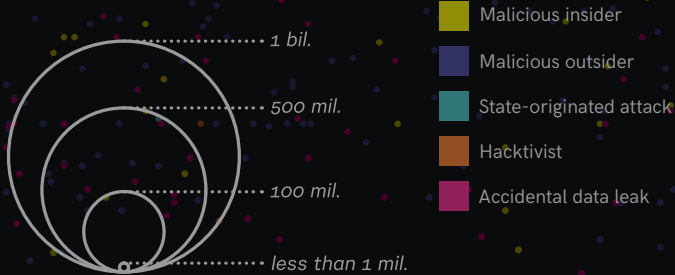


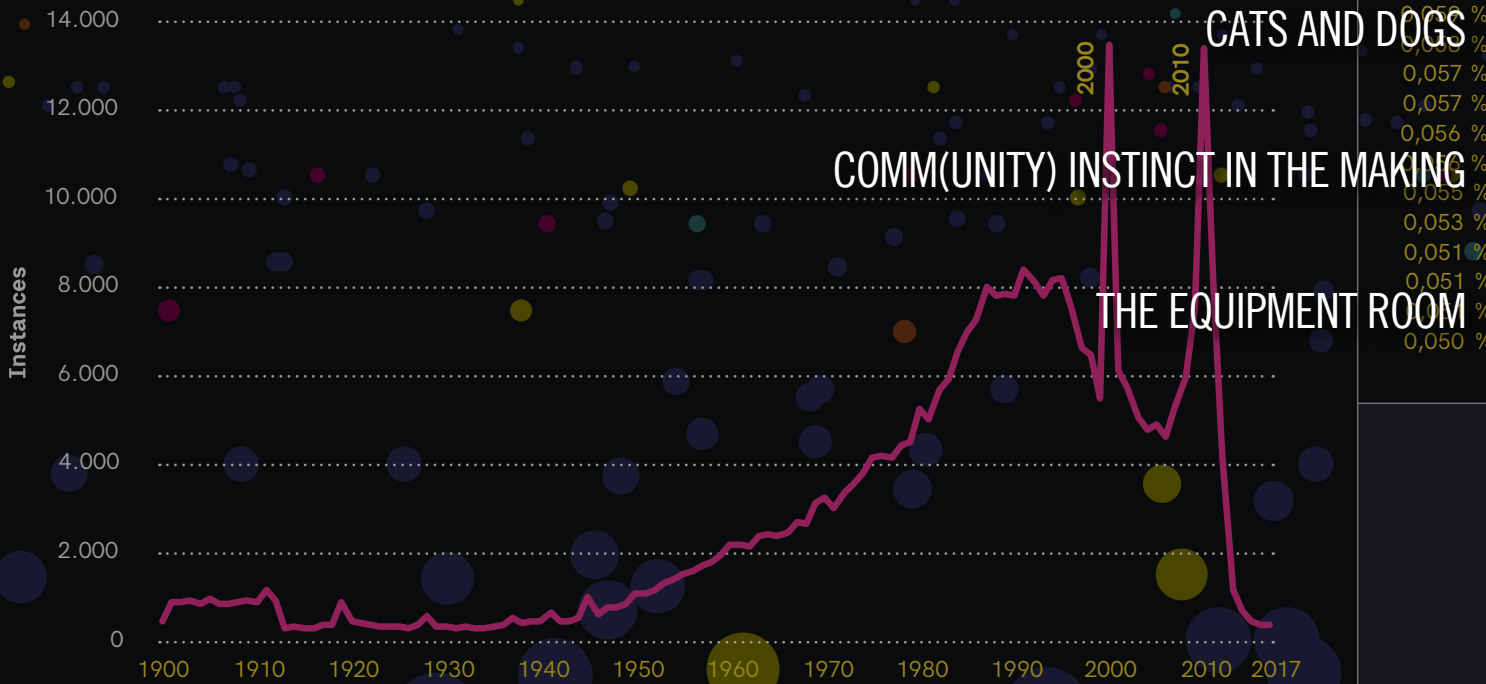
Expressions

A SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS PUBLICATION 2018

Number of hacked users



A GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF MUCKRAKERS



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS

Data visualization by Vanja Ivancevic

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INSPIRING THOUGHT. PERFECTING PRACTICE.

