



The Receiver

October 2006

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Semester at Large

By Fallon DeRiggi

As Jim Ryun said, “Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going”. As Editor-in-Chief of The Receiver, I can only hope that the rest of the semester runs as smoothly as it has been so far. I would like to congratulate and thank the brand-new Receiver staff for their input, hard work, and dedication in order to stay on track to keep this newsletter as it has been in the past.

Our PRSSA Executive Board would also like to welcome all of our new members this semester. In this issue, be sure to read up on internships, new faces in the Communication Department, as well as upcoming events!

Research Methods, Dr. Laux, and Going to the Show

By Lexxie Shiring

If anyone has ever had Dr. James Laux for Research Methods they would know about the opportunity of presenting their research paper to a New York State Communication Association (NYSCA) conference held at the Hudson Valley Resort and Spa in Kerhonkson, New York.

Dr. Laux was able to share with me a little bit about the conference and what the research paper must consist of

to be selected to go to the conference. There are many requirements that must be met in order for a research paper to be conference worthy. Dr. Laux mentioned three main factors that must be presented in a great research project. The research must be *well conceived, executed* and *reported*. He also looks for students of good character who will represent the university well.

Students who complete exceptional research projects in Dr. Laux’s Research Methods class are selected to go to the conference that is held every year. The conference is an academic conference for professors and professionals in the communication field. Faculty, graduate students, and a very select group of undergraduate students take part in this prestigious event. There are also featured speakers, special presentations and exhibits that are open to those who attend the conference.

This year Amber Johnson, Chris Martin, Rachel Seeman, and Wes Tagliaferre attended the conference because of their outstanding research papers. Dr. Laux stated that “all of their research is top-notch, especially for undergraduate students.” In addition to delivering their papers Amber and Rachel participated in the Communication Law panel.

I was able to speak with Wes Tagliaferre about his research paper entitled, *Are We on the Same Channel? An Examination of the “Channel” Preferences of Men and Women for Communication with the Opposite Sex*. The purpose of his study was to obtain knowledge of male/female interaction and channel usage, such as text messaging, phone calls, notes, mail, email, and instant messenger.

In Wes’ words, “My focus wasn’t just getting an A, it was about going to the conference.” Early in his Research Methods class when Dr. Laux informed

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his class about the conference, Wes knew that he wanted to be one of the best undergraduates who would be selected to attend the exclusive conference and by his hard work and massive amounts of researching, he accomplished that goal and will be one of the four undergraduates attending the conference, or “The Show” as Wes called it.

In preparation for the conference Wes was asked to present his paper to Dr. Laux’s Communication Concepts class, a group of about 80 freshmen. Wes said that he was nervous to present to a group of fellow students and feels that he will be less nervous when presenting to the conference.

Wes ended our talk by saying, “I look to Dr. Laux as a role model. I never had him for class until Research Methods and I didn’t know what to expect but I’m glad that I took the class and I’m really glad that I took it with Dr. Laux.”

Wes is a prime example of the theory that working hard and using the “E-Word” - as my mother would say - effort, really does pay off in the end.

The conference was held on October 20, 2006 through October 22, 2006 and Drs. Barnett, Flynn, and Swarts also attended.

Let’s Get Genuine

By Brandon Fox

A group of students recently attended *The Ethics of Being Genuine: How Well Are We Doing* conference held on September 22 at Point Park University in downtown Pittsburgh.

The conference, which discussed the role of ethics in the world of public relations and journalism, consisted of 3 panelists who discussed various topics, along with questions from the audience.

The panelists included Dennis Roddy, a columnist for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Madelyn Ross, former Pulitzer Prize winning editing manager of the Post-Gazette and, Bryan Iams, Director of Burson-Marsteller’s Pittsburgh office. Among the topics that the panelists discussed were product placement, video news release’s, paid spokespeople, front groups and “fake” news events.

The main topic that was discussed was how a person’s ethical beliefs affect their ability to write a story or do their job as a practitioner. Mr. Iams told the audience that you had to first look at how you yourself acts ethically and then look at your organizations ethical code. He stated that, “Ethics is truth, and for some people there is a fine line between getting paid and living by their personal code of ethics.”

All 3 panelists agreed that the concept of producing “fake” news is becoming an increasingly large problem. Madelyn Ross, who had worked in the field of journalism for 35 years before becoming Associate Vice Chancellor for national media relations at the University of Pittsburgh said, “You cannot tell if news stories are legitimate anymore because advertisements surround it all, and to the average reader they can’t tell the difference!”

