fields of study, and each of them provides specialized assistance to nonprofit organizations. Reaching out to the community is important to NC State. Connecting to the public through volunteer programs helps establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships between the University and the community it serves. It is a way for NC State and its employees to give back to the local community by addressing the needs of people.

Dr. Jessica Jameson has recently become involved with Triangle Family Services (TFS), a local nonprofit organization. TFS helps more than 7,000 low-income families a year in the Raleigh-Durham area by giving them the tools they need to overcome domestic violence, improve financial stability, and address family emotional welfare. An example of Dr. Jameson’s ongoing work with nonprofit boards of directors, she has been volunteering with TFS Executive Director Alice Lutz as their board plans fundraising and economic development programs.

Dr. Jameson has also used her extensive expertise to teach nonprofit board members communication and conflict resolution skills. Nonprofit board members are volunteers from diverse backgrounds so they must develop unity in order to be successful, according to Dr. Jameson. Boards become more effective when they develop relationships based on trust and open communication.

TFS is only one in a long list of organizations receiving Dr. Jameson’s support. She has also been involved with Meals on Wheels, NAMI-Wake, Triangle Radio Reading Service, and Women’s Center Wake County. Dr. Jameson is affiliated faculty with the Institute for Nonprofit Research, Education and Engagement, a co-investigator in the Education and Discovery Grounded in Engaged Scholarship (EDGES) development, and a member of the faculty for the Ph.D. in Communication Rhetoric and Digital Media.

Fredessa Hamilton Cobb, a fifth-year Ph.D. student and lecturer from NC State’s Communication, Rhetoric & Digital Media (CRDM) program also participated in EDGES. Hamilton’s dissertation research explores how low-literate adults enrolled in adult literacy programs use new communication technologies and applications. While conducting field research at community colleges and nonprofit literacy councils, it became apparent to Hamilton that many adults have been functioning in life without being able to read.

Hamilton also discovered that, in addition to reading challenges, these students do not know how to use communication technologies available to them. Hamilton is devoted to bridging the gap between literacy and communication technology.

STALLINGS PRESENTS AT CONFERENCE

By Cassandra Miller

A person like Sandra Stallings is necessary at every college and university. As Assistant Head of Advising and a Lecturer in the Department of Communication, she has received numerous accolades for her work in teaching and helping students.

She also serves as the Director for the Interdisciplinary Studies Self-Design Degree Program. This degree encourages undergraduate students to design their own degrees which reflect the unique interdisciplinary connections and compliments that exist between courses from multiple disciplines.

Recently, Ms. Stallings contributed to a panel presentation at the Individualized Majors Programs Conference in Bloomington, Indiana. Her presentation, “Advising and Mentoring IMP Students: Guidance with the Capstone Project,” allowed her opportunity to share the NC State Capstone model which utilizes a Service-Learning component. In the course, seniors connect with community partners who could benefit from the academic preparation of the IDS degree. “This program allows students to help their community while developing and furthering their educational goals,” she said.

DR. TONDO TAKES ON NEW POSITION

By Debra Buck

Dr. James Kiwanuka-Tondo, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, has been named Interim Director of International Studies. Dr. Tondo has a strong background in research and has taught such classes as intercultural communication. He has recently been a member of the International Studies Advisory Board.

The new position entails coordinating the curriculum, the faculty and staff, as well as advising International Studies majors. International Studies is the fourth-largest program within CHASS.

"The program is challenging because of its size. But the faculty and staff are terrific. I have enjoyed working with them tremendously," he said.

Dr. Tondo's research interests include health communication campaigns, especially AIDS education campaigns. He will lead a study-abroad trip to Gaborone, Botswana, in the summer. He is a recipient of the Fulbright Scholarship, the British Commonwealth Technical Assistance Scholarship, and is a Fellow of the Salzburg Seminar.
The Department of Communication will be welcoming two new faculty members in the fall, Matthew May from Colgate University and Maria De Moya from the University of Florida.

Dr. May originally became interested in rhetoric as a young political activist and an organizer exploring the relationship between language, power, and social change. After earning a B.A. in English literature from Arizona State University, he completed an M.A. in communication with a specialization in rhetoric from the University of North Texas. He earned a Ph.D. in 2009 from the University of Minnesota with a specialization in rhetoric and a supporting program emphasis in cultural studies.

“Words cannot express how much I look forward to joining the distinguished team of faculty, graduate students, and majors in the Department of Communication at NC State,” he said.

Dr. De Moya is originally from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She holds a B.A. in social communication from Santo Domingo Catholic University in the Dominican Republic and an M.A. in business and economic reporting (journalism) from New York University, where she was a Fulbright Scholar. She completed her requirements for a Ph.D. in mass communications from the University of Florida this spring. As a mass communications scholar with a focus in public relations, Dr. De Moya’s research interests are how public relations efforts can make social contributions.

“I am looking forward to becoming part of the Pack, following NC State sports; and of course, to learning about hockey and going to a Hurricanes game.”

DR. SCHRAG PREVIEWS HIS GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE

By Caroline Perkins

Being in a technology-driven society, our communication media are constantly changing to better suit the needs of consumers. Dr. Robert L. Schrag, an expert on communication technology, will examine the various roles that print takes in digital culture and how these messages are formed in his fall 2011 graduate course, COM598-010/COM798-010 Text in the Digital Age (Tuesdays 6:00 – 8:45 p.m.).

With the rapid technological innovations and social-networking sites, our way of accessing specific types of information shifts almost continuously. Professor Schrag specializes in media and technology and shares his special interest in the shifting nature of text in this graduate course.

