

Cypress Lake News

Vol. 13, No. 1, 2014

Newsletter of the Department of Communication • University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Communication Alumni Receive Top 20 Under 40 Recognition

Four ULL Communication Department Alumni: Abby Patterson Guillory, Frankie Russo, Jennifer Raggio, and Amanda Le-Roy, received the 2014 Top 20 under 40 award. The awards were presented on November 20, 2014 to 20 Acadiana professionals under the age of 40 who demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and a vision to better the community.

The *Daily Advertiser* and the 705 sponsored the "Top 20 under 40" awards and they were voted on by the Acadiana community. Nominations for the award were submitted in August and voting took place throughout the month of September. Two of the 20 nominees were selected to receive the Young Leaders Award. The winners, Shelly Breaux and Katie Durio received a \$10,000 grant to fund their Acadiana ARTWORKS project.

Abby Patterson Guillory, a 2006 public relations graduate from UL Lafayette was one of this year's recipients of the "20 under 40" award. She enjoyed the program and commented on the great atmosphere of the banquet.

"The awards ceremony was amazing, said Guillory." "The event was held at the University Art Museum, which is always a beautiful location. The décor, the lights of the museum, and the waterfall really set the mood. It was so engaging."

During her time as a student, Guillory was an intern at the Vermillion Parish Library and was eventually hired as full time public relations, marketing, and programming specialist for the library. She wrote grants to fund speakers and storytellers for the library programs. At the same time, Guillory began working on her Master's degree in Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University, which she obtained in 2011. Guillory returned to her alma mater in 2009 when she took a position in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at ULL. She is currently the Associate Director for Proposal Development and Pre-Award Services, and she enjoys being back in the Ragin



Abby Guillory was one of this year's 20 Under 40 Acadiana Leadership Award recipients.

Cajun community.

"Coming back to work for ULL has been great," says Guillory "We're all a big family."

She enjoys helping her fellow Ragin Cajun employees receive grants.

"The most rewarding part of my job is hearing the excitement in the voice of a faculty or staff member when they get awarded," states Guillory. "We all put in so much time trying to perfect the proposals before they're submitted, and to see all of that hard work pay off, well, there's nothing like it."

Some of Guillory's career highlights include booking national performers and story tellers for the Vermillion Parish library, establishing the adult summer reading program, serving as a grant reviewer for the American Library Association, and organizing the 2009 Summer Reading Program for other parish libraries.

Guillory was chosen to participate in a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation program to train librarians on how to best serve Spanish populations in their areas.

Since beginning her position at ULL, Guillory completed the Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration and Sponsored Project Administration: Level II programs offered by the National Council

of University Research Administrators. She also served as co-chair of the 2012 Young University Professionals Association and continues to serve on the University's Holiday Committee, which plans Sneaux Day and the Employee Holiday Luncheon.

One of the requirements for the "20 Under 40" award is for participants to be involved in their communities. Guillory proudly serves as the Night Grants Coordinator for the Junior League of Lafayette, which promotes voluntarism and leadership amongst Lafayette women.

"Our grants committee recently awarded \$135,000 to area local non-profits," says Guillory. "In addition, the Junior League of Lafayette puts in about 23,500+ volunteer hours over the course of a year. What an impact! I'm so proud to be a part of such an incredible, giving organization."

All 20 Under 40 nominees have the option of proposing a project that, if selected, is awarded a grant of \$10,000 in order to help the recipient complete the project. Guillory's project involved cooperating with the Lafayette Consolidated Government as well as with UL Lafayette to continue the bike path to reach more places in Lafayette.

"The benefits of bike riding are numerous both for the rider as well as the city in which they're riding," said Guillory. "Having a bike infrastructure in place can cut down on heavy traffic, reduce air pollution, lower healthcare costs due to fewer bike/vehicle accidents and obesity, and reduce the need for additional parking lots and garages."

Although Guillory's project was not selected for the grant, she still plans on seeing the project to fruition. She spoke to an individual who is interested in helping her fund the bike project. Guillory credits her accomplishments in her career to the knowledge she gained as a student at UL Lafayette.

"The communication skills I've learned at UL are the reason I'm successful," says Guillory. "In my undergraduate classes, I learned how to talk to people, how to

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present, how to lead, and how to express myself through more than one form of communication. The professors helped me to find my strengths as well as my weaknesses. This has made me a better writer, a better employee, a better leader, and a better person.”

Frankie Russo

The “20 Under 40” awards also honored Frankie Russo. Russo is a 2004 public relations graduate from ULL and the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Potenza Creative. Potenza is a fast-growing marketing, creative, and interactive firm in Lafayette.

After graduating from ULL, Russo began a career in advertising sales before moving into real estate and opening up Russo Consulting Group. During this time, Frankie Russo found inspiration from his brother, Giorgio Russo’s senior graphic design project for UL Lafayette.