INTRODUCING EXPRESSIONS 2018

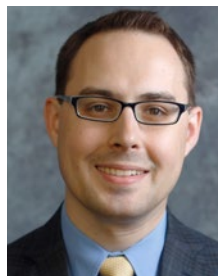
2017 was a season of change for the School of Communications, with three of our undergraduate programs—Photography, Film/Video Production, and Theatre—leaving the school to merge with other departments. While we will miss our colleagues and students in these programs, the leaner configuration of the school provides opportunities for new collaborations and a chance to focus on our core mission.

The reorganized School of Communications is home to more than 1,000 undergraduate majors, 50 graduate students, 24 full-time faculty, and a small army of part-time instructors—many of whom are practicing communication professionals from the local community.

Our students and faculty have accomplished a great deal in the last year. For example:

- Led by Ad/PR Professor Robin Spring, GVSU's NSAC (National Student Advertising Competition) team advanced to nationals, where they placed fourth overall and won the "Best Use of Market Research" trophy.
- The James Carey Lecture brought Dr. Kyle Scherr to campus to address the problem of false confessions in police interrogations.
- Multimedia Journalism Professor Jeff Kelly Lowenstein's investigative work on the global lottery industry was featured in a variety of national and international news sources.
- GrandPR, GVSU's student-run PR agency (advised by Professor Adrienne Wallace), was one of five student agencies nationwide selected to host a CreateAthon—a 24-hour marathon to develop a campaign for a nonprofit organization—on GVSU's campus.
- Professor James Ford and students from the Multimedia Journalism program developed and produced a new weekly news program, called "West Side Stories", that currently airs on WGVU at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday nights. "West Side Stories" won first place in the Best Newscast category at the Michigan Association of Broadcasters' 2018 Michigan Student Broadcast Awards.

This list captures just a few of the many achievements and accolades that set the SoC apart as a leader in educating future communication scholars and practitioners. I feel



fortunate to be a part of the SoC community, and I trust that as you read these pages, you will too.

Jonathan K. Hodge, Ph.D.
Director, School of Communications

The primary goal of Expressions has always been to showcase the diversity of activity by our faculty, students and alumni. The name of the annual magazine was taken from a quote by William James, for whom one of the original Grand Valley colleges was named: "no impression without expression."

In this sixth issue, we offer more examples of the impact and success of the School of Communications on campus and around the globe. The focus of this issue is on alumni and faculty who have "expressed" themselves in their areas of interest and expertise.

Faculty and student experiences are reflected in several articles, including reflections on the evolution of the School's "equipment room" by Scott Vanderberg; the growing need for health communicators by Haiying Kong; research presented to a group of nonprofit professionals by Tim Penning; and an essay calling on everyone to embrace a "land ethic" for our environmentally perilous times by Melba Velez Ortiz.

Our features, written by faculty, include Jeff Kelly Lowenstein's trip with students to a global investigative journalism conference; and Robin Spring's update on national recognition of advertising and public relations students.

In addition, we recognize alumna Janet Vormittag, who writes about her magazine publication *Cats and Dogs*, and four MSCom alumni profile themselves as part of an update on the Masters of Science in Communication program.

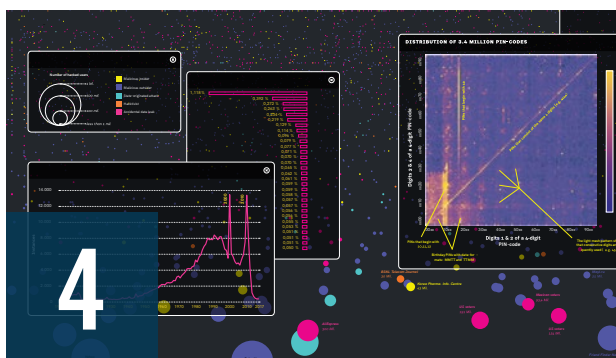


I invite you to read more online via our news blog and social media channels, which you can find at www.gvsu.edu/soc.

Lawrence Beery
Professor of Multimedia Journalism and
Editor of the 2018 Expressions

COVER

The visualization on the front and back cover was created by data journalist Vanja Ivancevic. It was originally made for the monthly magazine DATUM, a Vienna-based magazine about politics, economics and society. The entire visualization, shown below, was called “Top Secrets” and can be seen at www.v3data.net.



