

# THE SPEAK EASY

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## DR. BRYAN CROW RETIRES

By Cushé Blackmon, Treasurer, PRSSA

Bryan K. Crow is an Associate Professor of Communication Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. He obtained both a Bachelor's (1975) and Master's (1977) in Speech and Theatre from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He then went to the University of Iowa for his Ph.D. in Communication and Theatre Arts (1982). Crow's exceptional education history has made him such a vital part of the SIU Communication Studies Department.



Dr. Bryan Crow in his office on campus.

Crow first got a glimpse of the Carbondale community and SIU in 1979 while attending a national Doctoral Honors Seminar on Phenomenology and Communication hosted by SIU at Giant City State Park. He was drawn to SIU because of the "easy going style of life and being at a Big Ten school previously that had a lot of competition and a lot of stress. SIU had a calm welcoming atmosphere." Crow applied for a position at SIU two years later as an assistant professor in Speech Communication. He was offered the job and moved to Carbondale in August, 1981.

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## DR. NILANJANA BARDHAN RECEIVES DISTINCTION AWARD

The Women of Distinction Award is a university-level award given to a faculty, administrative/professional or civil service staff member, and recognizes employees for a "sustained commitment to women and/or issues of diversity through demonstrated leadership, vision, or actions" in their profession, expertise or service to the university community. The department congratulated Dr. Bardhan on being named the 2019 recipient of this distinguished award!

Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan has taught at SIU since 1998, and has previously served as assistant chair and acting chair for the Department of Communication Studies.

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(Crow, continued from page 1)

Some courses that Crow has taught here are Interpersonal Communication; Interpersonal Conflict; Family Communication; Conversation Analysis; Gender, Sexuality & Communication; Public Speaking; Language, Culture & Communication; and Irish Culture & Communication.

After 38 years, he will be retiring on June 30, 2019. The courses that Crow will miss teaching the most are the ones he created at SIU, like his graduate seminars and his University Honors course in Irish Culture & Communication. He is open to the idea of coming back to teach that course occasionally.

Professor Crow hopes that with his new-found freedom he will be able to spend more time with his three grandsons in Colorado and one grandson who lives with him locally. Crow has a retirement bucket list that includes continuing to go on the SIU Study Abroad trips to Ireland, traveling to New England for the fall colors, and finishing a book that he has been working on for years about the films of the classic MGM director Clarence Brown, whom Crow met at a film festival in Brown's honor at Brown's alma mater, the University of Tennessee, back in 1973. Crow also plans to continue producing new programs in his nationally-syndicated Public Radio series, *Celtic Connections*, which he started in 1991.

Crow loves his profession and values the reward of being the professor that, years after a student takes one of his courses, they still remember him. I can most definitely say that I will never forget the time Professor Crow played his Irish flute for us in the Interpersonal Communication course I took with him. His positive and energetic personality will be missed in the Communication Studies Department and at SIU. Best of luck to you and your family!

*“Crow loves his profession and values the reward of being the professor that, years after a student takes one of his courses, they still remember him.”*

(Bardhan, continued from page 1)

She earned her bachelor's degree in English and philosophy at Lady Shriram College for Women, Delhi University, and her master's and doctorate degrees from E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.

Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway said she nominated Dr. Bardhan for the award because of her “unwavering support, her commitment to her students, and her overall demonstration of excellence.”

In addition to her department and university service, Dr. Bardhan also serves on the advisory board for the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, and co-chairs that organization's Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee. She volunteers with For Kids' Sake, a local nonprofit, the United Nations Association, the Peace Coalition, and more.

She has presented more than two dozen papers at academic conferences, authored or co-authored three books, and published almost 30 papers in academic journals. She has been honored with the “Best Authored Book Award” for *Cultivating Cosmopolitanism for Intercultural Communications: Communicating as Global Citizens* and the “Best Co-Edited Book Award” for *Identity Research in Intercultural Communication*.

“She is known internationally for her work in critical/cultural studies that sheds light on diversity issues in public relations, often in a global context,” wrote T. Kenn Gaither in a nomination letter. “In her area of specialization, she has few peers and has carved out a place as a preeminent scholar in global public relations practice.” Congratulations, Dr. Bardhan!



Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan, Director of Graduate Studies

## 2018-2019 SPEAKERS FORUM RECAP

By Darren Valenta, Member, Speakers Forum Committee

Diversity, inclusion, and students' financial futures took center stage as part of this year's Speakers Forums. For the 19<sup>th</sup> year, the Communication Studies Department and the Society for Civil Discourse collaborated to hold a Speakers Forum event in both the fall and the spring. The Forum provides undergraduate students the opportunity to discuss timely issues affecting their lives in an environment that encourages the productive exchange of ideas and arguments. The format of the event is unique in that a select group of students is allowed to present five- to six-minute speeches featuring their perspective on the semester's theme before those in attendance provide their own thoughts and reactions to the evening's speeches. This arrangement places the emphasis on discourse, encouraging audience engagement and active participation in the conversation at hand.

In the fall, speakers presented on the topic "Diversity and Inclusion: What Does it Mean to You?" From the 20 students who auditioned, six were selected to present their five- to six-minute speeches at the Forum: junior, Anna Birska; and first-years, Sarah Hagen, Leah Hall, Tessa Kerouac, Prem Rana, and Rebecca Singer.

(continued on page 4)



A publicity poster announcing auditions for the fall Speakers Forum.

## INAUGURAL SIU IGNITE TALKS

Nine fun and educational presentations comprised Southern Illinois University Carbondale's inaugural officially licensed Ignite Talks. Held all around the world, Ignite Talks first started in 2006 in Seattle before expanding to hundreds of other cities. The goal of the event is to allow presenters to share their ideas and insights with the world in a fun and educational way.

Hosted by the Communication Studies Department, and organized primarily by Dr. Craig Engstrom, students and community members took five minutes to present on their topic, accompanied by a visual presentation of 20 slides that progress every 15 seconds.

This year's event attracted over 100 people, many of whom were given the opportunity to engage with the speakers following their presentations.

With such a fast-paced setting, presenters shared insights and perspectives on both individual and distinctive topics.

The event took place at the Varsity Theater's balcony stage, and was free to the public with complimentary snacks donated by local businesses like Cristaudo's, Thai Taste, Larry's House of Cakes, Chango's, and Primo's Pizza.



Lacey Corey Brown presenting her talk, "Pegasus for President"

*"Held all around the world, Ignite Talks first started in 2006 in Seattle...The goal of the event is to allow presenters to share their ideas and insights with the world in a fun and educational way."*

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(Speakers Forum, continued from page 3)

When asked to identify why the semester's topic was important to her, Rebecca Singer stated, "Being a future Air Force Officer, it is already very clear to me...that women and minorities in the military come in smaller number. As a result, we feel unseen, limited. I want to be the voice to incite healthy change in an institution I love, and the country I serve." Similarly, Tessa Kerouac said, "Being a female in aviation has presented many obstacles and I have been faced with lots of harassment and discrimination. Because of this, I want to make my voice be heard and share how we must change environments to be more inclusive for the next generation of girls in aviation." All six speeches captured the importance and value of diversity and inclusion in a variety of settings and touched off a valuable conversation at the first Speakers Forum of the academic year.

In the spring, the Forum's topic shifted to financial concerns. Students were asked to write speeches about the topic "At Any Cost...Finances and Our Future." Fifteen students in total auditioned, and, again, six were chosen: senior, Luis Prado; sophomores, Kiara Hartmann and Patrick Murphy; and first-years, Kierra Greer, Matthew Griesbach, and Payton Morris. These students spoke on topics ranging from the looming danger of skyrocketing student loan debt to the inequalities in access to higher education. Additionally, Luis Prado veered away from a traditional platform address and, instead, delivered an impassioned poetic response to close the evening's speeches. When asked what inspired her about the spring semester's topic, Kierra Greer responded, "We all want a better future. Talking about money and loans can ease the burdens of stress many college students are enduring, because of lack of resources or not knowing what to do." Furthermore, Payton Morris provided some advice for students potentially interested in auditioning for the Forum in the future: "No matter who you are, where you come from, or how you present yourself, everyone has something profound and original to say. The only difficult part is getting to a place where other people can hear you." These students certainly provided compelling perspectives on the spring's topic, and the Speakers Forum will, hopefully, continue to provide students with a venue to express their ideas.

*"...I want to make my voice heard and share how we must change environments to be more inclusive for the next generation of girls in aviation."*

(Ignite Talks, continued from page 3)

Speakers and topics included:

- Pigasus for President – Lacey Corey Brown.
- Mac and cheese's journey to America's comfort food – Emily Buice.
- Dream up – Diogo Seixas.
- How to overcome anxiety – Danny Damian.
- Work doesn't have to suck – DJ Jeffries.
- Engineering success with soft skills – Bruce DeRuntz.
- We are NOT created equal – Greg Wendt.
- Future of fertility – Katherine Hinders.
- From orphan to doctor and other stories from our work in Bangladesh – Shema Ruperto.

For Dr. Engstrom, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Communication Studies, the event is a great way to connect with the local and global community. "We've been doing Ignite-style talks in our courses for years," Engstrom said. "We decided to do an official Ignite event because it allows us to provide coaching services to the community, showcases Carbondale and SIU thought leaders, and puts SIU in touch with a global community of passionate public speakers. We've received advice and given advice to Ignite hosts in Baghdad, Bergen, and Brisbane."