“I went to the senior projects at the museum and was like, ‘Wow!’ because there were all these different companies that were created from nothing,” says Russo. “I realized that we needed to start one of these, because at the time I was young and figured I could start any business that I wanted.”

Russo founded Potenza as a graphic design firm for his brother, and it expanded from there. The company started out in 2008 with two employees and now has 25. Potenza also saw 500% growth within the past three years. Because of its rapid expansion in a short amount of time, Potenza was recently named the 12th fastest growing company in the state of Louisiana by Inc. 5000. The winners were announced in July and the awards ceremony took place in October. Potenza has also received several ADDY awards, and in 2011 Russo was named Entrepreneur of the Year.

More than just a businessman, Russo is also involved with the Lafayette community. He is a board member for Hearts of Hope, volunteers at St. Joseph’s Diner, and helps people who are struggling with drug and alcohol issues. He also supports local churches in town who do overseas missions. Russo believes that helping out in the community is important and encourages others to do the same.

“There’s a sense of pleasure in helping others and also, if you can, I think it’s our duty to give back, says Russo. “I think that we have been given so that we can give, and I think that anyone who has given their time, money, or resources to something knows what I mean when I say it’s a pleasure. That’s something that



Frankie Russo was a recipient of the 20 Under 40 Acadiana Leadership Award.

I learned is more valuable than anything else, that feeling of being able to help someone else.”

Russo’s achievements in his career and community involvement are what led to his nomination for “20 Under 40.” His accomplishments and success were aided by what he learned while studying public relations at ULL.

“What’s funny is, I didn’t think I was going to use my degree, and when I finally started to, I was like man I wish I would have listened better in class,” said Russo.

He also uses his college experience when looking for employees for his agency.

“The most valuable skills I learned are the same things that I look at when someone has a bachelor’s degree when I’m hiring, and that’s basically that you learn how to finish on your own, without anybody holding your hand and without anybody holding you accountable, per say, having to finish,” says Russo. “And basically, I think that’s what a bachelor’s degree does because,

unless you go master’s degree or Ph. D., you’re not going to get that skilled in a specific technique unless you’re an engineer or nurse. I think the best thing it taught me was just to finish and be accountable.”

Russo continues to build Potenza to live up to its name, which means power in Italian. It is uncommon for local agencies to have its own software; however, Potenza just released the 2.0 version of its software called Potenza Intelligence. Russo has hopes that the company will continue to flourish, and he predicts that Potenza will make next year’s Inc. 5000 list for fastest growing companies.

“I envision to end up being a 100 person agency, which right now we are at 25,” says Russo. “And I envision us being a company that helps put Lafayette on the national stage. At this point I still plan on keeping my home office here in Lafayette, and I envision Potenza to be a great agency that continues to acquire national business and be a culture that people want to come to Lafayette to work for as opposed to just trying to keep them from leaving.”

Jennifer Raggio

UL Lafayette alumna, Jennifer Raggio, was also selected as a “20 Under 40” recipient. Raggio is a 2005 mass communication graduate with a minor in English. She reflects on the time she spent with her professors and how much she learned from her experience at UL Lafayette.

“The professors in the College of Liberal Arts, especially my journalism professor, Dr. Robert Buckman, are all so passionate about their fields which provided a rich learning experience for me and fellow students I’m sure,” says Raggio. “Because of my ULL experience, I graduated confident and ready to enter the communications industry. Every day in my work I find myself reflecting on what I learned at ULL.”

Raggio was proud to be recognized along with other young business leaders

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in the community. She values the connects she was able to make with her fellow honorees.

“Being a “20 Under 40” honoree was a very special experience, said Raggio. “It was electrifying. Each honoree, past and present, inspires me with their passion to work hard to help advance our region. This experience allowed us as honorees to connect with each other in ways we normally might not.”

While still in school, Raggio interned with United Way of Acadiana (UWA) in marketing and communication in 2005. Towards the end of her time as an intern, Raggio volunteered doing disaster relief public relations, campaign and fundraising, and general volunteer work in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. During her last semester at UL Lafayette, she was hired as a temporary campaign account manager for UWA. After graduation, Raggio worked as an editorial assistant at the *Daily Advertiser*, then in 2007, she returned to United Way of Acadiana as a campaign manager. She later became the Strategic Back Office Manager where she helped develop UWA’s first technology plan alongside volunteer technology experts. She also helped start UWA’s first online giving platform. Raggio and her husband then moved to Houston, Tx., where she worked in communications for the Harris County Medical Society. She and her family returned to Lafayette and Raggio was rehired by UWA as the Director of Marketing and Communications, her current position.

As Director of Marketing and Communications, Raggio crafts and executes strategies to enhance the community’s understanding of UWA’s work to help more children graduate on time, more individuals gain financial stability and more families meet their basic needs. Raggio loves her job and has expressed the rewarding nature of her work.

“I gain so much value and learn something every day from working with hard-working, passionate, smart people from the staff to the volunteers to the partners we connect with in the community,” said Raggio. “But, knowing that every part of my work links to ultimately creating more opportunities for children and families in Acadiana and creating real solutions for real people is probably the most rewarding.”

