Students Study Cold War and Media in Europe

I-Comm Week VII

King of the Dead Heads

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Alumni braved chilly weather and more than a few raindrops to spend an afternoon with former classmates and faculty of the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies in a festive kickoff to homecoming weekend at the college’s sixth annual Gamecocks on the Green reception.

“Holding an event for alumni during homecoming weekend is so important,” said Elaine Taylor, alumni relations manager and assistant director of development. “It’s a time for alumni to reconnect with campus, their classmates and professors.”

The Nov. 5 event on Gibbes Green featured honorary hosts: 13 alumni, four distinguished professors emeritus, a distinguished dean emeritus and a staff member of the School of Library and Information Science. Dr. Michael D. Amiridis, USC vice president for academic affairs and provost, expressed his enthusiasm for the college and welcomed alumni and their families back to campus.

SLIS alumna Amanda Brewer, one of the event’s honorary hosts, entertained the crowd for the second year in a row, playing a wide selection of popular songs on her guitar. Cocky posed for pictures and played a game of cornhole with the children as alumni mingled with current and former faculty and staff of both schools and enjoyed light hors d’oeuvres.

“For me, participating in alumni events is my way of staying connected to professors and classmates,” said Brewer. “Receiving a diploma was not the end of the road — merely the cliffhanger ending of the first chapter. Staying connected to USC through the Alumni Society provides a lot of benefits such as staying in touch with professors and classmates, keeping tabs on the latest trends and developments in your profession, and discovering ways to give back.”

Alumni also won several door prizes, including a Cocky’s Reading Express bobblehead and a gift card for a stay at the Whitney Hotel. Several people wisecracked about football eligibility when alumnus Robert D. Raiford, an honorary host, won a stay at the Whitney.

“Gamecocks on the Green gets better and better each year as we have more support from our alumni, students and faculty,” said Taylor. “Alumni are making this event a tradition for themselves and their families.”
I was in Berlin when Ronald Reagan said, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.” It was 1987. I was back in Berlin this past summer walking around and through remnants of that infamous wall with students from our journalism school. Just as vivid in my mind as the odious scar that divided Berlin, is the vigor of reunited Berlin and the teaching opportunity it afforded us.

The trip through some of my old journalistic haunts was part of a 10-week summer course exploring the Cold War, the collapse of communism and the role of the media. We spent three weeks in Europe, chronologically tracing the efforts to throw off communism’s grip—Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland in 1980 and Berlin in 1989.

I’ve written about our journey in other places, but the memories are revived by the documentary journalism associate professor Dick Moore has created from the course for the university’s Study Abroad Office and its Beyond the Classroom video series. As Dick said recently, the students are still processing the experience. So am I.

For me, it was seeing familiar places in a new light and through the eyes of a different generation. For our students—the generation born just as communism was crumbling and the walls tumbling down—it was trying to place these vibrant 21st century capitals in the context of their Cold War existence.

Our cover photo for this issue captures us in Budapest’s Monument Park, a collection of monuments to communism-era grandiosity.

The success of this course was built on its interdisciplinary collaboration. Political science professor Dr. Gordon Smith and Dr. Don Puchala provided the framework for understanding Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism that led to the Cold War. The concept for the course was Dick’s. He broached the idea after leading a Maymester course to Berlin and Munich. I told him he could not do it, unless I got to participate.

The 2011 iteration of our popular Munich Multimedia Maymester will be led by Dr. Keith Kenney and Scott Farrand.

During spring break 2011, Keith will take students to Jamaica again for his course on Community, Culture and Communication.

Great Libraries of the World: Paris and Rome is a 2011 Maymester course led by Dr. Kendra Albright and Dr. Jennifer Arns for School of Library and Information Science students.

Sandy Snell, a second-year broadcast journalism major and one of the students on the Europe trip, summed up the experience saying “it takes being there” to really appreciate a subject we can only begin to approach in the classroom. The students spread the word, too.

Shortly after our return, Dick and I were asked by the Study Abroad Office if we planned to offer the course again this coming summer. Almost in unison, we took a deep breath and said, “Too soon.” It had, after all, been a full year in planning, organizing, recruiting and conducting, with Dick’s documentary work still to be done. No one expects a faculty member to conduct a study abroad program. But I’ve yet to see any come back less than excited by the experience, particularly when it’s in the company of engaged students.

Now, Dick and I casually exchange notions about what we’d do differently, what we missed, where we’d still like to go. It’s a big, enjoyable and teachable world out there, somewhere beyond Myrtle Beach. Where would you go? I’d like to know. Please e-mail me at bierbauer@sc.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Charles Bierbauer
Dean, College of Mass Communications and Information Studies

The three-day conference offered 13 panel discussions, each with three or four panelists. Sessions dealt with Social Media Impact Across Communication Systems, Intersections between Journalism, Health Communications and Content and Consumers.

One of the biggest trends common to the journalism and health tracks is the use of social media as a secondary tool by both journalists and health providers. Right now both tracks are exploring how to use social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

“It was very interesting looking at the parallels of social media on both tracks,” Dr. Grant said.

The panel discussions allowed scholars to present their research showing the various ways science and health messages can be communicated through new media and technology.

Forty out-of-town visitors and 30 faculty members from the J-school and the School of Public Health attended the conference. The final session was a Participatory Plenary roundtable moderated by co-chairs Dr. Andrea Tanner, a journalism school associate professor, and Dr. Grant. The participants discussed and analyzed the issues and research explored during the conference.

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People who have seen me lately might think I look a little, shall we say, scattered? Normally, I’m willing to drop everything if you want to pop in and chat. But, right now, you’re just as likely to get a stare that could melt an iceberg. What has turned me into this wild woman?

Our reaccreditation self-study.

The faculty and I have been working on this massive document for about a year. But it’s in my hands now with no one to blame but myself if it doesn’t make it to the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication home office on time. Like Robert Frost, I have a miles to go before I sleep. At times I’d rather lie lost on a snowy evening, shlogging my way through dark and deep woods than slogging my way through the documentation, data and details that this self-study requires.

