Big Changes in the School of Communication

Muppidi Begins Term as School Director

After seven years as School of Communication Director, Lynne Kelly, has completed her term and Sundeep Muppidi took over as director. Muppidi, who was promoted to full professor in the spring, originally joined the faculty in 1998. He has been teaching courses in new media, international communication, multimedia and television production, and research methods. An accomplished scholar, he edited the 6th edition of the Asian Communication Handbook in which he wrote the first chapter and authored or co-authored the descriptions of the 26 Asian countries featured in the handbook. Muppidi has impressive administrative experience as well, having served as secretary general of the Asian Media and Information Center (AMIC) from January 2010-2012 and as graduate program director of the School of Communication from 2004-2007. He is eager to take on the challenge of heading the School of Communication during a time of tremendous change in communication and media as well as higher education.

Kelly is eager to spend more time teaching following her seven-year directorship, during which she built a positive and engaged alumni community, improved student opportunities and experiences, and promoted the school and its faculty and students. Harvey Jassem said, “Lynne’s been the ideal director. Her insights and energy, dedication to the interests of our students, outreach to our alums, and well being of the program
have enhanced everything we do. She has always put the program before herself.” Randy Jacobs remarked, "During her tenure as director, Kelly set high standards for students, faculty and staff alike. She challenged us to enhance the quality of our program and, when possible, provided the support needed to do so. She is an outstanding role model."

Reflecting on her directorship, Kelly said, “I’m very glad I had the opportunity to be director. It was my turn to step up. I gave it my all and like to think that my efforts and accomplishments improved the School of Communication for students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Just like raising a child, it was way more fun than I expected and way more work! I could not have accomplished everything that I did without the hard work done by faculty and staff. And I had a blast reconnecting with alumni. We are lucky to have so many alumni who stay in touch, share their experiences with students, and help students with internships and job leads.”

**Cinema Merges with the School of Communication**

Last summer, as a result of changes in the College of Arts and Sciences, the cinema faculty, staff, and program joined the School of Communication. The transition took place during the academic year, touching on terms of administration, student recruiting, faculty and staff evaluation, and other areas. Despite the changes there will still be a Bachelor of Arts degree program in cinema, a Bachelor of Arts in communication, and a Master of Arts in communication. A goal is to retain the unique identities of the programs and to explore potential new courses and opportunities. This fall, for instance, a new course will be offered on Music Video and Commercial Production, populated by students in both programs.

**Faculty Changes**

With regret we announce the departure of Aimee Miller-Ott, who is leaving the University of Hartford to take a position at Illinois State University. Dr. Miller-Ott joined the School of Communication faculty in 2008, teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in interpersonal communication, family communication, small group communication, and many more. While here she developed a new course, The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication, which was well received by
students and is now a permanent course. Miller-Ott served as faculty advisor to Lambda Pi Eta, and has contributed to the School of Communication in countless ways. She will be missed.

Independent public radio reporter Nancy Eve Cohen is joining the faculty in the fall. In addition to teaching journalism courses at University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Smith College, she brings a wealth of experience as a reporter and editor for public radio, television, the web, and print. Her stories have aired on NPR, WBUR, WNYC, VPR, the CBC in Canada, Marketplace, and CBS Radio. Cohen began her journalism career in television, producing award-winning environmental documentaries and recording sound for network television. Her TV work included a rare interview with Fidel Castro in Cuba and coverage of the war in Sarajevo in 1992. She is part of the news team at Vermont Public Radio that received a first place PRNDI award for flood coverage in 2012. In 2008, she was named the Environmental Reporter of the Year by the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut. In 2006, she won the Enterprise Award from the Connecticut Associated Press Broadcasters Association. This coming year she will be teaching Fundamentals of Journalism, News Reporting, Editorial and Feature Story, Creative Non-fiction, and a special course in Radio Journalism, which she is particularly excited about.
**Spring Events for Students**

*Alumni-Student Career Mixer*

Students and alumni of the School of Communication had a chance to meet each other on March 11 at the annual Alumni-Student Career Mixer organized by the communication honor society, Lambda Pi Eta. Undergraduates came to the Gray Conference Center to hear about the careers of alumni and then got a chance to meet them.

Attending were **Kristie Borges ’93**, news producer, NBC 30; **Stephen Busemeyer ’93**, breaking news editor, The Hartford Courant; **Matt Cooke ’10**, strategic communications coordinator, Prudential; **Danielle Cyr ’06**, VP of integrated marketing, Co-communications; **LeAnne Gendreau ’94**, web editor, NBC 30; Keith Goralski ’91, senior director, Digital Content & ESPYS Day Auction, ESPN; Tom Nelson ’04, freelance director of photography; Jessica Ruggles ’10, marketing specialist, Prudential; Amanda Schoonmaker ’09, M’10, communications manager, CT Convention Center; Lon Seidman ’98, co-founder, Independent Media Network; and Lee Simmons ’06, client relationship manager, Event Resources, and freelance director, Channel 40 Springfield. The highlight for all was the opportunity to network, with some students able to connect with alumni about internships and jobs.
The second annual Reel Film Festival, a submission-based showcase of films and videos created during the academic year by University students was held May 7. Reel Film Club e-board members Kyle Turner, Parnian Emami, RJ Larussa, Nicholas Mastrangelo, Charles Kahn, and Eric Alelov, and faculty advisor Margo Greenlaw coordinated the event, hosted by Spotlight Theatres in Hartford. Out of the nearly 30 films that students submitted, 18 were selected to screen. Students whose pieces were accepted were thrilled to see their films on the big screen before an audience of friends, family, and faculty celebrating their hard work. School of Communication Professors Jack Banks and Kristin Comeforo, and filmmaker, part-time faculty member Pedro Bermudez—alum of the cinema program—comprised the judging panel and, after a tough deliberation, awarded the grand prize to Nicholas Mastrangelo for his surreal comedy Digital You.
Rob Melick A’96, ’98 was honored May 18 as a Distinguished Alumnus of Hillyer College, for his impressive career in television news. After directing the news in Rochester, Hartford, and Philadelphia, he moved to Washington D.C. where he was named director of Fox News Sunday, a weekly political television show. In 2010 Rob accepted his current position, becoming the director of the award-winning news show, Meet the Press. He has won three Emmy awards, most recently for directing the London Olympics for NBC. Melick, a communication major who started at Hillyer College, made the Student Television Network (STN) his home while he was at the University.