Ashton Ruby, senior, said of his experience, “It’s good to see that ethics is not thrown to the wayside with everything else that PR practitioners have to worry about. Personally, I was glad to see our own students taking the initiative to come and hear what professionals have to say on this topic. And the wraps weren’t too bad either.”

As the discussion came to a close, Bryan Iams gave the audience some important advice. When asked what the true test of being ethical is, Iams stated, “Can I go home and sleep at night if I go through with this?”



PRSSA members from top left Allison, Todd, Jason, Brandon, Ivan, Fallon, Ashton at Ethics Conference

“Communication is the real work of leadership.”
-Nitin Nohria

It's a Group Thing!

By Jason Demek & Krista Buzzelli

Being involved in educational groups are a valuable part of a student's academic career. From resume building to meeting new people, groups are a vital part of the collegiate atmosphere. The Communication Department offers seven major student organizations that can provide students with real-life work experiences.

- Lambda Pi Eta, the official honorary for the Communication Department jump started this semester by attending the Organizational Fair. Lambda will also be volunteering monthly at the Slippery Rock Personal Care Home, as well as other service opportunities. To find out more, contact Dr. Swarts at (724) 738-2571.
- Zeta Phi Eta, academic honorary, is participating in Hunter's Hope, which involves collecting soda can tops that will be exchanged for money for a project. Project Hope will consist of collecting toiletries for people who are in need. Also, the project Feed My Sheep, will consist of collecting canned goods. Lastly, they will be taking part in a clothing drive for a women's shelter. For more information on Zeta, contact Dr. Swarts at (724) 738-2571.
- PRSSA(Public Relations Student Society of America) started the new semester by attending an Ethics Conference in Pittsburgh at Point Park University. PRSSA is always looking for new members. Meetings are every Wednesday in ECB Room 205 at 4 p.m. For more about the chapter, contact Dr. Banks at (724) 738-2569.
- The Rocket is SRU's student published newspaper. It's total circulation is 6,000 papers in the SRU area. The Rocket office is located at 220 ECB. For more information about getting involved with The Rocket, contact rocket.letters@sru.edu.
- WRSK 88.1, SRU's Official Radio Station, is off to another rockin' semester. Run entirely by students, it serves the SRU campus and the surrounding community. For more information regarding WRSK, please contact general manager, Lori Patterson at (724) 738-2655.
- WSRU-TV is off to a great start this year. Brittney Miller states "We have three different shows running now and are airing weekly at different time slots Thursday through Sunday." WSRU-TV is still looking for volunteers to assist with taping of the shows. All of WSRU-TV programming is aired on campus channel 7. For more information, contact the main office at (724) 738-2973.



Communication is:

7% What you say

38% How you say it

55% Your body language

A New Face in the Crowd

By Ivan Moore



Ms. Katrina Quinn

In the fall of 2006 the Department of Communication welcomed a fresh face to the faculty, Ms. Katrina Quinn. Ms. Quinn is known for her public relations work. She worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. The USDA helps families with food assistance and also deals with other food items like school lunches. Ms. Quinn teaches Public Speaking, Public Relations Writing, and Public Relations Case Studies.

Originally from Indiana, Pa, Ms. Quinn completed her undergrad work at Notre Dame University where she earned her degree in English with a minor in Black Studies. While at Notre Dame, she completed an internship with the real estate company Crown American Corporation. Ms. Quinn continued her studies and earned a Master's degree in History from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Upon graduating she started work for the USDA. Once she decided to teach, she taught at both IUP and Westmoreland Community College concurrently.

Currently, Ms. Quinn resides in Grove City and is working toward her doctorate at IUP. When she's not working on her dissertation, she is taking care of her three children, a six-year-old named Tyler and a set of five-year-old twins named Jordan and Ryan. Ms. Quinn has a wealth of professional experience and is willing to share it, as long as you bring your AP Stylebook.

The Value of an Internship

By Todd Daugherty

Completing internships are the best way to achieve valuable work experience while attaining the necessary skills to land your first job.

Doing an internship allows you to apply academic knowledge in an actual work setting. A number of employers will not consider you unless you have up to two completed internships. With the experienced gained you will become more marketable to future employers because of your developed skills.

Internships offer little or no pay, but the experienced gained is invaluable. A minimum of three credits is required at Slippery Rock University to be completed, with a possibility of up to twelve. When considering an internship it is important not to limit yourself out of fear. If financially possible, do an internship overseas or in an unfamiliar region in the U.S. Internships can build career and life skills.

Among the current interns, 60 percent of the employers will offer them a full time position. Also, 85 percent of employers who hire former interns find they have higher retention rates than other employees. Around 87 percent of graduates that are employed have internships on their resumes.