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Expressions

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Students, Faculty Travel to South Africa For Global Investigative Journalism Conference

By Jeff Kelly Lowenstein, Assistant Professor, Multimedia Journalism



Posing in front of the Great Hall at Wits University in Johannesburg, South Africa, are, from left, professor Jeff Kelly Lowenstein, and multimedia journalism students McKenna Peariso and Eric Deyo. It was the start of the 10th Global Investigative Journalism Conference, which was hosted by Wits University. Photo courtesy of Jeff Kelly Lowenstein.

A respectful hush came over the 1,200 investigative reporters from 130 countries gathered in the Great Hall at Johannesburg's Wits University as Filipino journalist Patricia Evangelista started to talk.

"Once upon a time, which is the only good and proper way to begin a story, there was a mother and a father who lived in a cinder block house with their six children in the slums," she said. There was a microphone in her right hand and a phone in her left.

Evangelista spoke calmly and in harrowing detail about the brutality that has overtaken the Philippines since the election in June 2016 of Rodrigo Duterte and the inception of his drug war that has seen close to 4,000 Filipinos murdered by the police.

She explained that the family's 12-year-old daughter Christine was with her father when the police shot him. The daughter blamed herself for his death. Had she held her father tighter, the girl thought, he might still be alive.

"The problem in my country isn't that we don't understand human rights, it's that we decided one day that some people aren't human," Evangelista concluded.

Her comments highlighted the kickoff of the 10th Global Investigative Journalism Conference. Established in 2001, the biennial conference brings together journalists from across the planet for four days of panels, hands-on training, and networking. Jointly sponsored by Wits and the Global Investigative Journalism Network, more than 93 percent of post-conference evaluations gave it top ratings.

This was my second time attending the gathering of the world's top muckrakers.

The first one had been four years earlier, in Rio, Brazil. The intoxicating experience of being in what felt like a four-day wedding, with a flurry of intoxicating, half-completed conversations in English, Spanish and Portuguese, told me I was where I belonged. After having helped teach and translate in Rio, I wanted not only to return to the conference, but to present about an investigation I had lead and to bring students.

Fortunately, I was able to accomplish both objectives.

In November 2016 I convened a meeting of a half-dozen journalists from Africa, Europe and the United States at the African Investigative Journalism Conference. We decided to go beyond investigating an individual state or national lottery to shine light on the nearly \$300 billion industry. Our team grew throughout the year, eventually comprising more than 40 people from 10 countries. Together we uncovered the workings of the industry in which eight companies play an outsized role, operating in as many as 100 countries all over the world. These corporations heavily fund the World Lottery Association (WLA), a non-profit lobbying group in Basel, Switzerland. The WLA espouses its members' adherence to transparency, charitable donations and concern for the players, but convenes regional and international conferences to relentlessly extract more money from the world's lottery players, who disproportionately are poor people.

We revealed the financial maneuvers employed by International Game Technology, one of the largest of the lottery titans and a company that operates in Michigan, to avoid hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes. Our colleague in Mali exposed the lavish parties the ruling political party throws for itself with lottery profits, while a team of journalists and a civic tech organization in South Africa pulled 16 years of data from annual reports to lay bare the dubious recipients and poorly administered distribution process for lottery funds.

In July we received the news that our application to present at the conference had been accepted.

The first-ever student newsroom was another distinctive feature.

Enter McKenna Peariso and Eric Deyo, Grand Valley Multimedia Journalism majors and the only American students in a newsroom with more than 40 students from throughout South Africa and Germany. Together the pair wrote, shot video, snapped pictures and tweeted throughout the four days. Support from CLAS Dean Fred Antczak, School of Communications Director Jonathan Hodge and Office of Undergraduate and Research and Scholarship Director Susan Mendoza made their participation possible. Deyo and Peariso went through a department-wide application process in September before meeting weekly to plan out how to maximize their time in South Africa.

Both students had to purchase passports as neither of them had ever been outside of North America. Nevertheless, they navigated the communication and cultural challenges they encountered with skill and grace.