So why bother? Lots of academics are asking this question these days. The arguments typically revolve around cost and restrictions. It’s expensive to be accredited. Every six years a team of five or six stock their work room, hoping we’ll keep them happy on campus. Then there are all the treats we buy to please them. The faculty and I have been working on this massive self-study. Our reaccreditation self-study.

Some programs question the value of accreditation because of the restrictions ACEJMC puts on the curriculum. We must keep all skills classes small. That requirement puts pressure on the number and variety of classes we can offer. ACEJMC requires our students to take 80 hours of classes outside the school, or to put it differently, our students must take almost two-thirds of their college credits in programs other than ours. Meanwhile, professionals tell us we need more multi-media courses, more photography classes, more design courses. Why don’t we have a stand-alone course on Google Analytics? Why don’t we have more advanced writing and editing courses? Apparently it’s that we can’t because ACEJMC standards won’t let us. So some schools have solved this conundrum by stepping away from ACEJMC accreditation altogether.

But we won’t. I’m a firm believer in the accreditation process and here’s why.

Liberal Arts courses. Yes, requiring students to take 80 hours outside the school is restrictive. But even more restrictive is the criteria minds 65 of those hours must be in the liberal arts (courses like history, political science, literature, art). Those 65 hours provide a window to the world for any student studying the media. Knowing something about political science, economics, philosophy, and history is incredibly important to the future journalist, artist, or communications manager. Would students take these courses on their own if they weren’t required? Probably not. Do they understand how important these courses are? Maybe not now. But give them time and they will, I hated my poetry courses. Now a good poem can make me cry. I still get a bit wobbly when reading John Donne’s line “On a huge hill, cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will reach her, about must and about must go.” A good poem helps me understand myself and others more fully — and it helps me cope with contradictions in life that Donne suggests constantly put us in our pursuit of understanding and truth.

A balance of professionally oriented and researcher-focused faculty. As an academic, I love working in a research-oriented university. I love research just for the curiosity of it. I don’t really care if it has a practical component. For me it’s just fun to know. But I’ve learned that applied research also has value. ACEJMC makes us balance professional and academic training. The standards require us to support and to appreciate both professional and academic ways of knowing. That’s why we have faculty with PhDs and faculty with MAs and JDs. We learn from each other and together we provide a better learning environment for our students than if we went at it alone.

Accountability. We might think we’re doing a good job, but if we don’t keep records, create benchmarks and document how we’re meeting our goals, we can’t really know how we’re doing. Accreditation brings all this to light.

The good news is, we’re doing a good job here in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina. I’m convinced that the accreditation team agrees. But until they arrive in February, we won’t know for sure. So in the meantime, just like Frost, I’m taking the road less traveled and believing that that will make all the difference.

Dr. Carol J. Pardun
Director, School of Journalism and Mass Communications
Mary Caldwell was a public relations professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications from 1978-2000. At her retirement, she was named Professor Emeritus. She died on August 29, 2009. Mary is fondly remembered by faculty, alumni and friends for her gracious, nurturing nature and for her love of teaching. But make no mistake; she has also been described as “one tough cookie.”

In life, Mary made a positive impact on her students and colleagues. Her influence will continue in perpetuity to the school she loved, thanks to a generous yet simple provision in her will remembering the J-school. Mary’s gift of $600,000 is designated to support the advancement of the school, including faculty and student development.

Making a deferred gift, as Mary did, is one of many giving options through which a donor can support the mission of the university. Donors may opt to contribute cash, appreciated securities or other assets like real estate or life insurance. Donors can also construct a gift that will pass assets to family while income goes to the university for a few years. The benefits of these kinds of arrangements to a donor or heirs can be significant — reducing your involuntary philanthropy to a donor or heirs can be significant — allowing us to acknowledge your generous commitment publicly is another way you can maximize your support, as it may well encourage others to do the same. The Carolina Guardian Society recognizes the university’s deferred giving donors and invites its members to an annual luncheon in February.

The university’s second president, Thomas Cooper, shared this vision in his 1823 commencement address. “I pray you become the guardians of this… alma mater so…that to have been a graduate of the South Carolina College, shall everywhere be considered as a fair passport to the world’s esteem.”

I am confident Mary knew the importance and meaning her provision would have to the J-school, to the university. Through her kindness, new opportunities are being created. Lives will be changed. I only wish we had known her intentions earlier, so we could have at least wrapped our arms around her and said, “Thank you.”

Matt Haught is a first-year Ph.D. student in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. He got an early start in journalism, working on his high school newspaper and yearbook in Barrackville, W. Va. He attended Marshall University where he majored in journalism and worked for the student newspaper.

Haught decided to stay at Marshall for graduate school. As he was completing his master’s degree, he worked for both the Times West Virginian in Fairmont, W. Va., and the Daily Independent in Ashland, Ky. His degree in hand, he landed a job with the Charleston Daily Mail in Charleston, W. Va., where he did page-one design, sports design, and various reporting and writing assignments.

After three years with the Charleston Daily Mail, Haught began searching for a Ph.D. program that matched his interests. He chose South Carolina over Maryland, Florida and Miami. “I found a good match at USC in terms of faculty research interests,” he said.

While he still has not decided what area of journalism he will focus on for his dissertation, he said he is primarily interested in visual communication and how it changes across different cultures. “Even something I like boils down to visuals, communication, and culture, so I’d like to do something to connect them.”

Haught plans pursue a teaching position at a university when he finishes his degree. “Teaching and research — that’s my goal,” he said.

These students entered the doctoral program in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications in Fall 2010.

- Farah Alrefai
- Sang Hwa Oh
- Sid Bedingfield
- Geah Pressgrove
- Matt Haught
- Jeff Ranta
- Joe Kasko

These students entered the doctoral program in the School of Library and Information Science in Fall 2010.

