

THE COMMUNICATOR

A BELLISARIO COLLEGE FIRST

S. Shyam Sundar Named Evan Pugh University Professor



PennState
Donald P. Bellisario
College of Communications

ELEVATE YOUR NETWORK

Connect with our Bellisario College pages on LinkedIn and stay up to date on the latest events, awards, and opportunities.



DONALD P.
BELLISARIO
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Bellisario College – Alumni · Bellisario College – Ad/PR Network

Bellisario College – Broadcast Network · Bellisario College – Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Penn Staters in the Sports Industry · Penn State Washington Program

Penn State Women in Sports, Media & Entertainment

A YEAR OF MILESTONES

In higher education, summer is the time for “end-of-year” reflection and resolution-setting as we close out one academic year and prepare for another. As I read through this issue, I was struck at the significant achievements of our people and the milestones for our programs in 2023-24.

You’ll read more in the pages of this edition of *The Communicator*, but here are some highlights:

- Our first Evan Pugh Professor (see page 30). Shyam Sundar, our James P. Jimirro Professor of Media Effects, has now been recognized as one of the most distinguished and impactful researchers at the University and is the first professor of ours to be given this highest of honors. Shyam is also one of our longest-serving faculty members (he arrived in 1995) and leads Penn State’s Center for Socially Responsible AI. But he’s not all-work, no-fun: For instance, he’s hosted a jazz radio show on the campus student-run station for years.
- Two decades of leadership in sports journalism (see page 26). The John Curley Center for Sports Journalism celebrated its 20th anniversary with an incredible slate of opportunities for students through the year, starting with a partnership with the Associated Press to cover early rounds of the Women’s World Cup in New Zealand. The Curley Center, a pioneer program widely copied among our peers, offers one of the most strongly enrolled certificates at Penn State and is flourishing under the leadership of our Knight Chair, John Affleck.
- Two decades of ethical leadership in public communication (see page 54). The Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication was a brainchild of legendary alumnus Larry Foster (’48 Journ), who called former dean Doug Anderson with the idea 20 years ago. A small group convened in 101 Carnegie Building, and from that the Page Center emerged. Larry was a tireless fundraiser for the Page Center, which today boasts an endowment of more than \$4 million, along with a set of online modules used by faculty and students around the globe, and research that connects industry to the academy with impact.
- National recognition for our students (see pages 19, 22, 26). Of course, our students make us proud with big contest wins every year. But this year was especially gratifying. The headline: Our student team advanced to the finals of the American Advertising Federation’s National Student Advertising Competition from a field of more than 100 schools — a first in more than a decade. Other highlights: Our Association for Women in Sports Media chapter was honored — for the third time in six years — as chapter of the year; and “Centre County Report” was honored at the state, regional and national level as a top newscast.

There is much, much more in this issue of our annual report to convince you this past year was truly remarkable — and to make you proud of the Bellisario College and Penn State. I look forward to sharing much more in the way of good news as we look ahead. Thank you for your enduring support of our work.

Stay in touch!



Dean Marie Hardin





Jeff Biddle of Bear Meadow Farms near Boalsburg, Pennsylvania, leads the last, least willing cow into a stall to be milked. Biddle says the cow doesn't like to be milked because she's older and prefers to wait in the back of the barn hoping she won't be noticed.

PHOTO BY KILEIGH KANE (24)



VIEW the full
photo story.



A student laughs on a slip-and-slide outside the HUB-Robeson Center during Holi Celebrations on the University Park campus.
PHOTO BY JACKSON RANGER (25)





U.S. women's soccer player Megan Rapinoe consoles Portugal's Jessica Silva after a group match in Auckland, New Zealand, on Aug. 1, 2023. Students from the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism covered tournament games in New Zealand as part of a partnership with The Associated Press.
PHOTO BY RAFAELA PONTES (23)



FEATURES



36 A Look at the 'Last Sermon'



12 OPPORTUNITY 'KNOCKS'

Options and support make the Bellisario College special

By Steve Sampsell ('90)

**JADE
BRAMWELL**

19 STUDENT SUCCESS

Team reaches national final

44 RICHARDS RETIREMENT

Professor Bob Richards calls it a career

54 TWO DECADES

The Page Center continues to serve, succeed

62 EVERY DAY

Alumna Deb Gelman is one of the best in the business

NEWS & NOTES

THE COMMUNICATOR

The Communicator magazine is an annual report of activity in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications for alumni, students, faculty and friends.

DEAN
Marie Hardin

EDITOR
Steve Sampson ('90)

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jonathan McVerry ('05)

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Paris Palmer ('17)

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Whitney Justice

All items relating to the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications and its faculty, staff, students and alumni will be considered for publication.

CORRESPONDENCE
The Communicator
Penn State Bellisario College of Communications
201 Carnegie Building
319 Fraser Road
University Park, PA 16802

bellisarioinfo@psu.edu
@PSUBellisario
bellisario.psu.edu

 **PennState**
Donald P. Bellisario
College of Communications

This publication is available in alternative media on request. Penn State is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, and is committed to providing employment opportunities to minorities, women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other protected groups. policy.psu.edu/policies/AD85

UBR COM 25-04



“Many thanks to everyone at the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications who introduced us to this wonderful college and Penn State.”

— Mike Prest (Andrea's dad)

A Parent's Testimonial

It seems like just yesterday (January 2020) that my daughter Andrea and I visited Penn State and the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications. Now she's graduating.

Since we live in Illinois, I was very surprised when Andrea suggested a Penn State visit. As you can imagine most kids here go to Midwest schools.

That January 2020 visit introduced us to an incredible college. I was amazed how well prepared the staff, faculty were and how well everything was done.

When Andrea went to school in August 2020 it was an extremely difficult time as the COVID pandemic was in full force. Fast forward to May 2024 and we couldn't be happier. :)

Many thanks to everyone at the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications who introduced us to this wonderful college and Penn State.

— Mike Prest (Andrea's dad)

Student work supports Dog Show

A project from a team of Bellisario College students was selected to help increase viewership of the annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show earlier this year.

The students' work emerged from a class partnership with FOX Sports University. Teams of students conducted research and developed strategies for the campaign, and the winning team's project was then selected from others nationally to support the event that aired in mid-May.

Vargas earns Oswald Award

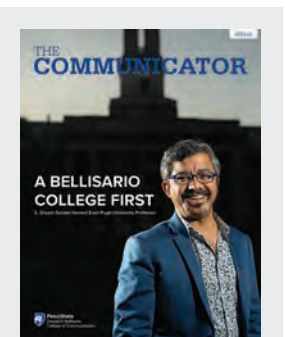
A Bellisario College graduating senior was one of three Penn State honorees in their respective areas of leadership honored with the 2024 John W. Oswald Award, which has recognized outstanding leaders since it was established in 1983.

Luke Vargas, who completed a double major in journalism and Spanish, was the Bellisario College honoree. His many leadership roles as a student included editorial and business positions with The Daily Collegian.

did you know?

695 members of the Class of 2024 participated in spring commencement exercises May 4 at the Bryce Jordan Center.

See photos on page 28



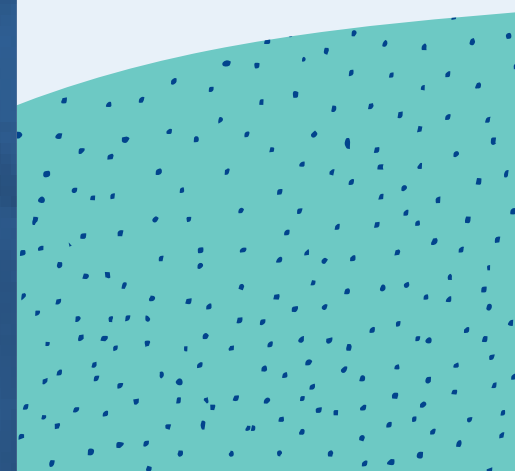
ON THE COVER
Evan Pugh University
Professor S. Shyam
Sundar near Old Main
at twilight.

PHOTO BY JOHN PENDYGRAFT

OPPORTUNIT 'KNOCKS



Dozens of clubs, hundreds of motivated classmates, and faculty and staff committed to providing support are all part of what makes the Bellisario College a special place for students to succeed and thrive.



Y
L



Opportunity might not literally knock on the door for students in the Donald P. Communications, but it certainly shows up — early and often during their careers at Penn State.

It comes with support from faculty and staff. It comes during classes, club meetings, internships and special events.

Opportunities can be found through personal interactions, displayed on digital signage and shared on social media.

No door to knock on? No problem because every student has an email address, and checking their email represents just one way students can find out about opportunities and then work to make the most of them.

CAMPUS VISITS AND CONNECTIONS

For many students, getting connected starts long before classes begin. Campus visits invariably help students feel at home and impressed by the available facilities. In addition, information sessions conducted by the Bellisario College regularly resonate.

Journalism major Avery Hill, a junior from Prince George's County, Maryland, thought he would pick a college in the South but felt connected and supported when he visited Penn State, which was conveniently close to home for him, for an Accepted Students Program.

"I met (Assistant Dean) Gary Abdullah and he gave me a better sense of all the things I could do here," Hill said. "Then when I got here, I learned more about all the ways to get involved. I've just been seeking out ways to make myself a more well-rounded journalist."

"Really it was a combination of joining clubs, knowing people and going after it. I'm not sure I thought there'd be this many opportunities, but I was committed to making the most of everything I could."

Hill found a home at The Daily Collegian and took advantage of freelance opportunities and internships.

He's also found a community of driven, like-minded students.

"There's definitely a community. A lot of my closest friends are in the Bellisario College. It's not just that we're spending time together, either. It's that we push each other and support each other. It's a good group of a lot of hard workers trying to get to that next level."

Penn State, with a quintessential college setting on the University Park campus, provides a connection point for many students. In addition, state-of-the-art facilities in the Bellisario Media Center help attract those interested in communications majors — even if they're not going to be working in film, radio or television.

Manoela Mota Rodembusch, who grew up in Brazil and finished high school in West Chester, New York, as a member of a graduating class with a just 147 students, was impressed with the Bellisario Media Center as an indicator of resources at Penn State in general.

"Originally Penn State wasn't in my field of vision. I came to campus, walked around the media center and was like, 'Whoa, that's cool!'" she said. "The people were really what pulled me toward a big school that felt like a small one, though."

Rodembusch, an advertising/public relations major, completed an internship with the New York City-based marketing agency StrawberryFrog this summer. She also quickly connected on the big campus, serving as a campus tour guide, a correspondent for Her Campus at Penn State and communications coordinator for the Bellisario Alliance of Multicultural Students.

"Really it was a combination of joining clubs, knowing people and going after it. I'm not sure I thought there'd be this many opportunities, but I was committed to making the most of everything I could."

AVERY HILL





She also joined the Brazilian Student Association, the Penn State Ski Club and got involved with the Penn State Dance Marathon (THON) as a special events committee member.

She learned a lot during her first year on campus, finding her way around campus and finding ways to get connected and focusing on the future.

“People say you’re going to walk a lot in college, and they’re right — you walk a lot in college.”

“I think I expected professors to be scary people, but they’re here to help you,” Rodembusch said. “I’ve just enjoyed getting involved. There’s a lot of stuff to do here, and I don’t want to miss it.”

COMFORT ZONES AND EMBRACING CHANGE

Once students arrive on campus and start meeting people and taking classes, the big school can quickly become a lot smaller. It requires work, though, and it often means a student must move outside their comfort zone.

It almost always leads to success if someone is willing to take the chance.

Isabelle Flores, a junior majoring in advertising/public relations with a minor in digital media trends and analytics, picked Penn State because she wanted a big-school feel. The University was her No. 1 choice because of its plentiful resources and support.

Still, adapting to central Pennsylvania from her home in South Plainfield, New Jersey, took time. She said making friends was difficult but got easier as she joined more clubs and talked to more people in her classes.

“I missed the comfort of being at home. It wasn’t really until the end of my freshman year, maybe even my sophomore year, that I really felt at home on campus — and that came because I got more involved,” Flores said. “I did feel like I was the

only one who was having a tough time adjusting, but the more I talked to people I realized that was not the case. College is a big change for everyone.

“Going out of my way to talk to people I barely knew made me feel better. At some point I just realized we’re all in the same situation, and everyone says the same thing — they had a hard time and when they were able to get connected, they felt so much better.”

Flores found her connections working at Happy Valley Comm, a student-run organization that helps local businesses, nonprofits and student organizations with their communications needs, and at Valley Magazine, a student-run life and style magazine.

She initially checked out several clubs and organizations, sampling to find connections and experiences that worked for her. Connections and friendships with students emerged from those experiences.

At the same time, she found support from faculty and staff in the Belliaro College.

“The people, not only the students but especially the advisers, faculty and staff, are so helpful,” Flores said. “I didn’t think I’d find that much support at a big school. It surprised me.”

Even after she settled in on campus, more new experiences revealed opportunities for growth. The Bellisario College conducts three communications-specific internship and job fairs each year — one on campus (JobExpo.Comm), one in Washington, D.C. (Comm Careers in the Capital) and one in New York City (Success in the City) — and attending her first such event in New York City prompted another moment of concern for Flores, simply because it was a new experience. She understood she was not alone, though, and that made it easier.

“I was really nervous going into it, I think everyone was,” she said. “It’s hard to pitch yourself. You have to be confident but you don’t want to sound full of yourself. It’s a challenge. It was another opportunity that was important, and something we learned from. It seems like there are so many of those experi-

ences here.”

Opportunities abound at Penn State in general, but Bellisario College students feel their chances come with a little more individualized attention and support because advisers and faculty members know students and invest in their success.

Junior advertising/public relations major Amanda Milholi had become so accustomed to the Bellisario College approach that it was a friend, a student not majoring in communications, who noticed.

“I walked into the Bellisario College Involvement Fair with her and everyone in the media center was saying ‘Hi!’ and having conversations, because I know a lot of people and they know me, and she was like, ‘Oh my gosh, I walk into my college and nobody says a word,’” Milholi said. “That made me feel so good. The small-school feel is something I’m very grateful for.”

RESEARCH AND REALITY

Like many aspiring college students, Milholi conducted research and scoured the internet to inform her college choice. As a high school volleyball player from Queens, New York, she knew of Penn State, and she supplemented what she knew by watching student-produced, day-in-the-life videos.

As a freshman, she “signed up for everything,” eventually narrowed her list of activities and found her fit. At the same time, she dealt with all the challenges of adapting to college life that every other student faces. “It was definitely hard,” she said. “I’m an outgoing person but when I got here, I didn’t know anyone. Going to club meetings and events by yourself is not easy, but everyone else is doing that. You learn to talk to the person to the left and to the right of you. We all have the same majors and interests.”

Miholi has especially enjoyed her time with the on-campus chapter of the Association for Women in Sports Media. She’s also embraced the art of balancing a busy schedule. Because of the variety of opportunities, and because many students are driven, those students are also reliably busy — and every student has a way to deal with those kinds of schedules while keeping themselves grounded and organized.

For Milholi it’s a mix of paper and online organizers, and learning how to balance time and be productive with the independence college offers that helps develop important lifelong skills. “When I have too much time, I don’t feel like myself,” she said. “I like to be busy.”

Adrianna Gallucci, a junior broadcast journalism major, also likes to be busy. She has an organizer on her computer and started writing things down, often reminders, anything from class to-do items or shopping lists, as a complement to the more high-tech approach so she stays on schedule. “I’m pretty much busy all the time,” she said. “But I’m grateful for it and wouldn’t want to change it.”

Gallucci, from Andover, New Jersey, serves as one of three student general managers for CommRadio, the student-led streaming station housed in the Bellisario College. She hosts a podcast about pro wrestling and covers Penn State men’s hockey. She hoped to get involved early when she arrived on campus and CommRadio made that possible. She’s also active with PSN-TV, the student-led network that produces more than a half dozen shows each semester.

Plus, she’s experienced something many Bellisario College students have when pitching an idea to a group adviser or as part of their expedience overall. Last season, with the Penn State men’s hockey team playing on the road, not that far from Gallucci’s home, she suggested an on-location student broadcast — and that became a reality after little pushback and a lot of planning.

She’s motivated to seek out those kinds of opportunities, but she’s also conscious about the whole Bellisario College and Penn State experience being bigger than one person. She’s confident about what makes a good day in her world, and it’s not just about her.

“If I can walk out of a class knowing something I didn’t before it started, if I can spend time with people I care about, if I can help somebody else at CommRadio or in my classes get better at something. If any of those things happen, then it’s been a good day,” Gallucci said.

Going to club meetings and events by yourself is not easy, but everyone else is doing that you learn to talk to the person to the left and to the right of you.

AMANDA MIHOLI



She's not the only Bellisario College student who feels that way. Even though every student's background and experiences shape their outlook, more than a few Bellisario College students champion a bigger-than-me mindset.

After starting her career at Penn State Altoona and transferring to the University Park campus early, Jade Bramwell, a senior majoring in broadcast journalism with a minor in African-American studies, has gained confidence from the experiences and opportunities she's found in the Bellisario College.

She's known she's wanted to be a journalist since she was 6 years old and she honed her skills as a reporter and anchor on "Centre County Report," the award-winning student newscast, during the spring semester. She then completed a summer internship at CNN and was a member of the student multimedia project team at the National Association of Black Journalists covering its recent convention in Chicago.

"They're great experiences, things I'm proud of having the opportunity to do, and probably would not be possible if I were not at Penn State," Bramwell said. "I've gotten more comfortable and confident in so many ways, and I really enjoy telling people's stories. Best of all, though, the faculty members are so supportive of real-life experiences and helping us develop. It's not just me, it's all of us."

Another focus for Bramwell has been revitalizing the NABJ student chapter at Penn State. The group was active in the past, and she has been a driving force to help revitalize it and ensure another opportunity for those who follow her in the

Bellisario College.

NEAR, FAR, WHEREVER YOU ARE

Will Bond, from Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania, has two parents and a sister who went to Penn State. He had visited campus a few times and knew about the University about 195 miles from his hometown long before he made his decision to attend.

Kawthar Almahdi, from Saudi Arabia, had never traveled internationally, and never seen snow before, when she arrived at the University Park campus in January 2022, some 6,600 miles from home, for her first semester as a communications student.

These days they're both film production majors who spend a lot of time in the Bellisario Media Center.

Bond, a sophomore, found out about his on-campus job as an editing lab assistant, an opportunity that keeps him close to his major and honing necessary skills, thanks to Julie Miller, the Bellisario College's manager of internships. At first Bond picked film production and was only "trying it on for size," but he said the community and opportunities have made him confident about his choice of major. He completed an internship with Keystone Pictures outside of Philadelphia this summer.

"I've been surprised by how tight knit of a community it can be once you get involved," he said. "I assumed a big place like Penn State would be like a city and things would get lost in the shuffle, but I'm surprised how much time I spend in the buildings, how friendly people are and how many people I know."

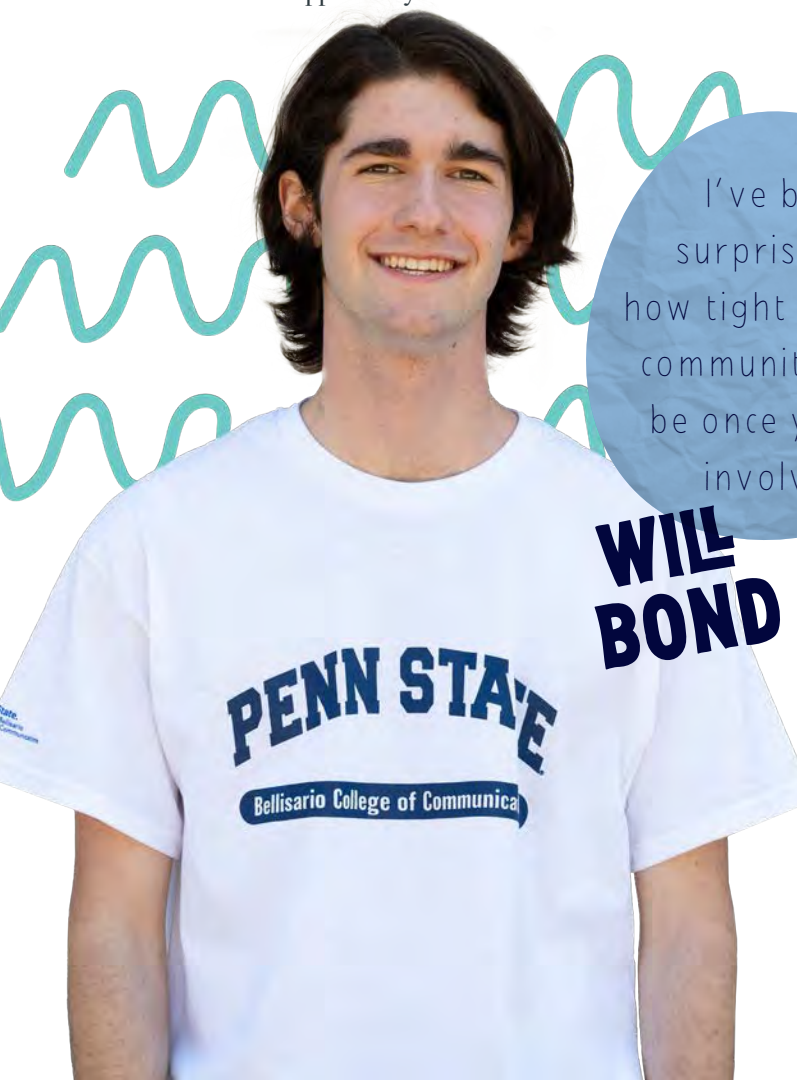
Almahdi picked Penn State sight unseen. She wanted to travel abroad and thought the University was the best place to provide opportunities that do not exist in her country.

Adjusting was a challenge initially, but it was more about the new country than Penn State. Her sister, who lives in Florida, drove to Pennsylvania and stayed for a week to help with getting settled in an apartment, opening a bank account and much more.

Almahdi participated in Penn State's World in Conversation program, served as social media chair for the Saudia Arabian Student Association and steadily gained confidence in classes and with production opportunities.