Peariso later told WGVU's Shelley Irwin that she returned with an expanded understanding of the privileges she has as an American journalist and a commitment to take constructive action: "While we were over there, we met so many journalists that had risked their lives just to get out the truth and fight for justice ... I want to use the privilege I have to not only do my best to be honest and truthful here, but to get the word about journalists in other countries that have it a lot harder than I do."

“The problem in my country isn't that we don't understand human rights, it's that we decided one day that some people aren't human.”
— Patricia Evangelista

Deyo, a father of three who has battled social anxiety, drew a more personal lesson. "The people here are so wonderful and so accomplished," he told me on the conference's last night. "Being here makes me feel like I can be one of these people."

MSCom Program Completing 30 Years



Alex Nesterenko, Ph.D.
Graduate Program
Director

GVSU's graduate program in communication — *MSCom* — is completing its 30th year in April 2018. The program is distinct from other communication graduate programs in the region in that it focuses on an organizing principle relevant to all aspects of professional communication, namely *communication management*.

The MSCom program has always offered an intelligent blend of liberal and professional education, taught by faculty who possess the necessary mix of scholarship and professional experience. These are key qualities that have made the program successful over a three decade period.

The following is a partial list of corporations and organizations where our graduates of the MSCom program have been employed over the years.

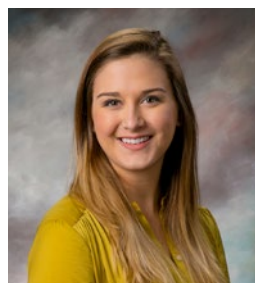
Amway	Great Lakes Credit Union
Aquinas College	Haworth
Baker College	Herman Miller
City of Grand Rapids	Mel Trotter Ministries
Davenport University	Muskegon Community
Farmer's Insurance	College
Ferris University	Otis Elevators
Fifth Third Bank	Perrigo
Foremost Insurance	Spectrum Health
Grand Rapids Police Department	Steelcase
Grand Rapids YMCA	TowerPinkster
Grand Valley State University	WZZM-TV
	WGVU-TV

Word of the program's success continues to spread, and the program is experiencing good growth. In addition to attracting more international students from Africa, Asia, and Europe, the School of Communications is developing *combined programs* that will result in even greater growth for the graduate program. A combined program allows an undergraduate student — who has been admitted to the graduate program at the end of their junior year — to take

12 graduate credits during their senior year that will count toward the completion of their undergraduate degree and also make progress toward their graduate degree. We plan to begin this new academic venture in the coming year.

Alumni Profiles...

In my opinion, MSCom students are the best, and I wish we could print each person's story of success. In each future edition of *Expressions*, we will bring a few student profiles to show the face of the MSCom program. In this issue, we present Chloe Beighley, Kevin Meyer, Pasha Shipp, and Amanda Stevens, four of our many successful graduates.



Chloe Beighley

I graduated from Grand Valley in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Advertising/Public Relations, and my master's degree is in Communication.

I work at TowerPinkster Architects and Engineers, a regional design firm with offices in Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. In my role as marketing specialist, I am responsible for the marketing efforts completed in our downtown Grand Rapids office. These efforts include corporate communications, advertising efforts, trade show and conference opportunities, and the development of proposals for new projects. My role also includes working with many regional school districts to engage community members in voting for the districts' bond proposals.

I started in my current position after my first semester in the MSCom program. The ideas that I had about my capabilities and what I could bring to the table for my firm increased tenfold as I progressed through the program. My ability to think and communicate in a pointed and strategic way has been invaluable, and I couldn't have developed those skills without the MSCom program.

Outside of my work with TowerPinkster, I am a member of the adjunct faculty in the School of Communications at GVSU. I enjoy reading, walking my dogs, biking and going to the movies with my sweetie.

**Kevin Meyer**

In my position as the assistant director of media relations at Stephen F. Austin State University, I perform a variety of functions for six varsity sports that compete on behalf of the university.

I act as the primary media contact for women's soccer, women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, and men's and women's track and field. Thus, if any outside media have any questions about our programs or athletes, they can receive that information through me. If they wish to interview any SFA athlete on one of those teams, I act as the liaison to put that interview together. Additionally, it is my job to create purpose-driven written content for viewing on our website – sfajacks.com – and for distribution through our social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

When those teams under my umbrella compete in home events, I am expected to aid in developing statistics, which creates the box scores that fans will look at during and after the games to find out which players did well.