- Clayton Copeland
- Peter Obitade
- Chris Cunningham
- Patrick Roughen
- Anmol Kalsi
- Yao Zhang
Helen Fellers, the “Reading Rooster,” is not your conventional librarian. She has been connecting with students and children in a personal and unique manner since long before social media approaches became the norm.

Fellers earned her master's degree in librarianship from the University of South Carolina in 1975, and has been working in library service since she began her undergraduate education. Today, Fellers coordinates the South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy (SCCBL), a School of Library and Information Science initiative, aimed at reducing illiteracy in South Carolina children. Her tireless support does not go unnoticed. This year, she received the State Library Partnership and Collaboration Award.

“It is no wonder that Helen is the first recipient of the Partnership and Collaboration award from the State Library, as she defines what being a partner is all about. At every moment she is collaborating to help South Carolinians get the resources they need to become literate and involved,” said Dr. Sam Hastings, SLIS director. “Helen works tirelessly to maintain a collection of new books for evaluation, arranges tours, teaches a course in children's literature, creates intriguing displays for every occasion and manages to produce her 'Reading Rooster' YouTube series,” Dr. Hastings added.

Fellers’ approach as a librarian and teacher is both enthusiastic and unconventional. In her role as the “Reading Rooster,” she uploads videos on her YouTube series in which she recommends children's books. She also reads books in her story time voices in her “Rooster Reads” segments. Fellers got the idea for her YouTube series while working at the Technical College of the Lowcountry. To get students’ attention, she put a vocabulary word of the day and “books worth crowing about” at her desk. When the Southern Association came for the accreditation of the college, they said Fellers had removed all barriers between the library and its users. Today, Fellers sees this as her mantra in library service.

As Helen Fellers always says, “Keep on reading!”

“Spend just a few minutes with Ms. Helen and you will feel better about the world!”

Aside from coordinating the center, Fellers teaches a SLIS children's literature class. Her passion as a librarian is clear in her teaching. She engages students with fun assignments and birthday celebrations, and she encourages creativity in her classroom, which happens to be the center at the State Library.

Fellers also plays an active role promoting reading in the community, serving on the board of the SC Book Festival, where the literacy center has its own exhibit. Five hundred children are bused from local school districts to the event. In recent years, USC First Lady Patricia Moore-Pastides, and Lady Cocky have met the children and given them each a book.

Dr. Hastings said, “She is a dynamo of activity and good will. Spend just a few minutes with Ms. Helen and you will feel better about the world!”

Fellers is enjoying a successful career, but what she does is not a job. Whether it is in the library, the community or the classroom, she is always sharing her passion for reading with those around her.

As Helen Fellers always says, “Keep on reading!”

SLIS doctoral students will enter the program in Spring 2011, with additional students added in Fall 2011. This program will provide additional depth to the doctoral program offered by SLIS.

The School of Library and Information Science wanted to be different, to try something new, with its doctoral program. SLIS wanted to be sure to keep its Ph.D. program at USC vital and relevant, and it got what it wanted.

The school was recently awarded an Institute of Museum and Library Science (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant to increase and enhance library education and develop library leaders through its doctoral program. The grant program, Cultural Heritage Informatics Leadership (CHIL), awarded $857,489 to SLIS. The school is expecting to offer IMLS fellowships to seven doctoral students over the next two years. CHIL focuses on the commonality among cultural organizations including libraries and museums.

“Both libraries and museums are valued as cultural institutions and protectors of our cultural heritage. They often serve diverse communities and play an integral role in K-12 education. Both support life-long learning and can make the difference in keeping an informed and educated electorate,” said Dr. Sam Hastings, SLIS director. “Our libraries and museums help us understand our past and look toward the future.”

This program is different because it is real-world based and aims to shed light on actual problems. Students work as interns at cultural institutions as they continue their regular courses, and while interning, will be responsible for identifying problems and proposing how to solve them.

In museums and other cultural institutions, there is a need for people who really understand the information regarding cultural institutions. Dr. Jennifer Arns, an associate professor in SLIS and co-primary investigator for the program, said, “I think this will not go away after our four-year grant is up. There is such relevance between these two fields, and there is already such a strong level of interest among the faculty, students and community. We believe the program will become an exciting concentration within our Ph.D. program.”

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Robert D. Raiford
...in his own words

By Joey Wallace | Design by Anna Westbury

"T"he world is too much with us, late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers. Little we see in nature that is ours. We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon, for this, for everything, we are out of tune. It moves us not."

Who says that? William Wordsworth wrote it, to be sure. But who actually says things like that anymore? The answer may surprise you. Robert D. Raiford, University of South Carolina alumnus and resident curmudgeon of The John Boy and Billy Big Show, has made a living saying what most people won’t, and at 82, he still hasn’t run out of things to say.

Four times a day, five days a week, Raiford enlightens his syndicated audience with his unique perspective on everything from philosophy to fruit cake and all points in between.

"I have the curse of sensitivity," Raiford jokes. "I see everything. What surprises me is that some people don’t."

"I like to read people’s bumper stickers on their cars to see what they’re like," Raiford explained. "One day I came up behind a woman with a ‘Honk if you love Jesus’ bumper sticker. I waited until we pulled up to a red light, and I honked. She turned around and shot me the bird."

Although Raiford’s regular audience tends to greet his observations with a bit more appreciation, he says it’s just a matter of time before they honk at him, too.

"People come up to me all the time and say, ‘Raiford, I agree with everything you say. I tell them, ‘That’s just because I haven’t stepped on your toes … yet.’"

The college “bug” bit Raiford in the summer of 1949 while he was working full-time at WIS radio as an announcer. He took his high school diploma to the admissions office and was accepted on the spot.

After paying his $88 tuition for the semester, Raiford was hooked, but he didn’t receive his BA in journalism until 1970 and his Master of Mass Communication degree until 1978. Why the delay?

"That’s a story of zigzag peregrinations that would take longer than the space here will allow," Raiford said.

At the time he first enrolled, Raiford already had a wife and two children. Breadwinning and broadcasting came before school, and as a result Raiford worked for CBS in Washington, NBC in New York and other jobs in Philadelphia, San Francisco and Charlotte before completing his degrees.