She said her mother worries about her college-aged daughter on the other side of the world, and Almahdi sounds like any other college student when she admits she's made some between semester trips to, say, Los Angeles, and told her mother only after the trip happened to prevent her from worrying. "I did tell her I was going somewhere and it would be a long flight," she said. "She knew from the pictures."

Almahdi said the version of the United States she got from movies and television is not exactly what she's found in a collegial and supportive film production community. She's interested in the major because she appreciates the power of films



I've been surprised by how tight knit of a community it can be once you get involved.

WILL BOND

and enjoys storytelling. And, while she admits she gets homesick, she believes she's in the right place.

"The homesickness will be worth it. I'm here to learn and try new things," she said. "When I've collaborated on projects, people have listened to my suggestions, and I listen to theirs. It's good to have someone who appreciates my ideas and what I'm suggesting."

Although she's entering her junior year, she's not in a big hurry to get home, indicating she might add a degree or some minors to enhance her studies.

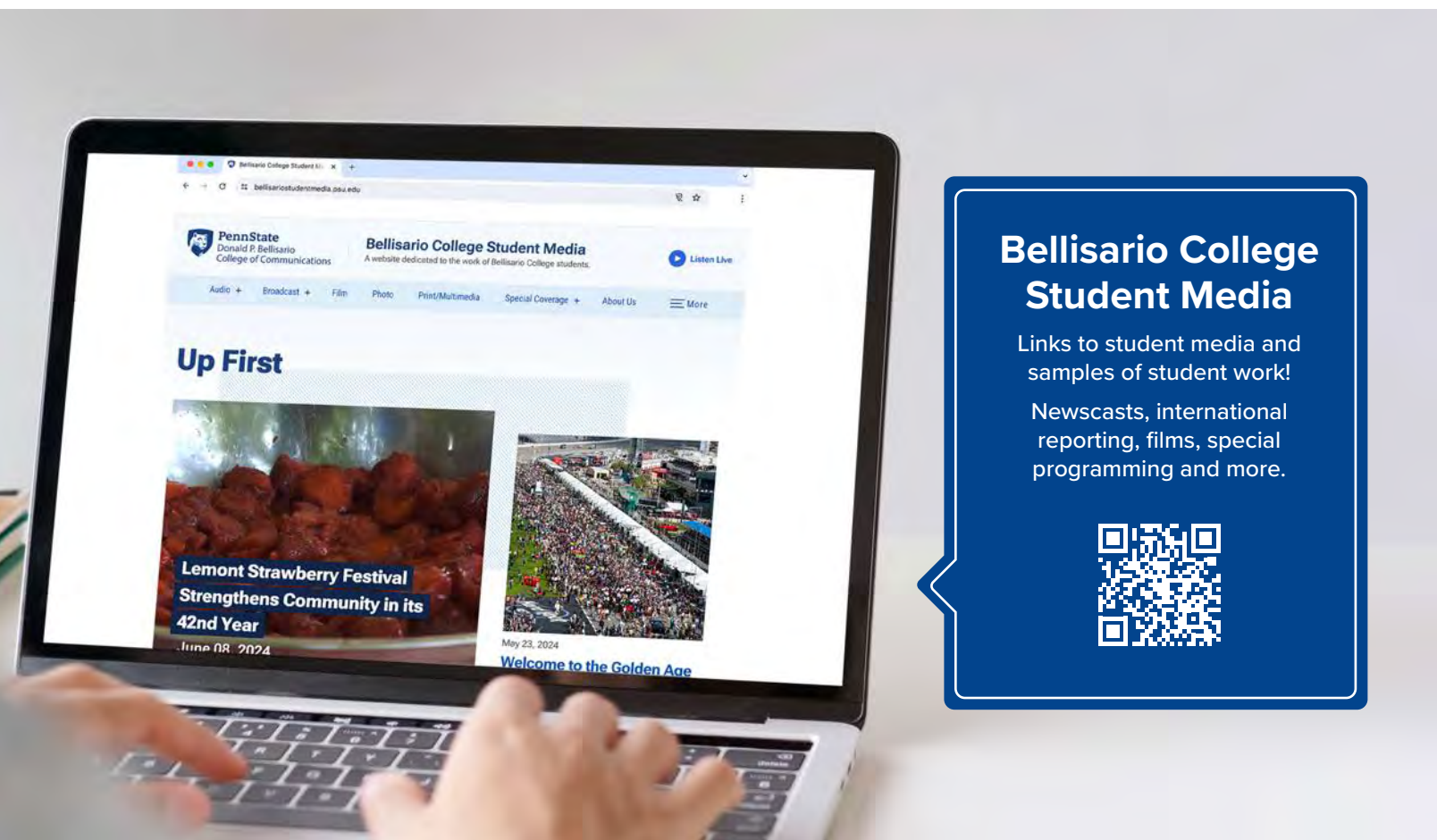
She's like many other Bellisario College students that way, too. With all the opportunities available, either they're in no rush to get to the finish line, or they realize things are happening faster than they expected.

"The No. 1 thing that surprises me is how fast it goes by," Flores said. "I'm only two years in and at times it feels like two months. You just have all these resources here and you want to make the most of them." ♥



When I've collaborated on projects, people have listened to my suggestions, and I listen to theirs. It's good to have someone who appreciates my ideas and what I'm suggesting.

**KAWTHAR
ALMAHDI**



Bellisario College Student Media

Links to student media and samples of student work!

Newscasts, international reporting, films, special programming and more.



AAF team reaches National Student Advertising Competition final



Bellisario College students won the district competition and advanced through the semifinals as one of eight national finalists in the National Student Advertising Competition, led by adviser Dave Wozniak (center), the Donald P. Bellisario Career Advancement Professor.

A team of Bellisario College students put together a Penn State first by advancing to the finals of the National Student Advertising Competition, conducted by the American Advertising Federation.

The annual competition, which started with 106 competitors, challenges teams to create a fully integrated communications program spanning paid, owned and earned media channels that is grounded in research and built on a strategic insight. All teams work on the same client.

The final round of competition with eight championship teams was conducted in late May in Salt Lake City.

The team, comprised of advertising/public relations students from the Bellisario College, advanced through the district competition and national semifinals to reach the national championship round for the first time since 2012. It's only the third time in the history of such competitions that a Penn State team has advanced to the final round. A team from the University also reached the final round in 1997.



“

I couldn't be prouder of their accomplishment and the commitment to excellence each of them made. This is truly a great recognition for the Bellisario College and Penn State.

”

– Dave Wozniak

“These students were focused on this campaign since last fall. They've invested countless hours and have earned the success they enjoyed,” said Dave Wozniak, the Donald P. Bellisario Career Advancement Professor in the Department of Advertising/Public Relations, who served as adviser for the 27-member team, which was structured like a communications agency. “I couldn't be prouder of their accomplishment and the commitment to excellence each of them made. This is truly a great recognition for the Bellisario College and Penn State.”

Deliverables for the district-level competition included two pieces. The first was a 12-page book that highlighted the research, insight and strategy and outlined the campaign's “big idea,” plus specified a media plan and budget. Teams also conducted a 20-minute presentation, which was followed by a 15-minute Q&A session where students responded to a panel of judges.

Those things, which accounted for 35% and 65% of a team's score, respectively, helped Penn State to a first-place finish in the district. At the semifinal level, conducted virtually, judges viewed a 20-minute video of the team's presentation, followed by a Q&A session.

The structure of the national finals mirrored that of the district competition. While the team did not place at nationals, its success was an important high-water mark for the program. ♥

Six selected as spring student marshals

Six Penn State graduating seniors who excelled in the classroom and complemented their educations with a variety of co-curricular and hands-on opportunities served as student marshals during spring commencement exercises for the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications.

The student marshals are: Jamie Nguyen, overall; Emily Eng, advertising/public relations; Ryan Manuud, film production; Julia Mertes, journalism; Shannon Cain, media studies; and Mitchell Scordo, telecommunications and media industries.



Overall: Jamie Nguyen *Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania*

Jamie Nguyen, a consistent Dean's List student with a 4.0 grade-point average, earned a degree in film production while completing several internships and honing her skills with numerous hands-on, on-campus opportunities. Last summer she worked with Monkeypaw

Productions as a development intern and was recognized in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Gold Rising Class of 2023.

Nguyen, a first-generation college student, also completed a double major in sociology. She worked on five different undergraduate film projects, serving in roles such as producer, editor and director. She also served as a producer and editor for CommAgency, an editing lab adviser in the Bellisario College, and as a videographer for 46LIVE's streaming coverage of the Penn State Dance Marathon (THON).

A Schreyer Scholar and a Paterno Fellow, Nguyen planned to move to California after graduation and work as the inaugural production studio intern for Clorox Company in its in-house studio in Oakland. Her long-term career goal is to create narrative social commentary films about the Asian American diaspora, particularly focusing on the wealth and education disparity faced by Vietnamese refugees and second-generation immigrants.

Advertising/Public Relations: Emily Eng

South Brunswick, New Jersey

Emily Eng was selected as the advertising/public relations student marshal. Along with success in the classroom, she was active in clubs and organizations, and completed several internships.

Eng, a Bellisario College Fellow, served as vice president of exploration for the Public Relations Student Society of America, vice president of the Bellisario Alliance for Multicultural Students, a Penn State News Literacy Ambassador and a crew member for 46LIVE.

She also served as an undergraduate student representative on the Bellisario College DE&I Committee and on the Ad/PR Alumni Board as well as the Academic Integrity Committee.

Eng is passionate about diversity, equity and inclusion, health-care, education and community. She said she hopes to continue making positive impacts on others' lives through those areas during her career. She was one of 50 students nationally selected for the American Advertising Federation's Most Promising Multicultural Students Class of 2024, and began work with 120/80 MKTG in New York City after graduation.



Film Production: Ryan Manuud *Centereach, New York*

Ryan Manuud, a Bunton-Waller Fellow, Bellisario College Fellow and Schreyer Scholar, was selected as the film production marshal.

In 2023, he spent a semester in Los Angeles in the Penn State Hollywood Program. Manuud completed two internships in L.A., and numerous internships and professional experiences overall — including roles with increasing responsibility for CommAgency. He also serves as director and editor of his own film company.

After graduation he became the primary videographer/editor and a live production camera operator for the Revolution Talent Competition. He's also pursuing a position with Madison Square Garden Entertainment and will continue his entertainment pursuits as a professional dancer and stunt performer.



Future Commencement Dates

Fall 2024, Dec. 22, 2024 / 4:30 p.m., Bryce Jordan Center

Spring 2025, May 10, 2025 / 1 p.m., Bryce Jordan Center

Journalism: Julia Mertes *Montoursville, Pennsylvania*

Julia Mertes was selected as the journalism student marshal. A Schreyer Scholar, she completed her degree — as well as a double major in English and a minor in technical writing — with a 4.0 grade-point average.

Along with that classroom success and numerous academic honors, including acceptance as a Paterno Fellow and a Public Humanities Fellow, Mertes served as the primary presidential election reporter and East Palestine train derailment reporter for The News Lab, housed in the Bellisario College. She previously wrote news features and worked as an investigative reporter for The Daily Collegian.

Mertes also served as communications director for the Lion's Pantry, Penn State's student-run food pantry, and led donor relations and fundraising efforts benefiting Relay for Life at Penn State.

She plans to pursue opportunities to write long-form features and conduct investigative reporting. Her passion for nonprofit organizations will shape her career as well.



and public relations. She also worked as a production assistant for WPSU-TV and served in roles of increasing responsibility, most recently as executive director, for Penn State Network News.

Her varied experiences also included an active role with the Penn State American Marketing Association and as a teaching assistant for the math department in the Eberly College of Science.

After graduation she moved to Philadelphia to work as a risk analyst for Guy Carpenter, a reinsurance broker.

Telecommunications: Mitchell Scordo

Mount Joy, Pennsylvania

Mitch Scordo was selected as the telecommunications and media industries student marshal, and completed a double major in political science, with minors in economics and global security.

A Bellisario College Fellow, Scordo also served as president of Lion Caucus, programming director of campus operations for the University Park Undergraduate Association and completed internships for a government strategies company and for a digital fundraising platform.

After graduation, he moved to Washington, D.C., to gain more experience with the legislative process by working on Capitol Hill. His goal is to become a communications policy specialist and advise lawmakers on telecommunications regulations.



Media Studies: Shannon Cain *Westchester, New York*

Shannon Cain was selected as the media studies student marshal, and completed a double major by earning a bachelor's degree in marketing.

She completed a handful of internships, with experiences in brand marketing, marketing and sales,



Winter Student Marshal: Lilly Riddle

Some aspiring college students who grow up in State College love everything about Penn State and know instantly it will be their future home for four years.

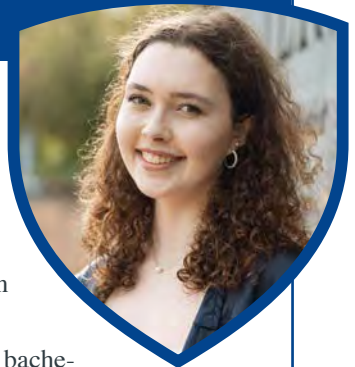
Lilly Riddle was a little more measured in her appreciation of the University, but she always understood it would help her reach her goal of building a career in journalism. She chose Penn State and made the most of the opportunities available.

Riddle served as student marshal for the Bellisario College during commencement exercises in December 2023.

A Paterno and Schreyer Scholar and consistent Dean's List student, Riddle graduated with a bachelor's degree in digital and print journalism, and another in political science. She also earned a master's degree in international affairs.

Riddle enjoyed many experiences at Penn State, and her favorite memory came as part of an international reporting class. During spring break of 2023, she traveled to Estonia to report on the country's parliamentary elections and write a long-form piece about its media landscape. She talked to Russian media workers, traveled to the Russian border and met the Estonian prime minister.

"It was an unforgettable trip, and it wouldn't have been possible without the support of the college," Riddle said.



Award-winning newscast expands across Pennsylvania



ESPN Vice President Judson Burch ('92) watches from the control room as students produce an episode of "Centre County Report."

An award-winning newscast produced by Penn State students became available to thousands more viewers across Pennsylvania as part of a streaming agreement with WNEP-TV, which serves Scranton/Wilkes-Barre as the top-rated station in the northeastern part of the state.

"Centre County Report" was added to WNEP's streaming channel in early 2024. The half-hour show has regularly been named the nation's best student-produced newscast by organizations such as the Broadcast Education Association, College Broadcasters Inc., the College Media Association, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and the Society of Professional Journalists.

"This is really exciting and a way for our students' work to be accessible to more viewers across the state," said Steve Kraycik, an associate teaching professor and director of student television in the Bellisario College. "It gives our students' work even more credibility, and their high-quality efforts have consistently proven they've earned that credibility."

"Centre County Report" serves a dual purpose. It provides a source of news and information to the residents of Centre County and functions as a real-life laboratory for student learning to report and deliver news. The newscast is produced by students in the Bellisario College's capstone broadcast journalism course.

The weekly newscast streams on YouTube and airs on WPSU-TV to 29 counties and 500,000 homes. In addition, "Centre County Report" streams in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia as the result of partnerships with KDKA-TV and KYW-TV, respectively. A similar agreement with WJZ-TV makes the show available in Baltimore as well.



It gives our students' work even more credibility, and their high-quality efforts have consistently proven they've earned that credibility.



— Steve Kraycik

Accolades

Recent awards for
"Centre County Report"



Winner, Student Excellence in Journalistic Craft-News Videography
(Oct. 13, 2023, episode)



Best-All Around Television Newscast
(Dec. 1, 2023, episode)



Best Newscast
(Oct. 27, 2023, episode)



Best of Festival, "Centre County Report in Estonia"
First Place, Television News Magazine, "Centre County Report in Estonia"

Penn State entrant advances to Hearst national championship

What started out as a class assignment became much more for one former Penn State student.

A feature story, a profile of a couple committed to the ongoing environmental cleanup in the aftermath of the February 2023 train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, became a passion project for Nick Stonesifer.

“I felt dedicated to the story and wanted to share their story. Getting to know them and learning what they do and why they do it, that made it easy to invest in the story,” said Stonesifer, who graduated in May with a bachelor’s degree in telecommunications. He also served as editor of The Daily Collegian.

Stonesifer’s story, “Safekeeper & Creek Guy,” which chronicled the work of Christina Siceloff and Randy Dehaven, finished second in a monthly competition for profile writing as part of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation’s Journalism Awards Program. There were 127 entries from 68 schools submitted for that competition.



PHOTO BY JACKSON RANGER (25)

With his second-place finish, Stonesifer earned a spot in the Hearst Program’s individual national championships that were conducted June 1-7 in San Francisco. During that time all entrants in the competition were challenged to find and write stories with the top finishers becoming the individual national champion.

The competition was also a homecoming, of sorts, because his family spent a year in San Francisco when he was in eighth grade.

He was the eighth Penn State student in the past decade to qualify for the individual national championship.

Three Penn State qualifiers have earned the individual national championship in recent years — Melissa Manno (2021), Anna Orso (2014), Andrew McGill (2010) and Halle Stockton (2007).

It’s an exciting opportunity for Stonesifer, who enjoys investigative reporting and began a full-time reporting job with Spotlight Delaware after the competition concluded.

THON™

The annual livestream of the Penn State Dance Marathon, produced by Bellisario College students who are members of 46 LIVE, reached more than 80 countries during the 46-hour fundraising event in February.

THON, which raises money to battle pediatric cancer, is the largest student-run philanthropic event in the world. Communications students have been leading the vital livestream portion of the event for nearly two decades.



46 LIVE’s work amassed:

more than
200,000
views

15,000+
viewers during
the total reveal

43 million
total minutes
watched

THON raised
\$16,955,683.63



PHOTO BY PATRICK MANSELL

PHOTO BY PATRICK MANSELL

The News Lab enhances journalism and empowers students with variety of options

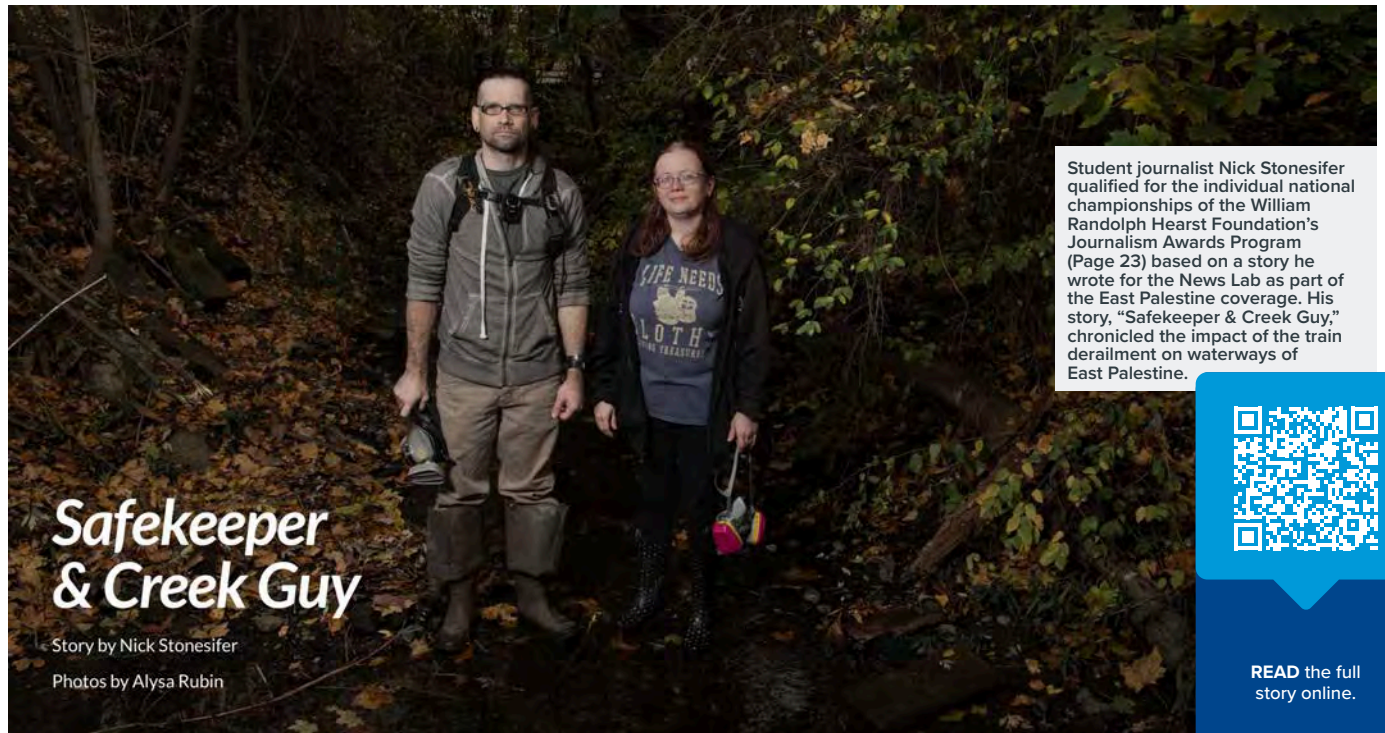
The News Lab at Penn State, housed in the Department of Journalism and led by Maggie Messitt, the Norman Eberly Professor of Practice, facilitates partnerships between professional news organizations and student journalists — regularly collaborating on long-form and special projects.

Among its recent collaborations was a six-month-long reporting effort by Penn State journalism students that included three separate site visits, dozens of interviews and hundreds of hours of preparation. That project produced an in-depth, immersive look at the East Palestine, Ohio, train derailment in February 2023 and its ongoing impact.



SEE photos
East Palestine:
One Year Later

The students translated their reporting into an immersive experience using the app Gesso, which is typically a platform for self-guided walking tours in cities and for self-guided museum tours, allowing visitors to engage with an exhibit on their own. For these purposes, the Gesso platform allows listeners and readers to find themselves more intimately inside the story, traveling alongside the train, walking inside someone's home, stepping into Sulphur Run and experiencing the trauma of displacement.



Student journalist Nick Stonesifer qualified for the individual national championships of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation's Journalism Awards Program (Page 23) based on a story he wrote for the News Lab as part of the East Palestine coverage. His story, "Safekeeper & Creek Guy," chronicled the impact of the train derailment on waterways of East Palestine.



READ the full
story online.