“I love teaching special-topic courses because it allows me to explore unique niches in the digital landscape. That allows students to expand their knowledge of technology and how it may impact their future,” said Dr. Schrag. “We will ask interesting questions, but I really have no notion what the ‘right answer’ will be, so the students will have considerable freedom to express their insight.”

Since 1980, Dr. Schrag has worked diligently to enlighten many students on communication, technology, and media in our changing world. As a founder and member of the American Communication Association, Dr. Schrag’s work has been published in their online journal as well as in traditional journals and textbooks.

“I have a strong interest in the various reconstructed forms of the written narrative,” said Dr. Schrag. In his upcoming course, he intends for the students to consider the impact of technology on narratives and how that influences creativity. “I want students in this course to examine the alternative features of text-based narratives in the digital world as both consumers and creators.”

Because this course is aimed at a very specific communication topic, Dr. Schrag does not intend for this course to become a permanent addition to the graduate curriculum. This course will be directed primarily at graduate students seeking to receive their master’s or doctorate in programs offered through the Department of Communication.

However, Dr. Schrag intends to save a few available seats for upper-class undergraduates who have a special interest in how the written narrative has changed and emerged into digital culture. “But it may be a ‘one-time deal’ so if students are interested in this course, grab it now,” he said.
Department Faculty Active in Volunteerism
Continued from page 9

Helping people gain these skills is her way of giving back to the community. “Spreading your influence outside the university is an opportunity to increase the school’s visibility by being a good community citizen,” Hamilton said. Teaching these skills helps prepare students for life in the “real world” outside the classroom environment. “Sending a student into the workforce with real-world applications benefits the student as well as the State of North Carolina,” she said. In addition to teaching at NC State, Hamilton tutors three to five times a week locally at Wake Technical College and at Robeson Community College in Fairmont, N.C. Her most fulfilling moments come when one of her tutored students walks across the stage to receive a diploma.

Dr. Kami Kosenko, who has gained recognition for her in-depth studies on safer sex communication among transgender adults, has had a long-time interest in transgender health. Dr. Kosenko worked with AIDS patients through hospice when she was a college student. Like most hospice volunteers, she provided comfort to terminally-ill patients and their loved ones, and gained first-hand knowledge about the effects of AIDS. Dr. Kosenko now extends her expertise into the community through her active involvement with AIDS organizations regarding communication practices related to primary and secondary HIV and STD prevention. Dr. Kosenko teaches a variety of courses, including communication theory, interpersonal communication, interpersonal health communication, interviewing, public speaking, and conflict resolution, and has published extensively on health behavior, healthcare experiences and transgender health.

The interests of these three women follow one common thread – communication. They have the ability to share ideas with others, a desire to listen and solve problems through their knowledge and experience, and the connections to access help if needed. They are part of NC State’s collaborative community of scholars and practitioners that act as a conduit between the general public and the University. Through their out-reach effort, they support programs that promote communication, foster understanding and improve the quality of life in their communities.

DR. ALBADA’S CLASS FOCUSES ON MEDIA AND FAMILY

By Natalie Griffith

Today’s children are growing up in a media saturated world, one that is characterized by rapid change and touches every aspect of their life, from education to friendship and play. Communication research has assumed a role in analyzing the role and influence of media on society and, especially, the children. COM 457: Media and Family is a course offered at NC State that examines the messages disseminated by the media and used, received, and responded to by children, adolescents, and parents. COM 457 instructor, Dr. Kelly Albada, uses the course to enhance students’ ability to apply communication theory and research in order to investigate the various media uses, processes, and effects within the family context. Dr. Albada also wants her students to improve upon their own media literacy throughout the course as they become more critical consumers of media messages and more reflective creators of media content. A distinctive aspect of Dr. Albada’s course involves a semester-long media education project that explores strategies that families may use to address a particular media content area.

“I was trying to create an applied project for students and to give them an opportunity to use their knowledge and skills in a way that differs from traditional class research papers,” Dr. Albada said. For the project, students research academic communication journals and books and other media education resources to create usable, informative materials for parents and children. Dr. Albada says, “I want them to be creative but balance the project with substance.” Projects cover topics that range from media violence and sexual behavior to adolescent body image or social networking issues and are presented in various formats. Students may develop games, brochures, videos, websites, newsletters, and so on to convey their ideas. One memorable project explored messages to young girls and strategies for addressing stereotypes through the development of a Princess game. Another project included a news format video to summarize research and interviews on childhood physical fitness and media.

She explained the project gives students a greater sensitivity to media and causes them to ask more questions. By creating the materials, students are teaching others, which enhances their own learning. The course and project are also important to students as family members and to students who may someday be parents by exploring topics that are not heavily covered in other communication courses. “My goal is for them to be prepared to make conscious choices when it comes to the role of media in their personal lives.”

Media and Family offers students a project that lets them explore issues by informing others and gives them a creative, tangible educational opportunity.
MOYER PRESENTS RESEARCH AT NC STATE SYMPOSIUM

By Caroline Linker

It has happened to all of us. The most gorgeous, attractive human being just walked into the room. As you stare, you hear that person say the most offensive comment about something and it changes your perception immediately. Beauty is, as beauty does.

Brandi Moyer, a master's student studying interpersonal communication, wondered if this phenomenon happened in all romantic relationships, regardless of how long you have known the person. During the fall 2010 semester, she conducted an online survey of married individuals to better understand how physical attractiveness perceptions are influenced by marital communication and how these perceptions influence marital satisfaction. She presented her research findings at the NC State Research Symposium in March and at the Southern States Communication Association a few days later.

With the help of Dr. Kelly Albada, Moyer was able to apply the Interaction Appearance Theory in long term, committed relationships. Participants rated their spouse’s and their own physical attractiveness before and then following a conversation with their partner. They also provided Moyer with information about the nature of the conversations they had with their spouses (e.g., angry, hurtful, intense, positive, pleasant, typical) so that she could see if certain features of conversations caused shift in relationship perceptions.

