Debate Team Bites the Big Apple, Earns Champion Title


By Nicole Johnson
Instructor and Assistant Director of Debate

While most students headed south for spring break, 22 debaters, three graduate assistants and two coaches headed east for the 18th National Educational Debate Association National Tournament at St. Peter’s College in Newark, New Jersey. The team came home triumphant. For the 5th year in a row, the team won the national NEDA championship!

Before the showdown began, the team took time to unwind with a tour of the Big Apple. The day started with a mild and sunny stroll through Central Park before the 30-block trek to the Empire State Building. In true New York fashion, hotdogs and pizza were served for lunch from sidewalk vendor carts along the way. Soon after, all 30 (including a few students from Southeastern Missouri State University) tourists piled onto the subway headed to Ground Zero to visit the new 9/11 Memorial.

After everyone took time to reflect on the magnitude of the events of 9/11 and the tributes standing today, the group started toward their dinner-and-a-show.

Alumni Return to Campus for COMM Club Alumni Conference

ALUMNI EVENT — COMM Club welcomed a number of Alumni back to campus for the COMM Club Alumni Conference.

By Beth Messner
Associate Professor

“Serendipity”... this was a central theme in the keynote address delivered by Tyson Carter at the 3rd bi-annual COMM Club Alumni Conference held on Sat., March 24, 2012. Carter was joined by eight other returning alumni of the Department of Communication Studies, all of whom met with students to discuss their respective career paths:

- J.D. Dalfonso, Social Media & Web Coordinator for Bradley University;
- Sarah DeWitt, Commencement Coordinator at Ball State University;
- Annie Hamilton, Vice President of Relocation Services at Century 21 Scheetz;
- Jeff Hughes, Youth Pastor at Union Chapel Ministries;
- Brooke Leister, Human Resource Assistant at Angie’s List;
- Rachel Nielsen, Human Resource Generalist at Indiana University Health, Ball Memorial Hospital;
- Jennifer Plumlee, Leasing
My love of travel began 25 years ago as an undergraduate student at Ball State University. Little did I know that participating in Ball State University’s London Center would foster so many intercultural connections.

As an undergraduate student studying English, Speech and Theatre, I imagine my fascination with the opportunity to spend winter quarter in London. I walked the same cobblestone streets as Shakespeare, Mary Shelley, and Charles Dickens. I stood at Speaker’s Corner. I saw a production of Macbeth performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon. And I had many opportunities for day-trips throughout the United Kingdom as well as longer trips to “the continent.” At that time, “the continent” meant Western Europe; the Berlin Wall was still standing. I think I recall needing a special visa to travel to Paris.

After completing my PhD in Communication Studies at Indiana University and joining the faculty of IUPUI, my former department chair, John Parrish-Sprowl (BS 1976), invited me to participate in a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) grant in Macedonia, Skopje, located in Tetovo, Macedonia. Founded in 2001, SEEU was the first university of its kind to support higher education opportunities in Albanian. Classes are offered in Albanian, Macedonian, and English; my classes were taught in English with a translator. My role would be to work with a faculty colleague at SEEU to help that individual develop a course in our areas of expertise, work with the entire faculty to develop a Communication Sciences Department, and train faculty on issues such as classroom management, civility, and syllabus development.

The first course I taught there was Gender and Communication in 2005. Two students in that first class were Emira and Blerim Limani (MA 2008). The course was amazing for me, and I hope for them too. I modeled the course after the same course that I teach at IUPUI. One of the most enlightening assignments was a weekly “gender story” that we asked our students to write in response to the topic of the week. Keep in mind that the Balkan region has undergone many changes in the last 20 years, and that the students have lived through these changes. Their stories were told differently and more poignantly than the same stories of my US students.

The stories were such an eye-opening assignment that I asked my US students to complete the assignment as well, and my SEEU colleague and I wrote an essay which appeared in the fall 2007 SEEU Review, comparing and contrasting US and international students’ perceptions of gender and the possibility for change. The most telling contrast is in the international students’ embrace of the term feminism and in the empowerment they are certain their education brings. While the US students, in general, tended to adopt the popular phrase “I’m not a feminist but . . .” or view their college education as just something you do after high school, the SEEU students, both women and men, embraced feminism as a badge.
Faculty from the different units in CCIM spent part of their Leap Day involved in the CCIM Diversity Book Club. On February 29th about ten faculty members gathered to discuss the book Understanding and Engaging Under-Resourced College Students: A Fresh Look at the Influence of Economic Class on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. The book, which investigates how economic class impacts student achievement of college students, was the second installment of the book club.