Safekeeper & Creek Guy

Story by Nick Stonesifer

Photos by Alysa Rubin

The News Lab also conducts badging programs for students to help hone their journalism and storytelling skills and launched Centre Documenters as part of a partnership with SpotlightPA. Centre Documenters trains and pays note takers to attend municipal meetings to help enhance access and transparency for municipal government. Since that launch in December 2023, the News Lab has expanded the note-taking service to share information with media outlets that serve Centre County.

During the upcoming academic year, especially in the fall leading to the presidential election, the News Lab will work with media organizations in underserved areas of Pennsylvania to help cover the election — making the lab's mission of offering opportunities for students and impacting communities across Pennsylvania in positive ways a reality.

Three Ad/PR majors selected among AAF's Most Promising Multicultural Students

Three students were selected from a highly competitive process and named among the nation's Most Promising Multicultural Students, according to the American Advertising Federation (AAF).



The three students — Emma Chan, Chenai Christian and Star Lawson — were all senior advertising/public relations majors in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications.

They demonstrated academic achievement and had high GPAs to be eligible for the program. Once eligible, they provided recommendation letters, a resume and a summary of community involvement. Each nominee also wrote an essay about why

diversity matters, how their skills and experience will enable them to become industry professionals, and why they chose their major.

“This is a huge accomplishment for our students as well as an honor for the Bellisario College,” said Dave Wozniak, the Donald P. Bellisario Career Advancement Professor in the Department of Advertising/Public Relations. “It’s a high-quality group of honorees, each of whom represents Penn State well.”

The AAF’s Most Promising Multicultural Students program, established in 1997, connects the advertising industry with the nation’s top multicultural college seniors. Only 50 students nationally were selected for the honor. Students from more than 140 college chapters applied to the program. Those selected — with an average 3.7 GPA — represented 28 schools from 18 states.

The students participated in a mid-February trip to New York City. The four-day industry immersion program allowed students to meet with professionals from top advertisers, media companies and advertising agencies at the exclusive Most Promising Multicultural Students Recruiters Expo.

Student earns top-five finish in PRWeek national competition

A senior advertising/public relations major took a classroom challenge and transformed it into an award-winning finish in a national competition.

Josh Maust was selected as one of the top five finishers for the PRWeek Outstanding Student Award, thanks to a campaign he put together for a final class project, which was then entered in the annual national competition. This year’s challenge prompt from PRWeek asked students to develop an integrated communications campaign that emphasizes the seriousness of climate change and educates a divided America.

Maust, from Latrobe, Pennsylvania, completed a double major in psychology and graduated in May. He went through several ideas and iterations before focusing his project on Bass Pro Shops as a partner.

“From my research it seemed like their consumers would care about the topic,” Maust said. “It was a lot of work, but we got peer feedback along the way and that helped. The thing I’m most proud about was how it all came together. My final campaign report was well-thought-out, and I thought the video looked pretty good, too.”

Along with a six-page campaign document and a 60-second video, Maust used AI images created by Microsoft Bing’s Image Creator from Designer and developed a campaign that amplified these images through earned and shared media. Then,

with the help of a classmate, Maust pulled together the pictures and a supporting poster with a message that “There’s Nothing Fishy About Climate Change.”

Once he advanced to the final round, Maust conducted a phone call and pitched his idea to PRWeek’s Frank Washkuch.

Maust is the ninth Penn State student in the past four years to earn a top-five finish in the competition. All have honed their skills and sharpened their campaigns as part of a capstone course taught by Associate Teaching Professor Tara Wyckoff.

Penn State’s recent national finalists include Maryrose Finn (2023), Samantha Preza (2023), Colton Breon (2022), Margaret Pfeifle (2022), Sydney Haykel (2021), Jenna Silverblatt (2021), and Elise Bingaman (2020). Morgan Sheedy and Yunjing Zhang were honored as semifinalists in 2022 and 2021, respectively.

Two Penn State participants have been named PR Student of the Year — Robert Corrado in 2008 and Tara Burnham in 2006.



More opportunities and success highlight Curley Center's anniversary year

With working student trips at major sporting events, award-winning productions in a variety of mediums, campus visits by top-tier alumni and an abundance of internships on and off campus, the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism celebrated its 20th year by putting the mission of the center into practice.

The Curley Center was founded in 2003 and housed in the Bellisario College as a first-of-its-kind endeavor focused on collaboration, education and experience-building in higher education. It has grown to become one of the largest and most-respected sports journalism programs in the nation.

Penn State students who complete the Curley Center's academic requirements, a combination of classes and an internship, earn a certificate — and 1,162 certificates have been awarded in the past 20 years.

The endeavor was initially named simply the Center for Sports Journalism when it launched in 2003. It was renamed the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism to honor one of its co-founders, John Curley, in 2006. Curley's more than five

decades of newspaper experience included work as a reporter, editor, publisher and, ultimately, president, CEO and chairman of the Gannett Co. He was the first editor of USA Today.

Since its inception, the Curley Center has explored issues and trends in sports journalism through instruction, outreach, programming and research. The center complements its core courses with an emphasis on internships and hands-on experience.

During that past year, Curley Center students covered the Women's World Cup and Super Bowl as part of partnerships with The Associated Press. Among alumni back on campus was writer Ryan Hockensmith of ESPN, who had three articles honored in "Best American Sports Writing 2024."

A student-produced documentary about short-track auto racing, "Dirt Circus," made its premiere and later earned accolades and awards on the festival circuit.

As always, students participate in countless campus media opportunities, including CommRadio, The Daily Collegian and student-led TV programs. They also have access to state-of-the-art facilities. Penn State Athletics offers valuable internships, and additional off-campus opportunities are available with media outlets, teams and leagues.

John Affleck, director of the Curley Center and the Knight Chair in Journalism and Society as well as head of the Department of Journalism, ranks as a thought leader about sports journalism and sports in society — regularly serving as a guest expert in response to media inquiries or writing op-ed pieces that appear across the world.

Although not specifically related to the Curley Center, the Penn State chapter of the Association for Women in Sports Media was honored as chapter of the year by the national organization for the third time in the past six years. No chapter at any other school has been so honored more than once in that time.



A screening of the documentary "Dirt Circus" about short track auto racing was one of many highlights of the year for the Curley Center.



Penn State

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SPORTS MEDIA
2024 STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE YEAR





Humor in Journalism

During spring 2024, an inaugural course, COMM 498, focused on humor in journalism — a time-honored tradition used by pundits to skewer the powerful and point out quirks in society around them. On the first day of the class, Associate Professor Russell Frank (standing, rear) posed for a group photo with the class. The semester was more about pacing, preparation, thoughtfulness and satire than funny glasses and mustaches, though.



A SAMPLE of student work from the class is below, and others may be found online.

New York Times to shut down news department in favor of games

BY EMMA WESOLOWSKI ('25)

(Editor's Note: This story was created as part of COMM 498 Humor in Journalism.)

NEW YORK (April 1, 2024) — The New York Times announced today that it will be shutting down its news department to focus on its more profitable enterprise: games.

The New York Times has been publishing news since 1851 and has since been a cornerstone of American journalism.

However, journalism has been at risk in recent years, with companies like Sports Illustrated and Insider experiencing drastic cuts in 2024. Other prominent papers, such as the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post, have laid off many journalists in recent months.

In a statement, Times president and CEO Meredith Kopit Levien explained the decision was made to prioritize the health of the company as a whole.

“At its core, The New York Times is a business,” Levien said. “Sharing the news is secondary.”

Levien went on to say that she believes by pouring the company’s resources into NYT Games, the company will survive the death of journalism.

While the NYT Crossword has been around since 1941, the NYT Games division was founded in 2014. In its 10 years of existence, it has revitalized interest in the company, especially with younger audiences.

Everdeen Mason, the editorial director of NYT Games, took to

X, formally known as Twitter, to share her excitement about the future of the department.

“This is the right move,” Mason said. “Totally unbiased, this is absolutely the right decision.”

In 2023, The New York Times’ games were played more than 8 billion times. Wordle, which NYT Games acquired, was the most played game with 4.8 billion times.

Mason said she hopes to acquire more games to add to the NYT Games library.

“We hope by 2025 all classic games will be played on our platform,” Mason said. “Checkers, chess, Monopoly? The sky’s the limit.”

While this move will result in around 1,700 journalists losing their jobs, Mason noted in her X post that this gives them the opportunity to find a more profitable career.

“Hopefully this move will help them take that jump into a new venture,” Mason said. “Who knows, maybe they’ll end up working for me.”

With the recent news of a TikTok ban by the federal government, Levien said she believes this decision comes at the perfect time.

“While we definitely did not have anything to do with this ban, The New York Times hopes that this will help us tap further into the Gen Z market,” Levien said. “We hope to dominate their screen time in due course.”

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES



Ali Krieger ('07)
Commencement Speaker





Commencement Celebrations

With the Bryce Jordan Center full of family and friends, the Class of 2024 celebrated the culmination of college careers that started with uncertainty and developed into experiences and opportunities that provided the foundation for ongoing success.



Whatever you do, choose to be good at something. ... Be adventurous. Don't be afraid

to make mistakes. Being happy and successful will always involve those things.

— ALI KRIEGER ('07)



FIRST & FOREMOST

Pioneering faculty member and researcher S. Shyam Sundar, known for his creative and rigorous approach, becomes the Bellisario College's first Evan Pugh University Professor.



If it seems like S. Shyam Sundar always has a plan, it's probably because he does.

A persistent and pragmatic approach shapes Sundar's academic and research pursuits. That thoughtful curiosity has provided the foundation for consistent success that has helped him earn international recognition while simultaneously enhancing the reputation of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications.

Sundar, the James P. Jimirro Professor of Media Effects, director of the Penn State Center for Socially Responsible Artificial Intelligence and founding director of the Media Effects Research Laboratory, was named the Bellisario College's first Evan Pugh University Professor, effective July 1.

It's the highest honor Penn State bestows on a faculty member. The distinction has been conferred by Penn State to only 79 faculty members since the designation's establishment in 1960.

"In the field of communication- and media-related research, Dr. Sundar knows few equals. He is a pioneer in producing ground-breaking research on the effects of digital media interfaces and, more recently, human-computer interaction in the context of communication," said Dean Marie Hardin of the Bellisario College. "His impact on the field has been remarkable."

Sundar is a theorist as well as an experimentalist who examines social and psychological effects of human-computer interaction and computer-mediated communication with a specific focus on technological elements such as multi-modality and interactivity that are unique to modern digital media. His research portfolio includes extensive examination of user responses to online sources, including machine sources such as chatbots, smart speakers and other forms of artificial intelligence.

Sundar was identified as the most published author of internet-related research in the field of communication during the medium's first decade. His innate curiosity across a variety of disciplines helps shape much of his work, which has proven ground-breaking. For example, he envisioned computers and online peers as sources of news back in 1995, well before the advent of social media and generative AI and has been tracking how people respond to content emerging from such sources.

"Some of the questions we ask or answers we get may typically belong to different disciplines, but for me it's more intellectual curiosity about online media and, more importantly, how people respond," Sundar said. "I'm primarily focused on communication technology and psychology, and certainly my background in journalism fosters that curiosity. I go on a quest for answers without worrying about the fact that I may be straddling disciplines."

While much of the scholarship in communication technology tends to focus on trends, Sundar's work is known for its enduring theoretical value. His concepts and models have helped scholars

understand new technologies over the past three decades, a period characterized by the historic emergence of several different forms of "new media" — from websites and mobile devices to social media and AI-based media.

"Because new technologies give us new ways of thinking about concepts, it keeps me excited about studying them," said Sundar.

Sundar is a fellow of the International Communication Association and a recipient of the Frederick Williams Prize awarded for contribution to the study of communication technology. He is also the winner of the Paul J. Deutschmann award for lifetime excellence in research awarded by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Determination, necessity and, always, pragmatism have been the foundation of Sundar's success. His diverse background and influences, including degrees in engineering, journalism and psychology, help him bring a big-picture approach to his research.

"I'm not chasing the next shiny new thing but always looking for concepts that vary across different technologies," Sundar said. Specifically, his MAIN model (modality, agency, interactivity, navigability) has applications across all types of online media. Likewise, his theory of interactive media effects (TIME) can be utilized to better evaluate and understand any medium.

In addition, Sundar's work — and work ethic — has been foundational for the Bellisario College's graduate program and research portfolio. He's an accomplished colleague with a collegial mindset.



“

Because new technologies give us new ways of thinking about concepts, it keeps me excited about studying them.

”

— S. Shyam Sundar

“I feel privileged to be among colleagues who are both very professional and highly collegial,” Sundar said.” My students and I have benefited from Bellisario College faculty, staff, and administrators who have contributed to our research in many tangible ways, from providing a sounding board for our ideas to arranging funding for our studies to helping publicize the outcomes of our research.”

When he arrived at Penn State nearly three decades ago, he found an “empty palate” and leaders who gave him both space and support. Lab groups were formed. The Media Effects Research Lab was created, and Sundar’s curiosity and strategic approach consistently led to success.

Getting things started from the ground up was not easy, but it’s been worthwhile.

“It was stunning and thrilling and nerve wracking,” he said. “It was also exciting to get that research culture going — to build energy, recruit more faculty members and really make an impact.

“I am blessed to have had a great group of grad students to work with over the years, helping Penn State attain and sustain the status of a leading center for research on psychological aspects of emerging communication technologies.”

He said Penn State’s support for his endeavors has been generally speedy and efficient, allowing him to take lessons he gleaned from mentors as a student himself and enable the Bellisario College to continually build on its research reputation. Plus, he sees any roadblocks or setbacks as opportunities. “When you’re constrained, you’re more creative, you bring your best,” he said. “It’s like Twitter’s 140-character limit going to 280 characters. I think people were more creative at 140.”

Sundar also brings a sense of humor to his work. He’s accomplished and focused, but it’s not all-consuming, which allows time for some jazz disc jockey duties at a local radio station.

Sundar, who joined the Penn State faculty in 1995, earned a doctoral degree in communication and psychology from Stanford University, a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Alabama, and a bachelor’s degree in engineering from Bangalore University, India.

He was named a Distinguished Professor at Penn State in 2009, earned a Faculty Scholar Medal from the University in 2016 and was named the inaugural James P. Jimirro Professor of Media Effects in 2018.

“The Evan Pugh designation is not solely about research,” Hardin said. “One selection criterion requires a track record of contributing ‘significantly to the education of students, both undergraduate and graduate.’ His work with graduate students has led them to outstanding academic and industry placement, and his work with undergraduates has been just as impactful.”

The Evan Pugh Professorships are awarded to faculty members who are nationally or internationally recognized leaders in their fields of research or creative activity; demonstrate significant leadership in raising the standards of the University with respect to teaching, research or creativity, and service; display excellent teaching skills with undergraduate and graduate students who go on to achieve distinction in their fields; and receive support from colleagues who also are leaders in their disciplines. The professorships are named for Penn State’s founding president. ♥

Collegial Comments

Excerpts from nomination letters supporting S. Shyam Sundar’s nomination as an Evan Pugh Professor:

“

It is hard for me to find any scholars in Happy Valley, and across the world, who evidence Prof. Sundar’s international theoretical and empirical academic influence, research leadership stature, and student mentorship record.

— Distinguished Professor Homero Gil de Zuniga, Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications

”

“

His contribution to the field has given Penn State worldwide recognition as a top program in the study of media effects. And he has contributed significantly to the education of our students. His outstanding research, teaching and service contributions exemplify the highest standards of the Evan Pugh Professorship.

— Fuyuan Shen, professor and head of the Department of Advertising/ Public Relations

”

“

His articulation of person variables like power user are notable and useful, and these constructs are delivered along with validated research instruments that can be used by others. His studies of interaction design variables such as interactivity, customization, and user agency are both foundational from a scientific perspective and rife with implications for designers who are building interactive websites and other online media offerings.

— Mary Beth Rosson, Professor Emerita, College of Information Sciences and Technology

”

“

Perhaps the most important thing I might say in support of Professor Sundar is that through his work and his spirit of collaboration he has improved his corner of the world and thus inspires everyone around him to aim for the same sort of excellence he has embodied.

— Patrick Plaisance, Don Davis Professor in Ethics, Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications

”

“

Dr. Sundar has set the bar high for scholarly integrity, ethical behavior, and an enormously strong work ethic. He is relentless in his pursuit of rigorous scientific inquiry, in an inclusive and equitable way.

— Amit Sharma, the Edward Friedman and Stuart Mann Professor of Hospitality Management, Penn State College of Health and Human Development

”

Faculty member's wait for broadband labels finally ends



Earlier this year the Federal Communications Commission launched Broadband Consumer Labels that require internet service providers to display information for consumers at the point of sale.

The labels resemble familiar nutrition labels that appear on food products. To ensure the label benefits consumers, the FCC adopted accessibility and language requirements for the label's display. Labels are required for all standalone home or fixed internet service or broadband plans. Providers must display the label — not just an icon or link to the label — in close proximity to an associated plan's advertisement.

For one Bellisario College faculty member, the arrival of the labels completed a decade and a half of waiting.

Sascha Meinrath, the Palmer Chair in Telecommunications, led a team at the New America Foundation that first proposed such labels 15 years ago.

At left is a whiteboard mockup of a potential label from Meinrath's group in 2009. At right is a look at what the FCC rolled out in April of this year.

Comcast

| | |
|--|---|
| Speed | 15 Mbps / 2 Mbps |
| SERVICE GUARANTEES | |
| MINIMUM SPEED | 8 mps / 384 kbps |
| Maximum Speed Service Guaranteed by | One day service credit for extended underdelivery... |
| Latency (Delay) to Border Routers | 10 ms to 50 ms. typical 100 ms. max |
| Reliability/Uptime | 96% typical |
| PRICES | \$44.99 service \$19.99 first six months on promotion |
| Service Limits (limit all traffic management techniques) | • 250 GB cap, capped month, overage as excessive use, download if also one system top 1000 users. • Heavy users or congested nodes inhibited |
| Other fees (can't change if not listed) | \$3/mo. Modem fee, Franchise fees vary by location, \$59.99 Installation fee, \$19.99 outlet installation, \$150 early termination fee, \$2 account charge fee, overage fees, taxes |
| Contract Term | At will - cancel anytime |

Broadband Facts

Provider Name
Service Plan Name and/or Speed Tier
(Fixed or Mobile) Broadband Consumer Disclosure

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Monthly Price | \$00.00 |
| This monthly price is an introductory rate | Yes / No |
| Time the introductory rate applies | YY months |
| Monthly price after the introductory rate | \$00.00 |
| Length of contract | YY months |

Link to Terms of Contract
<https://www.example.com/terms-of-contract>

Additional Charges & Terms

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Provider Monthly Fees | |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| One-Time Purchase Fees | |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| Fee description | \$00.00 |
| Early Termination Fee | \$00.00 |
| Government Taxes | Included/Varies by Location/\$00.00 |

Discounts & Bundles

Visit the link below for available billing discounts and pricing options for broadband service bundled with other services like video, phone, and wireless service, and use of your own equipment.

<https://www.example.com/discounts>

Speeds Provided with Plan

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Typical Download Speed | 000 Mbps |
| Typical Upload Speed | 000 Mbps |
| Typical Latency | 00 ms |

Data Included with Monthly Price

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| | 000 GB |
| Charges for Additional Data Usage | \$/GB |

<https://www.example.com/data-usage>

Network Management Policy
<https://www.example.com/network-management>

Privacy Policy
<https://www.example.com/privacy>

Customer Support

Phone: (555) 555-5555
Website: <https://www.example.com>

Learn about the terms used on this label. Visit the Federal Communications Commission's Consumer Resource Center:
fcc.gov/consumer

Unique Plan Identifier: F0005937974123ABC456EMC789

News Literacy Initiative continues growth

After a two-year pilot phase, the Penn State News Literacy Initiative continues to grow and make an impact.



It was launched in October 2022 as the Bellisario College collaborated with WPSU, the College of Education, University Libraries, Student Affairs, Penn State Harrisburg and Penn State Outreach to help students become more informed citizens and counter a trend of news avoidance.

Under the direction of Matt Jordan, an associate professor and head of the Department of Film Production and Media Studies, the initiative added student am-

bassadors, created a podcast ("News Over Noise"), developed resources for K-12 educators, and worked with non-University partners on special events, including a celebration of U.S. Media Literacy Week.

An on-campus event for Media Literacy Week this year will be conducted Oct. 23 on the University Park campus.

"It's important that all students are informed, and well-informed citizens make democracy stronger," Jordan said. "Unfortunately, the 'noise' of news sometimes chases people away. Ideally people would find their news from legitimate and local sources. That's becoming more of a challenge though."

With information and programming, the initiative strives to help people find the best sources and then develop ways to engage in their communities.

Bellisario Media Center Technology Fund



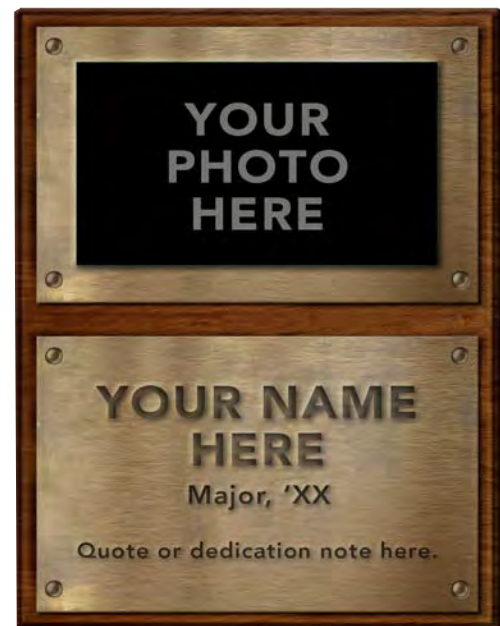
EXAMPLES OF RECOGNITION



\$250, with gifts recognized by a digital brick



\$500, with gifts recognized by a digital plaque with a personalized message



\$1,000, with gifts recognized by a digital portrait with a personalized message and photo

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Alumni and friends who support the Bellisario Media Center Technology Fund with gifts at various levels starting at \$250 will have an ongoing presence on the center's digital donor wall — consistently reminding students they are part of a community invested in their future.