After all the information was collected, Moyer analyzed the data and found several significant results. She found that physical attractiveness ratings of one’s spouse was positively correlated with marital satisfaction and that conversations that produced positive emotions resulted in an increased perception of one’s own physical attractiveness. On the other hand, anger-producing conversations and negative conversations lowered perceptions of the spouse’s physical attractiveness. The most significant result was that the length of a marriage and the age of the couple did not modify the relationship between marital communication, physical attractiveness perceptions, and satisfaction. Long-term couples and older people engaged in the same perceptual adjustments as early-term and younger people.

Dr. Vicki Gallagher, interim associate dean for academic affairs for CHASS and an advisor for many graduate students over the years, was impressed. “Brandi Moyer's research presentation drew a large and interested crowd. Her research examines how perceptions of physical attractiveness can be modified by social interaction, particularly in long-term relationships such as marriages. While there were many outstanding projects showcased at the symposium, the level of interest in Brand's presentation demonstrates the centrality of communication and communication research to all of us.”

Moyer said she was appreciative of the opportunity to work with Dr. Albada. “I thoroughly enjoyed working with Dr. Albada. She was a great source of support and encouragement. She showed me that I could do it all — be a teacher, researcher, and have a personal life!” Moyer said, “This research project was definitely a challenge, but I am proud of how it turned out.”

ANNUAL KRISPY KREME CHALLENGE REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

By Nikki Edmondson

Imagine this scenario: Four miles, 60 minutes, 12 doughnuts containing 2,400 calories, and one great cause. How does that sound as a way to spend your Saturday morning?

That is exactly what 7,500 participants tried to do during the seventh annual Krispy Kreme Challenge, which took place in February on possibly the rainiest, coldest day of the year.

The Challenge seems to be growing at an exponential pace every year, with the cap being 7,500 this year as opposed to 6,500 in the 2010 Challenge. There seemed to be an endless number of people crossing the start line. In fact, the last person to cross the line was about 20 minutes after the start of the race.

When asked about her favorite part of the race, Department of Communication student Katy Mogg said, “Doing all of this for the kids is what makes it worthwhile. I will be running in my bikini through the cold and rain on Saturday all for them.”

Only the challengers must eat all 12 doughnuts, but most everyone seemed to be up for the full challenge. There is also the option to be a casual runner or a spectator. The Krispy Kreme Challenge was originally started as a dare by a small group of NC State students. By 2006, the event had been turned into a small fundraiser for the North Carolina Children’s Hospital. After raising over $100,000 this year, the challenge has now grown to be nothing short of a spectacular opportunity to help a good cause.
A SERIOUS INJURY PUTS TEICH ON THE SIDELINES

By Brittany Waddell

Spending most of her life in a gym flipping, jumping, balancing and twisting her way through competitions, junior communications major Rebecca Teich knows the meaning of hard work. Now 20 years old, Teich is a part of NC State’s competitive gymnastics team. She got her start in gymnastics when she was just four years old while living in Long Island, New York.

When she was 12, her family moved from New York to Charlotte, where she continued gymnastics. “The move was a culture shock,” Teich recalled. Having grown up in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood, and attending school where that religion was practiced by most students, made the move to Charlotte more difficult. “No one really understood the Jewish faith. I felt like I had to explain myself everywhere I went.”

From just a sample of Rebecca’s character, it is safe to say she overcame that obstacle with ease. She attended Weddington High School where her club team was state champions two times. Teich also qualified for nationals four times. When choosing a college, she knew that she wanted to go to an institution with a large student population. “I wanted to find somewhere that had the perfect combination of great gymnastic coaches and somewhere I could get a great education,” Teich said. After looking at several universities, she realized NC State would be the best fit for her college career. Rebecca received a full scholarship as a member of the gymnastics team.

It is coincidental that one of her closest friends from New York decided to join her on the NCSU gymnastics team. “We had always kept in touch, and it just worked out that she came here,” Teich said.

Teich has been a vital member of the NC State gymnastics team and helped them win the 2009 conference championship. Unfortunately, Rebecca injured her knee this winter – the first major injury of her entire gymnastics career – that required surgery. She missed the rest of the season, but that is not stopping her motivation. Teich cheered her teammates on just as if she was helping them compete. Persistent hard work and ambitious goals have been a part of Rebecca Teich’s character and there is no doubt that she will bounce back stronger than before.

MAYFIELD MAKES HER MARK WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

By Lindsee Ratliff–Bowens

Michelle “Shelli” Mayfield, a senior concentrating in public relations, is not your average college student. After having four children and getting a divorce, Mayfield decided to return to school. In January 2011 she started her COM 496 internship at Rumley Marketing Group. During her interview she had learned that Rumley had no social media presence in its market. While an intern, Mayfield created a social media plan for the company. Her interest in social media began after hearing Dr. Richard Waters, assistant professor in the department, speak about Twitter at a Public Relations Student Society of America meeting.

Mayfield submitted the social media plan, and it was approved and implemented within a few days. Six weeks into her internship the firm was impressed by Mayfield’s hard work and saw her as a valuable asset.

In addition to her work as social media coordinator for Rumley, she is also the PR manager for the Run Geordie Run campaign that supports the Children’s Foundation and St. Benedict’s Hospice in the United Kingdom. Runner Mark Allison will be running 3,100 miles across America in 100 days. Mayfield’s press release and other work for Run Geordie Run not only gave her national recognition but also recognition in Europe. As a result, she was also invited and accepted into the National Association of Professional Women.