Understanding and Engaging was selected by faculty, in part, because it brought into focus an often overlooked facet of diversity—class. Based on the popular book, Framework for Understanding Poverty, this book serves as a powerful tool for improving retention and graduation rates for students from impoverished backgrounds. Many people, including faculty, are unaware that school success can depend on students’ ability to access and develop resources. Perhaps not surprisingly, students who have experienced generational poverty—those whose families have lived in poverty for two or more generations—often have difficulty acquiring those resources. The book helped faculty members understand not only why under-resourced students are affected but how to address this in the classroom.

Nicole Johnson, faculty member in Communication Studies, said that what she enjoyed most about the book was the problem-solving approach. As she stated, “many books of this nature address the problem, but leave the solution in abstract terms. These authors provide tangible examples of assignments and approaches that real teachers can use in real classrooms.” The faculty who read the book were inspired by this problem-solving approach and are in the process of scheduling a poverty simulation for the CCIM faculty. The simulation will take place in the fall semester and will be a great way for people to learn more about the struggles and reality of under-resourced students.

In addition to learning about an important issue facing our students, the book club is a great way for CCIM faculty to build camaraderie and community. The hope is that even more students interested in participating in the CCIM Diversity Book Club should contact Kristen McCauliff at klmccauliff@bsu.edu.

Education and mentoring are especially important to these women because they fought for and won a quota system that required each political party to present a slate of candidates that consists of at least 30% women. While the political representation of women in Macedonia is not as high as other European countries, the incredible changes these women fought for over the last twenty years should serve as an inspiration to us all.

I traveled to Macedonia a total of 6 times between 2005 and 2008 and the constant lesson was that education, and in particular communication education, meant opportunity. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and communist regimes in Europe, suddenly there was a need for open communication. Communication education exploded. Communication as an area of academic study and practical application was a new idea and provided many opportunities for international partnerships.

Since that time, I have done more traveling. My next adventure would take me to the Czech Republic, lecturing at Palacký University in Olomouc and participating in and observing Czech politics during the 2010 election season. I also have lectured at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. Each time I meet new students, the opportunities...
that communication education brings is not lost on them. Communication education not only fosters critical thinking and the ability to construct an argument, but it brings a perspective that is valuable to advancing cultural change, whether at home in our communities or abroad. The ways that people communicate with one another matters. Our communities are a reflection of our communication interactions with one another. I think that is the most powerful lesson I learned from my travels, a lesson with its foundation in my undergraduate communication education at Ball State University.

(Kristina Horn Sheeler (BS 1987; MA 1989) is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication Studies at IUPUI. She completed her undergraduate degree at Ball State in English, Speech and Theatre Education.)
Debate Programs with Different Coaches at the Same School

Recipient: Robert Greenstreet

Outstanding Contributions to Argumentation and Forensics Award

Your Teacher Can’t Be Your (Facebook) Friend: A Discussion of Missouri Senate Bill 54 and the Implications for Teacher-Student Connections, Panel Participant

Connecting to Millennials with Engaged Teaching, Panel Participant

Merging the Basic Course with the First Year Seminar: Progressive or Problematic?, Presenter

Connecting through Mentoring: Advising, Teaching, and Caring for Interpersonal and Group Communication Students In and Out of the Classroom, Panel Participant

Re-“Connecting in Cleveland”: Former Graduate Colleagues Connect on Women’s Issues in New Jobs, Panel Participant

Competitive Papers in Communication Education, Respondent

Your Teacher Can’t Be Your (Facebook) Friend: A Discussion of Missouri Senate Bill 54 and the Implications for Teacher-Student Connections, Panel Participant

Debating the Effectiveness of the Basic Course, Debate Participant

Challenges and Opportunities Faced by Industry Professionals Transitioning to GTA Positions, Presenter

Great Ideas for Teaching Speech: Drawing Connections Through Cards, Co Presenter

Student Response Systems and Facilitating the Larger Basic Communication Course: Impacting Engagement and Learning, Presenter

Mike Bauer

Argumentation and Forensics Interest Group Business Meeting, Treasurer

Debating the Effectiveness of the Basic Course, Debate Participant

Outstanding Contributions to Argumentation and Forensics Award Recipient: Robert Greenstreet, Presenter and Panel Chair

A Marriage Made In… : A Discussion of the Co-Existence of Speech and Debate Programs with Different Coaches at the Same School, Presenter and Chair

National Education Debate Association Executive Board Meeting, Chair

Kristen McCauliff

Connecting Modern Technology and the Classroom: Best Practices for Online Tools, Presenter