Employers are looking for certain qualities and skills when looking to hire new people. These skills include communication skills, honesty, interpersonal skills, motivation, a strong work ethic, and a minimal 3.0 GPA. Students can look for job opportunities and internships by looking at on-campus job fairs, co-op programs, on-campus recruiting, networking, and using faculty contacts.

Slippery Rock public relations major Jill Ann Sarver-Monk spent the summer in London, England working at Marketforce Communications, a public relations agency.

"I was also lucky enough to be in a company with many departments so I ended up discovering that I'd love to get a job in event planning rather than just a PR agency, an internship is an investment in your future." said Sarver-Monk.

"First learn the meaning of what you say and then speak."

-Epictetus, Philosopher

Gettin' His Stew On

By Allison Bordogna



Dr. Thomas Stewart

As I came back to school this semester, I was sad to find out that one of my favorite professors was not going to be here. Dr. Thomas Stewart, a Communication Department veteran is currently on sabbatical.

During his sabbatical Dr. Stewart is learning all of the Adobe and Macromedia Applications so that he can gain more knowledge to teach a larger variety of Multimedia courses and advanced Multimedia courses. During the interview, I asked Dr. Stewart what made him take the semester off; "I decided on a sabbatical for two reasons: First, I was eligible for one, and strongly believe in the restorative value of time away, and second, I wanted to be a more qualified instructor of multimedia. I just recently entered into that area and wanted to expand to higher levels. My background was always in mass communication and research methods, and I was ready for a new challenge."

Dr. Stewart plans to return teaching in January 2007. So don't worry he will be returning! Dr. Stewart also has plans to stay around for nine more years and then retire in 2015. Dr. Stewart says that he misses all of his students and advisees, but he is also enjoying his break.

Student of the Month

By Emily Huebner

For all his hard work in the Communication Department and particularly with *The Rocket*, Jared Ursta was finally rewarded. With the resignation of a staff member, Jared recently accepted the position of the Assistant Sports Editor for the *Rocket*, a job he has wanted since he first arrived at SRU in 2004. Jared previously held the position of Assistant Photo Editor; during this time he was awarded second place in the Keystone Collegiate Awards along with Nathan Collins for their photo page from the IUP football game.

Jared is a junior here at the Rock, majoring in Communication/Journalism. His favorite class is, "anything with Dr. Zeltner." Jared is from McKeesport, PA and attended McKeesport High School, where Jared was first introduced to journalism. The summer before his senior year he was offered the position of the Sports Editor for his high school newspaper, *The Red and Blue*. *The Red and Blue* has been in print since the 1900's and is one of the oldest high school newspapers in the nation.



Jared Ursta

"When I was sitting in a meeting everything just clicked and I knew it was it was what I wanted to do," Jared said when asked why he wanted to be a Communications major.

Jared's hardest challenge while writing for the *Rocket* came about his freshman year when he was assigned water polo. Since the head coach recently

"There are no secrets to success.

It is the result of preparation, hardwork, and learning from failure."

-Colin Powell

got a new number, his last resort was an interview in the dining hall.

“I was in the fluh interviewing four guys from the team and writing down their answers on a napkin,” Jared explained.

Jared is also involved in other activities on campus including roller hockey and women’s ice hockey. He is the center for the roller team, and the head coach for the women’s ice hockey team. He explained that coaching takes up a lot of time and there is a lot of behind the scenes work that people don’t know about.

Upon graduation from SRU Jared hopes to pursue a career in journalism, play hockey, or work for the New York Fire Department. His dream job would be with the Boston Globe and although that means not living in New York as he planned, it does mean living in the home of his favorite team, the Boston Red Sox. Presently Jared is searching for an internship dealing with sports and journalism.

Rocket Editor, Mike Mallory, described Jared as a hard worker and feels the time he spent with the Rocket is paying off. He also added that hopefully Jared’s new position will lead to bigger and better things.

Professor of the Month

By Emily Huebner



Dr. Mark Chase

If you ever need any technical, layout design, or graphic design help then Dr. Mark Chase is the person to see. Dr. Chase has been teaching at Slippery Rock since 1983 and is the former head of Media Services.

The courses he teaches are: Publication Production, Digital Imaging, Photojournalism, and Media Project Management.

In addition to his teaching duties Dr. Chase is also the advisor for the Women’s Ice Hockey team, is a member of the Co-operative Board, serves on the Technical Advisory Committee, and was the Assistant Chair of the Department for four years. Prior to teaching at SRU, Dr. Chase worked with graphic design, publications, photography, ad sales and layout design for a newspaper.

