



College of Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



VilasVoice

Fall 2015 | For Alumni and Friends of the Department of Communication Arts



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VilasVoice

is the alumni newsletter of the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, 821 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

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Chair's Voice

Supporting Students and Faculty

MICHAEL TREVIS



The Department of Communication Arts is nearly a century old, and yet we see many firsts each year. Over just the past year or so, we have helped support the first meetings of our newly-created Communication Arts Students' Association (CASA), and we have put on our very first Communication Arts graduate recognition ceremony. The latter provides a terrific new occasion for students and their families to celebrate our graduates in a smaller ceremony where they can meet with faculty and other members of the Communication Arts community. In addition, with the generous support of George (B.A.'80) and Pamela Hamel and the Morgridge match campaign, this year we will select the Department's first Distinguished

Chair, who will carry the title of the Hamel Family Distinguished Chair of Communication Arts. This year will also mark the beginning of the Communication Arts Partners (CAPs) Professorship in Communication Arts, created through the Morgridge match and contributions from our board of visitors.

I hope you will enjoy reading more about some of these exciting developments in the pages ahead, alongside the notable activities of our faculty, students, and alumni. These stories reflect the dedication and accomplishments of our world-class faculty, the engagement of our talented students and distinguished alumni, as well as our continuing efforts to provide our students with the knowledge and skills they need to make a difference in an increasingly communication- and media-intensive world.

To learn more about current developments in Communication Arts, as well as how you can engage with and support the Department, please visit our website, or connect with us on social media. We value your engagement—whether through our internship programs, a simple alumni update, or other interactions—and we are grateful to all those who have contributed their support.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Xenos".

Michael Xenos
Professor and Chair



UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Kahl Pays it Forward



You're a kid from the Midwest who makes it big in L.A. What's next? If you're Kelly Kahl (B.S.'89), you help others achieve their dream of working in the entertainment industry. For 10 years, Kahl, senior executive vice president of CBS Primetime, has mentored a summer intern from UW-Madison's Department of Communication Arts. Kahl and his team provide remarkable access and guidance during the internship and beyond.

"Each day I learned something new as I shadowed assistants during daily administrative duties, sat in on meet-

ings with executives and series producers, attended CBS' summer press tour events, went to set for episode tapings and visited sister networks CW and Showtime," says Alexis Krinsky (B.A.'08). "Kelly allows you to delve into many different areas of television, not just programming," adds Emily Coleman (BBA'12).

The opportunity is life changing. "Without this internship and without Kelly, I wouldn't be in L.A. working in entertainment today," says CBS executive assistant Alexa Sunby (B.A.'12). "This internship opened up more doors than I ever thought possible." Mallory Mason (B.A.'08) concurs: "The internship set me up for success. Kelly is a great role model and mentor, showing that with a little hard work, kids from Wisconsin really can achieve their dreams in entertainment."

The internship ends, but the mentoring and support continues. "After the internship is completed, the most important thing I gained is always having someone in your corner—and not just Kelly, his entire department! Kelly also fosters interaction amongst all his interns. We've become almost like a Wisconsin Badger-California family," says Krinsky.



Front row: Alexis Krinsky, Alexa Sunby, Katelyn Hansmann; Back row: Dan Brower, Mallory Mason, Kendall Ross, Hayley Braun

CBS Interns— Where are they now?

- 2006** Josh Burstein (B.A.'08), Director and Host—Last Glimpse travel show
- 2007** Alexis Krinsky (B.A.'08), Coordinator—Program Planning & Acquisitions—E! Entertainment Network
- 2008** Mallory Mason (B.A.'08), Publicist—CBS Television
- 2009** Jason Quist (B.S.'10), Associate Instructional Specialist—UW Comm Arts Dept.
- 2010** Emily Coleman (BBA'12), Senior Editor—The Tasting Panel Magazine
- 2011** Dan Brower (B.A.'11), Agent Assistant, Music Touring—Creative Artist Agency (CAA)
- 2012** Alexa Sunby (B.A.'12), Executive Assistant, Current Programming—CBS
- 2013** Kendall Ross (B.A.'13), Coordinator—Comedy and Drama Current Programming—NBCUniversal
- 2014** Hayley Braun (B.A.'14), Programming Assistant—FX Networks
- 2015** Katelyn Hansmann (B.A.'15)

Giving Matters

The impact of your gifts to the Department is far-reaching. Your generosity rewards excellence, expands opportunities, and cultivates a community.