Raggio’s passion for helping others transfers to her involvement with



Jennifer Raggio received 20 under 40 recognition.

the community. She is an active member of the Junior League of Lafayette where she serves as the public relations coordinator for the annual holiday market fundraiser, Tinsel & Treasures. She also served on the JLL Collaborative Opportunities Grants committee where she chaired the Camp Bon Coeur Family Camp volunteer project. Raggio also participated in the I AM Adoption Awareness and Acadiana Center for the Arts Silent Seat Program. In addition, she helped to build the Mouton Park Playground, and she volunteers for UWA’s Day of Literacy, Day of Action, and Stuff the Bus programs.

Raggio’s passion for her work and volunteering has earned her recognition as a “20 Under 40” nominee. She has a drive for motivating leaders and encouraging others to better the community.

“It’s so important to provide young leaders a platform to express ideas and collaborate on projects to benefit this area,” said Raggio. “Lifting up young leaders lifts up our entire community. It shows, too, that investing in our youth yields great leaders who wish to do great things in return.”

Her love for people and the community extends beyond her volunteer work. Raggio enjoys spending her free time taking advantage of Lafayette’s vast entertainment options.

“I love living in a city that has so much to offer with so many great things to do,” said Raggio. “Of course, attending Ragin’ Cajun football games tops my family’s list.”

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Lovel Joins Communication Department



Jim Lovel

Jim Lovel joined the ULL Department of Communication staff in the fall semester of 2014.

Lovel earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Arkansas and a Master of Arts from the University of Georgia.

Lovel worked for 20 years as a reporter and editor for newspapers in Little Rock, Tampa, and Atlanta. He was at the Atlanta bureau for Adweek magazine in New York before leaving the field to teach journalism.

Prior to joining the Ragin’ Cajun family, Lovel taught at the University of Central Arkansas for six years. His specialty is multimedia journalism.

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Amanda Le-Roy

UL Lafayette alumna Amanda Le-Roy also received recognition as a top “20 Under 40” young business leader in Acadiana. Le-Roy is a 2001 graduate in public relations.

Le-Roy’s nomination for the award is attributed to her work ethic and service to others.

“I am truly honored to be recognized amongst such a prestigious group of young leaders,” said Le-Roy. “I consider earning this award as affirmation of years of hard work and giving back to my community. I am excited to have reached one of my career goals and look forward to many more years of working together to make Acadiana a better place.”

Le-Roy’s communication degree from ULL also contributed to her success and recognition.

“My education laid the groundwork for my career in Public Relations,” said Le-Roy. “I learned the history, processes, and techniques of the trade through my studies at ULL. Through hands-on real life projects, I was able to apply my knowledge before entering the work force. One thing I remember the most about my courses was the importance one of my professors placed on building relationships and being a good steward of people’s time. This concept resonated with me then and continues to play a huge part in my career.”

After graduation, Le-Roy began working at Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA) and received training through the Economic Development Institute. She was an active member of the Southern Economic



Amanda Le-Roy is a 2014 recipient of Acadiana’s 20 Under 40 award

Development Council and served on the annual conference planning meeting in New Orleans.

Le-Roy transitioned into the non-profit sector where she worked for LARC, creating multiple record-breaking events: Noel Acadien au Village, Rice and Gravy Cookoff, Blackpot Festival and Acadiana Outreach, Palates & Pate and Thanksgiving Dinner.

She made the jump to the health care field where she attended the Louisiana Hospital Association’s Leadership Training program. In 2011, Le-Roy won a Pelican Award for Web Initiative presented to members of the Louisiana Society for Hospital Public Relations and Marketing. In 2012, she completed the Leadership Lafayette class, a local

program dedicated to developing leaders in the community.

Le-Roy is currently the marketing and business development manager as Lafayette Surgical Specialty Hospital where she manages public relations, community relations, and physician relations. She participates in legislative advocacy at the national level for Physician Hospitals of America by annually travelling to Washington, DC to discuss issues, and she advocates at the local level for several health care related issues. At her job, she helped to create the Patient Experience Task Force whose purpose is to help generate and maintain patient’s first impressions of the hospital.

In addition to advocating for legislation, Le-Roy spends time supporting her community and her alma mater. She is a member of the UL Alumni Association and stays active with events at the university.

“I grew up here and I could never be as proud as I am right now of plans that are in the works for the betterment of my city, says Le-Roy. “I am supportive of the Master Plan and have been involved in its development since the beginning.”

Her community involvement includes serving as a volunteer teacher for Junior Achievement of Acadiana, organizing Mardi Gras Bead drives for LARC during her employment there, and hosting a staff competition to collect canned goods for the annual FoodNet holiday drive. Le-Roy has also volunteered with United Way of Acadiana doing various fundraising

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and service projects such as Stuff the Bus, an event designed to provide students with school supplies. She is a member of the 705, volunteers at Festival International de Louisiane, and attends community events for Women of the Chamber, IndEvents, Media Society and Alliance, Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Executive Marketing Roundtable, the Daily Advertiser Healthcare Panel, and the Acadiana Press Club.