Connecting with Your Students Online: It’s Up for Debate, Debate Participant

Burke Gone Wild: A Pentadic Analysis of a Campus Controversy, Co Presenter

Mary Moore

Great Ideas for Coaching Forensics, Panel Participant

A Marriage Made In… : A Discussion of the Co-Existence of Speech and Debate Programs with Different Coaches at the Same School, Presenter

Debating the Effectiveness of the Basic Course, Respondent

Nichole Johnson

National Education Debate Association Executive Board Meeting, Secretary

Great Ideas for Coaching Forensics, Chair

Debating the Effectiveness of the Basic Course, Chair

Argumentation and Forensics Interest Group Business Meeting, Chair

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Team Awards

Varsity Policy Division: 2nd place team Elizabeth Hibbler (junior, public relations) and Dakota Wappes (freshman, communication studies)

Novice Policy Division: 1st place Alana Horner (junior, nursing) and Alexis Schaefer (senior, communication studies); 2nd place Kelly Lamb (junior, communication studies) and Maggie Carter (junior, communication studies)

Varsity Public Forum: 3rd place Kellie Snyder (junior, legal studies) and Alyssa Raymond (junior, communication studies); 4th place Rachel Harned (junior, business) and Stephanie Amato (senior, communication studies)

Novice Public Forum: 1st place Erika Mabee (junior, communication studies) and Keagan Vaughan (junior, communication studies); 2nd place Tyler Walker (freshman, psychology and history) and Kirsten Seidner (junior, communication studies), 4th place team Jamie Dash (junior, political science) and Luke Durfey (sophomore, business)

Speaking awards:

Novice Public Forum: 1st Kirsten Seidner, 3rd Keagan Vaughan, 4th Tyler Walker

Varsity Public Forum: 2nd Kellie Snyder, 3rd Alyssa Raymond, 4th Lauren Bade

Novice Policy: 2nd Alana Horner, 3rd Alexis Schaefer, 4th Kelly Lamb

Through an immersive learning initiative, the team is planning to shift its focus to parliamentary debate as it prepares to compete at the World Universities Debating Championship in Berlin, Germany in December, but is committed to maintaining a presence in NEDA.

see CENTRAL | page 6
Organizational Problem Solvers
Graduate students help local organizations solve problems through training workshops

By Tynesia Ross
Graduate Student

Graduate students taking the Communication Training in Organization course, taught by Dr. Susan Klingel-Dowd, have been working hard this semester trying to solve organizational problems for organizations in the Muncie community. The goal of this course is to solve organizational issues by creating and implementing a training session while working in a team of three to four graduate students.

The first group of students named their “consulting firm” Trust Training. This group includes graduate students Leland Fecher, Tae Sun Kim, Charles Jones and Elena Chudnovskaya. Trust Training chose to focus on the Boys and Girls Club of Muncie since one of their group members, Charles Jones, had previously worked with the organization.

“They are on a tight budget and had a lot of projects in mind, so we figured we could help them out,” explained group member Leland Fecher.

ATM Consulting, also known as Amy Fusco, Trevor Nash and Michael Catlos decided to develop a training session for Theta Chi, a Ball State fraternity, because they wanted to work with a unique local organization.

Daniel Kemp, Jon Conway, and Tynesia Ross, named their “firm” Kemp, Conway and Ross. They decided to focus on Motivate Our Minds, a local Muncie organization founded to provide extra academic support for at-risk children in the community.

Motivate Our Minds was chosen because group member Tynesia Ross had previously volunteered with the organization for two years. She saw a need that could be addressed through the creation of a training workshop. Specifically, the goals for the training session are: improving upon volunteer’s skills as a tutor, providing an open forum in which volunteers can discuss relevant and constructive experiences, and offering volunteers knowledge and useful tips on how to effectively interact with children.

ATM group member Amy Fusco said, “The purpose behind our training session is to help the Executive Committee of the Theta Chi local chapter to develop their interpersonal communication skills in order to communicate more successfully with each other and with members of the local Alumni Board.”

Trust Training group member Leland Fecher describes his group’s aspirations. “Our training session is divided into two parts. First, we are creating a manual for volunteers to include the information they need. Currently, the Boys and Girls Club of Muncie does not have a standardized document specifically for volunteers. Second, we are providing a training seminar for employees to show them how they can teach the volunteers this information in order to create a sustainable system.”

Since the end of the semester is just around the corner, the training sessions are a few short weeks away. For many, this will be the first training session that these students have implemented. And, as these students have found out, collaborating with an organization to create a training session comes with many challenges.

“One complication that we faced was how to narrow down what we wanted to train the Executive Board on. After conducting a focus group and interviews, we analyzed the data and a couple of issues emerged concerning the communication between members. We resolved this by deciding on what issue was most pertinent in the communication and how resolving this issue will impact the fraternity,” explained Fusco.