To watch videos of this event, visit <http://www.ignitetalks.io/ignite-southern-illinois-university-carbondale>

## FROM THE CHAIR'S DESK

By Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway, Interim Department Chair

It has certainly been quite a year in the Communication Studies Department, and indeed, across the campus of SIU. While organizational uncertainties abound at the institutional level, the department is witnessing some very exciting changes. And as always, our accomplishments go beyond what the pages of a newsletter might tell. In my first year as interim chair, I certainly had some successful shoes to fill, although now-retired chair Dr. Nathan Stucky left me in good hands with his month-by-month deadlines and notes of encouragement. I'm also now even more convinced that our department runs in large part on the outstanding institutional memory, good graces, and unbounding patience of office manager, Laura Sims. I must thank them both!



Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway, Interim Department Chair

While you can read about most of the highlights of the past year as you scroll through this edition of *Speak Easy*, I do want to mark some significant events. Many of you may remember the conference room at the back of the main office, COMM 2010. This room has, for many, many years, been the site of department meetings, several classes, and storage. It's currently in the process of getting a much-needed facelift and repurposing! Now envisioned as a sort of colabatory (a laboratory space for collaboration), it's finally going to be equipped with projection technology, various configurations of chalkboards and dry-erase boards (our undergrads requested that we keep the chalkboards!), a green screen and recording equipment, a cozy corner for more relaxed brainstorming, and some fresh coats of paint on the walls! I suspect that by the next edition of *Speak Easy*, we'll be able to show some before and after photos. Or, why not stop by yourselves; we'd love to have you visit in person!

We also say goodbye to some folks this year. Beloved PR faculty member Denise McClearney will embark on a much-deserved move towards retirement. And 38-year faculty veteran Dr. Bryan Crow will also leave us for the greener pastures of retirement, though assures us he will still be around writing his book on the films of Clarence Brown and hosting his nationally-syndicated NPR show, *Celtic Connections*.

Some of you may know that I received my M.S. from this department in 2001, and my PhD in 2006. (Fun fact: Bryan's Family Communication course was my very first course as a graduate student.) Upon leaving the department to begin a faculty position in Michigan in 2005, I remember that a few of us from the same cohort would often remark that we would love to go back and teach in the (then) Speech Comm department at SIUC someday. When the opportunity arose in 2012, I knew I was making the right decision to move my family to Carbondale. I have rarely doubted that decision in the years since, and stepping into the role of Interim Chair has only solidified my confidence in the good work we do in this department. My faculty and staff colleagues are unparalleled in our support of one another, and importantly, of our students. Our graduate students make me so proud. And our undergraduate students show me every day the determination and passion that young adults have. At our last faculty meeting just a few short weeks ago, we ended with a bit of light lamentation that SIU has so many positions filled by interims, and that much remains up in the air. But then my friend and colleague Dr. Jonny Gray reminded us all that "we are still here. WE are still here." Friends, Communication Studies is still here. We are active. We are solid. We are committed. We are still here, and will be for years to come!

*"Friends,  
Communication Studies  
is still here. We are  
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## DENISE MCCLEAREY RETIRES

By Hannah Colbrook, Vice President of Operations, PRSSA

After ten years of excellent work, Denise McClearey, a Senior Lecturer in the Communication Studies Department, has announced her decision to retire at the end of this semester. Starting May 2019, McClearey has plans to enjoy her extra time with her husband while sitting on her boat dock or playing her video games.



Senior Lecturer Denise McClearey who retires this year.

McClearey has taught over 100 courses throughout her time at SIU and has touched the lives of many students. Her fun, outgoing personality and tough love are hard to ignore. In class, she claims to only drink half regular half decaf coffee, but her spunk radiates from 8 a.m. until the end of the day.

"I love that she brings her real PR experience into the classroom," Haven Thompson, a junior studying Agriculture Communication, said. "Denise is the one who helped me fall in love with PR and Communication. Her Intro to PR Class and PRSSA [Public Relations Student Society of America] is the reason I changed my major."

Thompson was not the only student influenced by McClearey in this way. Her passion about the curriculum has transformed the education and career paths of many young adults.

"When I first changed my major from Business to Public Relations I had almost given up on school," Katelyn Bishop Hiller, a senior studying Public Relations, said. "She is the reason that I fell in love with PR. She has taught me how to better myself, be confident, and stand up for my work. She has been a significant role model in my college career and helped me to develop skills that will assist me in the professional world."

McCleary took on additional responsibilities throughout her time at SIU. These tasks included writing for the Communication Studies newsletter, *The Speak Easy*, and becoming the advisor for PRSSA.

During McClearey's time as advisor of PRSSA, she spearheaded projects like Operation: Sgt. Santa, an event held each December in partnership with Kohl's and the SIU Department of Safety (see "Capturing the Holiday Spirit"). McClearey has lightened the financial burden of over 100 families.

Some students have even mentioned their excitement about their ability to graduate at the same time of McClearey's retirement.

"When I found out Denise was retiring, I was immediately relieved, because I was leaving as well, and I didn't want to major in PR here at SIU without her here," Maggie Burke, a senior studying Public Relations, said. "Denise always inspired me to do my best. She helped me become confident as a writer and a young public relations professional."

Although McClearey's time at SIU has come to an end, her time, energy and real-world professionalism will continue to motivate students throughout their careers.

"I will forever look back at my time with Denise," Hannah Colbrook, a junior studying Public Relations, said. "It's hard to explain with words the amount of gratitude I have for the time she invested into myself and my classmates. She has been a role model for many, and I am proud to say that I had her as an educator. The professional world owes many thanks to Denise because her influence on SIU young professionals and their drive for success."

*"[Denise McClearey] is the reason that I fell in love with PR. She has taught me how to better myself, be confident, and stand up for my work."*

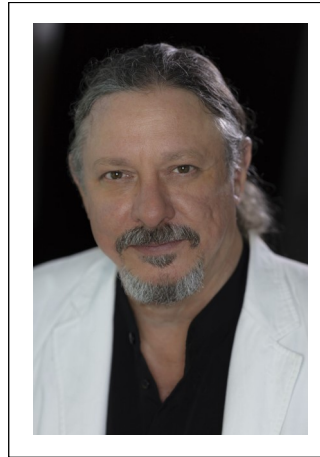
## RANDY RUNS FOR OFFICE

By Alex Lockwood, Ph.D. Student

Dr. Randy Auxier is a professor in communication studies who ran for congress as the Green Party candidate for Illinois' 12<sup>th</sup> congressional district. Graduate student Alex Lockwood interviewed Randy on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019, to gather some of his thoughts and insights about the process of running for office. Excerpts from this interview are presented here.

**AL: What kind of intersection is there between your work as a communication studies professor and your recent run for office?**

RA: "There's a tremendous intersection. I've taught political philosophy and theory throughout my career and I've been intrigued by the relationship between theory and practice, and been aware that I lacked practice. However, I was pointedly aware that what I was going to be doing was relevant to my training as a communication professor. Given that practice is the thing I lacked, I wanted it to be the thing I focused on. It was the preparation of social media, questionnaires, nonverbal communication, knowing that I would be covered by newspapers and radio and everyone. I would be preparing all of this public and political communication, and most importantly that I would be debating in public forums, knowing that these were all around.



Dr. Randy Auxier who ran for congress in 2018.

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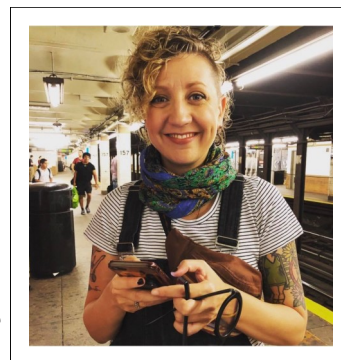
## WAYCHOFF VISITS THE KLEINAU

By Colin Whitworth, Publicity Director, Kleinau Theatre

In September, the Department of Communication Studies, with support from the Fine Arts Activity Fee, welcomed Dr. Brianne Waychoff of CUNY-Manhattan as a guest artist to the Kleinau Theatre.

Waychoff has a diverse and impressive resume as a scholar and performer. Her publications have appeared in SIU's own *Kaleidoscope*, as well as *Pacific Affairs*, *Text and Performance Quarterly*, *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*, and *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*. Waychoff's professional creative work has been seen at the State of the Nation Festival in New Orleans, the Around the Coyote Festival, the Bailiwick Director's Festival, Links Hall, the Chicago Cultural Center, and the Nova Young Art Fair in Chicago, to name just a few. Her performances have also been presented in academic settings like the Patti Pace Performance Festival, the HopKins Black Box Theatre at Louisiana State University, the Elsewhere Theatre at Bowling Green State University, and The Interpreter's Theatre at University of Northern Iowa.

As the first component of her visit, Waychoff led a workshop that focused on devising ensemble performances. The workshop asked its participants to first work solo—considering movements they may have overlooked—before using those movement sets to interact with texts in order to create short performances as a group.