Le-Roy’s desire to serve the community was the driving force behind her proposed project for the “20 Under 40” Young Leader Award. Her proposed project was Marché de Lafayette, a small business incubator that would allow for the growth and development of small local businesses. The areas of focus for Marché de Lafayette would be retail of art, crafts, foods, and other products of Acadiana. “Marché de Lafayette is an opportunity to showcase the great entrepreneurial spirit of our locals in a festive and enjoyable shopping experience that launches their business to the community and utilizes a formerly underperforming surface lot or vacant building,” said Le-Roy.

One thing that Le-Roy believes is important is for Lafayette to focus on keeping businesses in the city as well as bringing in new businesses.



Four UL alumni receive their award for 20 Under 40. Pictured: Abby Guillory (top left), Amanda Le-Roy (top right), Frankie Russo (bottom left), and Jennifer Raggio (bottom right).

Communication Department Extends Hospitality to Chinese Scholar

The College of Liberal Arts is strengthening its ties to China. Dean Jordan Kelman, Communication Department Head Dr. T. Michael Maher and Broadcasting Coordinator Dr. Bill Davie welcome visiting scholar, Dr. Libo Liu, from Shaanxi Normal University of Xi’an, China.

Dr. Liu is conducting research under the direction of Dr. Davie whom he first welcomed as a guest lecturer to Xi’an, China in 2013. Following Dr. Davie’s visit, Professor Liu applied for and won a visiting scholar award to the United States from the China Scholarship Council. Dr. Liu serves as Head of the Political Education Department

at Shaanxi Normal University, where he earned degrees in History and Politics. His research interests include course work in Mass Media and Human Behavior, Political and Cultural Communication, and the Modernization of Chinese Culture. His most recent research projects analyze the Governance of Network Anarchism, and Cultural Communication in Cyber Space.

Dr. Liu’s visit through 2015 to the United States is supported by the National Social Science Foundation of China, and his hosting in Louisiana is coordinated by the College of Liberal Arts, the Communication Department, and Rose Honegger, director of the Office of International Affairs.

Dr. Liu sat in on a few classes in the Fall 2014 semester including the graduate level classes CMCN 500: research, taught by Dr. Lucian Dinu and CMCN 572: theory, taught by Dr. Maher.

Dr. Liu says that he has been impressed by the warm and hospitable climate of the university, both in terms of academics and weather. He also wishes to thank the Overseas Training Center of Xi’an International Studies University, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China.

Interested in pursuing a master’s degree in communication? Our department offers a project or thesis track in the following areas:

- public relations
- organizational/interpersonal communication
- advertising
- international communication
- mass communication

If you have any questions about our program, you may contact Dr. Philip Auter, Graduate Coordinator at auter@louisiana.edu.

Winters Returns to UL Lafayette



Dr. Caryn Winters

Dr. Caryn Winters is no stranger to ULL. When she was a young girl, Winters spent much time in Burke Hawthorne Hall where her aunt worked in the Department of Communicative Disorders. After completing her doctorate, Winters saw that the Communication Department had a vacant teaching position and decided to apply. She was hired as a full-time professor in the Fall of 2013.

"Returning to UL, more than any other experience, feels like coming home," said Winters. "Because I grew up on this campus, I have relationships with people, and it feels really wonderful to give back to a place that has given my family and me so much."

Winters now teaches several communication courses including Communication Consultation, Interpersonal Communication, Interview Theory, Public Speaking, Leadership Communication, Media and Society, and Organizational Communication. Winters will also be teaching the graduate-level Interpersonal Communication course

in the Fall of 2015. She enjoys her time teaching and believes she is making an impact on students.

"Teaching students how to research and getting them into Ph. D. programs is life changing," said Winters. "Also, teaching undergraduate students the skills they need for master's programs is

"Because I grew up on this campus, I have relationships with people, and it feels really wonderful to give back to a place that has given my family and me so much."

hugely important, especially when you can inspire a student to obtain a Master's degree when they never thought that was possible."

Winters did not originally plan to pursue a career in communication. As an undergrad, she double majored in political science and communication studies, but her main interest was always politics. After obtaining her bachelor's degree, Winters worked as an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) as a community organizer for one of the worst

economically disadvantaged areas of Fort Worth, Texas. When this was completed, Winters decided to earn her master's degree from ULL, specializing in interpersonal communication. While in graduate school at ULL, Winters was a graduate assistant, and she completed more work with AmeriCorps collecting and organizing data for an anti-smoking campaign. She also realized that obtaining a master's in communication allowed her to combine her interests of democracy, political theory, and political science with her research and studies in communication. Winters decided to pursue a doctorate degree in communication from Pennsylvania State University.

Winters uses the skills she has learned over the years to teach students how to build better personal relationships through communication.