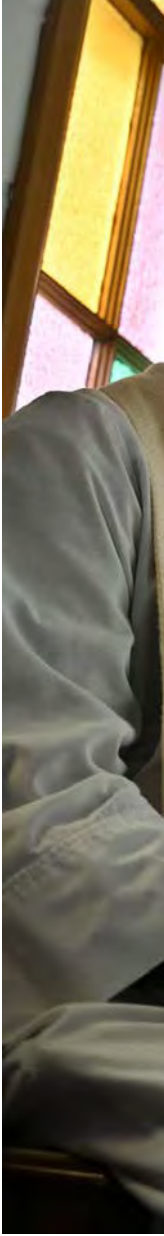
The Last Sermon

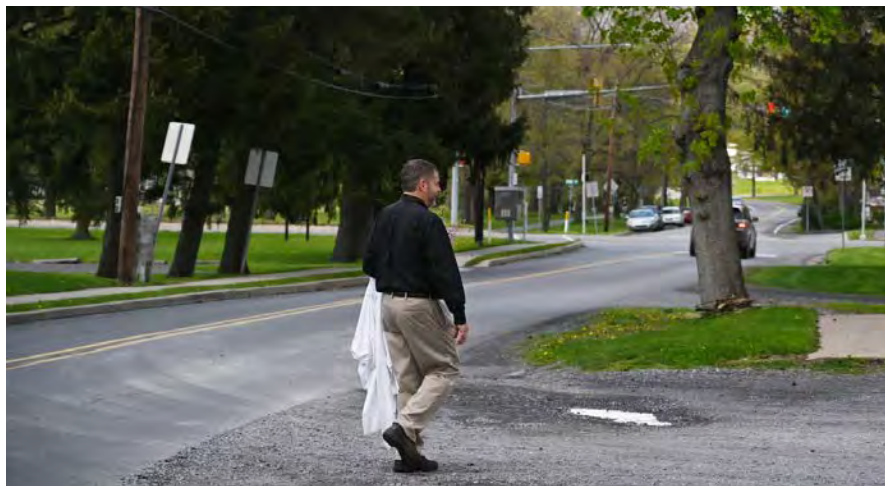
After a quarter century serving his congregation, Brent Book delivered his final sermon.

Brent Book served as the pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Boalsburg for 25 years.

From baptisms, to marriages, to burials, Book was an integral part of the community's most significant life moments. When he retired earlier this year, his daughter, Natalie, who graduated from the Bellisario College in May, documented the last sermon on March 31, 2024.

PHOTOS BY NATALIE BOOK (24)





Doctoral candidates find opportunities and support in the Bellisario College

More than three dozen doctoral candidates currently study and conduct research in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, and their range of interests and perspectives spans almost every aspect of mass communications.

Still, they often find common ground in the Bellisario College's classroom and the educational community.

With faculty experts as mentors and colleagues, along with opportunities to collaborate and teach, many students find a supportive environment to tailor their learning and make the most of facilities and resources that allow students to pursue their areas of interest.

Four current doctoral candidates, ranging from a first-year student to one primed to spend a fifth year at the University, said the opportunities and support they've found in the Bellisario College have been invaluable.

Cassandra Troy

Cassandra Troy is a fourth-year doctoral candidate from Virginia focusing on environmental communications. She earned her bachelor's degrees in communication arts and German from Virginia Commonwealth University. After graduation, she worked for a nonprofit and a university doing strategic communications work, while earning a master's degree in communication from Purdue University.

Her dissertation investigates the role of solutions journalism in climate risk mitigation. Her broad research focus is environmental communication for prosocial and pro-environmental outcomes. She is particularly interested in environmental solutions and advocacy messaging.

Troy chose to pursue a doctorate in communications after working as a sustainability communications and engagement specialist at the University of Richmond. She developed a deep passion for environmental public relations and messaging.

Troy, who earned a National Science Foundation grant to support her dissertation, chose Penn State for Bellisario College's fantas-



Doctoral candidates, from left, Wilhelmina Antwi, Erika Solis, Cassandra Troy and Sydney Forde are among many who have found success and support in the Bellisario College's mass communications program.

tic reputation for rigorous communication research and the faculty working in environmental communications.

"The faculty I've worked with are extremely supportive and provide great mentorship," she said.

After graduating, she accepted a tenure-track position with the University of Illinois, where she will be conducting interdisciplinary research with colleagues around climate change and teach-

ing courses like environmental journalism.

Sydney Forde

Sydney Forde is a fourth-year doctoral student from Alberta, Canada, focusing on the political and economic logics of the journalism industry. She earned her bachelor's degree in business communications from Brock University in Ontario, Canada, and completed her master's degree in Canadian American studies at the University at Buffalo and Brock University.

Her dissertation compares the narratives and justifications of two journalism antitrust exemption acts in the United States to explore who those policies really benefit, and if they will really save the failing journalism industry.

Forde's passion for studying structural motivations of media and media related policy developed after realizing both the immense impact mediated messages have on teaching us about the world, and how those messages are not naturally occurring.

"The media was feeding people's anger and frustration," Forde said. "It did not sit well with me."

She highlighted the need to understand what economic incentives are driving the media and why people are advocating for certain policies related to media systems and telecommunications more broadly.

Forde selected Penn State for its strong history in political economic research. The program is well known for focusing on structural power dynamics and advocating for social democracy.

"I feel like the luckiest doctoral candidate in the world. It is a

fantastic community of scholars, and everyone is so supportive,” she says.

In addition to numerous conference awards throughout her time in the Bellisario College, Forde recently received a national scholarship from Canada that will allow her to complete a fifth year at Penn State. Afterward, she hopes to pursue a career in academia that allows her to pursue further research endeavors.

Wilhelmina Antwi

Wilhelmina Antwi is a first-year doctoral student from the Republic of Ghana focusing on science communication and communication within STEM-based nonprofits.

Antwi, who worked as a content producer on the political and communications team at the British High Commission in Accra, Ghana, earned a bachelor’s in communication studies from the Ghana Institute of Journalism and a master’s degree in communication studies from Kansas State University. She emphasizes the need to look at scientific rhetoric and communication from a non-Western perspective.

Antwi decided to pursue a doctoral degree to be able to return to Ghana and teach journalism as a professor. She said she hopes to teach science communications and share her experience from the industry.

She resolved to present Western journalists’ theories with new, more inclusive views that are applicable to diverse cultures. Antwi said she hopes to be able to share her working experiences and cultural knowledge to support journalism students in Ghana.

“Many of my peers did not get that same experience I did because they had to work, and I want to change that,” she said.

Antwi picked Penn State because it is one of the top graduate programs in mass communication and media studies with a science communication lab and robust faculty. She emphasized that she found the incredible staff and community in the Bellisario College to be indispensable as she tried to stay grounded while away from home.

“I’m so grateful for the community here, and I feel honored to be among so many great minds,” she said.

Erika Solis

Erika Solis is a fourth-year doctoral student from Elizabeth, New Jersey, focusing on regulation in the video game industry and children’s media. They earned their bachelor’s degree in advertising and master’s degree in strategic communication from Rowan University.

Their dissertation is on current statutes and determining how regulations impact large data organizations with a focus on children’s media and privacy. They are a Google Public Policy Fellow working with the Washington, D.C.-based New American Foundation and its Open Technology Institute, with a focus on researching children’s privacy and age verification.

Solis chose Penn State due to its extensive resources, including lab spaces and excellent faculty. The University was highly recommended by one of their professors at Rowan University.

“I have friends doing all different types of research,” they said. “It really allows you to dig into what you are interested in without overlapping topics with someone else.”

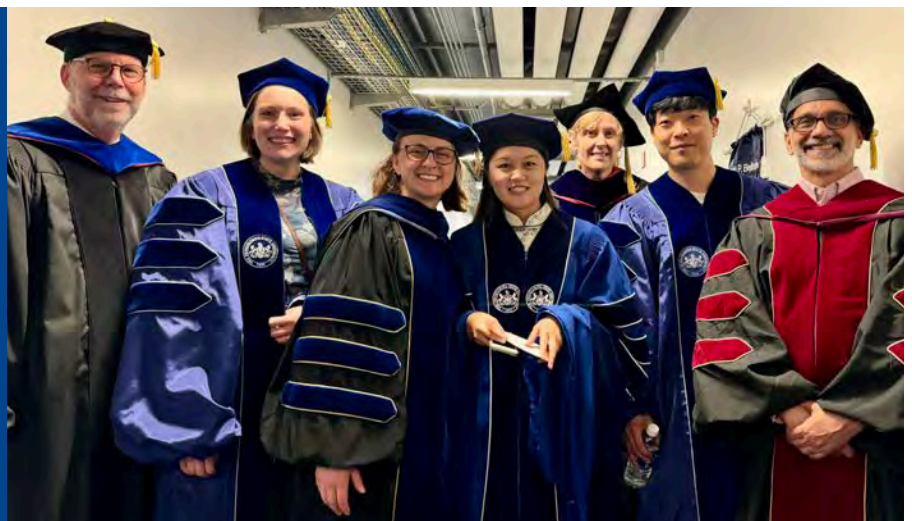
In the future, Solis hopes to pursue research with a Washington, D.C., policy institute or a nonprofit organization that studies the



Faculty members and researchers from the Bellisario College who presented papers or participated in panels during the 74th International Communication Association conference, which was conducted in mid-June in Australia.

Ph.D. Graduation Day

Celebrating Bellisario College Ph.D.s with (from left) Distinguished Professor Ford Risley, Karlin Andersen, Donald P. Bellisario Professor of Health Communication Jessica Myrick, Yin Yang, Donald P. Bellisario Professor of Media Studies Mary Beth Oliver, Bumgi Min, and Professor Krishna Jayakar.



Personal motivation drives faculty member's research focus

BY KAYLEN SITZABEE ('25)



One Penn State faculty member has a highly personal reason that sparked her interest in the idea of authenticity in media.

Heather Shoenberger, an associate professor of advertising/public relations in the Bellisario College, began her research into the perceived authenticity of digital advertising due to her sister's struggle with body image and social media.

Social media platforms often feature images edited using various filters or photo editing tools to “enhance” someone’s appearance. This can create unrealistic beauty standards, which can lead to low self-esteem and body image dissatisfaction by some who consume the content.

“My sister was not sheltered from social media and was active on it from a young age. I believe it was detrimental to her self-confidence and caused her to struggle with body dysmorphia,” Shoenberger said. “I really wanted to do something to stop or at least understand these issues.”

As Shoenberger examined perceived authenticity in the context of digital advertising, a social media campaign by Aerie — wherein the company specifically decided not to airbrush models — served as the inspiration for the study’s stimuli. She found that models with diverse body types and un-retouched skin were perceived as more authentic and their presence subsequently increased social media engagement and brand attitudes, which is good for the brand and the consumer.

Shoenberger has since focused her query of perceived authenticity’s effects to other issues in advertising. In an article in the *Journal of Advertising* (2021), Shoenberger found that perceived brand message authenticity was key for avoiding psychological reactance against COVID-19 advertisements that were meant to promote prosocial behaviors.

Shoenberger’s love for research, she said, stems from her desire to satiate her own curiosity.

“There are so many questions that I want answers to. Those unanswered questions drive me to continue researching,” she said.

New questions led her and a former Penn State graduate student, Yuan Sun, to win a 2024 American Academy of Advertising Research Fellowship Grant to support a proposal about understanding consumer perceptions in the generative artificial intelligence age.

Shoenberger finds support and inspiration for her research from her colleagues at Penn State and the doctoral students she works with every day.

“My colleagues are world class and a constant source of inspiration. I work with amazing people and we, together, have a supportive community that has allowed me to succeed,” Shoenberger said. “Whether it is teaching or research, I know I can always ask a colleague for help or to talk about new ideas.”

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

1911

FIRST CLASS

The history of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications dates back 113 years to Penn State’s first journalism class in 1911.



CHECK IT OUT

Check out the historical timeline online.



SHARE

Feel free to share a memory or story idea to add as we further develop the history project.

Share by email, bellisarioinfo@psu.edu

Bellisario College honors faculty and staff

Five faculty members, a staff member, two graduate students and an adjunct instructor received Deans' Excellence Awards during the annual Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications Faculty and Staff Awards and Recognition Reception. Additionally, a trio of faculty members were recognized for 25 years of service.

The annual awards recognize people who put the mission of Penn State and the college into practice on a daily basis.

➔ Honorees were:

- **Catharine Axley**, assistant professor, Department of Film Production and Media Studies, Deans' Excellence Award for Teaching
- **Anne Doris**, assistant teaching professor, Department of Telecommunications and Media Industries, Deans' Excellence Award for Teaching
- **Martin Marinós**, assistant professor, Department of Film Production and Media Studies, Deans' Excellence Award for Research and Creative Accomplishments
- **Maggie Messitt**, Norman Eberly Professor of Practice in the Department of Journalism, Deans' Excellence Award for Integrated Scholarship
- **Dave Wozniak**, the Donald P. Bellisario Career Advancement Professor in the Department of Advertising/Public Relations, Deans' Excellence Award for Service
- **Jeff Rice**, associate editor of The Penn Stater magazine, who teaches journalism courses in the college, was honored with the Outstanding Faculty Associate Award
- **Emily Miller**, the Bellisario College's undergraduate recruiter, received the Deans' Excellence Award for Outstanding Staff
- Graduate students **Yasemin Beykont** and **Megan Norman** each earned the Djung Yune Tchoi Graduate Teaching Award
- Additionally, faculty members **Matt Jackson**, **Russell Frank** and **Mary Beth Oliver** (below, left to right) were recognized for 25 years of service



Bellisario College adviser earns award for excellence

Adviser Del Schwab, who has been with the Bellisario College since 2019 and serves as the primary liaison with the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State, earned the Schreyer Honors College Excellence in Honors Advising Award this year.

Schwab, who earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin and both his master's and Ph.D. at Indiana University, capably and consistently helps Bellisario College honors students find connections and opportunities.

Because many Schreyer Scholars are motivated and often seek additional challenges or ways to move through their programs in the most expedient way possible, Schwab leads efforts to personalize their programs and help them succeed.

Before joining the Bellisario College, he worked as an academic adviser and coordinator of the bachelor of philosophy program in the Division of Undergraduate Studies at Penn State. Before that, he was an adjunct lecturer in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana University.

Grant earns Undergraduate Program Leadership Award

Catie Grant, an assistant teaching professor and director of CommAgency in the Bellisario College, was selected as the recipient of the 2024 Undergraduate Program Leadership Award from Penn State.

The award recognizes those individuals who have major responsibilities for the delivery of undergraduate education within a unit and who are providing leadership that has transformed or revitalized the undergraduate program in some way.

Nominators said Grant brings her extensive knowledge of the video production industry to Penn State and uses that knowledge to train the next generation of visual storytellers.

Before joining Penn State in 2016, Grant worked for a decade in the creative services department of Penn State Public Broadcasting. Grant's experience is in producing and directing short-form documentaries and client-based video projects.

She teaches courses related to film production and telecommunications and media industries.



Homero Gil de Zúñiga

Due to its rapid rise in everyday life, artificial intelligence (AI) technology has become increasingly relevant to social scientists. A team led by Penn State researchers reviewed a variety of social science literature and found that studies often defined AI differently. By drawing from some of these areas and computer science, the researchers created a single definition and framework that they said they hope will be compatible across disciplines.

Lead author Homero Gil de Zúñiga, Distinguished Professor in Media Effects and AI in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications at Penn State, said the definition is a starting point. It is purposefully broad so it can both adapt as AI evolves and boost interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers. The work, discussed by Gil de Zúñiga in the Q&A below, was published in the journal *Political Communication* with co-authors Timilehin Durotoye, a doctoral student in the Bellisario College, and Manuel Goyanes, assistant professor at the University Carlos III de Madrid.

Q: How did you identify the need for an artificial intelligence definition specifically for the social sciences?

A: Obviously in society today, AI is picking up. It's not just scientific anymore. It has a human basis for all citizens. Regardless of the country that you're living in, AI is becoming more important. For computer scientists, it's been around for decades. But for us who are thinking about how it's going to be integrated in daily life, artificial intelligence is in its infancy. So, starting with computer science, we gathered different definitions from what had been written about AI. My co-authors and I found that there was not a large consensus about what AI is or what it might be. We realized that the definitions were not concrete and were often defined in a way so they fit a particular paper's study.

Q: What is the definition that emerged from your study?

A: Our definition says: AI is the tangible real-world capability of non-human machines or artificial entities to perform, task solve, communicate, interact and logically act akin to biological humans.

Q: How does your definition for AI differ from a discipline outside the social sciences?

A: If someone is writing a study on Alexa, they might define artificial intelligence in a very particular way. For example, they may say AI is a machine that performs smart tasks.

Or they may base it on the system's ability to interpret external data. When it comes to journalism and communication, the definitions might abandon the machine and instead define AI as a set of algorithms designed to generate and distribute media, text and images. So, that's why we wanted to combine all of these definitions and generate something that will work across disciplines.

Q: Is the idea that interdisciplinary connections will be easier to make among researchers from different disciplines because they will have a shared definition for AI?

A: Exactly. If I'm from communication, it is going to work for me. We started with computer science, so our definition and framework are going to work for me if I'm a researcher from computer science. Our hope is that when you're talking with a sociologist or a biologist, it will work. And I know that our working framework is not very exhaustive, but what we wanted to facilitate was a condition to say that if you're using this definition in your theory, it will work. This is just a foundation. You can complicate it much more if you want, but this is a theory that's going to work for everyone. The rationale is that this is a launching pad or steppingstone for doing AI research.

Q: When you mention framework, you're talking about the study's evaluation of AI performance and AI autonomy. Can you expand on those terms and how they work together with your AI definition?





A: Beyond the definition, we constructed a simplistic theory in which we divided the two main dimensions of working with AI. One is the idea of how machines perform, and the other is how autonomous they are, meaning how well they can complete tasks with as little human input as possible. Any given intelligent entity will have different levels of performance by creating or performing certain tasks or predicting things, which is what AI does. So, we discuss three levels of performance and three levels of autonomy.

So, for example, it's just like humans. Some AIs are very intelligent, can perform lots of tasks and have a high level of autonomy. And there are some that might not be so autonomous and require more input from us. Based on these dimensions and performance levels, you can start thinking about any type of AI and apply it to any type of AI research. From there, I'm convinced that more theory will eventually become available and useful. So, with this definition and framework, we are getting the ball rolling.

Q: AI is changing so quickly. Will having a definition and framework that can be tailored or built upon be helpful to future research?

A: Yes, exactly. And keep in mind that the evolution of AI is dependent on the relationship with humans, because AI is going to do what we prompt it to do and what we ask it to do. We must study how we interact with it, because if you're not squeezing AI to its maximum capabilities, then AI will stay at the same level. That's a very interesting characteristic of AI. It is just not what it can do, but what we are able to do with it. We are going to see an explosion of AIs. The potential impact of this technology in society is humongous. By establishing a comprehensive definition and a theoretical framework, this study paves the way for future advancements and a deeper comprehension of AI's role in human society.

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHTS

🔍 'News finds me' mindset leads readers away from political, science news

People who believe the news will find them rather than seeking it out are more likely to choose sports and entertainment stories over more serious topics, according to Bellisario College researchers.

The findings of Chris Skurka, assistant professor of media studies; Mengqi Liao, doctoral candidate; and Homero Gil De Zúñiga, distinguished professor of media studies, were published in the journal *Communication Research*.

To clarify the mechanisms underlying news use behavior online, the

researchers developed a mock news website that resembled the Associated Press's homepage. More than 530 participants were tracked as they perused one of three versions of the site that presented a headline, image and lead for 13 real news articles.

"We started by talking about the importance of everyday citizens being informed and knowledgeable about current affairs," Skurka said. "I think a lot of political scientists and political communication scholars would agree that to stay informed about current affairs, you need to actively follow the news."

🔍 Users less vigilant about misinformation on mobile phones

People process information more efficiently but tend to be less vigilant about misinformation on their mobile phones compared to personal computers.

The Bellisario College research team also found that PC users are more likely to click on malicious links in phishing e-mails. The findings, published in the journal *New Media & Society*, have implications for cybersecurity and point to a need for additional alerts on mobile devices to combat misinformation and warnings on personal computers to combat susceptibility to phishing attempts.

Hard-working professor ends career that made an impact from coast to coast

Some faculty members have a way of making the job look easy, and that almost effortless-looking approach provides one way to summarize Bob Richards' career at Penn State.

Make no mistake, though, Richards worked hard — and made a lasting impact.

Richards, the John and Ann Curley Professor of First Amendment Studies and the longest-tenured faculty member in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, retired from the University effective June 30, 2024, after 36 years of service.

“There is perhaps no faculty member in the history of the Bellisario College who has had a greater impact,” said Dean Marie Hardin. “He joined the program before it officially existed as a college — when it was a school. He worked under every dean it’s had, as a faculty member or administrator. What he has built will last.”

Richards' relationship with Penn State extends nearly 45 years. He earned his bachelor's degree in speech communication (with highest honors) in 1983 and his master's in speech communication, along with a minor in journalism, in 1984 before beginning to build on what was a burgeoning broadcasting career.

Richards was a disc jockey and newscaster in Derby, Connecticut, before college and worked for radio stations in State College as a reporter, public affairs director and news director while a student. His first full-time job after leaving Penn State was with NBC Radio Network News in New York City.

He added a doctoral degree of jurisprudence from Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C., in 1987, and then served as a law clerk in Maryland and a judicial clerk in the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas. In 1988, he returned to Penn State and accepted a one-year teaching contract.

“It seemed like a quick return but even in high school everyone knew what I was going to do in life. My nickname was ‘Professor’ because I liked to teach, and I knew I didn’t want to teach high school kids,” Richards said.



Richards' tenure produced much more than simple longevity, though. He was immensely productive — authoring six books and parts of 16 others along with more than 75 scholarly articles and even presenting amicus briefs to the Supreme Court — and served on a variety of college- and University-level committees.

He created the Pennsylvania Center for the First Amendment. His expertise made him a go-to guest for media covering topics related to free speech and he hosted public affairs programs on the topic for local media outlets. More

than that, the center built a reputation as a resource center and provided education and outreach focused on the First Amendment. Richards also served as a volunteer attorney doing pro bono work for Mid-Penn Legal Services in State College and the Student Press Law Center in Washington, D.C.