Visiting artist, Brianne Waychoff

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*"... Waychoff summons diverse histories that converge in the discourses and practices of agriculture, family, domestic crafts, and art making."*

(Auxier, continued from page 7)

In academic philosophy, you're talking about things that, at the soonest, unfold in the next generation. There's an ethos of not getting bogged down in the present. While in the best instances that can be true, in 99% of cases this leads to a situation where philosophers don't understand how the past becomes the future. The problem is they either don't understand the past or the present. My aim as a philosopher was to have what Jaspers called a "decisive consciousness of the present," which involves an adequate understanding of history. The more you know about the past, the better your view of how the past becomes the future. I read that in Jaspers and I said to myself "that's it!" I want to know enough about the past to see how the past becomes the future. I want a decisive consciousness of the present. To go into the present, figure out what comes from the past, and how that becomes the future."

"I advocate an ethos for [the Green] party to view things as only future-oriented. To talk about the past is to get bogged down in the past. The organization needs to be future-oriented. What we have to say about the future is powerful enough to carry itself. We have vision, we don't need to convert people to our version of the past, but to our version of the future. Had I been elected, I'd've wanted that to be the party agenda. Given that this was unlikely, though, the question now isn't what would I have done, but what do I do with what I learned? I'm teaching political communication for the first time in the fall, and I want to teach the relationship between rhetoric, theory, and policy with an understanding that I did not have previously."

**AL: What would you say for students who want to get involved in politics?**

RA: "Students should run for city council and county board. Just because you're young doesn't mean you can't run for local office. One thing that could change Carbondale for the better is to get students in local office. I support [previous mayoral candidate] Colombo because I'm sick of old people running the town. Volunteer for a campaign, obviously. With a new election cycle starting, now is the time to join local campaigns. See who has an office started here that you can get behind. Whatever candidate you're into, get involved in their campaign. Get onboard now for the 2020 elections. People who get involved early, as the campaigns develop, they rise. If you're involved in a campaign that gets eliminated, you can join another campaign. If your candidate gets eliminated, your second choice may want your services. Until you work for a campaign, you'll always wonder why you vote."

*"Until you work for a campaign, you'll always wonder why you vote."*

(Waychoff, continued from page 7)

Ph.D. student Alex Davenport was one of the participants in Waychoff's workshop "Devising Practices for Performance." Davenport expressed that he truly enjoyed this workshop. "It was great to be able to be given space to think of movement as a devising practice in this way," he said, "The energy was really open ... it was a safe place to experiment with the performative modes."

Waychoff's own performance of her solo show, *Leftovers*, stitches together gleaned remnants from diverse sources: Jean François Millet's painting, *The Gleaners*, her Grandmother's needlepoint rendering of the same work, and Agnès Varda's 2000 film, *The Gleaners and I*. Waychoff's text is a blend of personal narrative and borrowed texts from the fields of art history, documentary filmmaking, performance studies, philosophy, and poetry. By traversing these various textual and performance landscapes, Waychoff summons diverse histories that converge in the discourses and practices of agriculture, family, domestic crafts, and art making.

There is no doubt that the performance students of SIU will feel the leftovers of Waychoff's visit for quite some time.



## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SALUKI STRONG

By Amber Henderson, Junior, Communication Studies

After being diagnosed with a brain tumor at the age of two, it was unclear if Mitchell Hill would ever live a normal life. Forty MRI's and three brain surgeries later, and Hill graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale with a degree in Communication Studies.

During his time at SIU, Hill has been hard at work with more than just coursework. In the last year, he has raised over \$10,000 to help other children who suffer with similar challenges to find a little ease in the long journey.

The biopsy and removal of the brain tumor left Hill initially with an 85% paralysis on the left side of his body. A second surgery added a shunt to repair a damaged ventricle, allowing excess fluid to drain from his brain. Hill's determination and commitment to ongoing rehabilitation has allowed him to regain functionality and live a life typical to most 22-year-olds.

Hill has had many opportunities to give support to other children who were also suffering, but it wasn't until his time at SIU that he really felt ready to get involved.

"Over the years, I had many opportunities to fundraise for Children's [Circle of Friends Program], participate in brain tumor studies, and to just give back in general," Hill said. "However, I turned them down when I was younger because I didn't feel ready for that responsibility. For about a year now, thanks to the skills, knowledge, and confidence I have obtained at SIUC, I have been in contact with the fundraising sector at Children's Circle of Friends Program, and they have helped me develop fundraising campaigns."



Mitchell Hill, who has raised over \$10,000 for Children's Circle of Friends Program

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*"In the last year, [Hill] has raised over \$10,000 to help other children who suffer from similar challenges to find a little ease in the long journey."*

## PR STUDENTS REPRESENT SIU AT CHICAGO SUMMIT

The Department of Communication Studies awarded four students a financial stipend that covered the cost of attending The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations' Diversity and Inclusion Summit. This inaugural summit was held in Chicago on Oct. 26, 2018. Speakers and attendees included leaders from the public relations industry (e.g., The Interpublic Group [IPG], Weber Shandwick, HBO Latin America, Ketchum PR and the Chicago Urban League), educators and students.

The four competitively selected students were Aaliyah Locke (senior), Maggie Burke (junior), Mia Porter (senior), and Nisa Fareeha (senior).



From left to right: Mia Porter, Aaliyah Locke, and Maggie Burke

The summit is an excellent opportunity for PR practitioners, educators and students to convene to discuss the state of diversity and inclusion in the industry.

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(Hill, continued from page 9)

Those campaigns have turned into a \$17,400 project to upgrade MRI rooms at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago. Remembering those days of continual MRIs, Hill felt compelled to do what he could to ease the discomfort for others.

"Scans last several hours, and the machines are cold, sterile, and intimidating," Hill said. "By customizing the equipment with animal murals and other artwork, children feel more relaxed."

Just a few months before his anticipated graduation date, Hill started noticing a few odd symptoms.

"I realized something was wrong when I was giving a presentation in a course and was experiencing double vision," Hill said.

After finishing the class period, Hill went to the hospital for an examination. Doctors determined he needed immediate surgery to replace a faulty shunt, which included five separate incisions. True to form, Hill was back to class in less than two weeks to finish his final semester.

Wherever he ends up, Craig Engstrom, director of undergraduate studies for communication studies, is confident Hill will find great success.

"Hill is a survivor and works hard, that is obvious," Engstrom said. "You won't find too many people who can have brain surgery and be emailing you two days later for help with a résumé."

*"This opportunity will finally allow me to hear from and network with people interested in increasing professional opportunities to young black women like myself."*

(Summit, continued from page 9)

Professors Nilanjana Bardhan and Denise McClearey, who teach public relations in the department, helped select the four deserving students. Dr. Bardhan, who serves on the board of The Plank Center, said, "It's been exciting to be an organizer for this Summit. Diversity and inclusion are key concerns in the PR industry, and The Plank Center is taking a lead on addressing this matter. I'm so glad some of our students are able to avail of this unique opportunity to network and learn from diverse leaders in the profession."

For Aaliyah Locke, a southern Illinois native, even brief access to a city and PR executives is significant: "As a young black woman, I've struggled to secure PR-related internships in the area. It is also hard to travel to larger cities such as Chicago and St. Louis for an internship due to the high costs associated with moving for just a few months. This opportunity finally allowed me to hear from and network with people interested in increasing professional opportunities for young black women like myself."

Maggie Burke hoped to get answers to perplexing questions: "Public Relations is a field unlike many others: it is dominated by women. Women hold anywhere from 61% to 85% of all PR jobs; however, only 30% of all global agencies are run by women. If most public relations professionals are women, then why isn't this fact represented in the executive suite?"

These motivated and thoughtful students are the rule rather than the exception in the Department of Communication Studies. Dr. Craig Engstrom, Director of Undergraduate Studies, says, "We are delighted that we were able to send four deserving students to the summit this year. Diversity and inclusion are key values of our department. I only wish we could send more students."

## CAPTURING THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

By Jack Peters, Vice President, PRSSA

The Communication Studies Department's Raymond D. Wiley Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) came to the rescue again this year. PRSSA members, along with Kohl's and SIU's Department of Public Safety, hosted Operation Sgt. Santa on Tuesday evening, December 4th, in Ballroom D of SIU's Student Center.

Operation Sgt. Santa paired ten children (ages 5-12) of SIU students with officers from the SIU Department of Public Safety who volunteered to participate. Generous donations from Kohl's, as well as a number of other businesses and individuals in Carbondale meant that every team had \$100 to shop for each child's family at Kohl's. The most special aspect of the experience was the enthusiastic collaboration between the police officers and the children. They got to know each other well, starting with a ride to Kohl's together in an SIU police car. For many of the children, this was the highlight of the evening!

The teams spent more than an hour combing through all of Kohl's departments, talking along the way about their families and their holiday plans. PRSSA members accompanied the teams to act as "Santa's Helpers." They carried the kids' coats and potential purchases, helped team members stay together, and diplomatically handled difficult questions (such as, "Can I spend my whole \$100 on candy?"). Although the police officers offered lots of helpful advice and friendly guidance to their young partners, each child made the final decisions about what to purchase. The officers then loaded up their police cars with bags and boxes, drove their teams back to the Student Center, and helped the children wrap all of the presents.