Mayfield has plenty of advice to share with fellow students. “Networking is absolutely everything in this industry,” she said. She is also a determined advocate of social media with both students and clients. When speaking with potential clients she tells them, “You either stay ahead of the eight ball or behind; the choice is yours, but either way eventually you will get into social media.” Mayfield also contributes much of her success to Professor Bob Larson’s writing class. “When I went on interviews for my internship they would ask about the work I did in Larson’s class.”

After her December 2011 graduation, Mayfield plans on staying in the Triangle area then eventually relocating to Washington State. She said that Washington is a social media hub, there are lots of jobs there and three of her four children live in the state.
DREAMS COME TRUE FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE KUFUOR

By Shain Collins

Born in Berlin, Germany in 1987, Enrico is a poster child for diversity. His father, Kwasi Kufuor, is a native of Ghana, while his mother, Claudia, was born and raised in Germany. Enrico was brought up in Berlin along with his older brother and younger sister. Throughout his schooling in Germany, Kufuor learned English and had multiple American friends. He also saw many of his friends leave Germany to come to the U.S. for college or careers. Little did he know that he too would soon be taking this leap.

Kufuor admits that throughout his life he was sure that he wanted to do one thing: play basketball. His passion for the sport began during his adolescence, and Enrico soon realized that high school basketball in Berlin was not satisfying him. He craved more. “I was unhappy at school, and just wanted a change,” Kufuor says. “That’s when I started thinking about coming to the U.S.” Much to his mother’s dismay, Enrico contacted a friend who also ran a foreign exchange program. Ironically, this friend happened to also be close with a family that is very dear to NC State, the Murphy’s. Soon after contacting the Murphy’s, Enrico had come to a decision: with his family’s blessing, he would leave behind his home in Berlin and head for Raleigh in pursuit of his dream.

As a foreign exchange student at Harrells Christian Academy, Kufuor excelled both in the classroom and on the basketball court. Already fluent in English, Kufuor had no problem making new friends. “There wasn’t too much of an adjustment for me coming here,” he explained. “I was already familiar with the culture, and the Murphy’s were a great host family, so it was a smooth transition.”

After finishing his senior year of high school in Raleigh, Enrico decided to extend his stay in America, and was accepted at NC State University in 2007. During his first year of college, he focused solely on academics, but admitted that basketball was never far from his mind. “I played a lot at Carmichael, and eventually decided to try out for the varsity team,” said Kufuor. He was rewarded for his talent in the fall of 2008, when he was accepted as a walk-on to N.C. State’s Varsity men’s basketball team.

“It’s been a blast,” said Kufuor of his three years as an NC State athlete. “I’ve been able to do what I love to do and compete against some of the top athletes in the country.” Enrico plans to continue chasing his dream of playing basketball after college. His agenda is to hire an agent and hopefully earn an opportunity to play professional basketball. While he insists that he will play anywhere around the world, he does have top choices. According to Kufuor, Spain and Italy would be ideal, but Germany is also a top choice. “Germany will always be my home, and I would be thrilled if I got the chance to return there to play professional ball. Just as long as I’m playing...”

COLLINS GOES ON THE ROAD WITH NC STATE BASKETBALL TEAM

By Enrico Kufuor

Shain Collins did not join the NC State basketball program in order to travel, but he quickly realized that all of the traveling he did with the basketball team would have its perks. Collins, a senior in public and interpersonal communication, is a student manager for the NC State basketball team. He originally joined the staff in 2007 as a student trainer. However, he preferred managerial duties to those of a trainer.

According to Collins, being a student manager can be challenging because the basketball players can be demanding, but he likes his job. Sometimes he has so much to do for the players that you could almost say that he is taking care of them. Collins jokingly said, “I was their daddy.”

Although it can be challenging, there are positives that come with his duties. “The main perk of being on NC State’s basketball staff is being able to travel so much,” said Collins. Over the years places such as Tucson, New Orleans, Atlanta and Charleston have been on NC State’s traveling schedule. Collins said Charleston and Madison, Wis., are his favorites.

Traveling brings new and unusual experiences with it, which is one of the reasons why Collins loves to travel. This was the case in Madison when Collins and Miller Bryant, a fellow student manager, went to Wando’s, which is a four-story nightclub. “They had bacon in the club,” said Collins, “Who serves bacon in a club? That’s unheard of.”

Many people are happy seeing the NC State basketball team play, however for student managers it is more than that. Not only do they get to see the game from the front row, and actually get close to the players, they also travel to various cities. Watching the team play is only one part of the basketball experience for a busy student manager.
LPE PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

By Brittany Waddell

Lambda Pi Eta always has numerous opportunities for its members, and this semester was no different. During Communication Week, LPE held a student research panel in which two members presented research projects. Several faculty members were in attendance to hear the students' presentations and to ask questions about their research. This is a great opportunity to expand research topics, get new ideas stirring, and for the faculty and students to engage with one another outside the usual classroom setting.

Another panel was conducted in March titled, “Is Graduate School for Me?” Here, two master's students and one Ph.D. student engaged in a question and answer period about the application process, and their experience in graduate school thus far. This was a nice shift from research and service information that is usually discussed at LPE meetings because it offered students a look into opportunities for furthering their education presented by speakers who had first-hand knowledge.

The final meeting of the semester was held at the end of April. As is LPE tradition, new graduates received honor and service cords. New officers were introduced at the meeting.

As always, Lambda Pi Eta holds its members to the highest standards with regard to academic excellence. Members continue their education in the field of communication through networking opportunities, service possibilities, and engaging in research with faculty.

PRSSA DOUBLES ITS MEMBERSHIP BASE AT NC STATE

By Caroline Perkins

By doubling its membership base and increasing member participation, the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) is having a successful impact on North Carolina State University’s campus throughout the 2010-2011 school year.