A fitting cause, as Raiford is a firm believer in survival, and that sometimes you have to pick yourself up, dust yourself off and start over again.

"Dylan Thomas said, ‘Do not go gentle into that good night. Old age must burn and rage at close of day,’ but now I feel more inclined to go gently and not rage so much on the air."

Who says that? Robert D. Raiford.

People come up to me all the time and say, ‘Raiford, I agree with everything you say. I tell them, ‘That’s just because I haven’t stepped on your toes … yet.’"
Lou Sossamon

By Dana White | Design by Anna Westbury

Lou Sossamon has spent nearly 90 years enjoying life, but his best memories occurred while he was a student at the University of South Carolina.

“I shake when I think about what my life would have been, had I not gone to the University of South Carolina,” said Sossamon. “When I was at the university, I met so many fine people, students and professors who have all been valuable to me as friends and also in business.”

While a student in the School of Journalism, Sossamon played for the USC football team and was the student body president. He served on the university’s Board of Trustees. He was recently honored by the Kathryn and Louis Sossamon Scholarship, available to students from the J-school.

Sossamon remained very involved with the J-school after he graduated. His daughter, Kathryn, was teaching law at Charleston School of Law when Lorri Shaylor Unumb walked into a room, she takes control of it. Rushing into a restaurant for a lunch appointment, the 1990 School of Journalism and Mass Communications graduate apologized profusely, blaming the parking. She carried a stack of papers, a Town and Country and an iPad. The Town and Country threw me off, as if she expected me to be late.

Unumb, who earned her Bachelor of Arts in broadcast journalism and her law degree from USC School of Law, ordered a World Series bat before he returned to South Carolina. Sossamon spent most of his career as the Gaffney Ledger as its publisher and owner. He purchased the Gaffney Ledger from his great-grandfather, Edward Decamp, in 1969 and remained publisher until 1999.

Sossamon was teaching law at Charleston School of Law, she was fed up with the system that denied benefits to her son for his disability.

“This is why you pay premiums,” she said, “and still I can’t help my son through insurance. It struck me as wrong and unjust. I started writing an article about my struggle and halfway through said, ‘I’m not going to write an article, I’m going to write a law’.”

Ryan’s Law was enacted in South Carolina on June 6, 2007, mandating insurance companies to cover up to $50,000 annually for ABA therapy, which was once deemed “experimental” by insurance companies. The law also prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage to patients because of the status of their disorders.

Unumb began getting calls from all over the United States days after the bill passed and the extended coverage the event received in national media. Calls came from parents who were in the same situation, or in a lot of instances, not as fortunate as Unumb and her family, asking for help. She invited all of these families to come to Charleston to discuss her success and how it could be replicated in other parts of the country.

Then, executives of Autism Speaks called Unumb with an offer she couldn’t refuse: a job as senior policy advisor and counsel. Autism Speaks is the nation’s largest autism science and advocacy organization. Its mission is to fund research efforts in the areas of causes, prevention, and treatment and, ultimately, a cure for autism. As senior policy advisor for Autism Speaks, Unumb has helped replicate Ryan’s Law in 23 states.

“My fight in South Carolina did not have any organizational backing. It was just me and a group of very determined parents who were willing to help. So when an executive from Autism Speaks offered me a chance to replicate Ryan’s Law in other states, it was a dream come true,” she said.

Unumb never thought she would be in this place. After graduating from the J-school, she enrolled in law school.

“Journalism is one of the best majors for pre-law. Students learn how to write in an appropriate structure and a purposeful way. Not only did my writing skills help me in law school, but they had given me the confidence to write a bill. The J-school helped equip me,” she said.

In 2010, Unumb received Town and Country’s Women Who Make a Difference Award, honoring her historic battle with insurance companies and the right of all children affected by autism to have a chance at therapies and hope for recovery.

As for Ryan, the 9-year-old is still the little soul behind the mom’s passion.

“Sometimes with my work, it feels as though I am less an advocate for my son, but at the end of the day, my work gives me gratification. If anyone is able to feel that in his or her career, it’s a gift,” said Unumb.
Rosalyn Durant, vice president of the JSPNU college sports network, travels widely for her work, but coming to Columbia to receive the award was important to her. “I’ve been blessed to receive various awards throughout my career and this one means the most—it’s like coming home.”

Durant earned her bachelor’s degree from the J-school in 1999 and quickly advanced to the top of her field.

Hank Gilman, deputy managing editor at Fortune magazine, is no stranger to the world of business. Gilman earned his bachelor’s degree in journalism in 1978. He was business editor at Newsweek E, and now oversees all editorial content for Fortune magazine.

Gilman said, “My experience with the J-school taught me three things: work harder than your competitors, develop a passion for journalism and the importance of fairness and get things right.”

Kerry Northrup, professor in multimedia journalism at Western Kentucky University, is known globally as an expert in newswroom technology. He was instrumental in the construction of the Ifra Newswplex training and research facility. Northrup received his bachelor’s degree in 1976.

Northrup said, “Education at USC turned out to be a phenomenal foundation. I didn’t realize how phenominal it was until much later in life.”

The reactions of our Outstanding Young Alumni are no less impressive.

Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda, associate professor at the University of Florida, is a founding member of the Institute for Public Relations’ Commission on Global Communications Research. Dr. Molleda earned his Ph.D. from the J-school in 2000. His contributions to public relations are innumerable, and he continues to bring new ideas to the forefront of academic research.

Dr. Molleda sent his regrets as he was unable to attend the banquet, and said, “My experience with the J-school determined my career success. I found an environment that encouraged collaboration and active engagement.”

Jeslyn L. Aberle serves as the Deputy Public Affairs Offices for SHAPE (Strategic Headquarters Allied Partners Europe) NATO.

She earned her Master of Mass Communication degree in 2006 and is finishing her third tour in Iraq. She has had many exciting opportunities, including photographing Saddam Hussein on the night of his capture and handling more than 250 press conferences and thousands of media outlets after his capture.