"We all come to the table with these really bad habits," said Winters, "whether we get triggered really easily by people or we may not give a co-worker the benefit of the doubt or remember that people are human. I'm teaching people every day how to be better in their relationships and how to take into consideration their experiences with culture, values, and needs. I just feel really lucky to be here doing these things because it's helping other's lives in a tangible way."

Broadcasting Major wins "Grand Prize" for Louisiana Focus Report

University of Louisiana at Lafayette broadcasting senior Heather Hailar took home the South Central Broadcasting Societies (SCBS) 2013 grand prize for best audio feature. Hailar's story was about the Oliver Pollock Oak tree in Washington, La. She took the top award over students from Stephen F. Austin and West Texas A&M University.

The award presentation took place Sept. 26-27, 2014 at Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond at the SCBS's annual meeting.

The main focus of the Hailar's story, the Oliver Pollock Oak, was named

after a war figure from the American Revolution. Pollock helped finance the colonies' effort for independence, and he is credited for creating the U.S. dollar sign. Hailar's audio feature brought attention to the damage that was being done to the 250-year-old tree by Washington motorists. Residents who live near the tree have started to make efforts to preserve the branches of the tree that were in jeopardy.

Hailar's professor, Dr. Bill Davie, believes that Hailar stands out from the rest of her classmates.

"This mother of three children is a veteran of our U.S. military forces in Iraq, and her discipline in radio reporting was evident the first day of class," said Davie. "She brought creativity, talent, and an outstanding work ethic to all of her assignments in the class-not just the Oliver Polk story."

Hailar hopes to begin a career in audio and radio production after graduation. She is focusing on putting more of her work online, where it has better opportunities to be viewed by broadcasting professionals.

UL Lafayette Debate Education Succeeds in and out of Classroom

When it comes to debate and argumentation, ULL excels at providing students with hands on experience. The university offers Debate and Argumentation course (CMCN 202) to students who are interested in expanding their knowledge of the speech and debate process.

UL Lafayette alumna Masey Hammons, who earned a master's in Public Relations, teaches the debate and argument class. At the end of each semester, students are required to participate in a moot court performance as their final project. In the Fall 2014 semester, Hammons' students applied to be on one of three teams, the affirming team of lawyers, the negating team of lawyers or a team of Supreme Court Justices. The teams did research and turned in case briefs about their side of the death penalty argument.

Mac Cormier served as the Supreme Court Justice while Organizational Communication Association President Dakota Henry and Ragin' Cajun football player, Kevin Fouquier led the team of lawyers. The negating team won by a vote of 7-to-2. Hammons was impressed with the students' creativity.

"This semester, the justices took a V for Vendetta approach to their job and came aptly dressed for the occasion," said Hammons.

Outside of the classroom, Hammons coaches the ULL Speech and Debate team. In the Fall 2014 semester, the debate team attended three tournaments and earned several awards. Five UL Lafayette students, Kristopher Harrison, Jamie Parker, Becca Brown, Gina Biddick, and Jacob Leger, competed at the Belmont University tournament where all five took home one of the top seven speaker awards. Top speaker awards are given to the speakers who acquire the most speaking points throughout the tournament.

In the Spring 2015 semester, state champions Gina Biddick and Jamie Parker will defend their titles at the Southern Forensics Championship. ULL will also host a debate tournament for the first time in the school's history. The tournament, named the 2015 Mardi Gras Classic, will be a collaborative effort between ULL and Louisiana State University.



CMCN 202: Debate and Argumentation students dress up as V for Vendetta characters for moot trial



UL Lafayette Speech and Debate team coaches and students pictured bottom row from left: Samantha McClure, Jamie Parker, Becca Brown, and Gina Biddick. Top row from left: Masey Hammons, Jacob Leger, and Kristopher Harrison

Dear CMCN Alumni:

We want to know what is going on in your life. Drop us an email to cypresslakenews@gmail.com and let us know about your new job, promotion, career change, marriage, baby or any other exciting news. Tell us what year you graduated and with what degree.

Alumni News

• 2014 •

Lanie Cook (B.A., journalism) left KPFL radio to take a two-year internship at the Advocate newspaper's Acadiana Bureau.

Scott Courville (M.S., advertising)-Marketing Associate at Tech Oil Products Inc.

Katie De la Rosa (B.A., journalism) is a reporter with the *Daily Advertiser*

Nagham El Karhili (M.S., public relations) works in public relations at Total Communications in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Jessie Franchebois (B.A., public relations) lives in Autstin, Texas and is a sales and marketing account manager for Breakthrough Concepts.

Mike Francingues, (B.A., journalism) landed a reporting job with the *Daily Iberian* newspaper in New Iberia.

Shanna Perkins (B.A., journalism) is the managing editor of Lifestyle Lafayette

Brad Wedlock (M.S., public relations) is pursuing a doctorate of education at ULL.