During his career Richards was honored on separate occasions by the Bellisario College for his research, teaching and service. He was named a Penn State Teaching Fellow by the Penn State Alumni Association in 2011 and earned the Scripps Howard Foundation's “Teacher of the Year” award in 2007.

Along with his academic prowess, classroom success and collegiality, Richards made an impact as a creator — launching the Penn State Washington Program in 1995 and the Penn State Hollywood Program in 2015.

“I figured I’d be here a while and see where it went. Ultimately, there was never any reason to leave. The University always gave me the flexibility to be creative and entrepreneurial within the framework of higher education,” Richards said. “The Washington Program was the starting point. The University wanted to have a presence there and I had an idea about how it could work.”

What started out as an internship program became a combination of internships and on-location classes. Richards was involved with every aspect of the Washington Program — from finding housing options and classroom space to selecting students and teaching classes.

Award-winning filmmaker, TV writer selected to lead Hollywood Program

An entertainment industry veteran who has been a part of the Penn State Hollywood Program since its inception has been selected to serve as director of the program.

Deepak Sethi, an award-winning filmmaker and television writer, will succeed Robert D. Richards, the founding director of the program. Richards, the John and Ann Curley Professor of First Amendment Studies and the longest-tenured faculty member in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, retired June 30, 2024.

Sethi has taught in the Hollywood Program and worked alongside Richards since the program's start in 2015. An accomplished screenwriter and director, Sethi has taught every student who has come through the program.

"There's no doubt Bob will be missed, but his planning and vision will enable the Penn State Hollywood Program to move seamlessly forward as Deepak Sethi becomes the program's director," said Marie Hardin, dean of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications. "We're excited about the passion and proven success Deepak brings to the position. More importantly, he cares deeply about our students and their success."

Sethi's writing credits include "Apple & Onion," "Family Guy," "Brickleberry" and "Close Enough." He's also worked as a voice actor and stand-up comedian. His 2019 film "Coffee Shop Names," which he wrote and directed, won the ScriptHouse Award during the BFI London Film Festival and a Tribeca X Award at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Sethi's family operated a food company in Canada, and he earned a bachelor's degree in computer science as well as a master's degree in business administration. His passion was writing, though, and a personal blog opened the door to what has become a successful career in entertainment.

He's excited about the opportunity to lead the Hollywood Program after working with Penn State students for years.

"The students are driven and passionate, and there's a community approach they bring to what they do," Sethi said. "It feels like I've become a Penn Stater just by being around them through the years, and finding ways to help more students succeed makes this position really exciting."



PHOTO BY CJS PRODUCTIONS

The start-up program tested his communications skills and creativity. For example, when he read about the University of California acquiring a building in the nation's capital, he figured they might need a tenant for some of that space. So, rather than Penn State investing in its own facility, Richards built a collaborative approach that served the program well for a quarter century.

The model provided proof of concept for a potential Penn State Hollywood Program, and even though Los Angeles was on the other side of the country, starting that effort up was a little easier because of the lessons learned with the Washington Program 20 years earlier.

Each spring 16 students travel to Los Angeles to complete coursework and internships. The program has helped a tight-knit group of alumni in Hollywood grow closer and the opportunities have opened doors for many students to join their ranks after graduation.

Richards, who has lived in Los Angeles since the program started, has done everything from teach classes to schedule meeting space. He's even picked out the Swedish meatballs for board meetings as part of his duties. It often demands a different skillset every day, but he has embraced the work and provided connections for alumni and opportunities for students while enhancing the reputation of the Bellisario College and the University in almost everything he's done.

"I think I'm best at bringing a vision to fruition. There are a lot of people I've met in academia over the years that have all these great ideas, but nothing ever comes of it," Richards said. "If you're going to have great ideas, you have to be willing to put the work in to make them happen."

He's certainly done that, and in retirement he plans to keep working — just with a different focus.

Richards is a member of the Court of Master Sommeliers, and the Society of Wine Educators as a Certified Specialist of Wine. He's written a monthly wine column for State College Magazine for nearly a decade, and he has regularly spent a good deal of time in the Napa Valley outside the academic year.

As a retiree, he can experience wine country during harvest season (September) for the first time, and he's excited about that opportunity.

"The entertainment business interests me, and I'm in Hollywood. The wine business interests me, and I'm in California," Richards said. "It's an exciting time. I attended a podcasting seminar earlier this spring and I just might launch a wine and culinary podcast. We'll see."

Judging by his track record of making visions a reality, Richards might be on his way to again building something special. ♥

Multiple platforms offer filmmaker's latest documentary



Teacher Gloria Jean Merriex with some of her students from Duval Elementary School in East Gainesville, Florida, in 2004.
PHOTO BY THE GAINESVILLE SUN. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Online cable and satellite platforms such as Apple TV, Comcast and DISH Network offer a Penn State professor's latest documentary, "Class of her Own," as part of a distribution deal that began earlier this year.

The feature documentary — written and directed by award-winning filmmaker Boaz Dvir, an associate professor of journalism in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications — tells the story of Gloria Jean Merriex's transformation into a trailblazing teacher who infused her math and reading lessons with music and movement. It is being distributed by Allen Media Group's Freestyle Digital Media.

Additional distribution platforms include Amazon, AT&T U-Verse, Cox, Dish Network, Google Play, Spectrum, Sling TV, Verizon Fios, Xbox and YouTube Movies. By the end of April, the DVD of "Class of Her Own" also will be available.

"Class of Her Own" follows Dvir's "Discovering Gloria," a documentary short that focused on Merriex's teaching techniques. Florida school districts and teacher unions screened "Discovering Gloria." Previewing one of those events, the St.

Augustine Record's Marcia Lane wrote, "How much of an impact can one teacher have on a school? Huge, as filmmaker Boaz Dvir discovered."

"Class of Her Own" focuses on Merriex's journey, which included teaching at Duval Elementary in the economically disadvantaged neighborhood of East Gainesville, Florida, her entire career and rebelling after her school failed its high-stakes state standardized exam. In one year, she led Duval from an F to an A in the testing program.

Along with "Class of Her Own," Dvir, founding director of Penn State's Hammel Family Human Rights Initiative, has produced several impactful documentaries. He made "A Wing and Prayer" for PBS and teamed up with Retro Report to produce "How Special Ops Became Central to the War on Terror" for The New York Times.

"Class of Her Own" was produced by Dvir, Emil Pinnock of Unleashing Giants, and Matthew Einstein of Tradition Pictures. The film is narrated by Tamara Tunie, who portrayed medical examiner Melinda Warner on NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit."

Human Rights Initiative produces free online training about difficult topics for educators

In recent years, the K-12 instruction of difficult topics such as racism and gender has posed mounting challenges for educators around the country. To support them, Penn State's Hammel Family Human Rights Initiative has produced a free, asynchronous, self-paced online module.

Pennsylvania educators who complete "Teaching Difficult Issues," which takes about six hours, will earn six Act 48 hours. In many other states, teachers receive the equivalent in professional development credits by showing their certificate of completion to their administrators.

"We know that educators are struggling to navigate difficult issues," said the initiative's assistant director, Danielle But-

ville, who led the module's creation. "They're unsure if they should lean in and address them or lean away. In response, we've created an online professional learning module to provide support in understanding how to make those 'in the moment' decisions."

The module offers participants strategies to facilitate and engage in planned and unplanned discussions about difficult topics.

This is the initiative's second online module.

The first links trauma-informed professional learning with pedagogy. Its topics range from creating a trauma-informed classroom to paying greater attention to self-care.

Resources, both visual and auditory, guide users through the sections.



Centre Film Festival earns Community Engagement and Scholarship Award



The Centre Film Festival, led by Pearl Gluck, the Donald P. Bellisario Career Advancement Professor and an associate professor of film production, received the 2024 Penn State Award for Community Engagement and Scholarship.

The award recognizes a project that best exemplifies Penn State as an “engaged institution,” which the Kellogg Commission defines as an institution that has redesigned teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetically and productively involved with its communities.

Nominators said the festival has offered impactful outreach to the community. Gluck launched the festival in 2019 with former colleague Curt Chandler on a shoestring budget and has seen it grow to attract top talent to the region. Since then, more than 500 films have been shown with more than 150 filmmakers visiting the region. More than 20 free high school workshops have also been held.

In 2024 — the festival is scheduled Nov. 11-17 — the Centre Film Festival will be recognized by IMDB.

planning to programming to outreach and serving on juries. Collaborations with campuses across the state expand opportunities for students. The festival also features partnerships with local groups such as the Central PA Film Commission, Centre LGBT+, the Borough of State College and the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau’s tourism board.

Films approach a variety of topics such as the lives of indigenous peoples; gender-based discrimination in sports, and the wars in the Ukraine and the Middle East. It also features films made in Pennsylvania.

“The impact of the films and discussion they prompted resonates with participants long past the festival. They also provide novice filmmakers the opportunity to meet and learn from legendary producers and directors,” a nominator said. “For example, legendary Hollywood director and producer (and Penn State alumnus) Gerry Abrams joined the festival to accept a lifetime achievement award in 2023. JJ Abrams, of ‘Star Wars’ fame, attended the festival with his father and met students, faculty and local residents.”

With the festival, nominators said, Gluck has created and sustained an event that’s a point of pride for the region through its community engagement and support for emerging filmmakers. They said it’s an inspiration for budding filmmakers, including those at nearby K-12 schools. And it showcases the region’s historic theaters.

Nominators said Gluck is a filmmaker and arts activist encouraging sometimes difficult but necessary dialogue through her own work. Her films have been featured at festivals such as Cannes Film Festival, Raindance and Tribeca Film Festival, as well as PBS. Her first documentary feature, “Divan” (2004), was a Sundance Institute project and opened theatrically at Film Forum in New York City. Her narrative shorts have won prizes such as Best Actor, Best Film and Best LGBT Short at various festivals. ♥



Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi presents Gerry Abrams with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the 2023 festival.



LISTEN to
Conversations
Podcast Episode 80.

Recipe for Success

There's no secret ingredient for Gabrielle Chappel — just a good bit of curiosity

She's two months or so into a yearlong career mentorship program, an opportunity she earned during a reality TV show with millions of people watching, and Gabrielle Chappel plans to make the most of it.

She's in no hurry, though, because she knows the journey matters more than the destination at this point. Plus, she's not sure where she's going.

Chappel, who won the third season of "Next Level Chef," earned a yearlong mentorship with chefs Gordon Ramsey, Nyesha Arrington and Richard Blais. She'll spend four months working with each chef.

The show was taped late last fall and broadcast with Chappel as the winner in May. So, she got to experience winning twice — once when it happened and later when the news was shared with the world as the show aired. She was watching with her family.

"The first time there was nothing like it. It was just so pure, being able to experience it after all the work involved," said Chappel, who earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and Spanish in 2016. "And the second time it was incredible because I was able to share it with everyone else — and so many people have been so supportive of me."

Chappel's first phone call with Ramsey related to the mentorship happened June 6.

During the time in between the completion of the competition and the start of her yearlong mentoring opportunity, she put together a four-episode YouTube series ("Gabi's Next Course") that she said felt like the culmination of things she loves — duties in front of the camera, researching and cooking, and just exploring avenues and opportunities.

"I'm just curious, and there are so many things that drive my curiosity that it's hard to say what the goal is," she says.

She's mostly trusted her instincts during her career, and it's worked out well.

From starting her career with an advertising firm in Portland, Oregon, to a variety of jobs in New York City around advertising and media producing, she's moved when it felt right. She's invariably grown as a result.

Then, during the pandemic, she decided to attend culinary school and completed a certificate program at the Institute for Culinary Education.

She subsequently grew her presence on social media, and put her culinary skills to use with catering, private parties and more.

There were times when pursuing her passion was the best way to pay the bills, and she struggled at times. Still, her family never questioned her approach, and she trusted her curiosity and intuition.



"My family was always supportive and, honestly, their influence really helped shape that gut feeling I get," Chappel said. "I know the things that interest me. I just want to learn as much as I can. By no means am I at a point of mastery, but I think I am at the point where I can teach myself and share that in a variety of ways."

What's next?

Well, the mentorship opportunity continues until next year and she wants to learn as much as possible from the three chefs. She's ready to embrace different styles of cooking and experiment with different ingredients.

Maybe there's a cookbook in the future, maybe a restaurant someday. Or maybe it's food anthropology, healing foods, herbal medicine or a master's degree.

She just wants to keep learning and exploring, driven by that innate curiosity. Plus, she thinks her freshman year self would be impressed with how things have played out.

"Freshman year Gabi would be like, 'That's what I end up doing? Holy cow, that's cool.'"

She's not done yet, either. ♥



WATCH Gabi's
Next Course.

Award-winning correspondent writes about a more personal battle

An award-winning Penn State alumnus has authored his second book, which focuses on his life as an investigative reporter and front-line war correspondent now fighting a personal battle with terminal brain cancer.

Rod Nordland earned his bachelor's degree in journalism from Penn State in 1972. He started his career at the Philadelphia Inquirer, where he was part of a Pulitzer Prize-winning team honored for news coverage of the Three Mile Island nuclear crisis in 1979. Later in his career, as chief foreign correspondent for Newsweek, he was a finalist in 1983 for the Pulitzer Prize in international reporting.

He most recently served as an international correspondent at large for the New York Times. He was previously the paper's Kabul bureau chief and has worked as a foreign correspondent in more than 150 countries.

While Nordland is no stranger to violent upheaval and witnessing tragedy, an incident in 2019, at the height of India's erratic monsoon season, made those things much more personal. He collapsed during a morning jog, was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed with a brain tumor.

While confined to a hospital bed, Nordland said he found the strength to face personal conflicts. He reconnected with his estranged children and became closer with them than he ever thought possible. He repaired a friendship with a best friend that had been broken for 20 years.

The arrogance and certitude that previously dominated his actions were replaced by a sense of humility and generosity that persisted even after he left the hospital, he said. Nordland's



Rod Nordland, right, reporting on the streets of Baghdad for the New York Times in 2014.

tragedy became, in his own words, “a gift that has enriched my life.”

His latest book, “Waiting for the Monsoon,” was the result. In the 256-page hardcover, published by Harper Collins in March, Nordland shares details and insights about his personal battle. He currently lives in New York City, where he is receiving medical treatment.

Nordland received an Alumni Fellow Award in 1990 and was selected for a Distinguished Alumni Award in 2007. Nordland has earned two George Polk awards, several Overseas Press Club awards and many other honors. He received the 2016 Signet Society Medal at Harvard, where he was a Nieman Fellow. The medal is awarded for “outstanding achievement in the arts” and only rarely given to journalists; previous recipients have included T.S. Eliot and Robert Frost. He previously authored “The Lovers: Afghanistan’s Romeo & Juliet” (Ecco/Harper Collins; New York, 2016).

Alum embraces creative spark to pen short stories



A little spark can often ignite a big fire, and for one Penn State alumnus, some creative sparks have done just that, igniting a fire resulting in nearly three dozen short stories.

Michael Danese earned his bachelor's degree from Penn State in 1977 as a film/TV major and worked more than 30 years as the manager of the video department at a Fortune 200 company.

After Danese retired in 2017, he wanted to continue with an activity that challenged his creativity. He wrote, produced, directed and edited video programs throughout his career, and he got the idea of writing short stories in 2008, prompted by his daughter telling him about a person who escaped from a mental hospital.

He regularly finds inspiration in hypothetical scenarios and everyday situations and turns those into short stories.

“My writing comes from sparks that I may see from my everyday experiences and observations,” said Danese, who grew up in Drexel Hill and now lives in Macungie, Pennsylvania.

Danese said his writing process consists of observing the world around him and turning it into “What If?” scenarios. He

thinks about how situations could have different outcomes.

“I can go months without writing a story, but once I get a spark I can write a story over a couple of days,” Danese said.

Danese said his writing process is sacred because it is a way for him to express his creativity. He will have moments where he may write only an outline, or the story may flow naturally toward completion once he starts typing on his computer.

Once written, Danese shares his stories with his old college roommate, Kevin McCaney, who makes suggestions and identifies any grammatical errors. Danese consistently appreciates how his Penn State connections impact his life, career and now his post-retirement activity.

Jones selected for Alumni Association's Achievement Award

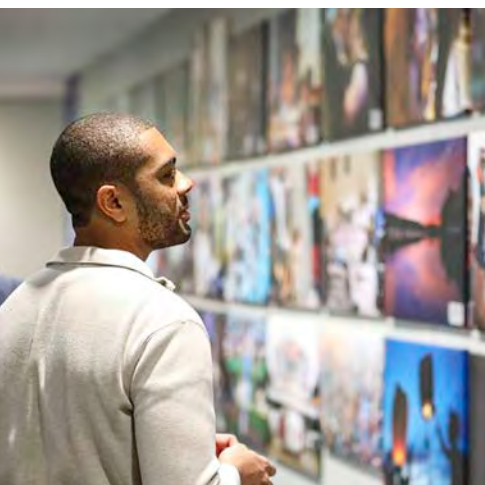
Mikel Jones, vice president of brand and sponsorship communications at Citi, one of the world's leading banking institutions, was among a group of 11 honorees who earned the Alumni Association's Achievement Award this year.

The Alumni Achievement Award recognizes alumni 35 years of age and younger for their extraordinary professional accomplishments. Alumni are nominated by an academic college and invited by the President of the University to return to campus to share their expertise with students, faculty and administrators. They demonstrate to students that Penn State alumni can succeed in exceptional fashion at an early age.

Jones, as part of Citi's Enterprise Services and Public Affairs team, leads public relations campaigns and internal communications for Citi's sponsorships in social causes, sports, entertainment, art and culture.



Mikel Jones with other members of this year's Alumni Achievement Award class.



During a tour of the Bellisario Media Center, Mikel Jones looks at the work of students featured in the photo gallery on the second floor.

Jones, who earned his bachelor's degree in 2015, leads the strategic approach to media coverage for Citi's brand reputation, advertising campaigns, and sponsorships including Citi Field, Global Citizen Festival and the Aston Martin F1 Team. His career highlights include leading Citi's earned media strategy on site at sponsored events like the Paralympic Games in Tokyo and Beijing, the President's Cup in Charlotte, the Ryder Cup in Rome, and the Miami Grand Prix.

Jones has led social media campaigns to show Citi's efforts to help close the racial wealth gap and has met with HBCU students to provide early career advice. He has also been featured on Citi's TikTok account, providing consumer fraud prevention tips with more than 6 million views.

Prior to joining Citi, Jones was on the customer service experience communications team at American Express and the corporate communications team at JetBlue Airways. He began his career as a specialist at the flagship Apple Store in New York City.

At Penn State, he was the director of communications for Lion Ambassadors, where he also met his fiancé, Tara Bendler ('15). He was also a diversity ambassador for the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, a communications captain for the Penn State Dance Marathon and a head lifeguard at McCoy Natatorium.

Busy and productive return visit for Lisa Salters



Alumna Lisa Salters, an award-winning reporter at ESPN and the longest-tenured sideline reporter in "Monday Night Football" history, made a multi-day return visit to the University Park campus last fall.

The visit included a role as the featured speaker during a session of the Penn State Forum, a separate session specifically for

Bellisario College students, a tour of the Bellisario Media Center and the opportunity to watch a Penn State women's basketball game and reconnect with longtime friends.

It was a whirlwind trip that provided positives for all involved.

The Penn State Forum session was one of the most well-attended in years as Salters discussed her career and took questions from the audience.

She was forthright in that session as well as the one with students.

Topics such as career path, daily preparation, interviewing, branding and more were fair game.

And, while Salters ('88) has a visible role, she said "branding" was not something on her to-do list.

"They told us at ESPN that we needed to be on social media for our brand, but I've always been old school and do not have a presence on social channels. My response would be I'm just going to go out and show you my brand."

“

... I'm just going to go out and show you my brand.

”

— Lisa Salters

Verducci honored with Distinguished Alumni Award



President Neeli Bendapudi and Board of Trustees Chairman Matt Schuyler present the Distinguished Alumni Award to Tom Verducci. PHOTO BY STEVE TRESSLER

Alumnus Tom Verducci was one of eight Penn Staters honored this year with the Distinguished Alumni Award, the University's highest honor presented to alumni.

Verducci ranks as one of the most authoritative voices on baseball, with more than three decades of unique achievement across multiple platforms. He serves as a senior writer for Sports Illustrated and an analyst for MLB Network and Fox.

He is the only dedicated baseball writer to be named National Sportswriter of the Year three consecutive years (2014-16). He is a three-time Emmy Award winner, including one for Outstanding Studio Analyst — making him the only person ever to win the award who was not a former player or coach and the only person ever to win Emmys for both reporting and analysis. In his broadcasting role with Fox, he is the only writer ever to call a World Series as a color analyst.

Verducci also is a two-time National Magazine Award finalist and the author of two New York Times best-sellers: "The Yankee Years" and "The Cubs Way: The Zen of Building the Best Team in Baseball and Breaking the Curse."

He is the only Sports Illustrated writer ever to be featured on the magazine's cover, the result of a first-person account of playing with the Toronto Blue Jays in spring training 2005. Verducci's elegant writing has graced the pages of Sports Illustrated since 1993.

His groundbreaking 2002 special report "Steroids in Baseball" earned a National Magazine Award nomination and helped stir congressional involvement and the sport's first testing program for performance-enhancing drugs. An anthology of some of his memorable SI stories, titled "Inside Baseball: The Best of Tom Verducci," was released in 2005. His work also has been featured in "Best American Sports Writing" multiple times and in "Sports Illustrated: Great Baseball Writing."

Before joining Sports Illustrated, Verducci spent 10 years (1983-1993) as a sports reporter for Newsday, serving as its national baseball columnist from 1990-1993. He also had a one-year stint as a sports reporter for Florida Today in Cocoa, Florida, covering the Miami Dolphins.

Verducci can be seen regularly on MLB Network, where he has served as an in-studio and game analyst since the network's debut in 2009, and on Fox, where he has become the rare journalist to serve as a game analyst on national telecasts.