Aberle was unable to travel to receive her award in person, and said, “I am humbled and honored to receive this award from the J-school.”

Jay Bender, SMJC visiting professor and Reed H. Montgomery Freedom of Information Chair, received the Excellence in Service Award. Bender, a strong advocate of free press and open government in South Carolina, is a permanent member of the Judicial Conference of the Fourth Circuit. He has been instrumental in increasing protection against libel and invasion of privacy claims, providing greater access to courtrooms and records, and expanding the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

J-school instructor Carmen Mayes said, “He embraces opportunities to meet people, learn something new, and act on behalf of the J-school.”

Bender said, “I learned service from the people in my life.

Dr. Angie Grant, SMJC professor, addressed the honorees at the Nov. 4 event. “You’d be a success no matter where you went to school, but you came here.” He said that each of the alumni’s success demonstrates the success of the J-school as a whole.

Dean Charles Baehr added, “What I love most about this evening are the stories. And that is what life, J-school is all about—stories.”

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Dr. Carol Pardun, Rosalyn Duran, Jay Bender, Hank Gilman, Kerry Northrup and Dean Charles Biebauer.

Holly Hammet, a second-year print journalism student who transferred from USC’s Beaufort campus, appreciated her first I-Comm Week. And she was not alone. Students, faculty, alumni and friends enjoyed the opportunities offered by the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies during the seventh annual lecture series. Speakers included noted library science professionals, authors, Pulitzer Prize winners, CNN correspondents and others.

“I enjoyed the WikiLeaks panel discussion,” Hammet said. “It gave me an intimate feel for the insights of professionals in my field. It was nice to hear them discuss an issue so important to the world.”

She attended the session as Jamie McIntyre, a former CNN national security correspondent, and SMJC faculty Jay Bender, Doug Fisher and Dr. Miron Varouhakis discussed the recent breach of classified military information.

More than 1,400 people attended the 22 events during the first week of October. Many USC students in other majors took advantage of the events. That’s just what Jarad Greene, a fourth-year criminology and criminal justice student, did during I-Comm Week VII.

Greene attended the “From Carolina to the Comics Page: A Military Brat’s Journey” lecture with Paul Jon Boscacci, a writer and cartoonist who created the Fort Knox comic strip. Greene, a cartoonist for the Daily Gamecock, chose this event to gain insight from another cartoonist.

“I loved hearing the behind-the-scenes story about how things are created,” Greene said. “Since this was a cartoonist, it particularly intrigued me, as I have heard one speak about his life story and the creative process before.”

A great component of I-Comm Week is that students are able to interact with the speakers. Greene spoke with Boscacci after the lecture and talked with him about cartooning.

“I will never forget getting to talk to Paul one-on-one after his speech and then getting invited out to eat with him and the other faculty,” Greene said. “He was so giving and willing to help me in any way possible. For just having met him, that just goes to show what a truly genuine person he is.”

The I-Comm Week events showcased library science and journalism trends, allowing students from both schools and across the university to enjoy learning from professionals in their fields of study.

The week ended with students evaluating the elements they had learned and wanting more. Matthew Olsen, a fourth-year visual communications major, said, “I definitely enjoyed the wide array of lectures they offered and wish I could have gone to more.”
Former CNN national security reporter Jamie McIntyre joined SJMC faculty Doug Fisher, Jay Bender and Dr. Miron Varsouhakis to discuss the consequences of WikiLeaks, the recent leak of secret documents related to the war in Afghanistan.

Freelance financial journalist David Milstead, left, and Columbia Regional Business Report publisher Bob Bouyea discussed business journalism as part of the "Report, Investigate or Advocate" panel.

Elizabeth Cassidy West, an archivist at the South Caroliniana Library, led School of Library and Information Science guests on a tour of Gibbes Green and the historic Horseshoe. It was a beautiful day on the University of South Carolina campus.

DAVID OAKLEY

Dr. Carol J. Pardun welcomed David Oakley of BooneOakley in Charlotte, who entertained students and faculty while discussing some important rules of effective advertising.

TED JACKSON

Pulitzer Prize winning photojournalist Ted Jackson shared his stories of working at the New Orleans Times Picayune during Hurricane Katrina.

RITA COSBY

J-school alumna Rita Cosby talked about her personal hero: her father, who was in the Polish Uprising and imprisoned in concentration camps in World War II.

DR. DAVID CARR

Noted scholar Dr. David Carr explored the power of libraries and museums. He spoke during I-Comm Week VII for one part of his fall lecture series for SLIS.

PAUL JON BOSCACCI

Paul Jon Bosccci, a syndicated cartoonist and J-school alumnus, helped students understand the connection between art and words to send messages.

MICHELLE LEDER

Michelle Leder, editor and founder of footnoted.org, delivered The Information Act.

J. KING/J. ROLLINS

First criminal case against public officials under the Freedom of Information Act.

Dr. Glen Nowak, former chief of media relations for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shared the ins and outs of health communications and how the CDC uses social media to impart its messages.

DR. GLEN NOWAK

Current and former SLISsen Up editors gathered to celebrate the Library and Information Science Student Association (LISSA)’s newsletter: SLISsen Up had had a very successful seven-year run—so far.

SMC alumna Stephanie Caravello participated in Career Launch, along with seven other professionals who reviewed students’ resumes and portfolios.

Dr. Glen Nowak welcomed David Oakley of BooneOakley in Charlotte, who entertained students and faculty while discussing some important rules of effective advertising.
Retired Professors Gather to Reconnect

By Lucy Sass

Even in their retirement, several former School of Journalism and Mass Communications professors continue to support the school and its students. A steadfast group of them occasionally meet for lunch to discuss current events and reconnect with former colleagues away from their old stomping ground, the Carolina Coliseum.

“It’s good to get together with people who you worked so closely with for so many years and for whom you have such deep respect,” said Dr. Henry Price.