• 2013 •

Lauren Davis, (B.A., public relations) promoted to Marketing Communications Coordinator at Lafayette Schools Credit Union and owns photography business. (blog link)

Masey Hammons, (M.S., public relations) along with **Brad Wedlock** (M.S., public relations, 2012) recently presented a paper to the Southern States Communication Association's annual conference titled "#WhyIStayed #WhyILeft: Social Media's Reinvention of Agenda Setting Theory" **Hammons** is also persuing a doctorate of education at ULL.

Suzanne Rees, (B.A., public relations) is the Exploring Executive for Capital Area Council in Austin, TX.

Skyra Rideau (B.A., public relations) appointed Events and Public Relations Manager for Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE). She was recently quoted in a story on Fox News: "Oil Companies Tap Virtual Technology to Train Workers"-[http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2014/11/10/oil-companies-tap-](http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2014/11/10/oil-companies-tap-virtual-technology-to-train-workers/)

virtual -technology-to-train-workers/

Laura Runkel (B.A. & M.S., public relations) is now the marketing and communication specialist at Meyer Plastics, Inc., a leading master plastics distributor in the Midwest.

Shelsey Sanchez (B.A., public relations) is the Marketing Coordinator for Universal Data Incorporated.

Hannah Trahan, (B.A., broadcasting)-works as an Audio Operator for KATC-TV (3).

Chasah West, (B.A., public relations)-works as the Web and Social Media Director for Holbrook Multimedia Inc. and is persuing a M.S in public relationsm, adcertising, and international communication at ULL. She and M.S. candidate, **Heidi Makady** co-authored a paper that was accepted to the International Conference on Media and Rumors hosted in Abha, Saudi Arabia.

• 2012 •

Ryan Broussard, (M.S., mass communication/media studies)-left the Advocate newspaper to return to Lafayette as Content Manager for KATC communications.

Asia Hebert, (B.A., public relations) is a guest relations hostess at Walt Disney World.

Jordan Iseral (B.A., public relations) landed an account executive job with Ruder Finn in New York.

Andre Williams (M.S., public relations) is a teaching adjunct for ULL, teaching undergraduate public relations classes.

• 2011 •

Adriana Beedle (B.A., public relations) -lives in Houston, Texas and works as an Account Executive at Liberman Broadcasting

Mia (Gordon) Wyn (B.A., broadcasting) continues her television career in Canada.

• 2009 •

Tova (Ostelet) Stelly, (B.A., public relations) is the public relations associate at Iberia Bank.

• 2008 •

Saad Khan, (M.S., broadcasting) wrote and directed a Bollywood film that was released nationally in India. The film, Station, in the Hindi language, is about three assassins and a dark deal in a deserted railway station's waiting room. The film was released across eight cities in Bangalore through DVR Cinemas. Watch the official trailer for station at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bP_rvHTKjc.

Heather Miller (B.A., journalism) is the web editor at KATC-TV (3) in Lafayette.

• 2005 •

Bian Lingjing (M.S., broadcasting) reporter with NewYork City's Chinese language news network.

• 1999 •

Letitia Walker (M.S., mass communication) is the news director at KATC-TV (3).

• 1985 •

Susan Hague (M.S., communication) recieved the Fulbright Scholar program grant to teach interpersonal communication at Goa Institute of Management in western India. She teaches speech and mass communication at Delgado Community College in New Orleans.

• 1978 •

Karen Rudick (B.A., communication) received the Eastern Kentucky University Alumni Association's Excellence in Teaching Award and the plaque in her honor will be displayed in the ECU Alumni Association's Hall of Fame.

Student Honored as Outstanding Graduate

Every semester, the Department of Communication at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette picks one student to be the outstanding graduate for the department. Ryan Richard was the fall 2014 outstanding graduate for the department of communication.

Richard began his college career in the fall semester of 2011 as a history major. He later decided to switch his major to public relations; a decision that eventually led to him becoming the outstanding graduate.

"It was an honor to be named the outstanding gaduate of the Communication Department," said Richard. "Knowing that the honor came from the amazing faculty and staff of the department gave it a deeper meaning."

While at UL-Lafayette, Richard was a member of the Pride of

Acadiana marching band and the UL-Lafayette Symponic and Concert bands. Richard was also a member of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), Sigma Gamma Mu Communication Honor Society, Sigma Alpha Lambda Honor Society, and the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. He also volunteered at fundraising events for KATC.

Richard values the education he recieved and believes that his experience gained through his coursework in the department helped him to become the person that he is today.

"UL became the place where I learned to challenge myself and open myself up to new opportunities, said Richard. "I learned so much from my professors and the opportunity to receive my education at UL has been so invaluable."



Ryan Richard was the Fall 2014 Outstanding Graduate in Communication

Department Recieves Approval for Audio Lab Upgrades

The Department of Communication at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette was approved for a \$6,280 grant in order to upgrade the Audio Instructional Labs located in the Burke-Hawthorne Annex. The grant money will be used for new workstations as well as to upgrade the program software to Adobe Audtion, a state of the art program for radio stations.