Verducci received the 2012 Dick Schapp Memorial Award for Media Excellence from the Michigan Jewish Sports Foundation, served as a consultant on Ken Burns' documentary "The Tenth Inning," and is a member of the alumni council for the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism at Penn State. ♥

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Thirty-three Penn State communications alumni have earned the Distinguished Alumni Award since its inception in 1951.

- 2024: Tom Verducci ('82)
- 2022: Diane Salvatore ('81)
- 2020: Linda Yaccarino ('85)
- 2020: Tanya Kennedy ('89)
- 2018: Jacob Corman ('93)
- 2018: Hal Sadoff ('86)
- 2018: Roger Williams ('75 MA)
- 2016: Donald R. King ('69)
- 2016: Mary Beth Long ('85)
- 2013: William Jaffe ('61)
- 2009: Todd Blackledge ('83)
- 2007: Rodney Nordland ('72)
- 2005: Jayne Jamison ('78)
- 2005: Alan Pottasch ('49)
- 2003: Paul Levine ('69)
- 2001: Donald P. Bellisario ('61)
- 1998: Carmen Finestra ('71)
- 1998: Marian Coppersmith Barash ('53)
- 1991: Charles Bierbauer ('66, '70g)
- 1989: Sidney Friedman ('42)
- 1986: Gerald W. Abrams ('61)
- 1985: James Jimirro ('58)
- 1985: Richard Smyser ('44)
- 1984: Stanley Lathan ('67)
- 1979: Lawrence Foster ('48)
- 1979: David Jones ('54)
- 1978: Norman Miller ('56)
- 1977: Samuel Vaughn ('51)
- 1976: Adam Smyser ('41)
- 1974: Herbert Nipson ('40)
- 1972: Donald Davis ('42)
- 1969: William Ulerich ('31)
- 1968: John Troan ('39)

Alum's first book offers 'street level' insights, solutions to gun violence

BY JONATHAN F. MCVERRY ('05)



While national coverage of gun violence often zeroes in on statistics and widespread impact, journalist Josiah Bates saw something different when reporting on the issue at the community level. The Penn State alumnus found personal stories, real-world actions and, most importantly, solutions.

Bates is a 2015 broadcast journalism graduate of the Bellisario College. He wrote "In These Streets," a book that reflects on his coverage of the gun violence epidemic and chronicles his journey to several U.S. cities interviewing activists, experts, perpetrators and victims. His book paints a unique picture of the violence plaguing the United States from the "street level," with stories that aim to redefine the causes of the issue and the struggles to combat it.

"From a national perspective, it's very difficult to understand what's happening on the ground," Bates said. "There's a big difference between being in a community board meeting versus just talking to the people who were there. That shoe leather, eye-level reporting is where you see for yourself what's happening."

Starting out at Penn State, Bates wanted to be a sports reporter. However, current events at the time, including the murder of Trayvon Martin and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, changed that.

One of Bates' professors, Knight Chair in Sports Journalism and Society John Affleck, became a go-to resource while Bates went through this career change, and he continues to be a mentor today.

According to Affleck, "In These Streets" is an important book that captures both the "human stories and the impact this plague has on our society." He said that Bates' transition from his native Brooklyn to State College, and seeing the stark culture differences between the two locations, likely impacted his decision to switch from sports to news coverage.

"I think when you're 19, you don't know what you don't know in terms of what goes into certain areas like production, sports or news," Affleck said. "I think in Josiah's case, he saw the importance of what he could do, and based on his life and his reporting, he is in the place he needs to be."

Affleck said that one of the most gratifying parts of being a faculty member is building relationships with students and watching them succeed after graduation. He said that being a "sounding board" is important and he's proud to have played a part in Bates' success.

AWARD

Alumni Society Board

This year's award winners were (from left): Melissa Conrad ('15), social impact manager, Zillow, Emerging Professional; Jerry Schwartz ('77), retired national writer/editor, The Associated Press, Outstanding Alumni; Mila Sanina, assistant teaching professor, Excellence in Teaching; R. Thomas Berner ('71, '74 MA), professor emeritus, Alumni Achievement; and Cate Barron, retired president, PA Media Group, Douglas A. Anderson Communications Contributor.



Bates credited Affleck and other Bellisario College faculty members like Mike Poorman, lecturer and director of alumni relations in the Bellisario College, and Steve Kraycik, associate teaching professor and director of student television, for setting a path for success in journalism.

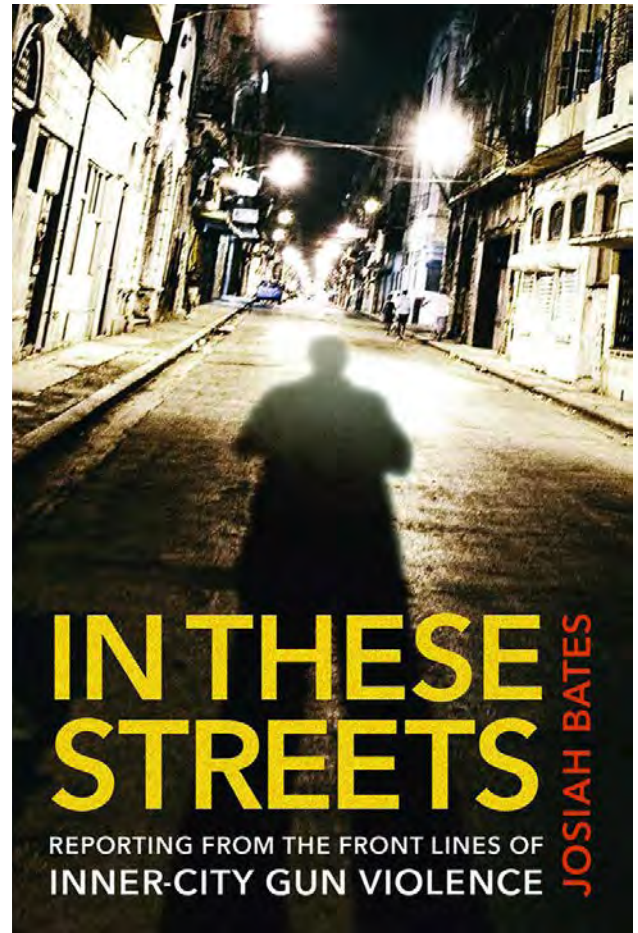
“I had some really great professors,” Bates said. “I learned so much from them. It was just a great experience.”

A few years after Bates’ graduation, the chaos of COVID-19 and multiple incidents of social unrest jolted the rate of gun violence in the United States.

“In These Streets” unearths a more complicated situation, which continues in many parts of the country today. Bates’ interviews reveal stories of people dealing with poverty, reacting to policy and trying to get by in unsafe communities.

He spent time in Atlanta, Baltimore, New York City, Washington, D.C., and Youngstown, Ohio. Throughout the book, Bates follows an activist who does intervention work for a violence prevention organization in Bates’ hometown of Brooklyn, New York. The man’s journey from poverty to prison to rehabilitation to community work symbolizes the spirit Bates hopes will emerge for readers when reading the book.

“The goal isn’t to fear monger,” he said. “Half of the book is about solutions. There are things we can do and apply to this situation.”



WINNERS



Ad/PR Network Board

This year’s award winners were (from left): Adam Pietrala ('04), partner, FleishmanHillard, Outstanding Alumni-Public Relations; T.J. Brightman ('91), senior vice president/chief revenue officer, Baltimore Orioles; and Kelly Gallagher ('14), vice president, Ketchum, Outstanding Alumni-Advertising.

The Page Center, Larry Foster's 'lighthouse,' celebrates 20 years

BY JONATHAN F. MCVERRY ('05)



In 2004, the late great Larry Foster ('48 Journ) had an idea for a research center at the Bellisario College. He hoped it would become a “lighthouse” for studying and promoting high standards and ethical behavior in business and public communication. Two decades later, Foster’s lighthouse still shines.

The Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication is celebrating 20 years of enhancing ethics and responsibility in all areas of public communication. The Center’s mission is a testament to Foster’s vision. In a time when the internet was taking shape and social media was on the horizon, he saw a need to strengthen the foundation of trust and truth in public communication. Boy, was he right about that?

What started as six funded research projects addressing ethical challenges of public communication has blossomed into 270 Center-funded projects covering a wide range of topics, including artificial intelligence, corporate social advocacy, digital ethics, sustainability and more. More than \$1 million in research funding has supported the work of more than 350 scholars from around the world. Outcomes from these projects have been published in prestigious academic journals and presented at national and international conferences.

There’s more. The Page Center offers hugely popular online training modules that have attracted more than 30,000 students from hundreds of colleges. It conducts an annual awards event that has honored and featured renowned communicators like Mary Barra, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Gwen Ifill, and Tom Kean Sr. The Center supports graduate student work and multi-institutional collaborations. It also maintains an archive of Arthur W. Page’s speeches and writings, and a collection of oral histories from leading communicators.

“The Page Center is a well-known commodity and a real jewel for the college,” said Marie Hardin, dean of the Bellisario College. “It’s incredibly important to us, and I would also argue it’s incredibly important to mass communication education.”

It all started with a phone call.

“It was a classic call on the phone from Larry,” said Doug Anderson, who was dean of the Bellisario College when the Page Center was founded. “Larry said, ‘Oh, by the way I’ve got an idea to bounce off you guys,’ and he knew exactly where he wanted this thing to go.”

On Sept. 15, 2004, Foster brought friends and fellow public relations legends Ed Block, former senior vice president of public relations at AT&T, and Jack Koten, senior vice president of corporate communications at Ameritech, to the University Park campus for the Page Center’s inaugural meeting. They met Anderson and founding Center director John Nichols in the Carnegie Building conference room. That pairing of professional expertise and academic ingenuity still defines the Center’s work today – and it was all part of Foster’s plan.



A NATURAL FIT

Nichols, professor emeritus at the Bellisario College, joined the faculty in 1977. He said the college's emphasis on ethics and responsibility dates to its earliest days. It got a boost in the late 1950s when faculty members like Gene Goodwin, director of what was then Penn State's School of Journalism, transformed journalism education at the University.

"Gene and other influential people had a vision that teaching journalism needed to be more socially responsible," Nichols said. "It wasn't just preparing journalists with vocational skills, but giving them ethical and social responsibility."

So, he added, "Larry's idea was consistent with the deep roots of the college. He wanted to protect integrity in communications, and he knew his alma mater was going to be the means to that particular end."

In 2004, Foster and his wife, Ellen ('49 A&L), provided the \$300,000 gift that launched the Page Center. With corporate support, lobbied by Foster, from AT&T, Johnson & Johnson, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and others, an endowment was created that set the Center up for the long term.

"The endowment grew quickly to \$4 million, and keep in mind that those first few years were tough economic times," Anderson said. "Larry was responsible for raising every penny. That level of fundraising was incredible given the time."

Reflecting on the Center's progress over the years, Ellen Foster said, "It warms my heart that the Center has found a lasting home at Penn State."

She added, "It is personally gratifying that the legacy of Arthur W. Page and Robert Wood Johnson lives on due to the hard work and foresight of my late husband Larry Foster, Jack Koten and Ed Block. They had the foresight to follow a vision and establish the Arthur W. Page Center."



WHY ARTHUR W. PAGE?

Foster was a public relations legend. Block and Koten were, too. However, they thought so highly of Page that they named the Center after him as "a means to preserve the Page legacy and promote his insightful approach to corporate communications and effective leadership."

From 1927 to 1947, Page was the vice president for public relations at AT&T. As the first person to hold an executive-level public relations position at a major corporation, he is often credited for establishing the modern practice of corporate public relations.

"When it came to ethics and responsibility, Page was the guy," Anderson said. "They wanted to pay tribute to him."

Page was an educator, publisher and adviser to several U.S. presidents. His name has become synonymous with public communication at the highest levels of the corporate world. He was not, however, a Penn State alumnus, nor was he a major benefactor of the University.

Block, Foster and Koten were heavily involved in the Arthur W. Page Society, an association for senior communication leaders founded in 1983, which sometimes partners with the Center but functions separately. Both entities apply the Page Principles in what they do. Penned by Koten, the principles are seven values based on Page's writings, speeches and interviews that represent the beliefs he held over his long career.

"The foundation of the Center was built on the Page Principles," Hardin said. The initial version of the principles is printed on the wall of the Page Center's office in the Carnegie Building. They are the driving force of many of its education, research and outreach initiatives.

The legacy of Robert Wood Johnson is also an important piece of the Page Center. The Johnson & Johnson credo is posted on the Page Center conference room wall. Like Page, Johnson was a strong and visible advocate of responsible corporate behavior. Recipients of Page Center grants are known as Page/Johnson Legacy Scholars.

"Larry was obsessed with the Page Principles and the Johnson credo," Nichols said. "In fact, one of the earliest projects we did with our Legacy Scholars was on codes of ethics and credos."

PASSING THE TORCH

Foster died in 2013, but he masterfully laid the groundwork to keep the Page Center thriving.

"The Page Center would not be what it is today without a visionary founder like Larry putting the resources in place," Hardin said. "He also knew when it was time to step away ... but nobody was going to fill Larry's shoes."

Luckily, the Page Center had an established advisory board to help with the transition. The board today consists of 18 active and retired leaders in academia, advertising, corporate communication, education, journalism, and public relations.

"What I love about the board is that we still have people who knew and worked with Larry, and we also have new, fresh voices," Hardin said. "There is a mutual appreciation of the value each person brings to that board. There's still an institutional memory that I think is very important. I think strong institutional memory can't be overvalued."

Despite differing backgrounds and work experience, each board member shares a commitment to integrity that crosses all disciplines and industries. It's led by board chair Bill Nielsen. Like Foster, Nielsen served as the head of communications at Johnson & Johnson. In July, Michael Sneed, who retired as CCO of the J&J in 2022, joined the Center's board.

Since 2015, Nielsen has been a leading advocate for the Center. “In many ways, Bill Nielsen has been the keeper of Larry’s lighthouse since joining the Page Center,” said Denise Bortree, Page Center director. “So many of us help carry the torch that Larry passed down, but we wouldn’t be able to hold the torch nearly as high without Bill’s leadership, mentorship and support.”



NEW DIRECTIONS

When Hardin was named dean of the Bellisario College in 2014, she needed to find a new director for the Page Center. Another torch had to be passed. According to Hardin, the first step was finding “someone with great ideas, fresh eyes, passion and dedication” to lead.

“That person was Denise Bortree from day one,” she said. At the time, Bortree was an associate professor who was familiar with the Page Center as a scholar. Today, she is the associate dean of academic affairs at the Bellisario College and celebrating her tenth year as director of the Center.

“I am so appreciative of what Denise has done,” Nichols said. “It’s personally satisfying to me to see something that I had a hand in launching do so well thanks to people like Denise.”

Bortree, who had been funded several times before becoming director, has worked hard to broaden the Center’s impact. This included expanding the breadth of research and also strengthening the connection to the Bellisario College. Today, six faculty members from the college serve a senior research fellow role at the Center.

“By expanding the senior research fellows, we got Bellisario College faculty more engaged,” she said. “Other ideas were adding alumni to the advisory board and, of course, bringing [associate professor of advertising/public relations] Holly Overton on as the Center’s research director.”

“

At its core, the Page Center is innovative and timely research by scholars.

”

– Denise Bortree

Fellows receive annual support to research ethics and present their work. Some also lead research calls, which is the Center’s primary activity. Each year, the Center solicits proposals for research ideas.

What started as “open calls,” which the Center still occasionally offers, has become calls that are focused on specific topics. Scholars submit their ideas, and a few are chosen for funding. This year, the Center is funding 17 studies in three topics: professional ethics training, academic-professional collaborations and theory in public communication. Past topics include digital analytics, prosocial communication and sustainability.

“At its core, the Page Center is innovative and timely research by scholars,” Bortree said. “It’s how we make an impact and it’s what we mean when we say ‘enhance ethics and responsibility’ in our mission.”

Results are shared in several ways, including the Page Center blog, newsletter, presentations, social media and an annual Insights Report that is a collection of takeaways from the past year’s research.

As it enters its third decade, the Page Center is an international leader in public communication. Thanks to Foster, it has the groundwork and reputation for lasting impact on ethics awareness, education, training and practice.

In 2004, Foster called the Page Center “one of the most important developments in PR education.” Today, his lighthouse continues to shine bright and guide today’s communicators through ever more turbulent seas. Thanks to Foster’s advocacy and vision, the Page Center has the foundation to shine for many more years to come. ♥





Ursula Burns



Dr. Sanjay Gupta




Kelly McGinnis

Honorees at 2024 Page Center Awards: Be informed. Be authentic. Speak up.

The Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication honored Ursula Burns, chairwoman of Teneo Holdings; Sanjay Gupta, chief medical correspondent for CNN; and Kelly McGinnis, chief communications officer of Levi Strauss & Co. at its eighth annual Page Center Awards. The event, which streamed online in March, was a special program that honored exemplary individuals for their commitment to ethical communication and leadership.

The three honorees join 22 past recipients in a group of remarkable leaders representing business, journalism, public relations and other areas of public communication. Once again, Bill Nielsen, former head of communications at Johnson & Johnson, and Marie Hardin, dean of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, hosted the event. Hundreds watched the annual program, which was free and open to the public.



WATCH the entire 2024 Page Center Awards and bonus content from the event on the Page Center's YouTube channel.

“We must apply our values to push forward and rebuild trust,” said Nielsen, the chair of the Page Center advisory board. “Ursula Burns, Dr. Sanjay Gupta and Kelly McGinnis are iconic individuals who are richly deserving of public trust. Let’s apply their high standards so we too can deserve and restore trust at this critical moment in history.”

Burns joined Page Center board member and executive-in-residence at the College of Charleston Tom Martin to open the Q&A portion of the event with a discussion about identity and authenticity. Burns talked about the power of compromise and how her mother was the foundation to her success. Giving advice to those starting their careers, Burns said the secret is to speak up.

She added that even though she expects everyone to be open and ready to share their authentic selves, many don’t and, in some

ways, that makes it a superpower.

“I am informed. I am studying and listening,” Burns said. “And then I am not at all shy when someone wants to hear my opinion ... or [when] they don’t want to hear it.”

After Burns’ Q&A, Ellyn Fisher, center board member, senior vice president of marketing and communications of the Ad Council and Penn State alumna, interviewed McGinnis. Their discussion focused on advocacy and activism in corporate communication, and how those choices are made. McGinnis said creating an open and welcoming work atmosphere helps every level of employee thrive.

“We know we’ll have a better business if we have a diverse business,” she said. “So, that makes us create a space where people can bring their authentic selves to work.”

She added that advocacy is about responsibly making a positive impact on society. McGinnis suggested that students find shared purpose with their line of work and the companies they work for and support.

Last, Nielsen interviewed Gupta, who opened the segment with five principles he said he hopes will help young communicators share facts and combat misinformation: Be humble. Learn how to communicate the message. Read everything. Appreciate that some things are truly novel. Lean into uncertainty.

“Humans are not good at experiencing things that are novel,” Gupta said. “It’s important to be as informed as can be [and] try to put things in context.”

Gupta also shared thoughts on adapting to the challenges of artificial intelligence and prioritizing mental health — particularly for college-age students.

“Take care of yourself,” he said. “Mental health is just as important as physical health.”

This year’s program was the fourth time the Page Center Awards event was streamed online. The namesake of the award, the late Larry Foster (’48), was a distinguished Penn State alumnus and founder of the Page Center. The annual program was created to honor communicators who share in Foster’s vision. ♥

HONOR ROLL

Our alumni and friends made 509 gifts totaling \$4,918,006 during the period from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, to support the Bellisario College's people and programs. The Honor Roll recognizes those who made gifts of at least \$100 during the fiscal year.

DEAN'S CIRCLE

(Minimum \$2,500)

Ellis M. and Lynn Castle Abramson
Estate of Rev. Lavonne Althouse
John R. Affleck and Jessica Ancker
Douglas A. and Claudia Anderson
Robert P. Barbarowicz
Roger Bolton and Lynne Melillo Bolton
Benjamin A. Bronstein
Marc A. and Amy L. Brownstein
Catherine A. and Robert S. Buday
Warren R. Carmichael
Steven M. and Julie Schlanger Clemens
Dana Cohen
Jeffrey M. and Kathy L. Cohen
Michael Cohen
Jane Lendvay Conley and David N. Conley
John J. and Ann C. Curley
Robin A. Deacle
John A. and Janet M. Dillon
Douglas M. Eroh
The ESS Group, Inc.
Elizabeth A. Fetter
Jeffrey H. Frank
Beth N. Garber-Fie
Estate of Jennifer A. Gottlieb
Victor H. and Dena Lipson Hammel
Marie Hardin and Jerry Kammer
Edward Harnaga
Michelle and Patrick Hillmeyer
Graceann Migliaccio and John Hiron
Bridget D. Hughes
Jeffrey W. and Nancy S. Hunt
Jennifer P. and Kenneth W. Irvin
Jay R. Jackson
James P. Jimirro and Ajchara Kaewthep Johnson & Johnson
David R. and Mary Lee Lauffer Jones
Stevens J. and Diane Kohn Kasselmann
Tyler Kleinle
Bradley J. Korman and Pamela Cowan Korman
Steve Lipin
Michael R. and Amanda L. Lockwood
Anne M. Lusk
Michael E. and Patti Marcus
Matt Neale
Willard D. and Doris H. Nielsen
Thomas G. and Edith Riggins Ortenberg
Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters
Pfizer Inc.
Princeton Area Community Fdn., Inc.