Currently, the university’s PRSSA chapter has about 75 active members who participate in monthly meetings, field trips, and sub-committee meetings. Members also have the opportunity to network with local companies and gain knowledge on careers they would consider pursuing in the future.

PRSSA President Mary Harris still strives to increase membership for the upcoming year. “Growing and building our membership base is extremely important, as we continue to try to make substantial contributions to the college, university and community,” said Harris. “By spring 2012, we hope to increase membership by 25 percent.”

In October 2010, PRSSA toured the RBC Center where members had the opportunity to hear from RBC Center’s event planner, Allison Flentji, about the logistics and synchronization involved in planning special events, such as concerts, circuses and athletic events. Students had the opportunity to see the facility’s locker rooms, VIP lounges, and press room where celebrities and athletes reside during special events.

“I loved touring the RBC Center. It was awesome,” said PRSSA CHASS Council Representative Cameron Batson. “I had no idea how many hours an event planner spends planning and making preparations for the event,” said Batson.

In addition to taking field trips, PRSSA members created and maintain the publicity campaign for the Lonnie Pool Golf Course. Members have created brochures, an electronic press kit and an internship program to promote the golf course to NC State University students and faculty.

Currently, PRSSA Event Planner Annah Burns and chapter members are reviewing their successful Public Relations Day, which was held at the McKimmon Center on April 7.

As for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year, PRSSA officers hope to gain new members by promoting the club on campus and by reaching out to local public relations firms.

“We look forward to the new school year and hope to spend more time with public relations professionals in the community to gain a deeper insight into advertising, marketing, crisis communications and event planning,” said Harris.
PR DAY 2011 OPENS DOORS TO DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES

At PR Day 2011, speakers and panels featured local public relations specialists speaking about their jobs and particular focus in the field. Panels included social media, nonprofit, crisis communication, writing in PR, event planning, and marketing/advertising. PR Day 2011 proved to be a great way for more than 90 students from NC State and UNC-Pembroke to learn more about public relations and its practical applications, while also networking with local companies in search of interns.

The day was sponsored and organized by Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) under the leadership of President Mary Harris and officers Annah Burns and Megan Collins.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, SOCIAL MEDIA GO HAND IN HAND, PANEL SAYS

By Jenn Bollman

The social media session at this year’s PR Day focused on the functions that social media serve for public relations professionals in today’s frenetic working environment. The panelists included Angela Connor, social media manager for Capstrat; Joe Mecca, marketing/advertising manager for Coastal Federal Credit Union; and former Chief Communications Officer of NC State and Associate Vice Chancellor of University Communications Joe Hice. The panelists offered great insight on how social media can be used effectively by public relations practitioners.

Connor said that social media “is where people get information, and if your organization is not involved then people may never hear the information.” Now more than ever social media is the new billboard and newspaper communication channel. Facebook was referenced frequently during the discussion. Facebook started out as a network and has now become a large infrastructure with over 400 million users, and its user base is larger than the U.S. population. The panelists discussed how crucial it was for organizations to make their name known through social media outlets. They also discussed how students can start branding themselves through these websites. Mecca mentioned how students should follow people on Twitter to foster professional connections.

Hice spoke of how NC State has been using social media to reach out to students all over the country by using applications for smartphones, Facebook and Twitter. This has proved to be successful in recruiting students as well as cost effective. Today more than ever before it is becoming evident that students need to remain knowledgeable of social media to stay connected. One repeated theme of the panelists was that a well-connected person establishes himself or herself as a professional and gets noticed.

EVENT PLANNING PANEL GIVES PRACTICAL ADVICE TO STUDENTS

By Andrea Simnor

Four professionals in the field of event planning gave advice to students and spoke about their experiences. The panel members included Ayana Hernandez, the vice president of Fleishman-Hillard Communications; Doug Warf, the senior director of marketing and executive director of the Kids ‘N Community for the Carolina Hurricanes; Ellen Fragola, the marketing and events manager for Downtown Raleigh Alliance; and Tom Maltais, the assistant director of external affairs for UNC Health Care.

Students asked the panel members, “What skills are needed for event planning?” Maltais focused on the importance of time management. Hernandez said, “details, details, details.” Fragola touched on how flexibility, creativity and collaboration were imperative.

Warf said there is no typical day for event planners. He explained that event planners are constantly working on varied aspects of the project, and each project brings its own challenges. Fragola said, “Know when good is good enough.” Hernandez added that the diversity of her days is one of the reasons she loves her job so much.

Fragola said that her job was rewarding yet tiring and that it is so important to find a balance. Maltais added that it is imperative to constantly manage expectations. All the panelists spoke to the importance of having a backup plan.

The session wrapped up with an important question, “What advice do you have for people going into event planning?” Maltais answered, “Volunteer, work for free.” Hernandez said to “find a mentor.” Fragola said, “Don’t just look for a position you want, look for companies you want to work for.” Warf said, “Do the dirty work. Someone has to, and you will be recognized for it.”
You absolutely have to be organized and on top of your work," said Dixon, co-founder of Intrepid Marketing Group. "Every day is different and you always have to have a backup plan." Although all three panelists are in marketing and advertising, their day-to-day tasks greatly differ. "One day I am editing a wedding video and the next day I am editing the Wolfpack Football promotion video to send to scouts," said Pharr of Pharr Productions.

However, throughout their discussions, Pharr, Burgwyn, and Dixon all emphasized the importance of networking and building relationships with companies, peers, and employees. Additionally, the panelists spoke on the influence of social media on advertising and marketing. "We do the majority of our advertising through Facebook, Twitter, and Blog outreach," said Dixon.