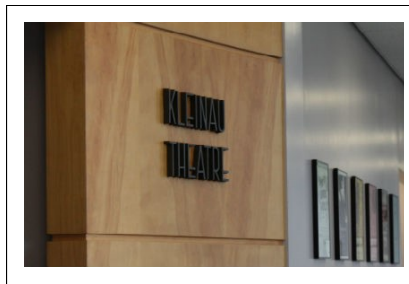
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*"The most special aspect of the experience was the enthusiastic collaboration between the police officers and the children."*

## THE KLEINAU: YEAR IN REVIEW

By Colin Whitworth, Publicity Director, Kleinau Theatre

Medusa, a closet, and Oscar the Grouch are just a few things that a diverse season of programming brought to the Marion Kleinau Theatre in the 2018-2019 season. This year the stage saw five original shows, a guest artist's show, a guest lecture and two spotlight hours showcasing student work.



The Kleinau Theatre hosted guest artists, solo, and cast shows in 2018-2019.

We opened our season with an exciting visit from Dr. Brianne Waychoff of CUNY-Manhattan (see "Leftovers" for details). The Kleinau's Fall semester programming continued with *Hardened*, written, directed, and compiled by Dr. Rebecca Walker and featuring a cast of graduate and undergraduate students. In November, undergraduate student Liz Newman performed her show *Things to be Hateful For*—the culmination of an online social media experiment that started with posting things she was hateful for and became "a community of commiseration."

(continued on page 12)

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It was often difficult to tell which member of each team – the police officer or the child – was having more fun!

More than 15 PRSSA members worked to decorate the ballroom, make sure everyone got a good meal of Quatros and Little Caesars pizza, and ensure the children and their families had a great time. While the teams were out shopping, the children’s parents and siblings were treated to cookies and other refreshments, games and entertainment, and a visit from Santa Claus played by Sam Vastis, one of our PRSSA members.

Operation Sgt. Santa was a rousing success that revived everyone’s holiday spirits. It allowed SIU students to give back to other SIU students and their families. It allowed children – some as young as five years old – to buy gifts that their families could not otherwise have afforded. And, most important of all, it helped spotlight and reinforce the positive relationship between the SIU Department of Public Safety and the campus community they work so hard to serve. As Jack Peters, Vice President of PRSSA, summed it up, Operation Sgt. Santa is an event that we enjoy putting on simply for the kids and their families. Seeing the children’s faces light up - when they get to meet Santa Claus, spend happy time with a police officer, and buy special gifts for their families during the holidays - makes all of our hard work worth it.” “Since this is my last year on the Executive Board, I think this is the event I will miss the most” Peters said. Kari Johnston, head of PRSSA’s event planning committee, added, “We had a great time with everyone who attended. We know Operation Sgt. Santa will be a special memory for the members of our chapter – and we hope the children and police will cherish their memories of it, too.”

If you would like more information about Operation Sergeant Santa and how you could help us make shopping dreams come true for another group of SIU students’ children next year, then please get in touch with Josh Houston. You can email Josh at [jhouston@siu.edu](mailto:jhouston@siu.edu)

*“We know ‘Operation Sgt. Santa’ will be a special memory for the members of our chapter—and we hope the children and police will cherish their memories of it, too.”*

(Kleinau, continued from page 11)

In the Spring, the theatre welcomed Dr. Reynaldo Anderson of Harris-Stowe State University to give a talk entitled “The Second Race for Afrofuturism: The Ride of Dark Speculative Futurity.” We also saw three graduate students direct shows for the Kleinau. First, Ph.D. student Alex Lockwood worked with a cast of four to present a unique installation experience, *Antlers to Ashes, Bytes to Bins* that asked the audience to consider what would be left over after the extinction of humans. Then, Ph.D. student Colin Whitworth presented a solo show *Within/Without: Writing from the Closet* that used personal narrative, literature, and poetry to interrogate the ways in which we understand the closet in terms of sexuality. Finally *Depressme Street* utilized a cast of graduates and undergraduates, displaying puppetry as a way to stage and talk about monstrosity and mental health. Ph.D. student Devin Collins wrote, directed, and compiled the show that he calls a “post-apocalyptic puppet show.”

Both semesters of programming were followed by a spotlight hour showcasing performance work from undergraduate and graduate students created in courses like CMST 201: Performing Culture, CMST 371: Storytelling, and CMST 573: Performance Criticism. All in all, the Kleinau stage saw roughly 20 unique performers across the season, and we can not wait to see which faces will join us next year. In closing, no performance happens alone; so we offer thanks to the performance studies faculty, Drs. Rebecca Walker, Jonny Gray, and Craig Gingrich-Philbrook, as well as to the 2018-2019 Kleinau staff: Technical Director, Jake Beck; Assistant Technical Director, Devin Collins; and Director of Publicity, Colin Whitworth. We hope you will join us in the Kleinau during the 2019-2020 season!

## SCO: YEAR IN REVIEW

By Lindy Wagner, President, SCO

The Student Communication Organization (SCO) is a student organization whose mission is to enhance and provide professional development opportunities for the graduate students in the Communication Studies program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The members of SCO have been busy at work this year. To start off our academic year, volunteers from SCO helped our Undergraduate Director support undergraduate recruitment for the Communication Studies major at the September 6 College Major Day and September 19 SIU Day. September also brought the appointment of Caleb McKinley-Portee to serve as the graduate representative on the Personnel Committee for the department. This was a busy year for the committee as there was a hiring process to find a non-tenure track Assistant Professor of Practice in Public Relations for the department. September also found SCO updating the organization's constitution. These updates included making descriptions of leadership positions more accurate and ensuring policies and procedures were clear to any reader. As part of these changes, the traditional executive committee position of librarian was updated to historian to more accurately depict the responsibilities associated with the position. This year our elected historian, Alex Lockwood, made it his mission to create a quick and easy database for the dissertations stored within the communications building. This has been no small task, but Alex has been diligent and significant progress has been made on this task during the academic year. September also provided opportunities for our SCO members to get involved in the family weekend tailgate which involved meeting Communication Studies students and their families. SCO also helped with the second annual Saluki Comic-Con.



A sampling from one of SCO's bake sale fundraisers.

September service to the campus and community extended into October as many members of SCO also participated in the annual Superhero 5K held in the Carbondale community. The costumes from SCO members and all the other participants were especially fun to see! In October, SCO also held the first Brown Bag professional development session of the academic year. Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway, Darren Valenta, O.J. Duncan, Danette Patton, and Lacey Brown all served as panelists for the session, "Conferencing like an All Star." Much experience, advice, and tips were offered, and the attendees found the information very useful. October also saw the first SCO fundraiser of the academic year. We sold many homemade treats and all funds went towards the general SCO budget. A similar fundraiser happened in March where treats and communication studies tote bags were sold. A combined total of \$282.50 was made from these fundraisers.

In November, SCO was very active when it came to the National Communication Association (NCA) Annual Convention. Here, many papers and performances were presented, but SCO members also volunteered their time at the Open House and SIU reception. This served as a great opportunity for our graduate students to recruit and tell potential graduate students all about our program and SCO. Two members of SCO, Shelby Swafford, Graduate Committee representative, and Colin Whitworth, SCO secretary, also received NCA Caucus Travel Grants to attend. In December, SCO held its first fundraiser for the John T. Warren Scholarship, which honors the memory of Dr. Warren by acknowledging the research of one undergraduate and graduate student each year. Anna Wilcoxon, SCO vice president arranged this fundraiser. Dr. Craig Enstrom organized a second fundraiser in March. The grand total of money raised between the two fundraisers was \$1,930. This is an excellent contribution to the scholarship fund and most certainly a way to ensure this fund maintains for future undergraduate and graduate students!

*"[SCO] is a student organization whose mission is to enhance and provide professional development opportunities for the grad students in the [CMST Department]."*

(continued on page 14)

(SCO, continued from page 13)

After a busy fall semester, SCO jumped right in and had an even busier spring semester! This included hosting four potential incoming graduate students, providing feedback to the faculty on a proposed hiring plan for the department, and presenting two additional Brown Bag professional development opportunities. The first brown bag on February 15 was "Demystifying Prelims." This brown bag featured Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan talking about the preliminary exam process with Darren Valenta and Lacey Brown sharing their first hand experience and advice. SCO's second Brown Bag on April 12 featured Dr. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook sharing his experience as the current editor of *Text and Performance Quarterly*. He helped participants understand the ins and outs of submitting pieces for publication and offered advice from the perspective of an editor. Finally, SCO finished off the semester with members volunteering at the April 26 SIU Days and recruiting for the Communication Studies major.

In addition to this excellent work over the course of the academic year, each month we had a variety of ways to interact socially as well. These opportunities provided a way for all SCO members to develop deeper relationships, both personally and collegially. From happy hours to cast parties, our Social Director, Bolton Morales, had SCO ready for a good time.

Overall, this year was a very busy and a very productive academic year for SCO! The SCO president would like to thank the executive committee Alexander Lockwood, Dianah McGreehan, Caleb McKinley-Portee, Bolton Morales, Colin Whitworth, and Anna Wilcoxon. Thank you for all you have done to make this academic year a successful one! Also, the SCO executive committee would like to thank the members of SCO who served on committees this academic year. We appreciate all the time spent in service to the organization and the department. Finally, a thank you to all the dedicated members who regularly attend and volunteer their time to the organization. Without dedicated members, the organization would not be the same. SCO is looking forward to another excellent academic year starting in fall 2019!