In thinking back to what part of my academic career best prepared me for this job, it was my experience at Grand Valley State, both as a graduate assistant for GVSU Athletics, as well as a graduate student earning a Master of Science degree in Communication. The program challenged me in all the ways I needed to be challenged, and through the methods taught to me in the program, I feel like I grew immensely as a writer. Professionally, my development in the MScCom program has given me an advantage in the workplace and continues to help me seamlessly transition into my position here, even after a move across the country that took me out of my comfort zone.

**Pasha Shipp**

I'm currently completing a contract at Steelcase Inc. as a communications project lead. In my time at the company, I have helped various departments in manufacturing improve their communications practices

through communication plan development and execution; digital asset design; and communications consulting.

Once my contract is complete, I hope to pursue my passion for writing via freelancing opportunities.

I believe attaining a Master of Science degree in Communication from Grand Valley State University equipped me with the necessary tools to guide communications projects from start to finish, develop rich content, and serve my peers as a communications liaison.

The relationships and skills I developed while in school have enriched my life – in both professional and personal ways.

**Amanda Stevens**

I studied at Grand Valley and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in professional writing. I loved my time at Grand Valley and knew that I would look to GVSU for my graduate degree as well.

I chose to pursue my Master of Science in Communication degree after meeting with Alex Nesterenko and learning more about the program. I loved written and verbal communication, argument and analysis, and research; so, I thought the program would be a good fit for my background and my interests. All of the professors did a great job teaching the content, and I learned a lot of skills that were applicable to my role at Steelcase. I gained confidence in my written and verbal communication skills, which transferred to my professional life as well.

I have been at Steelcase for about six years. Steelcase is the leading manufacturer of furniture for offices, hospitals and classrooms, and its furniture is inspired by innovative research in workspace design.

I started at Steelcase when I was an intern, after attending the Grand Valley job fair when I was a sophomore. I am currently a strategic project manager for Global Operations. I lead large projects that directly align with the strategic objectives of the company. My master's program helped me build the confidence I needed to move into a management role at Steelcase, lead project teams, and deliver presentations more confidently.

After completing my master's degree, Alex Nesterenko asked me to be an adjunct professor for the Concepts of Communication course. Because I really loved the content I studied in my undergraduate and graduate degree, and I really believe in the work that Grand Valley is doing, I thought it would be a great learning opportunity for me. I am now teaching a speech course this winter and look forward to more opportunities in the School of Communications.

Research Supports Thriving Advertising/Public Relations Program

By Robin Spring, Assistant Professor, Advertising/Public Relations



AAF ADmerica National Convention, New Orleans. GVSU NSAC Team placed fourth in the nation out of about 150 college teams. Pictured from left to right, 8 of 19 team members: Rachael Vrugink, Jim Sturtridge, Alex Rabideau, Elizabeth Konen, Dan Goubert, Bethany Garcia, Ari Zucker (standing), Addison Wittry (sitting). Photos courtesy of Robin Spring.

Recent findings from a survey of 366 senior-level advertising and public relations professionals from all 50 United States and Puerto Rico confirms that our Advertising/Public Relations program at Grand Valley is on target and thriving vis-a-vis what is expected of new graduates by industry professionals.

This study, conducted by myself and my School of Communications colleague Alex Nesterenko, was inspired by the lack of recent, large scale data from advertising/public relations professionals regarding their views of advertising education, particularly in the context of a liberal arts education. Furthermore, it was designed to check the alignment of our APR program with industry expectations. The results give positive affirmation to the content and output of our program.

Recently there has been national narrative questioning the value of a liberal arts education, in part due to escalating costs of attending a four-year university in relation to the viability of securing work in one's field of study. Additionally, there has been a call for more trade type programs. We set out to understand how advertising/public relations professionals felt about a four-year liberal arts education versus professional training programs.

Of the 366 industry professionals surveyed, 90.2% indicated that a four-year degree is either essential or desirable. Nearly 67% of the respondents preferred a balance of liberal education and professional training. A liberal arts education provides a well-rounded worldview while professional training can provide specific skills needed in the industry. To this end, our APR program does a good job combining both theory and practice.