The most recent gathering was in late September. Jerry Jewell, Dorothy Wardrip, Bill Rogers, Jay Latham, Pat McNeeley and Dr. Price attended. Jewell, whose book on creative strategy is considered the gold standard in the industry, was an advertising professor. Dr. Price taught copy-editing, and is fondly — or at least gratefully — remembered by many alumni for thoroughly preparing them for their careers. Wardrip, the wife of the late Dr. Joe Wardrip who began the New York City Maymester class, stays in touch with her husband's former colleagues and remains an active supporter of the school.

Now the executive director of the South Carolina Press Association, Rogers taught print journalism. Latham was a professor in the broadcast journalism sequence and helped create the first Senior Seminar program. McNeeley, who taught newspaper reporting, is writing a book with another retired professor, Lee Winnie, who was not at the event.

“One reason I joined the faculty in 1976 was that it was made up of interested and interesting characters,” said Latham. “It remained so for the 28 years of my tenure.”

“I love the university because it has been a part of my life since I came here in 1955 as a freshman, but I don’t miss the day-to-day routines,” said Dr. Price. “I miss my former colleagues, but I really miss the students with whom I had the privilege of working over the years.”

They have left lasting impressions on their former students, as well.

“Dr. Price was such an engaging professor. He had an infectious joy for learning that made you always with his classes were just a little bit longer,” said Joey Wallace, a 2004 print journalism graduate and current Master of Mass Communication student.

Now that we have filled you in on some of our retired faculty, we need your help. Tell us about your favorite, most memorable, most demanding, most cantankerous — in the nicest sort of way, of course — former professors. We’ll share your memories of this cast of characters in the next issue. Please e-mail Elaine Taylor at tayloren@umail.sc.edu.

A Professional Experience

By Adam Keele

The School of Journalism and Mass Communications’ upper-level magazine production class is a real-world experience in which students create InterCom, the seminannual alumni magazine for the Carolina community. Students develop relationships with faculty and alumni from both schools and learn about the programs and events important to the college.

Taught by the J-school’s Lisa Sisk, the class operates much like a newsroom in any other major publication. Students have assigned stories, tight deadlines and roles that include reporting, editing, photography and design. These roles are divided among a class of 17 dedicated students, guided by Sisk and Zach Sykes, a 2007 visual communications graduate.

“As journalists, it’s important for us to know and understand the Freedom of Information Act and be aware when it is being violated,” said Jay King, a former newspaper reporter from the Holly Springs Fire Commission. When he showed up, the commissioners were surprised to see a reporter. King advised them of the FOIA laws clear to journalists,” says Dr. Erik Collins. “I hope people will be more mindful of the act.”

In the classroom, students are contributing something to the Carolina community and it’s a great feeling to know our stories will be read by alumni who were once part of the same programs.”

The Freedom of Information Act states:

SECTION 30-4-15. The General Assembly finds that it is vital in a democratic society that public business be performed in an open and public manner so that citizens shall be advised of the performance of public officials and of the decisions that are reached in public activity and in the formulation of public policy.

SECTION 30-4-60. Every meeting of all public bodies shall be open to the public unless closed pursuant to Section 30-4-70 of this chapter.

SECTION 30-4-80. All public bodies...must give writ- ten notice of their regular meetings. Agenda, if any, for regularly scheduled meetings must be posted on a bulletin board at the office or meeting place of the public body at least 24 hours prior to such meetings.

SECTION 30-4-90. All public bodies shall keep written minutes of all of their public meet- ings.

SECTION 30-4-110. Any person or group of persons who willfully violate the provi- sions of this chapter shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars or imprisoned for not more than thirty days for the first offense.

To read or download the full FOIA Book, visit: http://cpress.org/foia.html
For five minutes, Tera Herrmann, a junior public relations major, quizzed Tera Oakey White, a school librarian, at this year’s Mentor Match Night in Harper College on the Horseshoe, after another dozen speed mentor moments, Herrmann chose White as her top mentor choice.

“I am looking for a friendly but professional relationship, and the mentor program seemed like the perfect opportunity to get both,” Herrmann said. White received her MLS in 2005.

Fifty-eight students and alumni from the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies participated in the mentor program. Herrmann and White’s match was one of the relationships students and alumni formed and developed over the fall semester.

“Knowing there is someone apart from your classmates, apart from your sorority sisters or professors whom you can go to is important. This relationship can lead anywhere, and I encourage you to take advantage of it and seek out whatever benefits you can from this experience,” the college’s dean, Charles Bierbauer, said during the event.

Over the course of the semester, students connected with their mentors several times, whether it was a monthly lunch date or a weekly e-mail. Students had the opportunity for mentors to look over their résumés, guide them to internships and have someone to talk to when questions came up.

Alumna Kelly Davis said, “I have always believed strongly in giving back, and I was so lucky to have great mentors during my career. I think it is really important to pay it forward.” Davis participated in the mentor program for the second time this fall. She owns Davis Public Relations and Marketing and is extremely active within the Columbia community. Davis earned her MMC in 1998.

Freshman broadcast major Emily McDonnell said, “Journalism is such a competitive field and what a better way to get ahead than to meet someone who has experience and can show you an inside look.” McDonnell’s match is Katherine Swartz, the vice president of Leadership Development and Community Involvement for the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Swartz also serves as executive director of Columbia Opportunity Resource. She earned her bachelor’s degree in journalism and mass communications with an emphasis in public relations in 2000.

After a few e-mails and a game of phone tag, McDonnell and Swartz met for coffee and immediately hit it off. “I don’t think I could have asked for a better mentor. Katherine understands my drive and is willing to help me achieve my goals,” McDonnell said. “I’m so lucky to have been paired with someone who has been able to do what she loves and is willing to help me get a jump start on my career.”

If you are interested in becoming an alumni mentor, call Elaine Taylor at 803.777.7118 or e-mail her at taylorem@mailbox.sc.edu.