Another alumnus who made STN his home as a student is Ben Wilcox ’13. In the short time since he graduated and started his job as a news anchor at WENY TV News in Elmira, N.Y., he has already begun to make a name for himself. He won first place in the New York State Broadcasters Associated Press awards for both Best Enterprise Reporting and Continuing News Coverage. The Enterprise award, for investigative news pieces, was for his story “Fire Inspections in Local Schools.” His piece on a home filled with sewage won the Continuing News Coverage prize. Well done, Ben.

This past spring there were wedding bells for alumni Craig Byer ’09 and Alexandria Hubbard ’10, who were joined by four alumni, all former staffers at The Informer student newspaper. Congratulations to the happy couple.
Katharina Lindner ‘03, M’05, a former member of the women’s soccer team, was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame. After completing her master's in the School of Communication, Katharina went on to earn a PhD from the University of Glasgow and currently teaches in the department of media, communication, and culture at the University of Stirling in the U.K.

Alumna Amy Ekross Quigley ’93 was this year’s invited speaker for the Corine T. Norgaard Women in Leadership Lecture hosted by the Barney School of Business on April 1. Her topic was “Brand You: The Power of Connections and Building Your Personal Brand.” Quigley was recently named president of The Massachusetts Innovation & Technology Exchange (MITX), New England’s leading digital marketing, media, and Internet business nonprofit association. She was previously chief marketing officer at Myelin Health in Boston. As a student in the School of Communication, Quigley was on the advertising competition team participating in the American Advertising Federation’s National Student Competition, an experience she remembers vividly because she found it to be terrific preparation for her career in branding and marketing. In fact, she took time out of her work day to come to Simmons College on April 11 to watch this year’s student team give its campaign pitch for client Mary Kay, Inc.

Spring ’14 Internship News

Brendan McCafferty interned at Mobile Video Productions in Manhattan, a full service TV/Film production company, known for its work on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, The Colbert Report, and TV ads and sport promotions. One of his more memorable projects was helping to produce a commercial starring daytime TV personality Kelly Ripa.

Ben Cohn commuted two days per week to Stamford to intern at World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. where he researched WWE history and helped write magazine and web copy. Lindsay Carey and Scott Roberts worked in the news department of WVIT-TV Channel 30 helping to produce morning and evening news, while Rachel Cisto had the same duties at Ch. 61 FOX-TV.
Seniors Cameron DaSilva, Leigh-Ann Todaro, and Brooke Tallinger worked in production at Back9, a new cable channel that promises to become the ESPN of golf. Brooke helped to produce a program titled “Digging for White Gold” about the world of professional golf ball hunters who make their living diving into lakes and rivers to retrieve golf balls for cash. Management paid the ultimate compliment to Cameron by offering him a full-time position at the channel after graduation. In the vast universe of non-broadcast video production, Justin Snide and Katie Fields helped to produce training films and videos at Learn To Program TV in East Hartford.

Other interns tried their hand in radio. Kelly Bouchard and Joe Ianiello promoted events and concerts for Clear Channel in Hartford, while Kyle Katin helped produce programming for WJMJ, operated by the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Print media were also important sources of internships. Sarah Lawes worked at Hartford Magazine in sales and promotion while Tia Long wrote articles for Everything Girls Love, a web-based fashion and style magazine covering New York and surrounding areas. Nicole Callender and Joanna Amoyaw wrote for Artsy Magazine, a NY based arts and culture publication.

In advertising and public relations, Sarah Morin interned in customer relations at The Shoppes at Canton Village and Sara Weissman worked in event promotion for West Hartford-based Event Management. Sean O’Donovan worked in the creative department at the Mintz’ Hoke advertising agency in Avon.

Meanwhile, Nicholas Doherty worked in social media marketing for Cloud Advantage, a messaging and data management firm, and Stefanie Szepanski worked in human relations for Stanadyne manufacturing. Kevin Mehler coordinated social media marketing for Gateway Financial Partners. His supervisor reported that principals in the firm learned beneficial information from Kevins’ courses in the school.

Several others interned at a number of Connecticut non-profits, including Alyssa Orlansky at the Lupus Foundation, Allison Fingado at the National MS Society and Carla Alves at the American Lung Association. Julia Cassarino helped to produce the annual gala and fundraiser for the Justin Matthew Porco Foundation and Adrienne Branch worked in promotion and donor relations at Feeding Children Everywhere.
Save the Date

Save the date and join us for the School of Communication Alumni Reception, held during Hawktober Weekend, the University's annual Homecoming and Parents Weekend, Oct. 17–19. Registration opens Aug. 1.

Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund

In today’s tough job market, students need to stand out. The Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund enables students to attend conferences and conventions, compete in the American Advertising Federation's National Student Advertising Competition, and travel to distant internships.

Support our students by making a gift online at www.anchoronline.org/anchorfund, and designating "Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund" under "other." You can also send a check, payable to the University of Hartford to Institutional Advancement, to the University of Hartford, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117. Please write "Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund" in the memo line.