The Audio Annex is the space where broadcasting and mass communication students take their first steps into the realm of broadcasting by creating music programming, public service announcements, and news stories. Many times the projects produced in the Annex make it onto the air at local radio stations.

Dr. Patricia Holmes uses the Annex to teach introductory courses on broadcasting, which allows the students to get a taste of real-world experience.

Dr. Bill Davie, the broadcasting sequence coordinator who uses the Audio Annex to teach courses, is excited about the grant approval. His classes are designed for students to get their work on Delta Media's Radio Lafayette.

"The audio lab has been home to so many award-winning students, and projects" said Davie. "These updates are going to allow us to become an even better program."

Jessica Taylor, a 2013 broadcasting alumna and former second-place winner for best radio news reporter at the South Eastern Journalism Conference, believes that the upgrades are important to the education of students.

"As a broadcasting undergraduate at ULL, I spent countless hours working in the lab trying to produce quality projects for my classes," said Taylor. "I'm happy to know that future students will be able to benefit from new equipment and recieve the best learning experience they can."

The improvements to the lab

allows students to continue to produce quality material in an increasingly more competitve industry.

"Between our two classes students are constantly improving their technique in writing, announcing, and mixing audio tracks on their way to a professional career," said Davie. "Without new equipment for the Audio Annex, said Davie "it would be impossible to produce competitive audio content like Louisiana Focus that has won the national news program of the year award from the Society of Professional Journalists, among other contests."

Conference Participation Still Thriving



Chasah West and Heidi Makady represent ULL at a conference in Saudi Arabia

One goal that graduate students have is getting papers accepted to communication conferences. Conferences are good for academic and cultural experience, but they also help graduate students establish themselves as credible scholars.

Chasah West, a graduate student specializing in public relations and Heidi Makady, a graduate student specializing in mass communication presented two papers at the International Conference on Media and Rumor; Societal Risks and Ways of Confrontation. This conference was held in Abha, Saudi Arabia on Nov. 25-27, 2014. West enjoyed the conference experience, and believes it played a role in furthering her communication skills.

“Having never presented at any conferences before this was a great foray into exploring, writing and presenting research for such a large gathering of fellow communication academics,” said West.

Makady also enjoyed her experience and stated that it gave her the opportunity to network with other scholars who share similar interests. She also believes that the conference provided her an opportunity to work on her communication skills, especially with presenting. Makady also believes that it is important for graduate students to attempt to get papers accepted into conferences.

“I believe conferences provide a

great chance for graduate students to gear up for their upcoming steps in academia,” said Makady. “In addition to networking with academics from various backgrounds and perspectives, students get to build their own reputation for future research work.”

West and Makady presented one paper that they co-authored together about Hashtags and Rumors surrounding the events of the missing Malaysian Airline Flight MH370. They presented another paper co-authored with UL professor Dr. Phillip Auter and University Of Ontario Institute Of Technology professor, Dr. Aziz Douai. The paper was an investigation of news frames across English and Arabic publications of two Saudi news outlets, Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera, and how these outlets reported on Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome.

Brandon Rudyk, a graduate student specializing in international and intercultural communication has also attended several conferences including the American Communication Association (ACA), the Southern States Communication Assoc. (SSCA), and the Popular Culture Assoc./American Culture Association (PCA/ACA). Rudyk believes that conferences are important for students to gain reputations in the academic world.

“Conferences allow you to begin branding yourself as a scholar and allow you to become known for a particular line of study,” said Rudyk.

Graduate Student Using Degree to Bring Awareness about Human Trafficking

In the fall of 2014, a group of students with a passion for ending human trafficking decided to reestablish Cajuns Against Trafficking (CAT) on ULL's campus. This student organization was founded in 2009, but died out and stayed dormant for five years. One of the students who helped to reform CAT is Tiffany Carrier, a graduate student in public relations.

Carrier received her undergraduate degree in public relations from ULL in May 2013. After taking a year off, she returned to her alma mater for grad school.

Carrier is the Vice President of CAT, and she also does the public relations work for the group. She believes that the skills and knowledge she gained in her undergraduate program as well as what she is currently learning in the master's program has been useful to CAT.

“Even though CAT was already a campus organization, I feel like we have to start from scratch,” said Carrier. “I have been helping our president to run events, make promotional material, and communicate with ULL students about human trafficking.”

Human trafficking involves the selling of human beings for commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor. Since college-aged individuals are targets for human traffickers, CAT believes educating the student body is important.

Carrier has begun researching human trafficking awareness communication efforts, and plans to write her thesis about it.

“Being able to use my school work in a way that has the potential to save someone's life is amazing to me,” said Carrier.

Carrier's passion for wanting to put an end to human trafficking stems from a trip she took to Greece in 2012. While there, she worked with a group called A21, distributing human trafficking hotline stickers. Two weeks later, a girl was rescued because of their communication efforts.