*"During the fall, we thought of a new on-campus fundraiser that was very successful... We called it 'Stop and Pop'."*

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## PRSSA: YEAR IN REVIEW

*By Madison Case, President, PRSSA*

2018-2019 has been a growing year for our members. Our chapter is broken down into the following committees: Chapter Affairs, Event Planning, Fundraising, and Pyramid Public Relations.

During the fall, we thought of a new on-campus fundraiser that was very successful in raising money to meet our monetary goals for our Operation Sargent Santa event held every December. We called it "Stop and Pop," where those who donated \$1 got to pop a balloon containing a piece of colored paper correlated with a prize. These prizes included candy, large candy bars, coffee mugs and coffee mugs. We ran "Stop and Pop" both semesters and had great success! We were able to raise enough money to hit our goal to purchase the Khol's gift cards for the Operation Sargent Santa kids.

Our Pyramid Public Relations agency, ran by our Vice President of Operations, Hannah Colbrook, has taken on clients such as Think Pink, Ignite Talks, SalukiCents and Carbondale Food, and Fashion Week. Through these opportunities, members have created pitches, press releases, audio news releases, and more (see "PPR: Year in Review" for more details).

(continued on page 16)

## PPR: YEAR IN REVIEW

By Hannah Colbrook, Vice President of Operations, PRSSA

Pyramid Public Relations (PPR) is a student run PR firm that is a subcommittee of Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). PRSSA Vice President of Operations (VPO), Hannah Colbrook, helped in the management of clients and allocations of duties for PPR members for fall 2018 through spring of 2019. Each semester featured different committee members that allowed PPR to accomplish many professional development ventures. PPR's 2018-2019 goal was to focus solely on clients that had on campus needs and give them access to PR assistance free of charge.

Fall semester, PPR was able to work alongside organizations like Saluki Cents, Think Pink, and the Communication Studies Department. Members were able to earn hours toward course credit by attending events held throughout the semester and creating materials for each client's individual needs. For this semester, PPR had five upper class members including Lance Lucas, Savannah Coody, Mia Porter, Emily Buice and Maggie Burke.

Saluki Cents contracted the help of PPR for promotion of several events they hosted throughout the semester. There were six workshops offered to students for increased money management education. Some of these workshops included how to eat healthy on a budget and credit card do's and don'ts. Students who attended three or more workshops throughout the semester were entered into a raffle for a \$1,000 scholarship. PPR members were able to attend the events for credit and to expand their abilities and portfolios. In November, Saluki Cents hosted a keynote speaker, financial author Adam Carroll.

Think Pink requested the assistance of PPR to improve their social media presence, attendance at informational tabling events within the student center hallways, and campus wide promotion through chalking the ground outside high campus traffic points. PRSSA members were able to obtain hours for designating their time towards any of these activities.

The Communication Studies Department requested that PPR members create a full campaign proposal for the department to increase their social media presence and enrollment rates. After conducting research and meeting several times outside of PRSSA to complete the proposal, the PPR team presented their findings in front of the department. The strategies put in place by PPR were to create an internal form of communication for the students within and outside of the department, start an ambassador program for undecided students, create merchandise, and update the hand outs and course descriptions.



Left, flier constructed for the Communication Studies Department; top right, PRSSA Members Rianna Boyd and Bragard Kizenga; bottom right, Twitter post for keynote speaker, Adam Carroll.

*“PPR’s 2018-2019 goal was to focus solely on clients that had on campus needs and give them access to PR assistance free of charge.”*

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(PRSSA, continued from page 15)

In November, some of our members traveled to St. Louis where they attended the Career and Professional Development Workshop with the Weber Shandwick agency. They participated in a panel discussion, networked, and toured the agency. Those who went said the experience opened their eyes to the world of PR and piqued their interest in pursuing careers in the industry.

Operation Sargent Santa was yet again a huge accomplishment. We had ten sponsored kids along with their families that joined. Each child got to pair up with a police officer that took them to Khol's while other PRSSA members stayed back with families. They watched Elf, decorated cookies, and wrapped presents (see "Capturing the Holiday Spirit" for more details).

Spring semester has been busy with most of our members gearing up to graduate! We have around 14 Public Relations seniors. In April, members traveled to Weber Shandwick once again for another agency tour. We have had many guest speakers from SIU Credit Union, Craig Engstrom discussed the upcoming Ignite Talks, and Reed Hoekstra showcased Carbondale Mainstreet events. As the semester came to an end, we had more volunteer opportunities with the AIDS walk and River to River Race as well as more chapter fundraising such as ice cream sales and trivia night.

*"Those who went [to the Career and Professional Development Workshop at Weber Shandwick in St. Louis] said the experience opened their eyes to the world of PR and piqued their interest in pursuing careers in the industry."*

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(PPR, continued from page 15)

Spring semester brought many positive changes for the structure of Pyramid Public Relations. By taking on only two clients, PPR was able to create a system of delegation for its members unlike in recent semesters past. Each client was overseen by an Account Executive and the PRSSA VPO. Account Executives relayed information from the client to the Account Associates who aided in composing content. This allowed PPR to efficiently create and distribute content for the individual clients and their needs.

For the first time ever, PPR gained Food and Fashion Week as a client. Sponsored by many on and off campus organizations, Food and Fashion Week requested our key focus for their campaign to entail press and media relations in promotion of the week's events. Katelyn Hiller, the Account Executive overseeing all relations with Food and Fashion Week, delegated tasks to her Account Associates including press releases, fact sheets, media kit content and more.

Ignite Talk SIUC organized by the Communication Studies Department along with community sponsors, was overseen by Account Executive, Lance Lucas. The focus for this event was to gain additional sponsors through community outreach, create press releases, and design fliers and tickets in promotion of the event.

Next semester, PPR plans to continue working with the Communication Studies Department along with C3, Communication Career Council, to promote classes and opportunities within the department. PPR is gaining another brand-new client, the Community Fun and Fitness Run, to increase the awareness of their event.



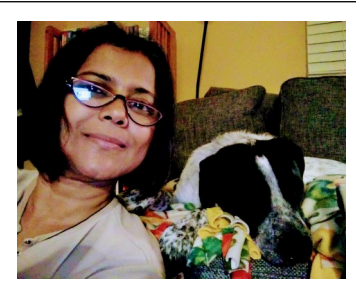
## FACUTLY UPDATES

**Dr. Randy Auxier** has had a busy year! He finished his own textbook for Persuasion and has now taught the Beta-version of it, published by Linus Press. It will be ready for full public release in time for the fall. A book he co-edited with Megan Volpert, *Tom Petty and Philosophy*, came out from Open Court. A run for US Congress as the Green Party candidate kept him hopping in the summer and fall (see “Randy Runs for Office”). He learned lots of useful stuff for his first go at a Political Comm. course this coming fall. He continues to try out new (for him) courses and to adjust to Comm Studies. Everyone has been helpful and patient with him during the process, for which he is grateful. He is currently serving a Visiting Professor at the University of Warsaw, his fourth spring there in the Philosophy of Culture Department.



Dr. Randy Auxier

**Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan** continues to serve as the director of graduate studies for the department and teach courses in intercultural communication and public relations. Last fall, while on sabbatical, she worked on a book on diversity and inclusion in the U.S. public relations industry. She was also the lead organizer for a well-received inaugural diversity and inclusion summit for The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations (of which she is a board member), which was held in Chicago last October. This spring, she published a book chapter about the importance of intercultural communication in public relations in a book titled *Public Relations: Competencies and Practice*. Finally, she was honored to receive the SIUC 2019 University Women of Distinction Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize employees who have demonstrated a sustained commitment to women and/or issues of diversity through demonstrated leadership, vision, or actions in a profession, in an area of expertise, or in service to the university community. She thanks the department and all her colleagues and former students who supported her for this award.



Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan

*“Dr. Craig Engstrom earned tenure and was promoted from assistant to associate professor.”*

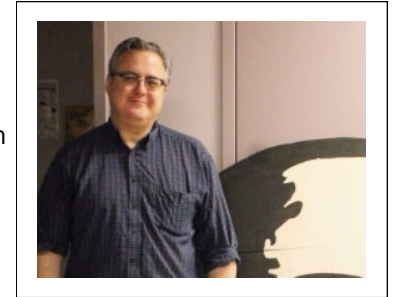
**Dr. Craig Engstrom** earned tenure and was promoted from assistant to associate professor. He continued his role as the Undergraduate Program Director and adviser of the Communication Career Council (C3). Accomplishments in these roles include developing the social media marketing strategy of the department and managing the student team that runs it. He oversaw efforts that secured \$10,500 in additional scholarship money for undergraduate students. In conjunction with C3 and PRSSA, he produced Ignite SIUC, an officially licensed Ignite Talks event. He received a \$9K grant from the SIU Foundation to develop and study learning record stores (LRSs), an emergent digital tool for competency-based education. He published three book chapters, one journal article, and presented on two panels at the National Communication Association annual convention. He was a convention co-planner for the Training and Development Division and is currently serving a one-year term as co-chair of the division. He delivered ten trainings for on-campus, local, and Chicago-based organizations. He serves as a subject-matter expert on instructional design for the Association for Talent Development’s APTD certification exam and as a communication, interviewing, and career coach for LinkedIn Corporation.