Excellence: Scholarships

Senior Ricky Hermida is dedicated, enthusiastic and inquisitive. Born and raised in New Orleans with modest means, Ricky says, he never envisioned having the opportunity to study at an institution like UW–Madison. In May, Ricky will be the first member of his family to earn a college degree.

Awards and scholarships, like the Keith Harris Wyche Memorial Scholarship, allow us to recognize and assist outstanding students like Ricky. The Wyche family established the scholarship in Keith Wyche's (B.A.'89) memory.



Ricky Hermida

MICHAEL TREVIS

Opportunity: Advertising and Communication Career Fair



Despite below-zero wind chills, hundreds of students filled Union South's Varsity Hall to attend the first annual Advertising and Communication Career Fair last February. The fair, organized for students interested in careers and internships in the fields of media, communication, advertising, marketing, and public relations, was co-sponsored by the Department of Communication Arts, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and five student organizations.

"I appreciated the opportunity to discuss career options and practice my interviewing skills with communication pro-

fessionals," says Comm Arts student Miranda Weber, who received an offer for an unpaid summer internship from a participating company but ultimately accepted a paid special events internship with Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison.

Our goal is to double the number of employers at the 2016 career fair. Do you or your employer have entry-level positions and internship opportunities to promote at the fair on Feb. 10, 2016? Please contact career advisor Pam Garcia-Rivera at pgarciariver@wisc.edu for more information.

Community: Welcoming New Alumni

With more than 11,000 Communication Arts alumni spread across all 50 states and 39 countries around the world, our alumni base is strong and far-reaching. During our inaugural graduate recognition ceremony last May, we celebrated the shift from UW-Madison student to alumnus for nearly 300 new graduates. They have joined you in your tradition of sharing the Wisconsin Idea and enriching communities across the globe.

The event, attended by family, friends, faculty and staff, is for sharing memories, strengthening relationships, and wishing our newest alumni well as they embark on new journeys. In her remarks to the 2015 graduates, Undergraduate Director Professor Louise Mares (M.A.'90, PhD'94) complimented them on their achievements and reminded them, "This is your intellectual home, and we hope you will always think of Comm Arts that way. You are connected to the



2015 Comm Arts graduates Lauren Kolodny, Danielle Rosegarten, and Carly Geller

Comm Arts cohorts that came before you, and the cohorts that will follow."

We invite you home to address the 2016 graduates on Friday, May 13. Self-nominate or nominate another

alumnus by sending contact information to alumnivoice@commarts.wisc.edu. One speaker will be selected to welcome the graduating class into the alumni community.

Help Keep UW-Madison Strong



Where would you be today without your degree from the College of Letters & Science at UW-Madison?

As a father of three daughters—

one of them in college—I think often about the impact of education on their lives. From selecting a major to landing that first job to pursuing a fulfilling career, their choices will be greatly influenced by their academic experiences. I hope your degree has opened doors for you, as it does for more than 2,000 new L&S graduates every year. And when you graduated with a degree in communication arts, UW-Madison was one of the nation's best public institutions. Now, we need your support to keep it that way.

This fall, we are embarking on a comprehensive fundraising campaign to ensure that UW-Madison remains not only strong now, but for the next 167 years. The College of Letters & Science—the heart of our great university—is critical to UW-Madison's global standing as a research and teaching powerhouse. Please consider giving back. By doing so, you will

be helping to create a legacy of excellence for future generations.

As we launch this campaign, I ask you to remember the professors and programs, the opportunities and insights, the depth and breadth of learning that set you on your path to success in life and work. Help us ensure that future Badgers will enjoy the same experiences, and so much more.

To find out about what your support can do for the Department of Communication Arts and the College of Letters & Science, visit allwaysforward.org. Thank you for all that you do on behalf of this great university.

On, Wisconsin!

John Karl Scholz
Dean and Nellie June Gray Professor
of Economics
College of Letters & Science

Student Profile

Gent Traces Message on Homelessness

MICHAEL TREVIS



Whitney Gent

The Obama administration is aiming to eradicate veteran homelessness by the end of this year and chronic homelessness by 2017. The plan, “Opening Doors,” follows the “Housing First” approach. “This model argues that we should first give people a home, then work on whatever caused them to become homeless. This is a reversal of the traditional shelter services model,” explains Comm Arts graduate student Whitney Gent.