Eric W. and Luisa M. Rabe
Richard M. and Rayna K. Ravitz
Raymond and Deborah Rubinow Rosen
Alan C. and Rungnapa Routh
Richard C. and Sarah Russo
Vincent and Wendy J. Sadusky
Neil H. and Jennifer L. Seidman
Barry D. and Carol Shapiro
David W. Skidmore
Shenavian Smith
Tara L. Smith and Daniel L. Smith
Jacqueline Jamieson-Szafara and Steven J. Szafara
Lauren M. Tilstra
Barry C. and Marylouise M. Uhlig
Thomas M. and Kirsten Verducci
William Randolph Hearst Fdn.
Carolyn Y. Xu
Randolph S. Yanoshak

DEAN'S ASSOCIATES

(\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Ronald L. Balasco
Lisa M. and Stephen Banco
John Q. Beauge
R. Thomas and Paulette Berner
Irwin H. and Laura E. Brenner
Estate of Walter J. Broschious
Paul J. and Jennefer L. Clifford
Philip R. and Joan C. Currie
Stanley E. and Ann H. Degler
Gene C. Foreman
Ellen Miller Foster
Thomas A. and Ellen Vesey Gailey
Robert L. and Kathleen M. Gavazzi
Xueyong Guan
Gregory W. and Deborah J. Guise
Tara Dugan Haplea and Seth S. Haplea
Brian M. and Dale Healy
Mark A. Illfelder
Marjorie Schenck Jeney
Ronald R. Kolb
George C. and Nancy Akeley Lewis
Ann Marie Major
William and Catherine A. Margaritis
Robert P. and Marylou Miller Martin
Lauren Meyer
Norman C. and Mollie Miller
Barry D. Mordis
David J. and Jodie L. Morris
Gerald K. and Mary Fae Morrison
Andrew Norman

Colette M. Rodger
Marissa D. Rosen
Steve J. and Eleanore Coutin Rosen
Paul K. and Deborah Popkin Rudoy
Lorraine A. Ryan
Stacey R. Shapiro
Seth A. Silverstein
Kathleen Kirsch Smith and Ralph Smith
Alexander S. and Nancy N. Williams Ward
Elliott W. and Susan Weinstein
James R. Wiggins and Christine V. Fleming
David S. and Jamie D. Yadgaroff

COMMUNICATIONS PARTNERS

(\$500 to \$999)

Mark D. Ashenfelter
Linda C. Belfus
Mark A. and Diane T. Bomberger
Brian J. and Katelyn D. Carr
Teresa Villa Cook
Maria Bodine Desautelle and William P. Desautelle, Jr.
Stanley M. and Susan Butz Ellis
Carole L. Feldman
Carmen J. and Antonia Finestra
Barry J. Fry
William J. Hackett
Kelly J. Hainer
Daniel M. Hartman
Karen P. Hockstein
Stephen and Pamela Kraycik
Cheryl A. Levkoff
Kirsten L. Lloyd
Jose H. Lugaro
Lisa Haney Lydon and Christopher Lydon
Arthur P. and Marjorie L. Miller
Michael G. Missanelli
Anthony A. and Moradeyo O. Olorunnisola
Robert E. Ostrander
Kimberly E. Mehle and Douglas C. Pratt
Betty J. Ramos
Richard J. and Stephanie Vuto Rapp
Pamela A. Reasner and Mark R. Cutkosky
Lisa Reyes
Jarred L. Romesburg
Caitlin K. Rossmann
Dyann Mowatt Roth
Benjamin S. Rupp

Estate of Robin Ward Savage
Paul A. Seltman
Brian A. Shoenfelt
Stewart H. and Karen Stabley
Susan Tague
Lesley Troan
Sharonah Volkowitz
Christopher C. Wheeler
Jeffrey A. and Jodi H. Wiseman
Patrice Bradley Zdeb and
S. Charles Zdeb

CARNEGIE CLUB

(\$250 to \$499)

Matthew P. Brown
Robert W. Capo
Clifton W. Colmon
Pamela A. Cook and Paul Gietzel
Monica J. Cooney
Pearl Gluck
Carol R. Gosser
Catherine D. Greenland
Scott F. and Laura K. Horner
Marilyn Rinker Jennerjohn
Robert A. Junas
Elizabeth Kahn
Jeffrey D. Klein
Suzanne K. Krane
Steven B. and Lorraine Lampert
Wendy L. Lichtenstein
Michael J. and Stephanie J. Liebowitz
Scott T. Love
Abby Mayer
Andrea E. Moy
Linda Caye Murphy
Megan E. Myers
Amanda and Michael B. Oey
Tim J. Panaccio
Michael S. Poorman
Alice W. Pope
Maureen Quinn
J. Ford and Mary S. Risley
Ronald G. Smith
Joanne Borrelli Steller
Robert J. Strang, III
Christopher M. Stroz
Tom N. and Raina Rose Tagle
Jeremiah A. Taub
A. Phillip and Mary A. Zimmer

CENTURY CLUB

(\$100 to \$249)

Joseph B. Adamoli
Madelyn E. Aiken
Erin Mahoney and David L. Alderfer
Tanya M. Ali
Johanna L. Altland
Mark E. and Bernedette R. Andersen
Ann T. Annarella
Anonymous
Michelle A. and James Antonelli

Eugene A., III and Alison Aucott
Steven C. Auerweck
Brad R. Bailey
Robert E. and Martha Gingras Baisch
Rishav Banerjee
Sarah A. Banicky
Keith G. Barnes
Gabrielle R. Barone
George L. and Deandra F. Barron
Michael J. and Diane C. Bauhof
Cheryl L. and David J. Berkof
Marvin S. and Darla V. Berkowitz
Nancy H. Berman
Karen M. Bernardo
Stephen R. Bertolet
Jonathan R. and Maria Bickel
Kathryn L. Blum
Madison P. Brady
Felicia D. Bray
Meredith B. Jacobs and
Gary M. Buchalter
Patrick J. Bunting
Ronald P. Burns
Andrew R. Calvin
Morrigan Calvin
Amy Andryszak Campbell
Kathleen J. Canavan
Stephen I. and Laurie P. Capin
Alexandra Cavaliere
Stuart H. Chamberlain
Angelo S. Chan-Meiner and
Mark Meiner
Julia Efthymiou Chipman
Robyn Richmond Chotiner
Anne Simmons Chubb and
Kenneth A. Chubb
Mollie and Matthew D. Colavita
Ashley N. Conklin
Russell L. Conklin
Lauren M. Connolly
Jessica C. Cook
Vicki Schneider Cousley
Michael R. Cowper
Bradley M. Cox
Michael R. Craven and Karen M. Buzby
Amy G. Crosswait
Carlyn Sipes Crout
Charles W. Curley
Cydney Daly
Meredith A. D'Ambrisi
Amy L. Davis
Michael J. and Hillary Delone
Kristi Depaul
Nicole M. Di Antonio
William DiFilippo
James T. DiMarco
Kailene A. Dolan
James P. and Julia A. Donnelly
Amy Strauss Downey and Bill H. Downey
Elizabeth A. Downey
Sarah Doyle
Colleen P. and Jens K. Duerr
Marie Klein Dunkle
Julie Dunlap

Bernadette E. and John A. Dunn
Brian J. Ellis
Gary C. Ezard
Lori Grasso Falcone
Donna Falvo
Marilyn S. and James J. Farley
Cori and Bill Fedyna
Jill Feldon Lanouette
Elizabeth M. Ferrari
Jaime L. Fettrow
Daniel E. Finer
Melanie J. and Christopher T. Finnigan
Samuel F. Fiotti
Richard M. Frank
Sita Frederick
Mark A. and Stephanie French
Michael A. Fuoco
Stephen J. and Jodi M. Furlong
Kevin M. Gallagher
Samuel R. Gett, Jr.
Lynne M. Getz
Herman J. and Judith Jones Gibb
Michael G. and Michelle Gibbons
J. Reed Gidez
Christopher P. Gilbert
Timothy D. Gilbert
Arthur W. Gillingham
Emma T. Goodson
Richard J. and Kristine A. Gosnell
Patricia A. and Richard H. Graswick
Gary J. Gray and Kathleen M. O'Toole
Arnold Gross
Ira N. and Susan Greenbaum Gross
Marjorie Jarcho Gross and
Robert A. Gross, M.D.
Erika K. Grossman and
Claire Psarouthakis
Gregory M. Gurev
Carol E. Hagedorn
Frank S. Halvonik, Jr.
Bonita Hamorsky
Kathleen E. Shaughnessy
Laurie Allen Harding
Amanda B. and
Stephen J. Harrington, Jr.
Ethan G. Harris
Merris W. Harvey
Thomas A. and Joy A. Harvey
Emily Hauch
Sally A. Heffentreyer
Heather A. Heigele
Christian G. Heilman
Carl H. Heller
Isabelle A. Helmich
Susan Henderson
Michele R. and Jason J. Herron
Chad W. Hershberger
Leonard F. Herzog
Joseph and Michelle Hickey
Elissa K. Hill
Gregory G. and Amanda S. Hill
Vernell E. Hill
Jeffrey C. Hills
Peter W. Hirsch

Jack R. Hirsh
Guy A. Hobson
Penelope and
Leslie E. Hoeltzel
Julian P. Hoffman
Leslie Levin Hoffman
Amanda Hofmockel
Thomas V. and Cheryl Huet
Kathleen Lyon Hull
Jordan D. and
Jeannine M. Hyman
Kate L. Iserson
Matt Jackson
Stacy N. Lloyd
Ellen Jentz
Hilary Mayall Jetty
Jewish Federation of
Greater Pittsburgh
Edmund F. Joella
Gregory P. and
Donna M. John
Gloria A. Johnson
Kathy Mayo Johnson
Richard W. and
Ann M. Jones
Lindsay M. Jordan
Mary Bolich Joyce and
Robert E. Joyce
Jessica Kartalija and
Brian M. Anecharico
Glenn N. Kaup
Brenda A. Kelly
Cristin M. Kelly
Roberta G. and
Walter G. Kelly
Shannon Kennan
Matthew S. Kincak
E. Sanford and
Marsha C. King
Jeffrey J. Klick
Karen E. Kline
Deborah M. Klink
Roberta L. Knapp
Derek W. Koffel
Olivia Korman
Michelle L. Kozubal
Allan P. and Linda S. Kramer
Douglas A. Krech
Cathy S. Kress
The late John J. Kryzak
Nanci Astwood Kryzak
Stephanie L. Kuhl
Lois Kunkle
Adriana Lacy
Tracy L. Langkilde
Phillip B. Latinski
Diane S. Lazar
Jody L. and
Michael S. Lazorcik
Christopher J. and
Sabrina Landis Liller
Mark X. Lima
Michelle Lin
Nicholas J. Lonetti
Vincent A. Loss

Marianne Tropp and
Christopher P. Loughner
Alan Luxenberg
Karen and Myron Lylo
Mary MacLaren
Madeliene M. Maggs
Madalyn P. Mako
Tony D. and
Lindsey B. Mancuso
Teri Mancuso
Julie and Stanley Maoury
Michele Marchetti and
Ryan D. Jones
Nadine Marques Cooke
Joseph A. Martellaro
Ebony D. Martin
Jodie Hough Martinson and
David Martinson
Sara E. Matulonis
R. Ray McAllister
T. Douglas and
Nora Jane McDonald
Joanne C. McLaughlin
Marcos A. and
Zoila K. Mendell
Gerald D. Micco
Walter T. Middlebrook
Gary J. Mihoces and
Susan J. Reimer
Robert S. Miller
Sean M. and
Marjorie S. Miller
Chad M. and
Laura J. Mitchell
Lillian A. and
Joseph J. Mittleman
Geoffrey M. Mosher
Claudia Gruenwald Mosso
John G. and
Susan Ruefle Motycki
Michael J. Moyle
Erin R. Murray
Jeffrey T. and
Julia M. Nelson
My Linh Nguyen
Sayaka Ninomiya
Thomas J. O'Brien
Lynn B. Osgood
Amanda Low and
Ryan M. Owen
Patricia A. Panzera
Marc Parich
Shaheen Pasha and
Suleman A. Din
Steven L. Patterson
George G. Peck
Brenda A. Penderville
Jean Allen Petersen
Susan J. Petix-McNeeley
Kira J. Petro
Gayle E. and Sean Petty
Audrey and
Lawrence Phelan
Linda L. Phillips
William G. Phippen
Jennifer Hofmann Pines

Emily Pirt
David N. and
Jean R. Plessett
Bryant M. Powell
William I. Price
Madeline G. Pryor
Marianne T. and
Dennis J. Puhalla
John M. Rafacz
Monica M. Rakoczy
Haley A. S. and
Geoffrey W. Rappoldt
Andrew H. Richards
Lawrence W. and
Mary E. Richardson
Aaron A. Rill
Barbara A. Ritchey
Paul and
Linda Pavian Roberts
Cheryl R. Roesch
Samuel V. and Mary Rogers
Andrew M. Rose
Benjamin K. and
Shari E. Rose
Michelle D. and
William L. Ross
Craig A. Rothenberg
David N. Ruderman
Caitlin J. Rush
Jacqueline S. Ruth
Megan C. and
Mark P. Ruzomberka
Leonard M. Sachetti
Jennifer Sacks
Steven W. and
Susan D. Sampsell
Benita A. Silverberg
Maureen Piccotti Sangiorgio
and James Sangiorgio
Laura Santora
Karin E. Satrom
Thomas F. Schaffner
Lisa A. Schroeder
Esther L. Schwartz
Jerrold A. Schwartz and
Nina B. Ovary
Donna Getchen Schwoebel
and Jeffrey J. Schwoebel
Mary Jane Slifer Scott
Allen Shapiro
Gerald J. Sheard
Hampton N. and
Rebecca D. Shirer
David Sidore
Stuart R. Silver
Susan A. Silversmith
Mark Sirota
Elizabeth K. Rosto
Dillon M. Smith and
Kelsey E. Smyth
Daniel S. and
Stephanie K. Solomon
Anthony J. Spickler
Bernard M. Steber
Rachel E. Steinberg
Gloria Kay Stephens

Thomas J. and
Donna M. Stewart
Kathryn Brazel Stickle
Melissa Stone Mangham
Maggie R. Sullivan
Matthew J. Sullivan
Karen M. Sweeney
Debra L. Edge
Steven R. and Lori L. Trapani
Michael K. Trobich
Bjorn Trowery
Richard R., Jr. and
Esther L. Van O'Linda
Dana B. Vas Nunes
Michael J. and
Joann Hanley Vogel
Christine M. and
James S. Vrentas
Jennifer Vrentas
Grace K. Waldren
William R. and
Linda J. Wallace
Lauren E. and Aaron Walsh
Thomas P. Waring
Robert S. Wechsler
Jolie A. Wehrung
Genny M. and
Michael P. Willis
Barbara Mercner Witherow
Bruce B. and Mary E. Wood
Rodnell E. and
Heidi A.C. Workman
Allison K. Wulfhorst
Mona Signorino Wunderlich
Holly A. Semanchick
Robert M. and
Elizabeth Yingling
Jeanne M. Yocum
Bradley C. Young
Ralph E., Jr. and
LouAnn Zeigler
Michael D. and
Shannon G. Zellmer
Tanner D. Ziack

THANK YOU DONORS

\$1.7 MILLION
of scholarships awarded
to 403 Bellisario College
students in 2023-24!

University trustee steps forward with \$1 million estate gift

Inspired by the prospect of coupling her ongoing service with new resources to empower students, Penn State Board of Trustees member Mary Lee Schneider and her husband, Edward Flam, have stepped forward with an estate commitment of \$1 million to support the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications. Once realized, the endowed Schneider-Flam Family Excellence Fund will offer an annual income, in perpetuity, for the college's dean to promote excellence, competitiveness, innovation and accessibility.

"We are grateful for the commitment Mary Lee has demonstrated as a member of the Board of Trustees," said Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi. "And now, she and her family are adding to their support of the University with long-term philanthropic support that will foster continued innovation and drive forward progress on strategic priorities and initiatives in the Bellisario College of Communications."

"A significant gift to Penn State was always a part of our estate planning strategy," Schneider said. "Our challenge was to identify the right timing and the right vehicle to provide the maximum benefit to the University. Working with the Division of Development and Alumni Relations, we found a way to structure the gift to get this balance just right. Having been through this process, I'd encourage other potential donors to do this: reach out to explore the various options and mechanisms for giving. There are ways to maximize your support for Penn State while doing it in the time frame and in the manner that feels most comfortable to you."

As a member of the Mount Nittany Society, Schneider has already established a substantial philanthropic legacy at the University. The Bellisario College of Communications has been the focus of much of the Schneider-Flam family's giving, including two Trustee Scholarships and an Open Doors Scholarship, as well as support for the CommVentures Fund, the Bellisario Media Center Equipment Fund and the Holocaust Education Innovation Fund. Outside of the Bellisario College, they have contributed to a Renaissance Scholarship, the Board of Trustees Emergency Assistance and Immediate Needs Funds, and the Student Farm Endowment.

As her involvement and commitment to Penn State deepened over the years, Schneider was recognized with the Alumni Fellow Award in 2006. She was elected to Penn State's Board of Trustees effective July 2015 as a business and industry representative.

"Mary Lee leveraged her Penn State education to break into the publishing industry and rise to the highest echelon of corporate leadership," said Marie Hardin, dean of the Bellisario College. "I have been so proud and profoundly grateful that in recent years she has deepened her commitment to the Penn State ethos



Mary Lee Schneider and Edward Flam have stepped forward with an estate commitment of \$1 million to support the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications.

of service to our community. This estate gift is a tremendous testament to her and Edward's commitment to Bellisario students and their determination to press ahead with fostering new opportunities."

During her four years at University Park, Schneider split her time between two communities: The Daily Collegian and Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. A change in her family situation could have delayed or derailed the completion of her degree.

"When I was a sophomore at Penn State, my father lost his job," Schneider recalled. "I was incredibly fortunate to be able to finish my degree at Penn State back when tuition — supported by a then-robust state appropriation — was manageable. I was able to complete my degree without taking on any debt. Today this is not the case for many of our students."

After earning her bachelor's degree in journalism from Penn State in 1984, Schneider began her career in publishing in Manhattan working for Condé Nast Publications, Time Warner and McGraw Hill's BusinessWeek magazine, which is rebranded today as Bloomberg BusinessWeek. After nearly a decade in New York City, she relocated to Chicago to eventually become the president, digital solutions and chief technology officer at RR Donnelley, then a \$12 billion provider of communication products and services to Fortune 500 companies. She next became president and chief executive officer of Follett Corp, a \$2.8 billion provider of educational content and services to K-12 schools and colleges and universities, followed most recently by a final stint as the president and CEO of SG360°, a direct marketing company that was sold to a private equity firm in 2016. ♥

Making the most of every day

Alumna Deb Gelman's secret to an accomplished TV career? Hard work



Deb Gelman's approach, creativity and dedication make her one of the most respected producers in sports television

It's about 240 miles from Penn State's University Park campus to New York, home of the CBS Broadcast Center. That's four hours by bus or car, and even longer by train (departing from Lewistown, Pennsylvania) or plane (with a layover in Philadelphia).

Deb Gelman made the trip on sheer determination.

Gelman leveraged an internship opportunity as an undergraduate student and subsequently built a career spanning three decades with CBS Sports — all in America's media mecca — focused largely on live sports production.

For the past 11 years she's been a coordinating producer for live studio programming, guiding shows focused on the NCAA men's basketball tournament each spring and leading "That Other Pregame Show," a four-hour combination of information and entertainment that airs every week during the NFL season on CBS Sports Network.

"We call it TOPS," said Gelman, as she stood on the set minutes after a recent show had ended. "And my Sunday means I'm here in the studio at 4 a.m."

After an hour of pre-production, an hour-long production meeting begins at 5 a.m., followed by breakfast for the crew, production team and on-air talent.

Production begins at 7 a.m. and includes some practice runs and pre-recording a couple segments for the day. The show goes live at 8 a.m. and runs until noon.

That's not the end of Gelman's day, though.



“We’ll have a post-op meeting with talent when we’re done to go over how the show went, what we were happy with, what we weren’t and start looking ahead to the next Sunday,” she said. “Then I go home and put on a pair of sweatpants and watch football from 1 o’clock until the Sunday night game is over because everything that happens is what’s going to be in my show next week.”

Gelman, who earned her bachelor’s degree in 1991, secured an internship with CBS Sports during her final semester at Penn State. She didn’t know all that was involved, only that she wanted to work in sports television.

What she knows now would be enough for dozens of how-to videos. She has proven herself to everyone she works with — from members of her production team, crew and on-air talent to former NFL coaches and players that appear on TOPS.

She’s one of the most respected producers in the business because of her attention to detail as well as her commitment and creativity.

“She’s the best I’ve ever worked with,” said director Jay Kincaid, who has worked alongside Gelman for the past decade on Sunday mornings and has crafted his own career of network-level success. “Her rundowns are so detailed. She doesn’t miss a thing in preparation, or during the show itself.”

Those four-hour-long shows could take a toll on people, but Gelman’s preparation and her combination of skills helps make things work well. The show runs smoothly because of the specificity of the rundown — it was 32 pages, color-coded and double-sided for a recent episode — and her experience and people skills take things to another level.

She’s a perfectionist with expectations who also knows, for example, that the show’s associate producer got engaged a few days earlier.

“We have to raise our productivity and professionalism to be at a level Deb brings. Without a doubt it starts at the top with her and filters down,” said producer Harrison Markey, who has worked on TOPS for 11 years and with Gelman for 15. He’s in charge of an hour or so of TOPS each week. “Everything I do is through Deb-colored glasses. That doesn’t mean I don’t bring my own creativity, but you respect her so much that you work to see things as she would.”

Gelman’s football duties with TOPS will run through the Super Bowl this February. Even before that, she adds college basketball, often working all day Saturday before another early call time on Sunday.

During March Madness, Gelman produces the studio show that includes Charles Barkley, Clark Kellogg and Kenny Smith. It allows her to flash her expertise beyond football and, as always, her creativity (including an idea for some well-received puppets a few seasons ago).

As with many people who’ve found their passion and do their job well, though, Gelman summarizes her schedule with a matter-of-fact approach. In addition, she often remembers mistakes more than the things that went well.

Most of all she appreciates the challenges, and emotional impact, of her job.