Dr. Craig Engstrom

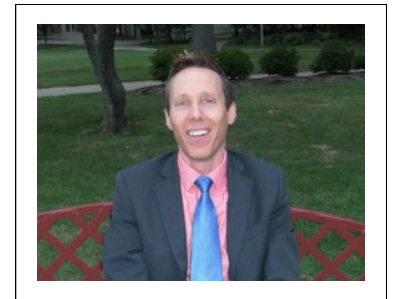
## FACUTLY UPDATES (CONT.)

**Dr. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook** spent the 2018-2019 academic year on sabbatical. He officially began his term as editor of *Text and Performance Quarterly* and worked on a number of writing projects of his own. Among these projects are a handbook of performance studies research methods (co-edited with Jake Simmons); a new performance (tentatively titled *Whitman in Space*, slated for February 2020 in the Kleinau Theatre); and the foreword for Tim Miller's new collection of performances and stores, *A Body in the O*, now out from University of Wisconsin Press.



Dr. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook

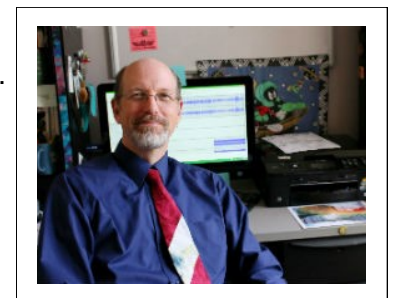
**Dr. Todd Graham** directed the debate team as they competed in the British Parliamentary style of debate, culminating in their attendance at the World Universities Debating Championship, held in Cape Town, South Africa. Dr. Graham teaches interpersonal communication and argumentation and debate.



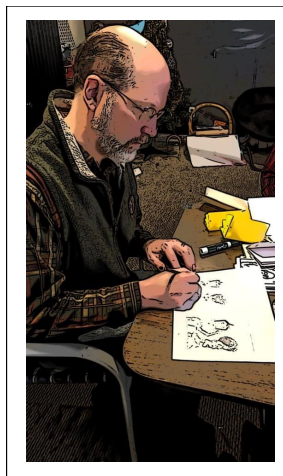
Dr. Todd Graham

*“Dr. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook...officially began his term as editor of Text and Performance Quarterly and worked on a number of writing projects of his own.”*

**Dr. Jonathan Gray** served as Introductory Course Director for the 2018/19 academic year, temporarily replacing Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway as she started serving as chair. He presented work at NCA and SSCA. He served as chair of the Performance Studies Division at NCA. He also began a three year term on the Council of Elders for Gay Spirit Visions. He continues to host the radio talk-show "Isn't it Queer" for WDBX. He is happy to be starting a sabbatical for the 2019/20 school year as the spring semester ends.



Dr. Jonathan Gray



Dr. Gray at one of the two comic art workshops he ran this year.

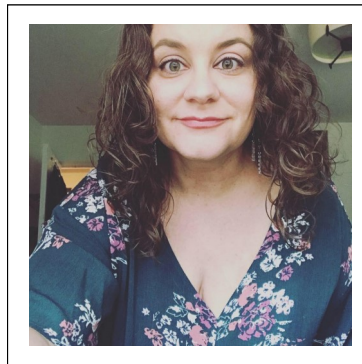
## FACULTY UPDATES (CONT.)

**Josh Houston** created and taught the new PR Ethics course in the fall semester. The course, CMST 485, is a requirement for all PR emphasis students and helps the department maintain compliance with the curriculum recommendations of the Public Relations Society of America. Josh is also proud to be a part of the new Saluki Mentor program. He is working to help students who are undecided on an academic major as they enter the university via the Exploratory Student Advisement office.

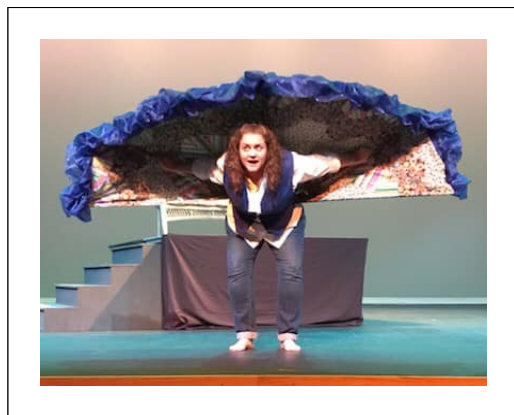


Josh Houston with students from his Sports and Recreation class.

In the Spring of 2018, **Dr. Rebecca Walker** officially earned tenure at SIU, and graduated to the level of Associate Professor. In the Fall 2018 semester, she created and taught a new hybrid undergraduate-graduate level course, CMST 445: Performance in Everyday Life. She also wrote, devised, and directed her third full-length show since coming to SIU in 2012, *Hardened*. *Hardened* explored the myth of Medusa, from her snakelike properties to her personal motivations, referencing pop culture, the 2016 election, and feminist theory. Along with the excellent undergraduate and graduate student performers, she was lucky enough to get former SIU faculty member, Dr. Elyse Pineau to join the cast in a special appearance. In the spring of 2019, Rebecca went on sabbatical, during which time she enjoyed a stint as a guest artist at the University of Houston, Clear Lake, where she performed her solo show, *Peacocks and Porches*. She has also been hard at work on several exciting article and book projects, including one on tourism as a performance methodology and another on pedagogy in the storytelling classroom. Recently, she was thrilled to be asked to co-lead the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Petit Jean Performance Festival (in October 2019) with her longtime friend and research collaborator, Dr. Holley Vaughn from the University of North Texas.



Dr. Rebecca Walker



Dr. Rebecca Walker performing her show *Peacocks and Porches*.

*“Josh is also proud to be a part of the new Saluki Mentor program. He is working to help students who are undecided on an academic major as they enter the university...”*

## ALUMNI UPDATES

In Fall 2018, **Andrea Baldwin** (PhD, '15) was the festival leader at the 39<sup>th</sup> Petit Jean Performance Festival at Petit Jean State Park in Arkansas. The theme, Petit Jeaneology, explores our relationships to the festival space, experiences that connect us, and attempts to document and articulate moments that seem ephemeral and remain palpable. Petit Jeaneology commits to the attempt to translate our experiences at the festival to spaces and experiences beyond.



Rialto marquee, welcoming attendees of the Petit Jean Performance Festival



Dr. Andrea Baldwin (center right) with her collaborators on the production of *Wild Ducks Flying Backward*.

This past spring, the University of Houston-Clear Lake performed an adaptation of the book, *Wild Ducks Flying Backward*, written by Tom Robbins, adapted by Dr. Justin Trudeau from the University of North Texas, and directed by Dr. Andrea Baldwin. This performance explores selected short stories from the text, presented by characters that embody various literary archetypes. The compilation of this performance surveys various themes housed under the idea of 'serious playfulness' – thus exploring, challenging, and teasing how we make sense of things. This is the fifth Performance Studies production at the University since 2015, all directed by Dr. Baldwin.

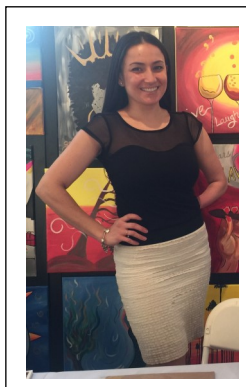
*“The goal of ‘Toast to Paint’ art studio is to provide an outlet for our painters to be expressive, release everyday tensions and focus on a productive task for a few hours to benefit their mental health and have fun.”*

Columbia College Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Piyusha Singh recently announced the promotion of **Dr. Lisa Ford Brown** to the position of Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Ford-Brown had served as interim dean since July 2018 following 17 years as a Columbia College Associate Professor of Communication Studies. Lisa attended SIU from 1993-1995 and is a 1999 PhD Performance Studies graduate. Her undergraduate and Masters degrees are from Indiana State University.



Dr. Lisa Ford Brown

**Jessica Hoyos** writes, “This year has been very exciting for me as a business owner! Utilizing my Public Relations and Marketing degrees, I’ve been able to expand ‘Toast to Paint’ a sip and paint art studio in Chicago’s Galewood community. I instruct art classes for adults and children of all ages, in a fun and encouraging environment. With this opportunity, I have the pleasure of teaching and building relationships with our diverse community on Chicago’s far west side. It has been a blessing to bring joy and positivity into our society through my passion of art. The goal of ‘Toast to Paint’ art studio is to provide an outlet for our painters to be expressive, release everyday tensions and focus on a productive task for a few hours to benefit their mental health and have fun. If ‘Toast to Paint’ can bring happiness to painters, those same painters will be able to project that happiness into their everyday situations. For this reason, I share my love for painting with the hope of bringing our society together, one painting at a time.”



Jessica Hoyos

## ALUMNI UPDATES (CONT.)

**Barry W. Birnbaum**, Ed.D., writes, “I am currently an Associate Professor of Special Education at Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL. I graduated from SIUC in 1974 and I have had many opportunities to apply what I learned in my teaching. I am also writing a sixth book on assessment.”