The panelists concluded with sharing what they would look for in potential employees and interns. Besides having a good GPA and being involved in activities on and off campus, the panelists all said when they are reading over resumes, they look for work or internship experience. They also shared the importance of having a flawless resume and cover letter. "Do not use the cookie cutter resume," said Dixon.

Burgwyn, director of marketing and communications for Marbles Kids Museum, agreed with Dixon saying, "We want someone who is creative and stands out from the crowd." All three panelists believe that students should take every opportunity to network and meet new people. "Never be afraid to put your foot in the door and always be open to new things," said Burgwyn.

At the Marketing and Advertising seminar, panelists Jon Pharr, Katy Hipp Burgwyn, and Mike Dixon all shared their everyday tasks at their jobs and the tasks necessary to be successful in advertising and marketing.

"NONPROFITS FOCUS OF PR PANEL"

By Elizabeth Biggerstaff

Janet Kennedy, one of the guest speakers for the nonprofit organizations session, explained her passion for this area of public relations as a result of her being a "serial volunteer." She became interested in nonprofit public relations because she cares deeply for others and always finds a new way to help out. Rebecca Clendenin, Communities in Schools of North Carolina communications and media specialist, also found comfort in the care and support she found in working with nonprofit organizations. Clendenin described her coworkers as a "family that is fighting a good fight together."

Kennedy and Clendenin listed a set of skills that they found most important in working with nonprofit organizations: know the media, be a good writer, be a problem solver, and you must be able to be creative with a small budget. Each of these skills were described as being of great importance to succeed in nonprofit organizations.

"WRITING IN PUBLIC RELATIONS DISCUSSED BY EXPERT PANEL"

By Cathy DiGrazio

Writing in Public Relations panelists were Cara Doyle McLeod, marketing coordinator, Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department; Evie Hornak, awards chair, Raleigh Public Relations Society and North Carolina Public Relations Society; Keith Hayes, Hayes Writing; and Roger Friedensen, president/CEO, Forge Communications.

Friedensen opened the panel discussion with the following descriptive sentence about a day in the life of a PR professional. "It’s like slipping on a banana peel. Every day offers a new set of challenges." As each panelist described his or her daily responsibilities, a common theme emerged – know your audience. A public relations practitioner must be able to craft a message using words or fonts that appeal to the intended receivers of the information. McLeod explained that she uses a large font when communicating to senior citizens, and then switches to a "child friendly" language when communicating with mothers about children’s programs. Friedensen explained that the intended PR message must be able to cut through the over 4,000 brand messages the public receives every day. "You must ask yourself who is out there and then put yourself in the audience’s position," Friedensen said.

When asked about the importance of social media, Hayes surprised some audience members with his remark that social media is now what the Internet was 15 years ago when companies hurried to create poorly designed websites just to make sure they had something on the Web. Hayes’ opinion that social media is not a business necessity was counter-argued by Cara McLeod who said she relies on social media to communicate with her audience of 1,700 Twitter participants.

Friedensen stated that both arguments have merit as there are some companies that do not require social media; however, many companies benefit from Twitter or blogs and can gain positive results from social media. Friedensen warned that companies must be committed when using a social network, and recounted how blog feedback resulted in policy changes by JetBlue, an early adopter of the new technology. Hornak said that she uses industry information gained through social networking to write articles of interest to her audience.

The panelists offered advice for gaining PR internships and employment. All of the panel members agreed that a portfolio with three to four well-written samples is important, but they also stressed that the most pivotal component of the hiring process is the interview. These PR professionals rely on the face-to-face meeting to determine if a candidate is able to solve problems and willing to learn as well as exhibiting savvy, persuasive and inquisitive traits.

The industry is looking for detail-oriented employees who are able to think and produce quickly and give more than required. The parting employment advice they offered was “check your ego at the door” and do not expect to receive credit and accolades for individual contributions. Public relations is a team effort.
BARNHILL FINDS SUCCESS WITH NC STATE’S COMMUNICATION TEAM

By Rebecca Teich

Caroline Barnhill graduated from NC State University in 2005 with a degree in communication and a concentration in public relations. After she graduated, she worked more than three years in the public relations agency setting in the Raleigh office of Fleishman-Hillard, one of the largest communications firms in the world. Her job was to manage 10 accounts in several different fields. Working in the agency setting was a good experience for her, but she knew one day she would like to be able to give her all for a single client.

About three years ago when she heard that NC State had a position opening for a public communications specialist, she jumped at the opportunity. Now, as a member of the NC State communications team, she promotes the excellent work done by our faculty, staff, and students. She works in media relations, strategic communications, and crisis communications. “NC State is an amazing university with many stories to tell – and I enjoy playing a role in that,” she said.

Barnhill’s advice to students who are nearing graduation and looking for a job is to not be discouraged. If you cannot find a job right away, you should try to stay engaged with the job process by joining industry groups. These groups will help you stay current. Also, if you do find a job, try to get as much experience as possible. “Never turn down a project because it is not exactly what you want to do. The more experience you get earlier on in your field, the easier it is to narrow your focus later on and broaden your real-world expertise,” she explained.

Barnhill believes that returning to NC State was a privilege. As a student, she was able to form close and lasting relationships with her classmates and professors. Now she is working with extraordinary people across the entire University. "I am happy to have been able to come 'home' to NC State and help the university grow," she said.

ALUMNA MAKES MARK AT LARGEMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS

By Emily Freeman

It didn’t take Kelly Hubbard long to become a large part of the Triangle's public relations community. The 2006 graduate majored in communication with a public relations concentration and minored in psychology and journalism. She found fast employment with Largemouth Communications (www.largemouthpr.com), a full-service public relations firm based in Research Triangle Park focused on providing strategic media relations and corporate communications services. Hubbard was just the third hire and has helped her firm grow to be a successful agency and witnessed the company expand to have a presence in Charlotte, N.C., and Pittsburgh, Pa.

