UniverCity 2002 speakers share real world experience

By Miranda Montooth

The week-long intellectual festival of UniverCity 2002 was the perfect excuse for alumni to visit and share their expertise with current students.

On Sept. 25, tent Red 11, located in Tent City on the lawn between the Architecture and Library buildings, became a journalism classroom for the community as part of the university-wide event.

Throughout the day students displayed community projects and attended lectures, multimedia presentations and question-and-answer sessions sponsored by the college. Robert Pritchard served as the college representative to the planning committee.

Chris Jensen (M.A. 1988), the editorial director for the National Retail Hardware Association, discussed the myriad of job opportunities in the trade magazine industry. "The perception is that trade is not as exciting [as the consumer magazine industry]," said Jensen. "But I've been doing it for 14 years and have loved every minute of it." Jensen explained that the writing and reporting is the same no matter which industry you enter. The fact is, he said, there are very few opportunities for students to find jobs at consumer magazine just after college. But the trade industry makes it much easier to get in the door. "If I can help one or two students find their way into the journalism world every time I come back, it's time well-spent," said Jensen.

Another look at the world of journalism was provided by the department's second speaker, alumnus Fred Blevens (M.S. 1979).

Blevens gave the students a short but informative look at the practice of civic journalism. The former faculty member, who is now associate dean at the University of Oklahoma, used the book he co-authored, "Twilight of Press Freedom: The Rise of People's Journalism," as a guideline. "There is no set definition of civic journalism," he said. "It can be whatever helps a paper get in touch with their community."

He also provided students with a glimpse of what the outside world thinks of Ball State's journalism department. "A degree from Ball State means something," he said. "It is a place in perpetual motion."

Both alumni also met with journalism classes to further share their experiences and encouragement.

Students take notes on the presentation given in the outdoor classroom of the UniverCity festival.

Freshman YaShekia Smalls gives all her attention to speaker Fred Blevens.

ABOVE: Chris Jensen illustrates the many advantages of work in the trade industry to a tent packed with students and faculty.

LEFT: Fred Blevens details the four beliefs he says are necessary to embrace the philosophy of civic journalism.

Photos by Jenny Lesselbaum
Summer workshops offer high school students added experience

BY CHRISTI GARTON

For 37 Ball State’s journalism department has offered high school students and advisers from around the country the opportunity to attend before their time out of their summer schedules and be a part of what has consistently been a distinguished journalism workshop program. This year, however, those workshops were pushed to a new level.

Under the leadership of first-time director Mark Herron, 400 high school students from 12 states came to campus July 8-12 and July 15-19 for intense journalism instruction.

This came in the form of a top-notch staff from the United States and Canada. The staff was comprised of numerous award-winning teachers and advisers, as well as Gold Crown and Pacemaker winners.

“I absolutely loved my teachers,” said Corrisa van der Merwe of Smycove High School in Ohio. “Not only did they teach me the techniques in journalism, English, social studies and civics. The Indianapolis Star; Michelle McClellan from The Oregonian, who is also a Neiman Fellow at Harvard University; Ken Hein, photojournalist and professor at Ball State; and Pulitzer Prize winner Amanda Henderson from The Detroit News.

The institute’s hectic schedule didn’t only trained participants to be better newspaper advisers, but offered them six hours of graduate credit upon completion of the institute.

“The pace of the institute was so intense and fast,” said Glen McClellan from The Oregonian, who is also a Neiman Fellow at Harvard University; Ken Hein, photojournalist and professor at Ball State; and Pulitzer Prize winner Amanda Henderson from The Detroit News.

In 1994, Wilkerson became the first African-American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize. The award was for her coverage of the Midwest flooding and a story about a child living on the South Side of Chicago. It was the profile of 10-year-old Isadora, whom Wilkerson shared her “mantra of writing, instructing, training and design process during its journalism workshops for the first time.

In the past, students signed up for one class and spent the week with one instructor, focusing on one aspect of journalism. The WED process allowed students to take three separate daytime sessions and study writing, editing and design.

The workshops also offered special evening sessions allowing students to take time to learn more about copywriting, yearbook design trends and editorial leadership. Students got the chance to interact with up to three different instructors and had more of a well-rounded experience.

Chelsea Schnedier, a Warren Central High School student, said she thought the experience was great, and she wouldn’t change a thing.

“I didn’t even think it was possible to learn so much in a week,” said Shelby Dow of Clay High School in South Bend, Ind.

Plans are already well underway for summer 2003. Summer school and other summer camps have caused conflicts in the past, keeping many students from attending.

In 2003, the workshops will take place two weeks later than usual, from July 21 - 25 and July 28 - Aug. 1.

Herron hopes that this change of dates will take care of the conflicts, and he said adviser feedback told him students would like to attend these workshops as close to the beginning of school as possible.