**Larry Clifton** writes, “I was at SIU during the reign of my wonderful friends, the Kleinaus. Also, my fine theatre professors were David Stevens, Chris Moe, and Alfreds Straumanis. With my 1987 Ph.D. in hand, I taught at Dalton State College and finished at Walters State Community College, Morristown, TN. In both schools, I initiated film appreciation courses. The last college annually gives the oddly-named ‘Cliffy’ for best student films. My M.A. in film was from New York University and my B.A. was from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I have written four books. *The Terrible Fitzball: Melodramatist of the Macabre* is the standard text—and the only one—on the career of Edward Fitzball, England’s most notorious ‘blue-fire’ playwright of the 19th century. It was my dissertation and is in bookstores and libraries throughout the world. My next two books were *Public Speaking: An Academic Source* and *Your Platform is the World*, which is about interpersonal communication. My final book is *The Cinema of Fright*, which is an introduction to the classic horror films. In addition to academia, I was employed for voice-overs in various film studios in Hollywood for some five years while happily interviewing classic players from the Golden Age. A recent widower, I am retired in South Carolina.”

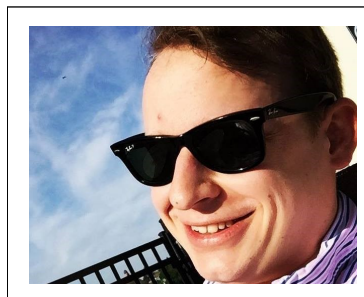
**Allyson Monroe**, a 1985 graduate, writes, “After graduation, I was lucky enough to live and work all over the United States including Fort Lauderdale, FL, Houston, Texas, and San Jose, California. I was a high school English teacher for many years, but I gave up the life of spit wads and sarcasm in 2017 and I am now semi-retired and living in Sedona, Arizona where I am a part-time real estate agent. I’m also a full time genealogy nut and have led friends on ancestral village tours all over Europe. I have four children and five grandchildren, and I love having them all come visit me. I have many fond memories of Carbondale, especially Mary Lou’s, Hangar 9, Gatsby’s, and, of course Dairy Queen. I love Facebook for the ability to stay connected with some of my friends from school.”



Allyson Monroe

*“I have many fond memories of Carbondale, especially Mary Lou’s, Hangar 9, Gatsby’s, and, of course Dairy Queen.”*

**Ben Reid** writes, “This year I have continued working as a business consultant in the Seattle area contracting with Microsoft. My responsibilities include executing, analyzing, and reporting Microsoft partner satisfaction surveys, while also working to design, drive, support, and communicate partner-facing programming to enable organizational change. Over the past year, I’ve leveraged skills gained at SIUC to develop and implement a specialized linguistic taxonomy to improve text analysis processes and outcomes, identify and correct organizational shortcomings, and provide live, personalized sales training to a diverse set of new sales people all over the world, from Las Colinas, TX, to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.”



Ben Reid

## ALUMNI UPDATES (CONT.)

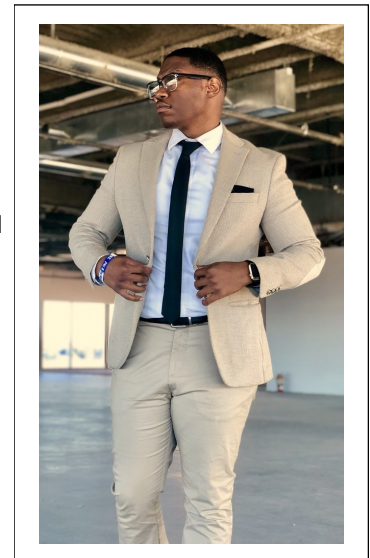
**John B. Stewart** writes, "I left SIUC in 1984 with a BS degree in Speech Communication and minor in Journalism, having been a staff writer for the *Daily Egyptian* under the tutelage of Bill Harmon. I also worked at the Micrographics Department, and served in student government on the Judicial Board for Governance, which heard all elections appeals. I then returned to New England and went to Law School in Springfield, MA, and still work here and teach a trial advocacy course each spring at the law school. I took a lot of writing courses at SIU. That, along with my writing for the newspaper, allowed me to get onto the Law Review through a writing contest after my first year (an alternative route for people with less than stellar course grades). I worked at a law firm during law school and was hired there after graduation. In my first year of practice I was able to write an appeals brief and argue at the MA Supreme Court, and am still doing appeals from time to time, 30+ years later. Mostly I do civil trial work, which involves a lot of written and oral advocacy, and analytical communications with clients. In 2013 I was selected a Massachusetts "Superlawyer" by Boston Magazine, and in 2015 received the same recognition for all of New England. Throughout, I have and still appear and make presentations in court several times a week. The skills and knowledge developed at SIU, taking courses in Persuasion, Small Group Communication, and the like gave me a good background and starting point. In 2015, I did a pro bono case for a sexual abuse victim and obtained a gratifying, if uncollectible, verdict in Federal Court against her abuser, chronicled in a book my client later wrote. K. Picard, *Life with my Idiot Family.*"



John B. Stewart

*"Ultimately, one could say I have definitely utilized my degree within rhetorical communication to the best of my ability."*

**Gentry Webb** writes, "First, I want to say it is truly an honor to be able to share my story post graduation, and I appreciate this opportunity. Since graduating from SIU, I have hit a couple huge milestones. I moved to Boston, Massachusetts in order to expand my knowledge and tenure in one of the most business professional states in the United States. I started a career with Enterprise Holdings. After 8 months, I worked my way up to a Tri-branded Assistant Manager for the Boston Logan airport and quickly became number one in the United States for sales and customer satisfaction. Becoming well rounded within sales, customer satisfaction, and relationship building, after two years of living on the east coast, I was offered a Senior Technical Recruiter role with Robert Half International. Robert Half is listed #1 on Forbes' list of America's best professional recruiting firms. Ultimately, one could say I have definitely utilized my degree within rhetorical communication to the best of my ability. In the near future, I plan on branding my own shoe restoration business and expanding throughout Texas and then the United States. Thank you SIU for allowing me this opportunity! "



Gentry Webb

# END OF YEAR AWARDS

As with every year, the department ended the academic year by recognizing the excellence of its undergraduates, graduates, and faculty.

Several undergraduate students were recognized with departmental awards:

**The R. Paul Hibbs Memorial Scholarship** went to Maggie Burke, Hanna Colbrook, and Jordan Spicer. First awarded in 1978, this scholarship remains the department’s most prestigious and distinguished undergraduate award, often given to up to three recipients.

Kiara Hartmann was awarded the **Dr. Albert Weitz Scholarship**, which was left as a bequest by Dr. Weitz in 2013 in order to establish a scholarship for students in the field of Communication Studies.

This year’s **Elizabeth Toth Public Relations Award** went to Madison Case. This financial award is given to an outstanding graduating senior specializing in public relations who is a member of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

Sean Fuller received the **Dr. Tekla Story Award for Excellence in Performance**.

Finally, Savannah Coady, Danielle Lorentz, Hunter Jackson, Lance Lucas, and Ellie Martin were awarded the **Robert Carr Speech Communication Scholarship**, which is given to notable CMST students.

The department also recognized the following students at the top of their cohort academically:

Outstanding First Year Student

Jami Allen  
Megan Dunker

Outstanding Sophomore

Martiece Arrington  
Kiara Hartmann

Outstanding Junior

Ariel Denton  
Hunter Jackson  
Madi Kic  
Danielle Lorentz  
Alyssa Metelak

Outstanding Senior

Chesney Allen  
Emily Buice  
Maggie Burke  
Madison Case  
Lance Lucas  
Samantha Parsons  
Jordan Spicer



Left to right: Danielle Lorentz, Madi Kic, Hunter Jackson, Savannah Coady, and Hannah Colbrook

*“As with every year, the department ended the academic year by recognizing the excellence of its undergraduates, graduates, and faculty.”*

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(Awards, continued from page 23)

Finally, Communication Studies awarded a few additional competitive scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$1000.

Danielle Lorentz received the **CMST Scholarship for Leader of a Recognized Student Organization**.

Jason Weller received the **CMST Scholarship for the Leader of a Fraternity or Sorority**.

Savannah Coady and Madeline Reinhardt received the **CMST Scholarship for New Majors or Transfer Students**.

Several graduate students were also recognized for their excellence this academic year. Traditionally, the department gives three awards to graduate students who are nominated by the faculty or their peers.

The **John T. Warren Excellence in Graduate Student Research and Creative Activity Award** was given to two students this year, Mick Brewer and Darren Valenta. This award is meant to recognize a student's production of acceptable research and creative activity as determined by the university's criteria, which includes but is not limited to articles in professional journals, chapters in professional books, professional presentations and performances, and book reviews. The award is named in honor of a beloved and prolific late member of the Communication Studies community.

The **Ronald J. Pelias Excellence in Graduate Student Service Award** went to Anna Wilcoxon. This award recognizes an individual's devotion to serving the department, the university, and the surrounding community as determined by the university's criteria for acceptable service activity. Anna was nominated by six of their peers for their continued service over the current year and in years past. The award is named after a Professor Emeritus whose service to SIU and the Communication Studies discipline has had a long-lasting impact.