She has contributed to accounts in the technology, health care, professional services, retail, academic and life sciences fields with regional, national and global footprints. She is now a senior account executive at Largemouth and oversees day-to-day account management, editorial outreach and strategic counsel for a number of accounts, including Eaton Corporation, whose Power Quality Division is based in Raleigh, and The Pantry, owner and operator of Kangaroo Express convenience stores across the Southeast.

One of Largemouth PR’s campaigns for Kangaroo Express, the Battle for Bean Street, was recently featured in the New York Times as a Campaign Spotlight. Stuart Elliot published a story that dives into the PR, marketing, social media and advertising efforts surrounding this campaign in his article, “From Campus Grounds to Coffee Grounds.”

Hubbard has been good to the Department of Communication over the years, taking on a succession of department interns and teaching them about real-world public relations work. Her advice for new graduates is to take advantage of networking opportunities.

“Every internship or job opportunity that I was offered was a result of getting to know and keeping in touch with professionals in communication-related fields,” Hubbard said. “I also took full advantage of the CHASS internship program, and I really enjoy paying it forward to current students. My internships helped me apply what I learned in the classroom and build my portfolio to become a competitive job candidate.” Her active professional life also includes serving on the board of the Raleigh Public Relations Society for the past four years. She currently holds the membership chair position, citing opportunities for students to join and become involved with local professionals.

“It’s important to continue networking even after landing your dream job,” said Hubbard. “The PR industry has evolved very quickly, even in the years since I graduated from NC State. I have learned a lot from discussions with my colleagues and believe active discussion makes you a more polished practitioner.”
ALUMNI NEWS

JODI PEELER BLAZES PATH TO ST. KITTS AS ASSISTANT DEAN

By William Kaylor

For Jodi Stamey Peeler, life on an island is more than a beach and sea breezes, it is about utilizing the education she gained at NC State to organize a communications and community relations program. In April of 2010, she accepted an offer from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine, located on the island of St. Kitts, to become assistant dean for external relations and communications.

In 2001, Peeler graduated from NC State with a degree in communication with a public relations concentration and a minor in business administration. As a member of the National Communications Honor Society Lambda Pi Eta and the Public Relations Student Society of America, Peeler excelled in her extracurricular activities. In 1998, she won the Michael F. Pandich Excellence in Application Award and in the next two years she would also claim the Spring Leadership Award and the National Presidential Service Award from PRSSA. She would also go on to receive an MBA from Campbell University in 2005 and be designated a Certified Fund Raising Executive in 2009.

After graduation, her career began as the director of membership services at the Fuquay-Varina Chamber of Commerce. After about one year, she realized her true desire to be in academia (not to teach but to work in communications). In 2002, she accepted a position at the College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences at Campbell University. Peeler would work there for the next seven years, first as the associate director of alumni relations and outcome assessment and then as the director of alumni relations and advancement. After building a successful alumni program, she was promoted to assistant dean of external relations in 2008.

With a passion for developing programs, the desire to work internationally (especially in the Caribbean) and her love for animals, a job opening at Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine enticed Peeler to apply for the position. She sought the advice of friend and mentor Dr. Melissa Johnson, associate professor and director of graduate programs in the Department of Communication, about taking the position. Dr. Johnson encouraged her to “pursue the opportunity because it may be a once-in-a-lifetime chance.”

The decision to take the job was easy, Peeler said. When asked if she misses anything about living in the U.S., she replied, “Not really, other than my family and friends, but we hope they will all visit. The island has everything one needs to live and you truly learn to be appreciative of what you really need in life. The stores may not have the exact brand you like from back home, but you learn to adjust and be practical.”

As assistant dean, Peeler is responsible for the planning, implementation, and administration of resources for directing the overall communication and external relations program. She is also beginning to work with students, faculty and staff to organize and implement an internal communications plan. The favorite part of her position is the external relations, as she is able to join students, faculty and staff as they educate the community about veterinary medicine and the treatment of animals.

“I am so thankful to have the opportunity to join members of the Ross team in the community,” said Peeler. “I typically will write a story and share it with the media, but it is so much more than that for me — seeing the excitement from local children when learning about animals is a great feeling.”

Jodi Peeler has accomplished some outstanding goals and achievements throughout her career. She was a part of the original group who began the NC State Communication Alumni Circle and has served on the Board of Directors for the Raleigh Public Relations Society and the southeast district Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Her favorite quote was penned by Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead, where there is no path, and leave a trail.” Peeler hopes to embody the principle of the quote in her position.

BRINKLEY TAKES HER COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO LAW SCHOOL

By Meagan Gay

Dana Brinkley, a 2009 graduate from the department with a concentration in public relations, has remained true to her long-held goal of studying law. She expects to graduate from Wake Forest University Law School in 2013.

Brinkley said that public relations is great preparation for law school: “Of course, it’s impossible to be prepared completely for any kind of graduate school, but with that being said the public relations courses like Professor Larson’s allowed me the opportunity to learn how to think both analytically and logically, which are two big components of law school life.”

Brinkley attended NC State from August 2007 to December 2009 and graduated a semester early with honors. In only three years, she was able to obtain a B.A. in communication with a minor in political science. While at NC State, she was busy preparing for her future. Not only was Brinkley a member of PRSSA, but she was also a public relations political analyst intern for the Hillary Clinton campaign, the NC State Campus Captain for Kay Hagan’s campaign, and she worked as a legal assistant at Hager & Associates.
As all college students know, but try to hide in the back of their minds as best as possible, we all must enter the professional world one day. To help ease the transition between college and the professional world, the Department of Communication has created the COM 496 Internship class, taught by Dean Phillips.