SLIS alum Nicholas Meriwether takes the road less traveled in his post-graduate career. And oh, what a long, strange trip it’s been...
“Here was a concert in which it was not a nostalgia act; where the music was still very fresh and vibrant. In fact, it was the most ambitious music that I had ever heard played in an arena to an audience of that size. I thought it was just remarkable.”

So says the King of the Deadheads.

As Nicholas Meriwether, School of Library and Information Science graduate, recalls his first Grateful Dead concert in the fall of 1985, it becomes intensely clear why he was destined for his current job. In 2010, Meriwether was selected out of 400 highly qualified applicants to become the director of the Grateful Dead archives at the University of California, Santa Cruz. An extensively well-read and published scholar on the band, Meriwether’s selection was no-brainer. His natural enthusiasm for the music was not a nostalgia act; rather, it was a passionate selection.

Mereiwether and his team are responsible for processing and digitizing everything the band created and collected over the last 40 years, from business records and press releases to music releases, artwork and fan letters. “They’re great challengers, and they’re fun, but certainly not trivial,” he admits. “I’ve got great colleagues there. I’ve got great colleagues there. It’s a wonderful team, which keeps it from being overwhelming.”

The greatest job in the world?” he notes. “No, I ‘do, but there are a lot of days where it’s just the most complicated and complex archive on the planet.’”

As the director of the Dead archives, Meriwether and his team are responsible for selecting out of 400 highly qualified applicants to become the director of the Grateful Dead archives at the University of California, Santa Cruz. An extensively well-read and published scholar on the band, Meriwether’s selection was no-brainer. His natural enthusiasm for the music was not a nostalgia act; rather, it was a passionate selection.

Perhaps another factor in keeping work-related stress at bay is the fact that his job is like being in a hands-on museum dedicated to his favorite subject every single day. “There are things I have a reaction to on a daily basis. Anything from a beautifully illustrated letter that a fan has sent in thanking them for a good ticket or show to a very rare and almost unknown poster that is absolutely gorgeous.”

KING OF THE DEAD

Story and design by Danna Mathias

There are things I have a reaction to on a daily basis. Anything from a beautifully illustrated letter that a fan has sent in thanking them for a good ticket or show to a very rare and almost unknown poster that is absolutely gorgeous.

If there were one Grateful Dead song he had to choose to listen to for the rest of his life, Meriwether’s selection is fitting. “It’s called ‘The Attics of My Life,’” he notes. “It’s a wonderful lyrical song that can be taken as comments on archives and archival practice. If you think about it, attics are - for most Americans - our personal archives.”

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Gayle McCarthy: Journey to Freelance

Gayle McCarthy stepped onto the platform of what she believed to be a death sentence. She glanced over 200 feet below at the endless row of trees and green shrubbery, sure that her course would be lying among them soon. This was only the first zipline of a five-line zipping experience through the rainforest of St. Kitts. McCarthy would have to survive them all — and conquer her extreme fear of heights — in order to tell her tale on Hipster Travel Guide.

School of journalism and Mass Communications alumna McCarthy is an experienced travel writer who will try anything once for an engaging story. She teamed up with Hipster Travel Guide, an online travel publication, where “Cool needs no translation,” about a year and a half ago, and has been on board with them as a correspondent, editor and travel writer ever since.

“We’re unique in that we like to focus on unexpected locations. We have an edge and a sense of humor,” said McCarthy. “I love the challenge of the travel pieces. I get to experience things that I might not normally do on my own. It allows me to push myself.”

McCarthy visited two dude ranches in Colorado last year. She was there for a week and stayed three days at each ranch, where she square danced, headed cows and learned how to lasso. While she was still struggling with her dread of heights at the Latigo Ranch, 9,000 feet above sea level, she conquered another one of her biggest fears.

“I’m terrified of horses, and they really can sense your fear. I wanted to take this trip as a personal challenge to myself,” said McCarthy, who overcame her fear by riding a black mare humorously entitled Candy for the entire trip.

McCarthy also took a pink jeep tour through the red rock country of Sedona, Ariz., and has traveled to London, Amsterdam and Belgium. She is a member of the International Food, Wine and Travel Writers Association.

What life travels got this travel writer to where she is today?

McCarthy began her journalistic journey at the University of Delaware where she wrote for its university publication, The Messenger, and received her bachelor’s in English in 1992. She began her freelance career at The Princeton Packet.

Afterwards, in 1994, McCarthy landed a teaching position at the American School of Guayaquil in Ecuador. She taught English and journalism, and she advised the school newspaper humorously entitled El Iguana. In 1996, she was accepted into the J-school’s graduate program. After earning her Master of Arts degree in 1998, she continued her freelance work in Phoenix, and, in 2000, she became an editorial program manager for Forbes Magazine in Manhattan.

McCarthy then got another taste of the magazine industry by working as the managing editor for the New Jersey Countryside magazine. She left New Jersey and moved to Savannah, Ga. in 2005 to begin her full-time professional freelance career.

While her itinerary has had many stops, McCarthy has arrived at a destination she enjoys.

“When you do what you love, it just comes naturally,” she said.

School of Library and Information Science scholarship donor Jane Olsgaard attended the second annual scholarship luncheon because, she said, “It allows me the chance to meet recipients and see the good that’s being done.”

Olsgaard and her late husband, Dr. John Olsgaard, created a scholarship for SLIS students. She is the head of processing services at Thomas Cooper Library. Dr. Olsgaard was on the SLIS faculty, and held other positions at USC from 1984 through 2004.

She is continuing a promise she and her husband both believed in. They agreed it is their duty to help the upcoming generation of students. The Olsgaards wanted to make earning a degree from SLIS a little easier for scholarship recipients. “Giving someone a chance to not have to work and to be able to focus on school will help them have better careers,” she said.

Sara Rose, a student in SLIS, received the Dr. John N. and Jane K. Olsgaard Scholarship. She acknowledged how grateful she is for the financial support as she spoke to the donors and recipients in November.

Olsgaard also wants to encourage others to donate and give back to any profession they love.