Finally, the **Elyse L. Pineau Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching** was awarded to both a master's and Ph.D. student in the department, as is tradition. Kenny Beeker won the master's award and Shelby Swafford won the Ph.D. award. The award is named after a Professor Emeritus whose work on pedagogy and contributions to the department as an instructor and Introductory Course Director continues to shape the teaching practices of graduate students at SIU and beyond.



Dr. Craig Engstrom (left), Danielle Lorentz (middle), and Savannah Coady (right) posing with a check for over \$17,000, the grand total of scholarship money awarded to undergraduate students this year.



Top, left to right: Kenny Beeker, Darren Valenta, Anna Wilcoxon, Mick Brewer.  
Bottom, left to right: Caleb McKinley-Portee, Shelby Swafford, Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan

*“Several graduate students were also recognized for their excellence this year.”*

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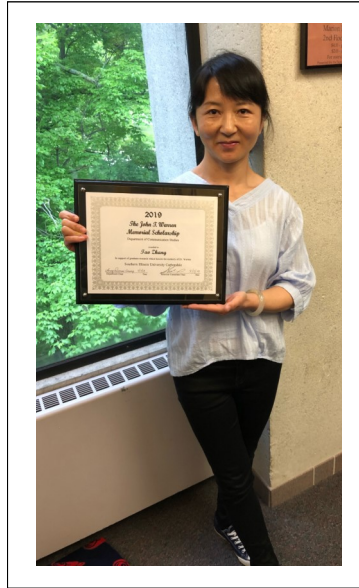
(Awards, continued from page 24)

Communication Studies students also nominated faculty members for the **Communication Studies Outstanding Teacher Award**. Ultimately, the review committee awarded this year's honor to Dr. Nilanjana Bardhan.

In addition to these awards, the Communication Studies department also awarded the **John T. Warren Memorial Scholarship** to undergraduate student Hannah Colbrook and Ph.D. candidate Tao Zhang. This scholarship is awarded to an individual for research-related expenses of up to \$250.

Colbrook plans to use her funds to study international marketing and marketing habits of non-American consumers in order to learn the most effective way to communicate a need with consumers and clients outside of her own cultural location. Her long-term goal is to help people who face financial difficulty through a medical situation, schooling, or disaster, no matter their background.

Zhang's project, "My English is Accented Because Your Ears are Racist: Surviving Otherness by Approaching Toward Positive Becoming" blends pedagogy, globalization and post-colonial theory, and intercultural communication. She plans to use her funds to offset the cost of conference fees and travel in order to present her research.



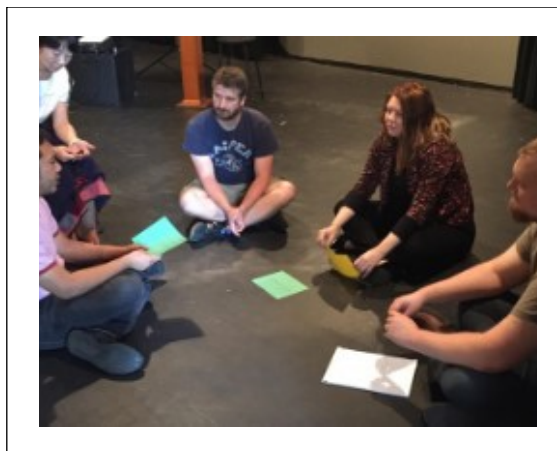
Tao Zhang, one of the winners of the John T. Warren Memorial Scholarship.

Finally, Ph.D. student Caleb McKinley-Portee was recognized for his continued success in recruiting undergraduate students to declare Communication Studies as their major, bolstering our continued attempts to grow our undergraduate student enrollment.

*"Zhang's project...blends pedagogy, globalization and post-colonial theory, and intercultural communication."*



Graduate students (from left to right) OJ Duncan, Kevin McCarty, and Jeremy Omori who helped organize and oversee the Gaymer Lounge at Saluki Comic-Con.



Graduate students (from left to right) Jeremy Omori, Tao Zhang, Robert Fiedler, Emily Vajjala, and Kenny Becker collaborating as part of a teaching exercise during orientation week.

# 10 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

By Dr. Craig Engstrom, Undergraduate Director

This year has been a year of many changes and achievements in the undergraduate program, thanks to the dedicated work of our faculty, graduate students, and staff. If this year is any indication of the years to come, we have a lot to be excited about! I want to take a moment to reflect on what I see are ten notable accomplishments related to the program.

1. Delivered \$17,800 in new or existing scholarships to CMST majors, minors, and scholar-athletes—a 1.483% increase from prior years. The SIU Foundation and CoLA Dean's Office provided some money just because we showed committed recognition of undergraduate achievements.
2. Developed a social media strategy for the department. The strategy resulted in an 81.9% increase in Facebook page likes, a new Twitter account (that has an average of 22K impressions per month and 104 monthly profile visits), and a new Instagram account that has 290 followers and earns an average of 1,159 impressions weekly. (Special shout out to undergrad students Savannah Coady, Danielle Lorentz, and Chelsea Dallas for their dedicated work on building and executing the content calendar.)
3. Used social media to raise nearly \$3000 in new donations for the CMST Activities Fund, John T. Warren Memorial Scholarship, and PRSSA Activities Fund. Please consider giving >> <http://bit.ly/Give2CMST>
4. Completed the new undergraduate curriculum. Beginning in fall 2019, students will choose between Public Relations and CMST General as their specialization. All new CMST students will be required to complete a five-course core curriculum.
5. Established five 2+2 programs in public relations with Kaskaskia College, Parkland College, Lewis & Clark College, Kankakee Community College, and College of DuPage, which will allow students to complete an associates degree at a community college and then complete the CMST undergraduate degree in just two years!
6. Undertook a variety of new recruitment initiatives, including a CMST Academic Fair (held in October 2018), new scholarships, and new in-class campaigns, which resulted in a year-over-year increase of 500% in students declaring CMST as their major. (Special shout out to doctoral student Caleb McKinley-Portee for sending me the most potential students.)
7. Developed a series of new partnerships with the Leadership Development Program, the SIU Student Multicultural Resource Center, and SIUC Extended Campus that is resulting in additional funding, cross-listed courses, and new practicum experience.
8. Made significant progress on establishing a new program called "Host a CMST Saluki" that pairs alumni living in cities with CMST students seeking city internships. (Initiative supported by undergraduate student Maggie Burke.)
9. Covered the financial cost of various undergraduate initiatives, including sending four Public Relations students to attend the inaugural Plank Center Summit on Diversity & Inclusion in PR in Chicago, and partially covering the cost for Savannah Coady to earn HootSuite certification.
10. Made further progress toward an online minor in Communication Studies.

I invite alumni and patrons of the program, who would like to support the undergraduate program as advisors, guest speakers, or internship hosts, to contact me via email or phone: [craig.engstrom@siu.edu](mailto:craig.engstrom@siu.edu) and 618.203.1997.

*"This year has been a year of many changes and achievements in the undergraduate program, thanks to the dedicated work of our faculty, graduate students, and staff."*

## GRADUATE STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY THE NUMBERS

Awards and Grants: **21**

Chairing at Professional Meetings/Conferences: **5**

Invited/Visiting Scholarship: **2**

Panels at Professional Meetings/Conferences: **20**

Papers Presented at Professional Meetings/  
Conferences: **33**

Performances/Creative Work: **27**

Professional Membership/Attendance: **12**

Publications- Book Chapters: **10**

Publications- Journal Articles: **7**

Publications- Articles/Reviews/Creative Work: **47**

Readings/Presentations/Guest Lectures: **8**

Review and Editorial Activities: **20**

Service-Campus and Surrounding Area: **113**

Trainings and Leadership Development Work: **5**



Mick Brewer (right) receiving a Top Paper award in the International and Intercultural Communication Division of the National Communication Association from division chair, Dr. Ahmet Atay, a Ph.D. alum.



Graduate students blowing up balloons as part of an orientation week activity.

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## EDITOR'S NOTE AND THANK YOU

*By Darren Valenta, Editor, Speak Easy*

I wanted to take a bit of space here on the back page to thank everyone who contributed to this year's newsletter. It has truly been a joy compiling, arranging, and editing this document over the course of the spring semester because it has allowed me to reflect back on all we've done as a department and all we plan to do going forward.

Thank you to all the individuals who wrote the stories you've read throughout this newsletter. Without their efforts, the *Speak Easy* would be a far less accurate reflection of the year that was. Thank you, too, to everyone who supplied pictures so that you, the readers, could catch a glimpse of what life is like here at SIU. Many thanks to the alumni who took time to update us on their current lives. It has been fascinating to read about the various directions you have headed after finishing your time here at SIU. Thank you to Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway for entrusting me with this important undertaking and for empowering me to make it my own. And, finally, thank you to Denise McClearey whose guidance in the early goings of this year's *Speak Easy* was invaluable.

I hope you have found a bit of joy in checking back in with our department. It truly is a lively and inspiring place full of ambitious and kind-hearted people looking to contribute to the legacy and well-being of our discipline.

**If you would like to contribute to events like those included in these pages by donating to the department, please visit the SIU Foundation Homepage (<https://siuf.org/>) or contact the Interim Department Chair, Dr. Sandy Pensoneau-Conway ([sandypc@siu.edu](mailto:sandypc@siu.edu)).**

**SIU** SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CARBONDALE **DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

