Students to compete in Bucket Speech

By Vicki Rosenberger
Graduate Assistant

Over a year in the making, the COMM 210 Bucket Speech civic engagement project is finally nearing completion.

“I went to a basic course director’s conference last year and someone talked about this project in a smaller class and I wanted to see if we could incorporate it on a much bigger scale—maybe with over 1,000 students,” said Kathy Denker, COMM 210 director and project supervisor. From there, a committee of Communication Studies graduate assistants adopted the Bucket Speech concept for their civic engagement project. Buckets were made for donations, one used every Monday during the Comm 210 lecture and one that was placed in the Communication Studies department office.

“Students were given a list of local non-profit organizations and were told to research the particular non-profit organization they were interested in, write a persuasive speech about why it should receive the donations, and compete to determine which local non-profit organization will receive the donations we raise,” explained the service learning committee chair Kendra Tarr, noting that participation was “completely optional.”

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Facebooking for a living: JD Dalfonso on Social Media Marketing

By Beth Messner
Associate Professor

As Joseph “JD” Dalfonso (B’10) neared his graduation from Ball State University, he never envisioned himself employed in the realm of social media. But thanks to an internship at the 500 Festival and his personal interest in facebook, that’s exactly what has happened. This fall, JD became the first Social Media and Web Marketing Coordinator to work for the Office of Enrollment Management at Bradley University, Peoria Ill.

JD is thrilled to be working in such a pioneering role. It allows him to exercise a great deal of creativity and generate new ways of promoting Bradley University to prospective students. Yet, much of what he and his colleagues do is based on trial and error. As he says, they are “learning as they go.” JD finds it very fulfilling to be starting such an initiative from the ground up, particularly so early in his career. He also counts himself blessed to have so much support from other staff as he does so.

JD’s first foray into the use of social media as a marketing tool occurred during a spring internship with the 500 Festival in Indianapolis. JD used the knowledge he gleaned from his personal experiences with social media to design a 500 Festival facebook page and produce other social media content to promote the event.

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NCA a rewarding experience

By Glen Stamp
Department Chair

The 2010 annual convention of the National Communication Association was held in San Francisco this year and Ball State University had a full contingent of Communication Studies graduate students in attendance. Second year students Mike Bergmaier, Brandon Bumstead, Seth Davis, Emily Esmail, Aaron Estabrook, Shelly Kimrey, Mary Nuznov, Paul Sommer, Bao Ta, and Kendra Tarr traveled to the west coast to experience all that the conference had to offer. Their goals were to attend panels and programs, meet faculty and graduate students from other schools, and plan for the future by attending graduate school open houses and departmental events to talk to representatives from various PhD programs in Communication Studies.

Brandon Bumstead, Aaron Estabrook, Shelly Kimrey, and Paul Sommer presented competitively selected papers at the conference. They found the opportunity to present their research to be both anxiety producing and a rewarding learning experience. Shelly, in particular, had a unique experience. As she sat down in front of the room, she noted the presence of a premiere scholar in the front row. "I was very nervous. But then I realized it's not like Karlyn Kohrs Campbell is going to show up to your presentation. Oh wait. That is exactly what happened." Although this added to her stress level, all who attended her panel agreed that she did a stellar job presenting her paper, "Bitch: A Theoretical Analysis." Aaron, like Shelly, was nervous prior to presenting his paper, "It's only a joke: A rhetorical-critical analysis of Paul Mooney." However, he indicated that one of best parts of his overall NCA experience was "having friends attend my presentation. It was so great to see other colleagues support each other and learn more about their projects."