In her dissertation research, Gent is tracing the rapid spread of this idea through various media to better understand how messages circulate and how gaps in communication might be addressed to improve policymaking and

advocacy. She is finding that advocates and policymakers do not communicate effectively with people unacquainted with homeless services. Thus, general attitudes about homelessness remain constant despite changes to the way homelessness is approached and discussed.

Gent argues that “while advocates have tried to talk about ‘housing as a human right,’ my research has shown that people don’t even agree on what rights are, let alone whether homeless people should have a right, specifically, to housing. It is my hope that my research will help point out some of these gaps.”

New Endowed Faculty Positions

Thanks to the Morgridge match initiative and the generous gifts of George (B.A.’80) and Pamela Hamel and members of the Communication Arts Partners (CAPs), the Department has established two new endowed positions, the first of their kind in Communication Arts—the Hamel Family Distinguished Chair and the Communication Arts Partners Professorship.

The Hamel Family Distinguished Chair, our first distinguished professorship, will be awarded this fall to an exceptional senior member of our faculty. Among other things, the award will provide substantial support to the recipient’s research program. The CAPs Professorship will support the teaching and research of the Department chair, enabling that person to continue an active research program while taking on the additional administrative duties of the chair’s office.

Endowed positions such as these will greatly assist the Department in retaining excellent faculty, recognizing their efforts, and attracting faculty to leadership positions within the Department. By increasing the Department’s ability to support faculty projects requiring paid student assistance, these positions will also benefit Communication Arts students.

To continue our history of looking forward we need to advance in all directions. Your gift to Communication Arts will support scholarships, facilities improvements, student travel, faculty research, and curriculum updates.

W ALL WAYS FORWARD

Help us move forward at allwaysforward.org/ls

Professor Michele Hilmes Retires

Distinguished teacher and scholar Professor Michele Hilmes retired in May. She introduced numerous undergraduates to the study of media as a cultural form and challenged graduate students to recognize the old in new media. Introduction to Television, the Cultural History of Broadcasting, and Radio and the Art of Sound were among her staple course offerings. Hilmes has had a profound impact on her colleagues, students, and the field of media and cultural studies during her 22 years with the Department.

Known for her endless curiosity, supple thinking, and collaborative nature, Hilmes has advanced the discipline and inspired countless students. Her impressive list of publications is complemented by the number of individuals she has influenced, guided, and encouraged. A podcast created in her honor captures the magnitude of Hilmes' impact on her many students and the field as a whole.

"Trailblazer, most important person in my field, exceptional, intellectually



Michele Hilmes

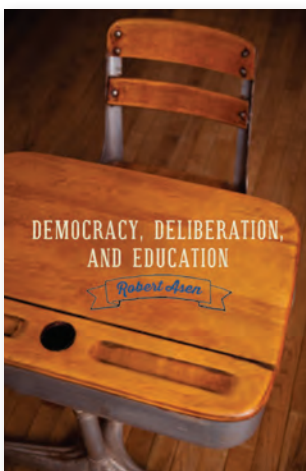
generous, inspirational, noble, diplomatic, supportive" were a few of the accolades expressed by nearly 50 colleagues and former students. To listen to the tribute, please go to the Antenna blog, go.wisc.edu/Hilmes. Share your own favorite memory or well wishes on

the Comm Arts Facebook page.

Congratulations, Michele, on your tremendous career and your retirement.

MICHAEL TRENTS

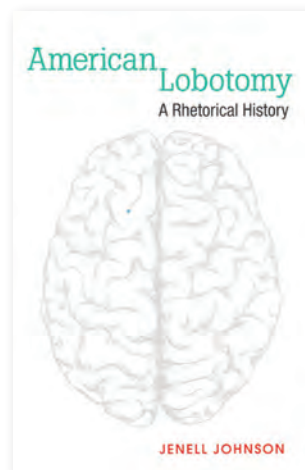
Professors' Voices



Robert Asen
Democracy, Deliberation, and Education



Lea Jacobs
Film Rhythm After Sound



Jenell Johnson
American Lobotomy



Jeremy Wade Morris
Selling Digital Music, Formatting Culture



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Please update your contact information in the
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or email changes to
AlumniChanges@uwalumni.com.

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