Dr. Chase knew he wanted to teach after he was asked to fill in for a position in the Education Department here at SRU, shortly after he completed his masters. This was so enjoyable for him, he decided to further his education and get his doctorate.

His education background includes a high school degree from Slippery Rock High School followed by an undergraduate degree in Communication Media from Indiana University of PA. He then went on to obtain his Masters in Administration from Slippery Rock University and finished with a Doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh in Instructional Design and Technology.

Not only has Dr. Chase received a degree here and presently teaches here, but his history goes back much further. Both his mother and father were professors here and he can remember attending SRU football games in the 1970’s.

Currently Dr. Chase is working along side Dr. Banks and Graduate Assistant, Meghan Herrod, in conducting a research interests project. The project involves looking closely at the student’s perception and use of technology on campus.

One of Dr. Chase’s favorite classes to teach is the FYRST seminar class because he enjoys watching students grow. He explained that you can see who the leaders will be early on and it is fun to watch them take off. If Dr. Chase could leave his students with something upon leaving SRU it would be a level of professionalism. He incorporates deadlines and steps up the criteria to a higher level so his students will be able to prove to employers that they have the high level of professionalism.

“You take the good, you take the bad, you take them both and there you have the facts of life”

-Edna Garrett

Standing Tall on the Wings of a Dream

By Chris DeMeglio



Ryan Muldowney

Tony Danza, Burt Reynolds, Steven Spielberg, Ryan Muldowney. What do all four of these men have in common? A dream. At one point in all of these men's lives they dreamed of stardom, of making it big in Hollywood.

Ryan Muldowney, who graduated from Slippery Rock University in May '05 with a degree in Journalism, received an offer to move to Hollywood and work as a Casting Assistant on a show titled *Vas o no Vas*; the Telemundo version of *Deal or no Deal*. Ryan had to make the hardest decision of his life and asked himself, "What would I be more upset with: leaving my family and friends behind for the period I would be away, or knowing I missed out on an opportunity to do something I really wanted to do."

With that question in mind he woke up one day and decided to do the self described, "saddest and most difficult thing I have ever done." Ryan gave himself twenty-five days to pack up his life and say goodbye to everyone he knows and embark on a journey from the South Hills of Pittsburgh to Los Angeles, California

Ryan expressed that despite feeling nervous, afraid at times, not having any close friends nearby, and being a small fish now that there were three major things that helped him make the adjustment to life in L.A.: his support group, his personality, and his experiences at SRU. Ryan credits his support group consisting of: his mother, a few close friends, and SRU professors Dr. Joe Harry and Dr. Mark Zeltner; for giving him the

courage and advice to leave and follow his dreams. Friendly, outgoing, driven to succeed, mindset to achieve goals were words Ryan used to describe the skills that let him adjust to new life.

These same skills allow him to constantly be networking and making new contacts in the film and television industry. Ryan states that as a producer/writer/host of his own campus television show *Gettin' Later* he truly developed his passion to be in the entertainment business as well as honed his production skills. Ryan noted that it is impossible to be fully prepared to make a leap like this because as he said, "There are no two less similar places than Slippery Rock and Los Angeles."

Ryan Muldowney is currently working as a Production Assistant on a new show for E! Entertainment, *Boulevard of Broken Dreams*, set to air January 2007; and when asked if his journey has been worth it Ryan gave an emphatic yes, "I definitely made the right decision; I realized the world is bigger than Western PA and that well...people shouldn't be afraid to take a chance... especially if it is doing something you really enjoy."



The Receiver Staff: Yes we are Awesome

“Examine
what is
said, not who
speaks”
-Arabian
Proverb

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-Organizational Editor

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Christina Watson

You Can Bank on It

By Christina Watson

From February through June of this year, Dr. Mark Banks, Assistant Chair of the Communication Department, went on a trip to southeast Australia as a Visiting Scholar/Professor. While he was there, he team-taught in three public relations courses at Victoria University, in Melbourne, working with both graduate and undergraduate classes in PR basics, writing, and campaigns.

He describes Victoria as a university in an urban setting, providing “a different view of public relations.” Victoria is a comprehensive university with 15 different campus settings in the greater Melbourne area. Pictured is Dr. Banks across the Yarra River from the downtown campus of Victoria University.

Dr. Banks also worked with undergraduate students on Public Relations campaigns and he also did a research collaboration with Dr. Fidoten on Mobile Computing. We are glad to have Dr. Banks back in the Communication Department, just ask senior Chris DeMeglio, “Am I glad Dr. Banks is back? Yeah most definitely, he is the man.” We hope he enjoyed his time in Australia!



Dr. Mark Banks on the banks of the Yarra River in Melbourne, Australia