Communication Alumni Newsletter
July 2010

3rd Annual Communication Alumni Reception to Be Held October 1, 2010

Come join in the fun, mingle with former professors and classmates, and perhaps do some networking. During Homecoming Weekend, the School of Communication will host a reception for alumni of its undergraduate and graduate programs on Friday, October 1, 2010 in the Rotunda of the Harry Jack Gray Center at 5:30-7:30 pm.

Be sure to mark your calendars and reply when you receive an invitation from the Office of Alumni Relations. You may register for the event at www.anchoronline.org.

Communication Alumni Reception in NYC a Big Success

The March 25, 2010 School of Communication Happy Hour reception in Manhattan at the Croton Reservoir Tavern was very well attended by alumni from the 1980s to 2009. Professors Roger Desmond, Bob Duran, Harvey Jassem, Lynne Kelly, Paul Siegel, and Susan Grantham went to the Big Apple to share in the fun and reconnect with former students. A special thank you to alumna Elite Rubin ('98) who devoted her time to planning this event and to Shelby Asen (2010) who assisted. We look forward to a similar event in the near future. Any alumni in Boston who’d like to plan a Happy Hour reception?

In a tough job market, it is important for students graduating in Communication to distinguish themselves through internships and participation in special activities that develop their skills and help them network. School of Communication students present projects at professional conventions like the Public Relations Society of America and the Eastern Communication Association. Some participate in the American Advertising Federation’s National Student Advertising Competition and many do internships. These activities, along with attendance at lectures and events, field trips to media outlets, etc., vital to students’ professional growth, have associated costs which can prevent students from participating.

That’s why we created a new fund, the Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund to cover some or all of the costs of these kinds of activities. Faculty in the School of Communication initiated the fund through their donations, and we are asking for your help to grow the fund.

To make a contribution to the fund, you can send a check payable to the University of Hartford, and in the memo section indicate Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund, and mail c/o Crystal Waldo, Institutional Advancement, University of Hartford, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117. If you prefer to contribute to the fund online, go to www.hartford.edu, click on “Giving to U of H,” select “Make a Gift,” and where it asks for “Designation,”
select “Other” and indicate Communication Students Special Opportunities Fund.

Please consider a gift to the Special Opportunities Fund for Communication Students.

Communication Students Welcome Alumni for Career Meet and Greet Event

Nine School of Communication alumni came to campus on March 4, 2010 for a Career Meet and Greet event organized by the Communication honor society, Lambda Pi Eta. The classroom and lobby were packed with students eager to hear about the careers of alumni and then to get a chance to meet them personally. The alumni who attended were Kristie Borges ('93), News Producer, NBC 30; Stephen Busemeyer ('93), Breaking News Editor, The Hartford Courant; Jocelyn Feder ('93), Human Resources Manager, Goodrich PECS; LeAnne Gendreau ('94), Web Editor, NBC 30; Alexis Lemieux ('07), Communication Specialist, The Hartford; Mark Lukas ('84), Retail Advertising Director, The Hartford Courant; Rachel Lutzker ('99), TV Reporter, Fox 61; Amanda Nelson ('04), Account Executive, Cronin & Co; and Lon Seidman ('98), co-founder and C.E.O. of Local Online News.TV.

Faculty News

Professor Robert L. Duran was named as this year’s recipient of the Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching. The Larsen Award, given at commencement, recognizes a faculty member for exceptional teaching and work with students in and out of the classroom. In letters of support and course evaluations, students commented: “I wanted to come to class,” “Dr. Duran, best teacher I’ve had,” “His enthusiasm is contagious,” and “An exceptional mentor.”

Bob Duran began teaching at the University of Hartford in 1981 and has taught courses such as interpersonal communication, small group communication, nonverbal communication, and communication research methods. Known by students and faculty for his passion for communication research, he has directed many graduate and Honors theses. He has worked on research projects with students, writing and delivering papers with them at regional communication conventions like the Eastern Communication Association and published journal articles co-authored with students. Those who have taken the communication research methods course taught by Dr. Duran have appreciated his enthusiasm and his ability to engage them and make difficult concepts understandable. A former student remarked that he had had no interest in research methods and was initially taking it because it was required. He stated: “However, Dr. Duran captivated my interest. . . we learned because Dr. Duran brought the material to life. . . his fascination and passion for research was incredibly contagious.”

Professor Elizabeth Burt spent a week at the University of the Pacific to examine the papers of naturalist John Muir. She received a Cardin Grant for her research into press coverage of Muir’s attempts to protect the American national parks at the turn of the 20th Century. In August, she will present her paper, “Negotiating the Transition from ‘True Woman’ to ‘New Woman’ in the Lydia Pinkham ‘Animated Ads’ of 1890,” at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in Denver.

Dr. Mark Cistulli presented two papers at the Eastern Communication Association convention in Baltimore. One paper, titled: “Workplace Email Monitoring: The Links among Employee Privacy, Trust in Management, and Commitment” (co-authored with Dr. Jason Snyder) was recognized as a Top Competitive Paper in Organizational Communication. The second paper, “A Win, Lose Proposition: Positive and Negative Evaluations of Drinking Game Outcomes,” was co-authored with Dr. Snyder and Dr.
Randy Jacobs of the School of Communication.

Professor Don Ellis was a member of a week-long seminar at NYU devoted to political Islam. The seminar was helpful for his work on communication approaches to solving difficult political conflicts. He also taught a course at Ariel University located in the West Bank in Israel. While in Israel he continued work on a book and research project funded by the International Center at the University.

At the International Society for Risk Analysis conference on “Risk, Governance & Accountability,” held in London, Dr. Susan Grantham, along with co-authors Colleen Connolly-Ahern and Lee Ahern, presented a paper called, “Communicating the Risk of HPV and Cervical Cancer through Social Amplification: Merck’s Strategic Marketing of Gardasil.”

Dr. Harvey Jassem co-edited a book, The Urban Communication Reader, Volume 2, published by Hampton Press. The book was undertaken by scholars affiliated with the Urban Communication Foundation, which, according to Jassem, “promotes research designed to enhance understanding of communication patterns in the urban environment and encourages collaboration among communication scholars, urban planners, and policy makers.”

The Women’s Education and Leadership Fund approved a grant proposal by Dr. Aimee Miller and Dr. Lynne Kelly for a project on relational aggression among college women. Beyond conducting research, a goal of the project is to mentor young women in the research process. Five students will conduct interviews with college women about their experiences, and help to write the report and present the work at conferences and within the campus community.

If you have any news you’d like to share, or if you’d like to be a guest speaker, or if you have internship opportunities for our students, please let us know. We enjoy hearing from you. To keep up with School of Communication happenings, you can also visit our website at http://uhavax.hartford.edu/cmm. We hope to see you on October 1st.