“There’s nothing like live television. I’ve done a million taped shows but it’s not the same,” Gelman said. “Live television is as close as you can get to being on the field — that’s the rush.” ♥

DEB’S DAY

MON TUES WED THURS FRI SAT SUN

SCHEDULE

| | |
|----------|--|
| 4:00 AM | arrive at studio & begin pre-production |
| 5:00 AM | production meeting |
| 6:00 AM | production begins: practice runs & pre-recordings |
| 7:00 AM | show time |
| 8:00 AM | |
| 9:00 AM | |
| 10:00 AM | |
| 11:00 AM | |
| 12:00 PM | show ends: post-op meeting w/ talent |
| 1:00 PM | get comfy & watch football all day to prepare for next week’s show |

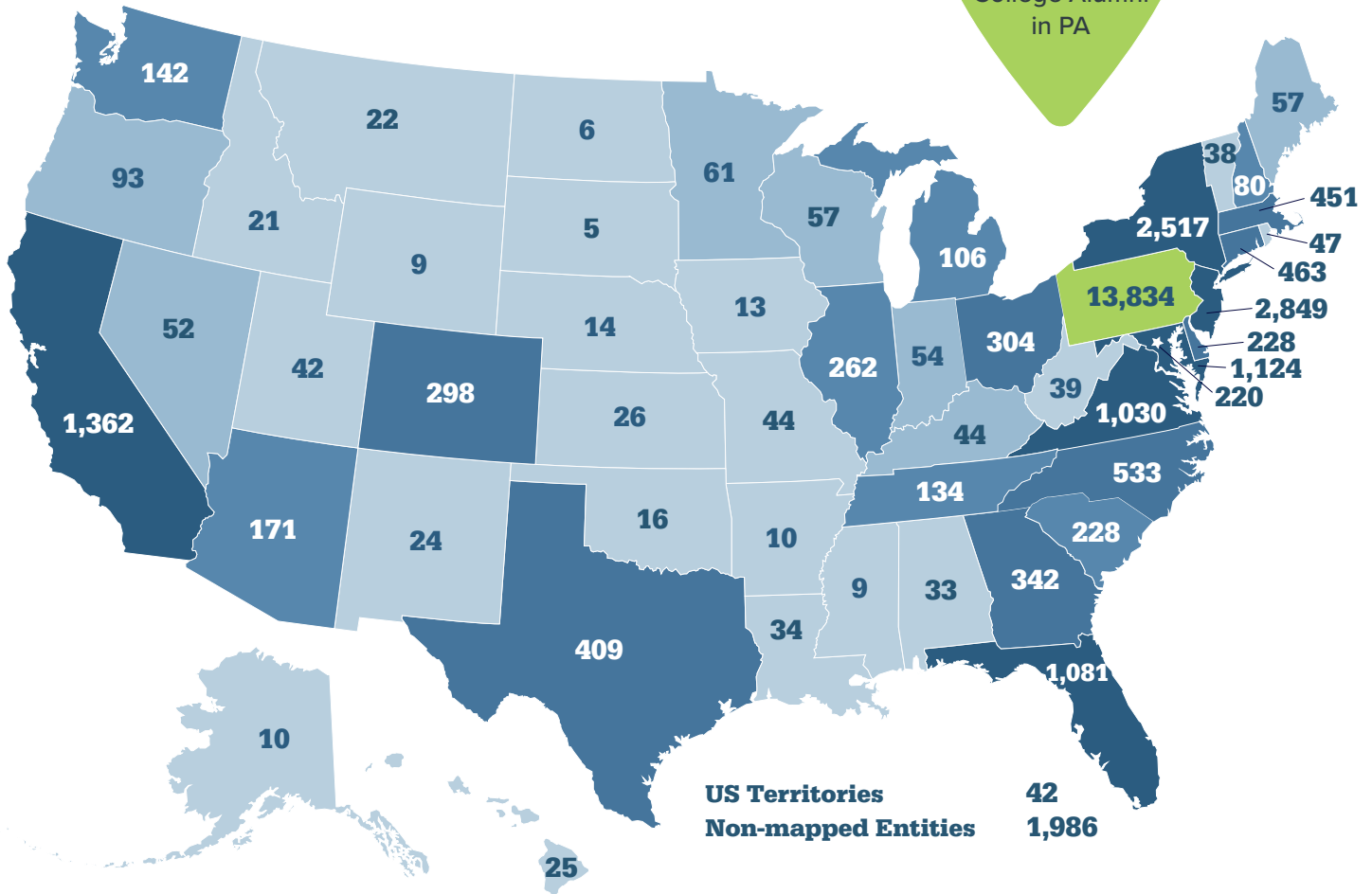


WATCH Alumna
 Deb Gelman’s
 Day in the Life

CURRENT BELLISARIO COLLEGE ALUMNI BY STATE

5.6% increase
from 2023 for Current Bellisario College Alumni in the United States

4.6% increase
from 2023 for Current Bellisario College Alumni in PA



ALUMNI BOARDS

Get on board!

Here's your chance to join the Bellisario College's Ad/PR Alumni Networking Board! The group serves as a resource for faculty, students and alumni with class visits, mentoring, events, and more!

APPLY ONLINE



Ad/PR Alumni Network Board

- Jeanmarie Biemer ('17 Journ)
- Richard Frank ('95 Eng)
- Kelly Gallagher ('14 Ad/PR)
- Amanda Goldberg ('16 Ad/PR)
- Becky Kitlan ('07 Ad/PR)
- Steve Lampert ('74 Journ), *president*
- Adam Pietrala ('04 Ad/PR)
- Alexandra Piscitelli ('013, Ad/PR)
- Melanie Query ('98 Ad/PR)

- Caitlin Rush ('12 Ad/PR)
- Suzanne Schulner ('08 Ad/PR), *vice president*
- Holly Semanchick-Xhema ('15 Ad/PR)
- Ned Show ('89 Journ)
- Tara Smith ('06 Ad/PR)
- Robert Strang ('16 Ad/PR)
- Allison Wulfhorst ('20 Ad/PR), *secretary*

CURRENT BELLISARIO COLLEGE ALUMNI BY COUNTRY

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Australia 8 | Finland 1 | Kazakhstan 9 | South Korea 134 |
| Austria 1 | France 1 | Kuwait 2 | Spain 5 |
| Bahrain 1 | Germany 4 | Malaysia 11 | Sweden 1 |
| Bangladesh 1 | Ghana 1 | Mexico 3 | Switzerland 5 |
| Bolivia 2 | Greece 2 | Mongolia 1 | Taiwan 180 |
| Brazil 4 | Grenada 1 | Netherlands 3 | Thailand 8 |
| Brunei 1 | Guatemala 2 | New Zealand 2 | Turkey 1 |
| Canada 14 | Hong Kong 20 | Nigeria 2 | Uganda 1 |
| Cayman Islands 1 | Hungary 1 | Pakistan 1 | Ukraine 1 |
| China 543 | India 23 | Panama 2 | United Arab Emirates 7 |
| Colombia 1 | Indonesia 2 | Philippines 2 | United Kingdom 194 |
| Cyprus 5 | Iran 1 | Poland 2 | United States 29,335 |
| Dominican Republic 2 | Ireland 1 | Qatar 1 | Venezuela 4 |
| Ecuador 4 | Israel 2 | Romania 1 | Vietnam 3 |
| Egypt 1 | Italy 5 | Russia 2 | Zimbabwe 2 |
| England 4 | Japan 18 | Saudi Arabia 2 | |
| Fiji 1 | Jordan 2 | Singapore 6 | Military Abroad 18 |



| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| North America | 95.89% |
| Asia | 3.21% |
| Europe | .77% |
| South & Central America | .05% |
| Australia & Oceania | .03% |
| Africa | .02% |
| Caribbean | .01% |
| Russia | .006% |

Alumni Society Board

Felicia Bray ('07 Journ)
 Kevin Flintosh ('06 Journ),
past president
 Carol Gosser ('87 Journ)
 Elissa Hill ('19 Ad/PR)
 Jack Hirsh ('20 Journ)
 Ali Ingersoll ('12 Journ)
 Ebony Martin ('14 Journ), *president*
 Bryant Powell ('10 Telecomm)

Will Price ('17 Journ)
 Maddy Pryor ('13 Ad/PR),
president-elect
 Tanya Scalisi ('08 Ad/PR)
 Linsey Shea ('08 Ad/PR)
 Jolie Wehrung ('15 Journ)

Young Alumni Council

Nancy Berman ('19 Ad/PR)
 Carly Fried ('20 Ad/PR)
 Alex Gilliland ('14 Journ)
 Caroline Goggin ('14 Journ)
 Madeliene Maggs ('16 Journ)

COLLEGE VISITORS

Bob Angelo ('74), retired cinematographer, NFL Films

David Arroyo ('19), associate producer, ESPN

Jeffrey Ballou ('90), producer, ABC News

Amanda Bell ('13), vice president, BCW Global

Nancy Berman ('19), director of marketing and advertising, Crowd Surf

Julia Beretta, assistant director of strategic communications, Penn State Athletics

Peter Bhatia, CEO, Houston Landing

Todd Blackledge ('83), analyst, NBC Sports

Jen Blough, brand manager, Sheetz

E.J. Borghetti, executive associate athletic director, University of Pittsburgh

Brian Bronaugh ('83), president, Landesberg Design

Judson Burch ('92), vice president/production, ESPN

Travis Capacete ('09), co-founder, JTWO Films

Mackenzie Chalfin ('23), associate, Weber Shandwick

Vince Chandler ('12), director of communications, Office of Denver City Council

Lauren Connolly ('97), founder, The Beating Heart

Rose Corr ('08), documentary filmmaker and editor

Dan Cox, senior vice president, Harmelin Media

Ariane Datil, host, TEGNA

Daniela Dimitrova, editor, Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly

Bill Douglas, staff writer, NHL.com

Abby Drey, photographer, Centre Daily Times

Michael Elavsky, professor, Masaryk University

Patrick Evans ('90), special assistant for public affairs, Secretary of the Navy

Michael Field ('92), executive creative director, Mason Inc.

Zach Fields, senior manager, Cox Communications

Michael Fimognari ('96), director/cinematographer

Sean Fitz ('07), publisher, On3

Richard Frank ('95), vice president/global brand marketing, T. Rowe Price

Carly Fried ('20), manager/global brand partnerships, Professional Fighters League

Paula Froke ('84), AP Stylebook editor, The Associated Press

Kelly Gallagher (14), vice president, Ketchum

Robert Gavazzi ('91), head of U.S. confection innovation, The Hershey Company

Dejanae Gibson ('19), associate development producer, TIME Studios

Amanda Gifford Lockwood ('04), vice president/production, ESPN

Alex Gililand ('14), sports anchor, WFTV-TV

Caroline Goggin ('14), news reporter, WPVI-TV

Anna Gomez ('89), commissioner, Federal Communications Commission



Lyndsay Green ('10), reporter, Detroit Free Press

Conor Hare ('10), executive producer, JTWO Films

Jen Harringer, early career recruiter, Hearst Television

Amanda Harrington ('16), assistant VP/media and acquisition, Morgan Stanley

Ryan Hockensmith ('01), writer, ESPN

Jim Ivler ('90), NFL player agent, Sportstars

Ben James, chief innovation officer, GALE

Rachel Jenkins, vice president/talent acquisition and diversity resource lead, Weber Shandwick

Mikel Jones ('15), vice president/corporate communications, Citi

Becky Kitlan ('07), creative director, GALE

Dan Langlitz ('05), managing director, Strawberry Frog

Steve Lampert ('74), independent public affairs officer

Wyatt Massey, investigative reporter, Spotlight PA

Jasmine McNealy, associate professor, University of Florida

Samantha Max, public safety reporter, WNYC

Sam McQuillan ('19), lead reporter, Legal Sports Report

Ingrid Montalvo, senior manager, Weber Shandwick

Mike Neligan ('05), founder, Outlier Sports

Soledad O'Brien, journalist and producer

Shadé Olasimbo ('12), senior producer, HubSpot

Alexis Paige ('20), senior communications coordinator, Delta Airlines

Jay Paterno ('91), president, Blue Line 409 LLC

Maria Patrick, managing advertiser, Sheetz

Martina Piantoni, doctoral candidate, European University of Rome

Adam Pietrala ('04), partner/business development, FleishmanHillard

Amelia Pisapia, manager/emerging technology projects, The New York Times

Giancarlo Pitocco ('07), co-founder, GDC Leadership Institute

Maddy Pryor ('13), social media strategist, Princeton University

Melanie Querry ('98), owner, Beyond Spots & Dots

Holly Rubin ('19), manager/client and consumer experience, Weber Shandwick

Caitlin Rush ('12), marketing manager, Meta

Danielle Ryan, director of marketing and fan experience, Penn State Athletics

Rich Russo ('83), director, Fox Sports

Sinan Sadar, director/news talent recruitment, Hearst Television

Lisa Salters ('88), reporter, ESPN

Amit Schejter, professor, Ben-Gurion University

Tara Schumal, crewing associate manager, Fox Sports

Jerry Schwartz ('77), retired editor, The Associated Press

Divan V. Shah, professor, University of Wisconsin

Dan Shelley, president, RTDNA

Ned Show ('89), CEO/chairman, Chemistry

Matt Slocum, photographer, The Associated Press

Evan Spector ('95), director stractivation, Starcom

Christopher Smith ('94), chief creative officer, Plot Twist Creativity

Tara Smith ('06), graduate program director and instructor, University of Delaware

Brooke Steach ('22), digital video content associate, ESPN

Rachel Steinberg ('14), marketing manager, FanDuel

Halle Stockton ('08), executive director, PublicSource

Jim Trdinich, director/player relations and team historian, Pittsburgh Pirates

Brian Tripp ('11), sports broadcaster, Westwood One

Bjorn Trowery ('08), head of consumer communications, Yelp

Michelle Tucker, executive VP, executive creative director, U.S. creative health lead, Edelman

Nick Weiss ('19), director and cinematographer

Chelsea White, writer and producer

Anna Wolfe, reporter, Mississippi Today



Min Xian ('17), local accountability reporter, Spotlight PA

Holly Semanchick Xhema ('15), brand content strategist, Core Digital Expansion

ALUMNI NOTES

1970s



PHOTO BY KEVIN MORLEY, ENTERPRISE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

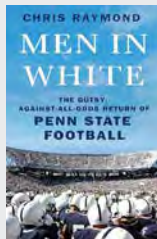
Pam DiSalvo Lepley ('77 Journ) retired from Virginia Commonwealth University after 22 years of service as a communications and public relations leader at the institution. She joined VCU in 2002 and most recently served as a senior adviser to the president after previously serving as vice president of university relations and executive director of university relations. She started her career in TV as a news director for WJAC-TV, and worked as press secretary for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and as vice president/public relations of Siddall Inc. before joining VCU. She earned a graduate certificate in public management and master's degree in public administration from VCU.

1980s

Gloria Barone Rosanio ('82 Journ) directs all communications for the health industries practice at PcW. She is also returning to Rowan University as an adjunct professor where she created the university's first health care public relations course.

Andrew Kevin Walker ('86 Film) wrote "The Killer," which rose to Top Ten worldwide on Netflix last fall. The film was directed by David Fincher and competed at the Venice Film Festival. More about Walker and his award-winning work may be found on his website: andrewkevinwalker.com

Chris Raymond ('87 Journ), a deputy editor for Consumer Reports, has published "Men in White: The Gusty, Against-All-Odds Return of Penn State Football" (St. Martin's Press), a 496-page book that will be available in August.



Sonja Kristina (Schweinsberg) Blake ('89 Ad/PR) is a partner/creative director at 31,000 FT, a full-service creative advertising agency in Dallas.

Michael Field ('92 Ad/PR) is the VP, executive creative director at Mason, in Bethany, Connecticut.

Don Klees ('92 Film) is the senior vice president of programming for Acorn TV and recently published a book about Fleetwood Mac.

Amy Zurzola Quinn ('94 Journ) is director of public information for the New Jersey Department of Corrections.



John Myers ('95 Brcab) is the co-founder of Rowhome Productions. He recently partnered with Philadelphia radio station WXPN to produce the premier season of the "Artist to Watch" podcast which tells the stories of five Black artists in country music.

Kenon Lee ('97 Brcab) marked 23 years of working for NBC News in the fall. He's a technical associate for shows such as "Early Today," "MSNBC Daytime" and multiple daytime programming projects.

1990s

Bob McKinnon ('90) has authored his second children's book, "America's Dreaming," which shares a universal message about belonging. The 48-page hardback book introduces readers to a lead character who endures a difficult first day in a new school, but gets help from a teacher that provides inspiration and support.



Laurie Alicia Roth ('99 Journ) was re-appointed to the executive committee of the Monmouth County Joint Insurance Fund. This is her 15th year of service. Her specialties are workplace safety, workers compensation and liability claims. She was previously recognized by Rutgers University and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission for her completion of the Certified Public Manager Program. Roth serves as administrator/municipal clerk for Allentown Borough.

2000s



Jerry Hoak ('03 Ad/PR) was named chief creative officer at The Martin Agency. Hoak joined Martin in 2016 as senior vice president, group creative director, working across multiple accounts and on new business.

Emily Mahler (Evans) ('04 Journ) was recognized as one of America's Best Lawyers in the Employment Law - Management category for 2024.

Kyle Wintersteen ('04 Ad/PR) was named editor of Delta Waterfowl's award-winning membership publication. Wintersteen, who has nearly 20 years of experience writing and editing outdoors content, had served as Delta Waterfowl's managing editor since March 2015.

Michael V. Pettigano ('06 Journ) earned the 2023 Associated Press Sports Editors contest Excellence in Video honor for "The Athlete of the Week Story" at NorthJersey.com and The Bergen Record. It was his second consecutive APSE Excellence in Video honor.

Tyler H. Walk ('06 Film) was invited to join the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) under the documentary branch. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences extended invitations to 398 distinguished artists and executives to join the organization in 2023. Membership selection is based on professional qualifications, with an ongoing commitment to representation, inclusion and equity.



Kelly Gallagher ('09 Film) was awarded a 2024 Creative Capital Award in the amount of \$50,000 for her upcoming experimental feature documentary titled "By All Your Memories." The film was one of 50 projects chosen to be funded out of 5,600 submissions this year. Gallagher is an associate professor of film at Syracuse University.

Rachel Guldin ('09, '11MA Media Studies) coauthored the book "Language Arts in Action: Engaging Secondary Students with Journalistic Strategies" (Norton Professional Books). The book presents an instructional model based on journalism skills that taps into student agency to develop communication skills. Guldin is an assistant professor at Denison University.

2010s

Zack Feldman ('12 Journ) is the lead graphics producer for ESPN's College GameDay and College Football Playoff Selection Show. He's been with ESPN since 2013, previously working as an associate editorial graphics producer and, before that, content associate.

Brittany Stoner ('12) Journ is an acquisitions editor for Globe Pequot Press, the trade division of Rowman & Littlefield, acquiring nautical/maritime and history books.

Meghin Moore ('13 Journ) is a news editor with VPM News in Richmond, Virginia.

Adam Conklin ('15 Telecomm) is a new business team lead at AssetMark, based in Phoenix, Arizona.



Gabby Richards ('15 Journ) is the director of Federal Advocacy Communications for Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund. Based in Washington, D.C., Richards works to amplify the importance of protecting reproductive health care and rights from the halls of Congress to the campaign trail.

Mackenzie Mager ('16 Ad/PR) is the program officer at Macabi USA, a Jewish, non-profit organization whose mission is building Jewish pride through sport. She is responsible for organizing the USA delegation to the second-largest sporting event in the world, the Maccabiah Games that takes place in Israel every four years.

Jessica (Savarese) Muldoon ('16 Ad/PR), group vice president/corporate media at Ruder Finn, was named as one of PRWeek's Women to Watch, an annual list recognizing public relations professionals who are fast on the road to becoming the next generation of PR and communications industry leaders.

Ryan Stevens ('16 Journ), the director of public relations for the Indiana Fever, was named the first-ever winner of the PBWA's Val Ackerman Award, which honors an WNBA media-relations official who best exemplifies the standards of professionalism and excellence.



Ben Dennis ('18 Journ) was promoted to weekend evening anchor at WDVM/WDCW, DC News Now in Washington, D.C. He will continue working as the organization's consumer reporter.

2020s

Will Desautelle ('20 Journ, Lib) was promoted to sports content researcher with the ESPN Stats and Info Group.



Hannah Mears ('20 Journ) joined the Pittsburgh Pirates and SportsNet Pittsburgh as a sideline reporter. She also works as a sideline reporter for Big Ten Network.

Madison Montag ('22 Journ) joined PennLive as a night-side reporter on the breaking news and public safety beat.

Luke Dreyer ('23 Journ) accepted a position at abc27 WHTM-TV as a news photographer/editor.

Emily McGlynn ('24 Journ) accepted a position as producer with FOX 61 News in Hartford, Connecticut.

Max Ralph ('24 Journ) accepted a position as a reporter covering Penn State for PennLive.

Nick Stonesifer ('24 Telecomm) accepted a position as a reporter for Spotlight Delaware.

Samantha Varrelli ('24 Journ, Lib) accepted a position as a regional reporter with Cardinal News in Roanoke, Virginia.

SUBMIT an alumni note.



2024-25 BELLISARIO COLLEGE CALENDAR

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Aug. 26, 2024 | Fall Semester Classes Begin |
| Sept. 8-9, 2024 | Alumni Society Board Meeting |
| Oct. 3, 2024 | Donor Recognition Event |
| Oct. 10-11, 2024 | “Challenges to Digital Media Flourishing” Symposium |
| Oct. 23, 2024 | U.S. Media Literacy Week Celebration |
| Nov. 11-17, 2024 | Centre Film Festival |
| Nov. 25-29, 2024 | Thanksgiving Holiday |
| Dec. 13, 2024 | Fall Semester Classes End |
| Dec. 21, 2024 | Commencement |
| Jan. 13, 2025 | Spring Semester Classes Begin |
| March 10-14, 2025 | Spring Break |
| April 6-7, 2025 | Ad/PR Alumni Board Meeting |
| April 2025 (TBA) | “Centre County Report” 20th Anniversary Reunion |
| May 2, 2025 | Spring Semester Classes End |
| May 10, 2025 | Commencement |



VIEW our online events calendar to see all events.

Brian Stelter, who won the Bart Richards Award for Media Criticism for his book “Network of Lies,” met with Dean Marie Hardin and Maymester journalism students working in Washington, D.C., after the presentation of the award at the National Press Club.



Penn State COMMversations PODCAST

PLAY NOW





PennState
Donald P. Bellisario
College of Communications

201 CARNEGIE BUILDING,
319 FRASER ROAD
UNIVERSITY PARK, PA 16802

BELLISARIO.PSU.EDU | @PSUBELLISARIO

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
State College, PA
Permit No. 1



-  11,496
-  6,947
-  7,005
-  5,541
-  203