Spring Banquet Honors Dr. Farooq Kperogi and Students



Outstanding Alumnus Dr. Farooq Kperogi

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Department of Communication held its annual Sigma Gamma Mu (SGM) Communications Awards Banquet. The department selected Dr. Farooq Kperogi as the 2014 Outstanding Alumnus. Along with Kperogi, the department also honored several outstanding students from each department. The awards banquet was held

on April 29, 2014 at the Petroleum Club of Lafayette.

Dr. Kperogi received a Bachelor of Arts in mass communication in 1997 from Bayero University in Kano, Nigeria. He then received a Masters of Science in Communication from ULL in 2006 and earned his Doctorate in communication from Georgia State University in 2011.

During his time at ULL, Dr. Kperogi was chosen as the 2006 Outstanding graduate student in Communication and was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. He graduated from UL Lafayette with a 4.0 grade point average.

Dr. Kperogi has published several articles in multiple journals such as *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, *New Media & Society*, *Journal of Mass Communication*, and more. He has also presented numerous conference papers to major conferences such as the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

Dr. Alice Ferguson, faculty advisor of SGM, was in charge of the banquet, and believes that Kperogi was an excellent choice for the award.

“It is an honor to have someone of Dr. Kperogi's accomplishment among our alumni, and it was wonderful to hear him speak of his time in our department during

the banquet,” said Ferguson. “His interactions with students were just as inspiring as the stories he shared during his keynote remarks. He continues to educate and inspire all those around him, which is what makes him so deserving of our Outstanding Alum award.”

In addition to the Outstanding Alumni Award, the communication department also honored undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty from each sequence within communication (advertising, public relations, organizational communication, journalism, and broadcasting) selected a student to receive the Outstanding Senior Award. All communication organizations selected one member to receive the Outstanding Member Award. Graduate school faculty also chose students for Outstanding Project, Outstanding Thesis, Outstanding Research Assistant, and Outstanding Teaching Assistant. In addition to these awards, the students who received scholarships were announced, and the seniors in SGM received their honor chords. For a list of awards see below.

The following is a list of students and awards received at the 2014 Communication banquet:

Outstanding Graduate Project: Jared Haynes	Outstanding Senior in Broadcasting: Brian Richard	Outstanding Member of Organizational Communication Association: Rebecca F. Ready
Outstanding Graduate Thesis: Naghah El Karhili	Outstanding Member National Broadcast Society (NBS): Katie Mendoza	Outstanding Senior in Public Relations: Edward DeClouet
Outstanding Research Assistant: Stephanie Majesty	Outstanding Senior in Journalism: Katie de la Rosa	Outstanding Member of Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA): Jared Luent
Outstanding Teaching Assistant: Donna Guidry Brad Wedlock	Outstanding Member of Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ): Lanie Lee Cook	Outstanding Member of Sigma Gamma Mu (SGM): Jennifer Burdette
Outstanding Senior in Advertising: Brittney Garrett	Outstanding Member of National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ): Kimberly Hurst	Outstanding Faculty Member: Alice Ferguson
Outstanding Member American of Advertising Federation (AAF): Emily Larkin	Outstanding Senior in Organizational Communication: Monica M. Bollich	Outstanding Senior in Communication: Janea Judge-Hammons
		Outstanding Alumnus: Dr. Farooq Kperogi



Outstanding Senior in Public Relations Edward DeClouet and Dr. Dedria Givens-Carroll.

Faculty News



Dr. T. Michael Maher and Dr. William Davie completed editing *First Amendment*

Law in Louisiana, a media law textbook, which will be published this upcoming spring by the University of Louisiana Press.



Dr. Phillip Auter and several graduate students published papers in communication journals. One

publication titled *Uses and gratifications of Arab and Muslim-oriented Facebook pages in the U.S.: A survey of current users*, was co-authored with communication graduate student Nagham Elkarhili. This publication appears in the *Journal of Middle East Media*. Another article was co-authored with two communication graduate students, Brandon Rudyk and Brad Wedlock, as well as Dr. Aziz Douai from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. This article titled *The influence of social media in the early 21st Century: A meta-analysis of a decade of research (2001-2011)*, was published in the *Global Media Journal Arabian Edition*.

and in leadership positions as vice-chair of programming for the Mass Communication Division and chair of the Public Relations Division. She also presented a paper: "Reverse migration: Americans run for the Mexican border for healthcare despite media depictions at the The National Association of Hispanic & Latino Studies (NAHLS) 22nd Joint National Conference with the National Association of African American Studies, National Association of Native American Studies and International Association of Asian Studies.



Dr. Dedria Givens-Carroll was appointed to the Advisory Board of the Louisiana Center for Women

in Government and Business. She also served as a judge in the Team Policy Finals hosted by the Baton Rouge Debate Club. The team policy debate resolution for the academic year 2014-2015 was: "The United States should significantly reform its policy toward one or more countries in the Middle East," hosted by the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA). She was active at the Southern States Communication annual conference, presenting papers, serving on panels