Along with the paper presentations, other Ball State students attended workshops. Mike, for example, attended a short course on "Teaching Political Communication" which he found to be very valuable. As he says, "It was great to see and meet so many of the premier scholars in political communication. It was also very beneficial to get so many perspectives on the subject matter, and to receive so much teaching material, a worthwhile profession."
VBC project showcases Indiana artists

By Vicki Rosenberger
Graduate Assistant

Generated from an initially unsuccessful grant proposal, Department of Telecommunications instructor Terry Heifetz revised that idea into a proposal for a Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry project (VBC). That project, Hidden Treasures, comes to fruition on December 8, 2010 in the same way all VBC projects end—with a showcase. Communication Studies students Leanne Fabellar and Lisa Vitkin are participating in this project. Past Communication Studies professors who have been involved in VBC projects include Dr. Lara O’Hara, Dr. Beth Messner and Dr. Peggy Fisher.

“It’s a way to say ‘this is what we’ve been working hard on for the past 16 weeks,’” said Heifetz of the semester-long project. Originally intending to visit New York to cover Hoosier artists, “we turned that idea upside-down and focused on Indiana artists known around the globe,” Heifetz explained, referring to the grant proposal he and Department of Journalism professor Mary Spillman had collaborated on. “We decided to find artists who may be known around the city or state for what they do, but whose neighbors might not be aware of it.”

The selection process began with help from the Indiana Arts Commission. “A public relations director and a regional partner helped us brainstorm on what would be considered art,” Heifetz said. “We had a list of 50 things, but only one or two might actually qualify—that’s why we have the eclectic mix we have.” The group of 15 students was then split into four groups with each group responsible for researching and finding artists.

“At first we wanted nationally and internationally known artists and we found that there were a super amount in Indiana,” said Fabellar. “It was actually hard to narrow it down.”

But according to Heifetz, the students were able to discuss their choices and

Debate team’s immersive project helps high school debate program

By Vicki Rosenberger
Graduate Assistant

The Department of Communication Studies Debate Team completed an Immersive Learning project in November with a round-robin, mini-tournament that pitted Broad Ripple High School against Muncie Burris.

“We wanted to get high school students on campus and we brainstormed on how to do that,” project sponsor Nicole Johnson said. “This program is a great way to showcase what we do in our department and with the debate team.” Johnson credits the communication studies Debate Team for their hard work in putting the event together. The team members processed paperwork, spent 8-10 weeks working with, and preparing Broad Ripple students for, the final event, and joined department faculty as judges during the competition.

“We had some good competition,” Johnson said, commenting that the debate topic, ‘The U.S. Should Lower the Legal Drinking Age to 18’ helped. “The topic was relevant to (the students) … It energized them.”

The biggest challenge Johnson faced while supervising the project was communication. “You have to have everyone on the same page and working toward the same goal,” she said. “I learned quickly how challenging that can be.”

But along with challenges come rewards, and Johnson said seeing the impact the Ball State students made on the Broad Ripple students was a highlight for her. “During the awards ceremony they were whooping for each other, patting each other on the back and sharing in everyone’s success.”

The Debate Team is currently working on a second Immersive Learning project: a public relations video for the Madison County Problem Solving Courts. Madison County has a grant for this federal initiative, which is being used as a prototype. Johnson said the video will be presented to the Madison County courts at the end of this semester.
Communication Professionals Network focuses on fundraising, recruitment

By Vicki Rosenberger
Graduate Assistant

Still in the early stages of development, the Communication Professionals Network (CPN) is focusing on restructuring, increasing recruitment efforts, and planning several fundraising events to kick off the spring semester in January, 2011.

According to first-year group sponsor Nicole Johnson, one main goal of CPN is to restructure how communication within the group works with the hope of “empowering all members of the organization to increase their investment and increase the success of the organization.”

CPN is following last year’s agenda by holding one public event in the fall and one in the spring. The fall event, held in early November, was a career panel featuring Scott Evans of MyNDY-TV, Monique Armstrong of Motivate Our Minds and Keith Roysdon of The Muncie Star Press. Johnson anticipates the spring event being a networking opportunity for the organization, but nothing has been confirmed at this time.

One fundraising event CPN is currently organizing is the production and sale of t-shirts. Planned as an ongoing event, Johnson said the t-shirt sales would allow the group to make a profit to use as a financial security net to help with future group functions.