“We have based the changes on the Indiana summer school schedule as well as the Ball State summer school schedule,” Herron said. “This way, the students can carry the knowledge and excitement of their experience at Ball State into their own publications.”

ASNE Institute offers Journalism education training

BY KYNA WILLIS

Nostalgic memories of college days filled the heads of many high school journalism teachers as they arrived at Ball State University to attend a two-week institute sponsored by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Their sweet memories of a carefree way of life were soon shattered by Mary Arnold Hemlinger, ASNE workshop director. She presented a long syllabus and an overview of the institute, welcoming them to ASNE BOOT CAMP.

Thirty-five teachers from across the United States attended the second annual ASNE High School Journalism Institute from July 8-12, Ball State. The institute was designed to focus on skills including newspaper editing, writing, design and photojournalism. These skills were targeted to help newspaper advisers start a student-driven newspaper, improve the quality of an existing paper, and enhance teaching techniques in journalism, English, social studies and civics.

“I didn’t realize how much I didn’t know until I got here,” said Kate Billman from Cardinal State and other participants were in the daily writing circles were taught by some of the leading high school journalism advisers in the country, including Ball State alumnus and 2001 Dow Jones Newspaper Fund National High School Journalism Teacher of the Year, Terry Nelson (M.A., 1973). Presenters for lectures included Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center in Washington, D.C. Leisa Richardson, recruitment and development editor from The Indianapolis Star; Michelle McClellan from The Oregonian, who is also a Neiman Fellow at Harvard University; Ken Hein, photojournalist and professor at Ball State; and Pulitzer Prize winner Amanda Henderson from The Detroit News.

The institute’s hectic schedule not only trained participants to be better newspaper advisers, but offered them six hours of graduate credit upon completion of the institute.

“The pace of the institute was so intense and fast,” said Glen Scott Copper from Milwaukee High School of the Arts in Milwaukee, Wis. “I worked hard to keep up with everything that we learned during the two weeks. It was definitely worth six credit hours.”

Along with classroom style lectures, participants were able to experience the hands-on production of a newspaper. They toured The Indianapolis Star’s new $72 million production facility, as well as the Daily News and The Star Press facilities.

As a reward for their bravery for enrolling in ASNE boot camp, worn out participants enjoyed a day on the town in Indianapolis. They visited museums, the Circle Centre Mall and dined at the Skyline Club.

Lisa Kingsbury from Antioch High School in Antioch, Calif., said, “I now have peace of mind. Last year was such a hectic year, but now I have tools, understanding, a network and resources to advise a fantastic paper.”

Wilkerson: Write with empathy

BY MIRANDA MONTOTH

Empathy is not a word one usually associates with journalists. But Isabel Wilkerson, former Chicago Bureau Chief of the New York Times, says that it is the ingredient that can make writing its best Wilkerson shared her “mantra of empathy” as part of the Professional-in-Residence program on Oct. 7 in the Student Center.

“If you approach stories with empathy and you write with the idea of trying to reach the readers so they can then, in fact, see themselves in the subject you’re writing, that’s what success is,” said Wilkerson.

In 1994, Wilkerson became the first African-American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize. The award was for her coverage of the Midwest flooding and a story about a child living on the South Side of Chicago. It was the profile of 10-year-old Isadora, whom Wilkerson used to illustrate her empathetic approach.

But she cautioned that empathy can’t be faked.

“Empathy has to be sincere and real because people are really smart,” she said. “They can see through that.”

While specific, said Wilkerson, “Is finding the right subject – someone who is accessible, eager and compelling. This ultimately takes time away from the reporting but it is a well-spent sacrifice. “It’s finding the right subject that will make the reporting bear fruit,” she said.

Recently, Wilkerson has been following her love of literary journalism. She is working on a non-fiction book on the migration of African-Americans from the South to the North and West during the 20th century. The story is told through the memories of three families who participated in the migration.
Schranz Lecture highlights integrity

BY GREG CHANDLER

With corporate America stained by fallout at companies like Enron and WorldCom, Christopher Komisarjevsky's message about corporate integrity could not have been more appropriate.

Komisarjevsky, president and chief executive officer at Burson-Mars. telle r Worldwide, spoke to an audience of 400 professionals who had been invited to present the lecture, said Dr. Melvin Sharpe, Ball State's public relations department head.

Komisarjevsky's lecture, "Integrity: The Final Frontier," challenged public relations practitioners to recognize the importance the profession has in the modern world and to understand integrity's role in corporate leadership.

"There cannot help but be tears when companies with proud histories that span decades fall by the wayside—and, in some cases, even disappear—in a matter of months because someone in a leadership position didn't do what was right," Komisarjevsky said.

While public relations practitioners do not always have the final say in major decisions, their obligation and duty to advise in what establishes their role as the guardians of integrity, said Komisarjevsky.