“One of the stranger complications we have encountered was the freedom we were given in creating the manual. We felt a little stranded creating an entire document for an organization that we thought up. However, after viewing some of the club’s documents and other organizations policies, we believe we have created a product that will be both informative and easy to understand,” states Fecher.

Overcoming these challenges has only added to the real-world experience that this course offers and continues to be one of the things that students appreciate and value.

“People should take this class because it provides real world experience. Sometimes in an organization, no one will tell you what to do. They will present you with a problem and tell you to fix it with barely any direction. I mean, that’s why they hired someone to fix it, because they don’t know how. This class gives practical experience that prepares students for some of the real challenges they will face in the workplace,” said Fecher.

Fusco adds, “I believe people should take this class because it not only develops required skills to become an organizational communication consultant, but it also helps to develop your own individual communication and critical thinking skills, which is needed within any work environment.”

Submitted Photos

CENTRAL STATES — (Left Photo) From left to right: Morgan Summers, Robin Phelps, Jessica Choquette, Leland Fecher, Michael Catlos and Katie Sroufe are on a panel at the conference. (Right Photo) BSU graduate students Robin Phelps, Scarlett Hester, Morgan Summers, Marie Roth and alumni Mike Bergmaier and Dr. Kathy Denker are on their way out to dinner.
Central States | Participants

Beth Messner
- From Engines Roaring to Flash Mobs Dancing: Counter-protesting in Westboro Baptist Church, **Presenter**
- Pickets, Counterprotests, and the First Amendment: The Case of Westboro Baptist Church, **Chair**
- Communication Ethic & Freedom of Expression Business Meeting, **Chair**
- Burke Gone Wild: A Pentadic Analysis of a Campus Controversy, **Co Presenter**

Jacquelyn Buckrop
- Burke Gone Wild: A Pentadic Analysis of a Campus Controversy, **Co Presenter**

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Robin Phelps
- Great Ideas for Teaching Speech: Drawing Connections Through Cards, **Co Presenter**
- Challenges and Opportunities Faced by Industry Professionals Transitioning to GTA Positions, **Presenter**
- Bridging the Gap: Connecting Graduate Teaching Assistants and Organizations through Socialization Tactics, **Presenter**

Katie Sroufe
- Analyzing Documented Racetalk in a Small Midwestern College Town: Developing In-Group and Out-Group Categorization Through the Use of Chosen Vocabulary, **Presenter**

Leland Fecher
- The Mass Effects of Mass Effect: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the Video Game Community Amidst Controversy, **Presenter**
- Gender Issues, Fighting Games, and Progress: An Analysis of a Genderless Character in Tekken 6, **Presenter**
- An Exploration of the Identity of “Gamer” as Perceived by Gamers, **Presenter**

Maria Hoffman
- Round Table Discussion: Connecting the Campus and the Community through Internships, **Chair**
- Great Ideas for Teaching Speech: Social Judgment Theory of Action, **Presenter**
- Heroes and Villains: A Fantasy Theme Analysis of Jon Stewart’s speech at The Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear, **Presenter**

Jessica Choquette
- She Had it Coming: Testimonial Analysis of the Texas Gang Rape, **Presenter**

Connecting to the Next Generation of Communication Educators: Bringing Historical Foundations with New Directors

Leland Fecher
- “Bridging Entertainment and Instruction: Connecting Video Games and Education”

Meg Tully
- “The Absent Minded Washed Up Professor: Archetypes in Academia and their Effects on Expectations of Effective Instructors”

Morgan Summers
- “Connecting Formative Assessments to our Students: A Look at Where We’ve Been and Where We’re Headed”

Michael Catlos
- “How’s This Relevant to Me?: A Study of Student Motivation in the Classroom”

Kenny Saalman
- “Smart and Attractive?: The Effect of Biological Makeup on Success in Collegiate Settings”

Robin Phelps
- “Instructional Technology and Teacher Credibility: Is There a Connection?”

Jessica Choquette
- “Understanding Academic Freedom: An Analysis of the University of New Mexico’s Sex Phone Scandal”
Basic Course Directors Conference

By Robin Phelps
Graduate Student

Dr. Kathy Denker, graduate students Morgan Summers and Robin Phelps, and Dr. Jacquelyn Buckrop, Assistant to the Provost and Professor of Communication Studies, were in attendance at the Basic Course Director’s conference that took place in Normal, IL January 29th until the 30th. Those in attendance from Ball State gave presentations on the maintenance of the basic public speaking course, the use of student response systems, the use of a Wiki to create consistency of course material taught and on the large lecture-lab format.