There are currently 15 students involved in the group and Johnson said students are welcome to join at any time during the academic year. Although CPN regularly meets twice a month, Johnson said it’s up to each group member to determine the amount of time they choose to invest in the organization.

“Time commitment is determined by what they want to get out of the organization. Some members stay in contact with the president and vice president but are unable to make the meetings ... (some students) want to connect with other students and gain event planning experience ... the (involvement) possibilities really are endless,” said Johnson.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE — Lisa Cappa, president of Communication Professionals Network (CPN) looks on as Scott Evans of MyNDY-TV, Monique Armstrong of Motivate Our Minds and Keith Roysdon of The Muncie Star Press share their professional tips and experiences with a crowd of CCIM majors during CPN’s 2nd Annual Career Panel on Nov. 4.

FIND OUT MORE:
- The Communication Professionals Network will hold their next meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 8 in LB 112 at 7 p.m.

UNDIVIDED ATTENTION — The crowd of students from Journalism, Telecommunications and Communication Studies listened attentively during Communication Professionals Network’s 2nd annual Career Panel in early November.

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When he applied for his current position, Bradley University requested a portfolio of his work and became keenly interested in the content he designed for the 500 Festival social media campaign. Prior to this time, the university’s marketing attempts via social media largely were limited to the placement of advertising on social media sites. They were interested in doing much, much more.

JD uses many of the same social media channels accessed by millions of people on a daily basis. However, he uses Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as business tools. His primary mission is to strategically develop, manage, and monitor social media content to generate prospective students’ interest in Bradley University.

Toward this end, JD produces and manages a variety of on-line content, including videos that highlight various dimensions of campus life, such as athletic events, activity fairs, and Greek life; photographs from campus Visit Days; tips for creating effective admissions applications; information about the history of the university; and announcements about community and campus events. One of his current projects involves producing a “reality-style” video that explains what it is like to live in the dorms at Bradley University. He also is working on creating a Twitter following and manages two social media networks specifically designed for the university. Connect2Bradley is designed to address the needs of incoming freshmen students. BradleyConnect targets students who are transferring to Bradley University.

JD emphasizes that his is not a typical 40 hour week, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. job. His schedule often is dictated by peak periods of consumer social media usage. He frequently monitors the university’s social media sites even when “off the clock.” And, he can be called upon at any time to provide social media content to respond to the university’s needs. For example, he may tweet about a Bradley University basketball game and post Facebook photos while attending the game. Perhaps as a result, JD has discovered that his personal use of social media has decreased significantly since he started his job.

For JD, success in the social media field is dependent on several things. First, he insists that content providers must be able to write well. One of his greatest challenges is designing engaging messages that also are “clear, concise, correct, and within 140 characters.” JD also indicates that the ability to strategically plan messages and to multi-task are quite important. Finally, success depends on being able to cope with the rapid pace of change associated with social media technologies. He points to Facebook’s recent announcement of plans to integrate a new “Messages” e-mail system as an example. He and his colleagues now must determine how this innovation will affect the way that they use Facebook to promote Bradley University.

Because professional use of social media is so new, there is not a lot of formal training available for people interested in pursuing careers in this field. Therefore, JD encourages people to engage in a lot of independent research. The best preparation may come from reading trade publications, consulting blogs, examining other professionals’ use of social media, and investigating social media business strategies. It also is important for people seeking careers in this field to “stay on top of their game.” Because social media changes so quickly, staying current in the field is vital. One of JD’s future goals is to address this need by organizing a conference for social media coordinators who work in college and university admissions across the midwest. He envisions a gathering in which people come together to discuss challenges, share ideas for the future, and gain inspiration from other professional users.
Events

DECEMBER

FRIDAY-SATURDAY | 3-4
Annual Ball State NEDA debate tournament.

SUNDAY | 5
Phi Kappa Phi Initiation Ceremony, Ball State University Art Museum, 2:00 p.m.