"In the best managed companies, our position and earned credibility give us a strong voice," Komisarjevsky said. "We have the responsibility to share our professionalism point of view and counsel, not only on what the communication should be and on which audiences should count most, but also on what the behavior must be."

"In my view, there is no question that we must be the guardians of integrity," Komisarjevsky added. "There is no more important role that can be played."

Komisarjevsky concluded by presenting CCIM Dean, Scott Olson, with a first-edition copy of the Jules Verne novel "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," which was compared to the world of public relations at several points throughout the lecture. The novel will be displayed at Bracken Library.

Komisarjevsky is the co-author of "Peanut Butter and Jelly Management," and has close to 30 years of professional experience in public relations and business. Under his leadership, Burson-Mars. telle r has produced $25 million in annual income and continues to be one of the world's largest communications consulting firms, with 72 offices in 32 countries. He has written articles on numerous public relations topics and has lectured at the prestigious Instituto de Empresa in Spain.

Former Naval officer gives lesson in integrity

BY LAURA HOBBS

Integrity is simple for Robert Sims to define—he defines it by asking the question: "Is it the right thing to do?"

This point summed up Sims' Nov. 12 speech, the last Professional-in-Residence presentation for the fall semester.

Sims spoke on integrity in the workplace to a standing-room-only audience in the Art and Journalism Building's lecture hall.

Sims, a retired Naval officer, has worked as president of National Geographic, in the White House under President Ronald Reagan, and is now the publisher of the Crockett Times, a weekly newspaper in Alamo, Tenn.

In all his positions, Sims said he’s never had to go against his values in order to do his job.

Robert S. Pritchard, associate professor of journalism in the public relations sequence head, said Sims has shaped his career after Sims' ideas and values.

"He was a legend when I first got into the Navy," Pritchard said. "He was a model for what I wanted to be."

Sims commented briefly about the new journalism building and the technology Ball State's journalism department has.

"I haven’t seen anything that compares with this," he said. "I was salivating when I walked around your building and saw your equipment."

Part of his speech included stories of people in journalism and government Sims admired for their use of integrity. Among those names were former President Ronald Reagan, current Secretary of State Colin Powell and television broadcaster Peter Jennings.

Sims concluded his speech by giving a simple piece of advice to students—honesty and integrity in the profession will earn respect.

However, this wasn't only a speech to encourage students but also a testimony to how far one can go by sticking to this advice.

PR offers new master's specialization degrees

BY BETSY HATCH

Public relations is becoming more specialized, said sequence coordinator Melvin Sharpe. As a result, master’s students will now be able to take courses that focus on a specific aspect of public relations. The program is already implementing an emphasis on sport communication and approved adding specializations in business, public affairs and communication.

"We could see the effectiveness of it in the sports program," said Sharpe. "That created a lot of pressure to do a specialization in business, so we began to look at our options."

Public relations assistant professor Becky McDonald said the specializations offer a broader exposure to the industry they are interested in.

"The specializations have met a student need," McDonald said. "Many of our master's students are already working professionally and the specializations offer a more applied approach that will relate to their job."

McDonald also said the business, sports and public affairs specializations are ideal for someone who already has an undergraduate degree in public relations because it will give those students exposure to something new.

Meanwhile, the communication option will suit students whose undergraduate degree may be in a different field, said Sharpe.

They can come into the program from different disciplines and really get a strong communications background with their master’s degree," he said.

The specializations are a mix of public relations courses and courses from other disciplines. Students with a sport communications emphasis take classes from the physical education department. Students with an emphasis in business will take courses in management, accounting, and marketing. Students with a communications emphasis will take courses in communication, and students with a public affairs emphasis will take courses in political science and history.

Cliff Fraser, who received a master's degree in public relations with an emphasis in sport communication in May, was the first person to enroll in the specialization. Fraser, who now works at Hoosier Park in Anderson as the coordinator of the Twin Spires Club, said he benefited from the specialization.
A look at the events that taught us, intrigued us and even tickled our funny bones.

Photos by Jenny Lesselbaum and Miranda Montooth

ABOVE: Professor Mark Popovich and Lecturer Emeritus Fred Woodress share a laugh at UniverCity 2002.

ABOVE: Bryan Erickson of Time magazine explains the art directing process to students.

RIGHT: CCIIM faculty and staff gather at the Alumni Center to honor this year’s Distinguished Schrant Lectureship.

ABOVE: Instructor Pam Farmen soaks up the sun during a multi-media presentation at UniverCity 2002.

LEFT: Families get a chance to “play” reporter on the department’s new video broadcast system. Family Weekend featured tours of the new Integrated Media Lab.

LEFT: Chicago Tribune’s Tony Majeri presents the Tribune’s interactive CD, “When Evil Struck America,” to students and faculty.

EXTRA! EXTRA!  
June 21, 2003

Student Media Alumni Reunion

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