Phillips describes the internship class as a “bridge course,” meaning it is in place to help students successfully enter the work force. To help students prepare for the transition, he created the COM 496 mentors program in the fall 2010 semester.

The mentors program gives students a list of past NC State communication alumni. Students must then take it upon themselves to reach out to these alumni who are there to work one on one with the students and give them career advice. Topics that are often discussed between mentors and students include future careers, career counseling, resume help, mock interviews, and cover letter assistance.

Doug Warf, the senior director of marketing and executive director of the Carolina Hurricanes Kids ‘N Community Foundation, is one of the mentors. When asked why he agreed to help students through this program, he said, “I still have people I call on to bounce ideas off of. Those are important people who helped me get where I am. People have helped me, so I want to give back.”

The mentors include alumni from various fields, including marketing, public relations, media, sports, and corporate settings. “We want students to have contacts in all areas of the communication field so they can learn more about their future interests and possibilities,” said Phillips.

When discussing why this program is beneficial to students, Warf emphasized the importance of networking. He said students should constantly be networking, even after they get their internship or job. By not only focusing on assigned tasks but also looking out for opportunities to volunteer with other departments and making your face seen, students can make many connections that could be beneficial in the future. The mentor program allows students to start the networking process, if they have not already.

According to Warf, the program is not one-sided. “We both learn something. By staying in touch with the younger population, employers are kept up to date,” he said.

Although only a handful of students have taken advantage of the program so far, Phillips has high hopes for the future utilization of the mentors. “They feel like NC State gave them so much and they want to give back. They want to stay connected to the community,” he said. “COM 496 is making every effort to connect interns to the working world and provide those interns with the tools to land a real job. At the end of the day, it is up to the students to put these tools to use.”

Dana Brinkley

Continued from page 19

Upon graduation in 2009, Brinkley was recruited by Ketchum, a global public relations firm in Washington D.C. For a couple of months she lived in Washington wondering if there was more to her life than public relations. From there she applied to Wake Forest Law School and became a member of the Class of 2013.

Brinkley recommends that students explore communications at NC State, especially students who are not quite sure about what they want to do.

AMAZING ALUMNI SERIES FEATURES ‘CASH CAB’ KING

By Cassandra Miller

NC State Libraries’ Amazing Alumni series kicked off with a visit from alumnus Greg Volk, who in June won his second Emmy in writing for his work with the popular Discovery Channel show Cash Cab. Volk discussed his career and the secrets of developing those fascinating Cash Cab questions. This Amazing Alumni program was planned to coincide with Communications Week (February 21-25), a week-long series of events coordinated by the Department of Communication.

Volk’s favorite question is, “What grammatical no-no is featured in the iconic song lyric ‘we don’t need no education?’” Many of us would know the answer, “a double negative,” right off the bat. But for a few unlucky participants on Cash Cab this answer could be the one thing standing between them and some major cash.

Volk graduated from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences in 2003 with a degree in Multidisciplinary Studies (now Interdisciplinary Studies). During his time at NC State, Volk was a Caldwell Fellow and a writer for the Technician. He is currently living in New York City with his fiancée.
Greg Volk of Cash Cab Fame  Continued from page 20

As a member of the Wolfpack, Volk snagged a prestigious internship with David Letterman. After one failed attempt at getting the internship, Volk persevered and was awarded the internship the following year. By receiving the internship, he was the only writer intern for David Letterman. During his lecture for NC State’s Communication Week, Volk repeatedly mentioned the importance of finding an internship during college. “Even though it was a lot of running around and getting coffee, just being in the atmosphere taught me a lot,” he recalled.

In addition to David Letterman, Volk has also worked for the Onion, Jimmy Fallon, the Step Up 2 soundtrack special for MTV, and he continues to write the factoids for the show Pawn Stars on the History Channel. He believes that all of these jobs led him to become the senior writer for Cash Cab and a new life in New York City.

The show Cash Cab plays by the “three strikes and you’re out” rule. An unmarked cab picks up participants and once they get in, the driver (and host of the show) will ask them a series of questions. The questions are asked in order of difficulty. If a question really stumps a participant, he/she will get the opportunity to have a mobile shout out (cell phone call) or a street shout out (ask someone off of the street). After the participant reaches his destination, he will receive the sum of money he earned while playing.

Making up questions is not as easy as it sounds. There is a very complicated process that Volk has to pass through to think of a good question. Volk describes a good question as “fresh but familiar and relatable; clever, fun, funny, and interesting; easy to recall and logical.” Volk must come up with 20 good questions a day, and these must be different and new from a question bank of over 30,000 different questions. He pours over the news, trivia, and other sources of information during his brainstorming sessions. Once he finds a suitable topic, he will search the question database for topic overlap then he will decide a level (easy, medium, or hard) for the question. After that he will decide how much detail he wants to provide in the question and then he will pick the answer. He then submits the question and hopes that it will one day be asked during a show.

His final advice to students in the audience was to never give up. He said that students should know what they want and "go out and get it."

GRADUATION FOR COM STUDENTS PLANNED FOR MAY 14

CONGRATULATIONS MAY COMMUNICATION GRADUATES!

The Department of Communication’s graduation ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. on May 14 in Reynolds Coliseum. It will be one of the largest ever with 158 undergraduate students to walk the stage, including 47 students from the Communication Media concentration, 58 students from the Public Relations and Organizational Communication concentration, and 53 students from the Public and Interpersonal Communication concentration.

The ceremony will honor the 15 graduate students who completed their M.S. degree this spring. CRDM will graduate its second doctoral student, Kelly Martin.

Students graduating Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Cum Laude as well as students with memberships in communication societies will be recognized.

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