COMM 210 Bucket Speech Competition, Letterman Building, 2:00 p.m.

MONDAY | 6
COMM 210 Ugly Holiday Sweater Day

WEDNESDAY | 8
Muncie SCORE Ambassadors will have an information booth at the Building Better Communities (BBC) Fellows Showcase from 4-6 p.m. at the L.A. Pettinger Student Center.

Muncie SCORE Ambassadors Mixer at the Muncie Chamber of Commerce, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Contact Peggy Fisher at (765) 285-1958 for more information.

FRIDAY | 10
Last meeting day for regular classes.

SATURDAY | 11
Lambda Pi Eta annual Delaware County Foster Child Holiday Party.

Final examination day for Saturday classes.

MONDAY | 13
“Seasonal Peace” Carry-In Lunch, Dept. of Communication Studies, noon.

MONDAY-FRIDAY | 13-17
Final Examination Period.

SATURDAY | 18
December Commencement. Residence halls close at 6 p.m.

SUNDAY-SUNDAY | DEC. 19, 2010 - JAN. 9, 2011
Semester break.

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According to Denker, one reason for implementing the Bucket Speech was to “give students the opportunity to see how much their persuasive speeches can impact the community. I think it’s important to provide a sense of connection with students and the community.” Students will have a chance to practice their speeches in class as part of their final speech assignment. This opportunity affords students participating in the Bucket Speech to receive feedback from their professor and make necessary adjustments before the competition, which takes place Sunday, Dec. 5.

Aaron Estabrook, Kristina White, Heather Chaulk, Sheri Niekamp, and Jessica Choquette join Tarr on the service learning committee and have worked on the Bucket Speech project. According to Tarr, a few Communication Studies graduate assistants have volunteered to judge the preliminary rounds and a couple of faculty assistants have volunteered to judge the final round.

“Knowing that this project will help the community by earning money for a non-profit organization is very rewarding,” said Kirschner. “I didn’t know we’d get stuff done.”

Kirschner found the flexible environment a challenge at times and enjoyed her experience. “It’s definitely different than going to class every day,” she said. “Instead of 50 minutes in a classroom you might be here for hours on end and that can be kind of draining. It’s a lot more flexible but you are pushed to stay on track and are held accountable.”

“Immersive Learning is not like when you teach a class where you hand out a syllabus and each week you have an assignment or quiz to prepare. This is very flexible,” Heifetz explained. “Immersive Learning in general is such a different experience and it takes time to get used to it, especially when you usually have a set schedule for when to be in class or grade papers.”

“I didn’t have any agenda about who or what we would cover … the students did it all … I told them they are driving the bus and my job is to not let it go off a cliff.”

Terry Heifetz | program supervisor

“Bucket Speech” continued from page 3

vote within their individual groups for a list of finalists. “The students did all the research. I didn’t have any agenda about who or what we would cover … the students did it all … I told them they are driving the bus and my job is to not let it go off a cliff.”

It was a tight competition, with only one or two artists not making the list of finalists. Heifetz described the collection of 13 artists who made the cut as eclectic. “The artists come from all over the place—both geographically and in what they do. We used a broad definition of art during the selection process. We found painters and musicians as well as a tattoo artist, a cake artist and a harp maker,” he said.

The showcase and documentary premiere are only part of the VBC project. Heifetz said each of the 13 artists had a feature story about them created. Though no dates had been finalized at the time this story was written, Heifetz said he anticipates a TV documentary airing on WIPB and a promotional piece airing on Indiana Public Radio. There are also magazine articles in the works that are being pitched to various periodicals.

Students have to go through an interview process to be selected for VBC projects, the limit for each capping at 15. “I knew I’d be working with other students and since 15 were picked from a group of around 85 I thought the others would be ‘the best of the best’ and I was intimidated,” commented participant Megan Kirschner. “But I knew we’d get stuff done.”

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