Many of the students would not be able to earn their degrees without help from very generous donors, and they rarely get to meet and thank the people who made their dreams possible. Elaine Taylor, the college’s assistant director of development and alumni relations manager, organized the luncheon. She said, “This event makes that experience possible, and it allows students to meet donors face-to-face and show their appreciation.”

Dr. Carol Pardun, School of Journalism and Mass Communications director, and Beverly Dominick in the career services office, work together to allocate the scholarships for J-school students. They want to help as many students as possible further their educations.

One of our SLIS scholarships recipients said, “This scholarship will allow me to one day work in a public library in the children’s literature department or as library specialist in an elementary school.” She said she feels an enormous appreciation to the donors and SLIS for helping her succeed.

Second Annual Scholarship Luncheon Allows Recipients to Show Appreciation

FEATURE

By Vernita Ackerman

Sara Rose, Jane Olsgaard and Russell Grooms

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Scholarships continue to provide a critical way for alumni and friends to give back to the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies, allowing the donors to make a lasting impact on our students’ ability to earn degrees.

To learn more information about supporting scholarships in the college, contact Terry Dixon at (803) 777-6898 or tedixon@mailbox.sc.edu.
Reflection and Renewal

The end of the year is upon us. It's a time of festive gatherings with family and friends. It's a busy time where we're balancing schedules to fit it all in. It's a time for reflection and renewal. And the college's Dean's Circle is giving us a sense of renewal and helping us focus that reflection.

Our Dean's Circle represents some of our most loyal supporters in the college. Dean's Circle is a group of donors who support the college with unrestricted gifts of $1,000 or more. These unrestricted donations allow Dean Bierbauer to fund initiatives that otherwise may not receive adequate funding. Past gifts have supported our student competition teams, faculty travel, Cocky's Reading Express, Maymeter class expenses and other immediate college needs.

Members of Dean's Circle meet with Dean Bierbauer throughout the year as well as with other members of the college administration. Dean Bierbauer sends quarterly updates and invites members to participate in college special events and private receptions.

Dean's Circle has played an invaluable part in the college's advancement. Thanks to the newly formed campaign committee, Dean's Circle contributions promise to participate in the college's advancement. Thanks to the new campaign committee, Dean's Circle members enjoy the connection they maintain with the college even after they've left Carolina. “I've been retired for nine years now,” said Bentley. “I don't want to be one to sit around and vegetate. I'm a voracious newspaper reader, but I think it gives me another pipeline to news to go through the J-school itself.” These donations are especially important for journalism schools because of the challenges the field is facing. “I'm tremendous-ly concerned about the future of the news media,” said Bentley. “I'm old-fashioned enough to want news to be objective; I don't want it to be opinionated or swinging to the right or left. I'm concerned that that seems to be going away, and I would like to have an honorable university, such as the University of South Carolina, champion objectivity and the factual nature of the news and to try to swing away from opinion and propaganda.” Bentley believes that well-educated journalism graduates and people who are engaged in it that really makes the big difference.

Our inaugural campaign committee members are:
- Kenneth Baldwin, Jr., '49
- Robert Bentley, Jr., '62, committee chair
- Dr. Manuel Gaetan
- Preston Grisham, '05
- Samantha Hastings
- P. Sigmund Hult, '67
- Clint Leach, '07
- Van Newman, Jr., '49
- Cheryi Shain, '85

We invite you, our alumni and friends, to consider this meaningful giving opportunity and become a member of the 2011 Dean's Circle. Your tax-deductible contributions may be paid at once or in installments. Membership is based on a calendar year. Call me for additional information at (803) 777-7118. I look forward to welcoming you into the Circle.

Dedicated individuals such as these are especially valuable when higher education is facing financial strain. Bussell pointed out the 60 percent drop in state funding the University of South Carolina faced in recent years. “You don't have to look hard in this state to see that our state government has not continued to support higher education,” he said, adding that the individuals who can give time and money help keep tuition affordable for students. “Some are able to give back in higher amounts than others, but it’s the number of people who are engaged in it that really makes the big difference.”

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Reflection and Renewal: Dean’s Circle donations keep members involved with CMCIS

On a bright September afternoon, Dean Charles Bierbauer met with some of the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies’ most dedicated donors to discuss the plans for the future of its two schools. As members of the prestigious Dean's Circle, these donors each give a minimum of $1,000 annually to the college in unrestricted funds, allowing for new initiatives to give students the fullest possible experience.

Among the Dean’s Circle members are Chernoff Newman chair-man and CEO W. Lee Bussell; Leila S. Wenthe, the second advertis-ing professor and first full-time female faculty member at the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, and Robert Bent-ley Jr., who worked as editor of six newspapers around the coun-try for more than 45 years. All three are alumni of the J-school.

Dean's Circle members enjoy the connection they maintain with the college even after they’ve left Carolina. “I’ve been retired for nine years now,” said Bentley. “I don’t want to be one to sit around and vegetate. I’m a voracious newspaper reader, but I think it gives me yet another pipeline to news to go through the J-school itself.” These donors are often have the opportunity to hear from students who have benefitted from programs funded by their gifts, such as Maymester courses and Cocky’s Reading Express, and to attend receptions for guest speakers, including Rita Cosby and Candy Crowley.

The daughter of two university staff members, Wenthe grew up around this campus. “As a lifelong professor, I certainly do not have tons of money to give away, but we do feel obligated to give back, and I can think of no place where my money would be better used to benefit people I care about: college students.”
30

the Greenville Professional Women’s Forum.

magazine. She was also named president of an independent public relations counselor

University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame in

Cocky, he is now the director of the

diaconate of the Episcopal Church on June 3.

Breen, Richard J.

Paw on My Heart,” her memoir about the of the award winning “Shandon’s Ivy League”

Sewell, Michael

S.C., and was named the Charleston County

Public Libraries employee of the year for 2009.

Mosshinke, Michelle M. – 2010, BA, is a associate editor with Mother Nature Network in

in Columbia, S.C. 

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