Hands-on, experiential learning via student groups such as the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) and GrandPR, our student run public relations agency, provide students with the opportunity to work with local



Elizabeth Konen, NSAC Team Research Director, accepts the "Best Use of Marketing Research Award" at the AAF National Convention. She also was presented an award as the "Best Presenter" in the AAF District 6 NSAC competition.

and national clients. Additionally, our program delivers practical experience through working with real clients in the classroom. In fact, 93% of professionals we surveyed felt that working with real clients while in school was important or very important.

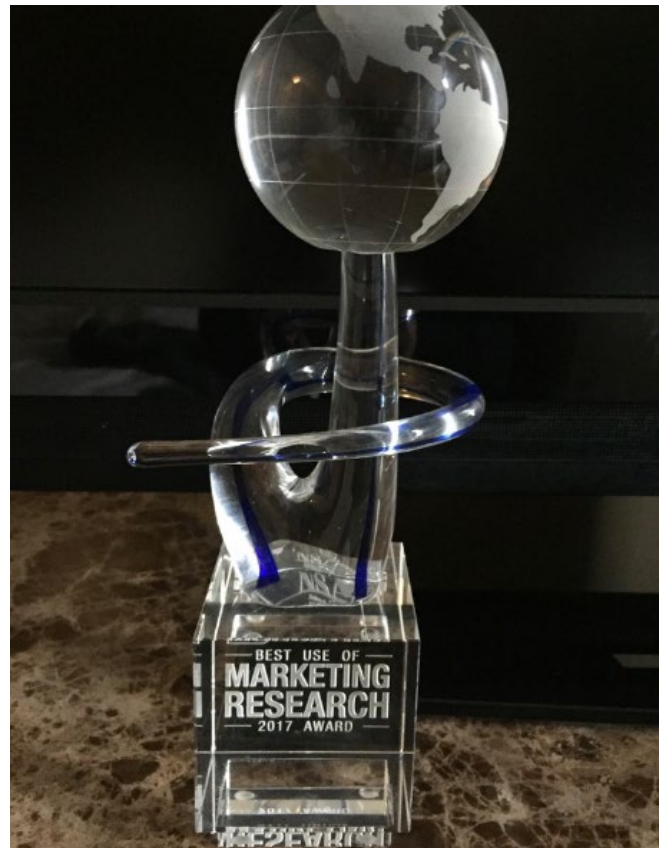
Moreover, internships in professional settings are integral in providing students with real-world experience and are required of our APR majors. Once again, 93% of the surveyed respondents stated that internship experience was either important or very important.

When asked to identify the most important skill sets and knowledge areas college graduates should have to be competitive for entry level jobs in the advertising/public relations field, top responses were written and oral communication skills, problem solving, strategic planning and self-directed learning along with collaborative skills and digital competence – all skill sets we emphasize throughout our curriculum.

We asked about the most pressing challenges to the advertising/public relations field currently. Respondents largely agreed that keeping up with the deluge of swiftly evolving technology and leveraging the opportunities digital tools provide is an issue. Efficiently and effectively utilizing new tools in an ever-evolving media environment is a looming challenge for the industry.

The GVSU APR program works hard to stay on top of dynamic technology and digital tools via course offerings and industry specialists who provide insights as guest speakers in classrooms, student pre-professional clubs and the APR Speaker Series.

Our student pre-professional groups have been recognized on the national level. The GVSU NSAC team recently received the coveted “Top Marketing Research Award” and took 4th place in the nation for their work on the Tai Pei account. GrandPR has just been chosen to host the CreateAthon, a highly prestigious national initiative serving multiple nonprofits in a “lock-in” style setting. Graduates of our APR program are landing jobs in prominent organizations such as Google, NBC, Wieden & Kennedy, Amway, Edelman, Fleishman Hilliard, Finn Partners and more. These are but a few examples of how our students and student groups are gaining national notoriety.



GVSU's NSAC 2017 was awarded the coveted “Best Use of Marketing Research” Award - the only one in the nation.

We are proud to offer our students an advertising/public relations curriculum that is meeting the needs of students based on national standards of the industry, confirmed by our recent national survey of industry professionals and evidenced by notable appointments of our graduates.

More than \$234 billion is projected to be spent on advertising in the U.S. alone by 2020, up by about 8% of spending in 2016. With a nearly 9% expansion of advertising related jobs predicted by 2024, growth is strong in the advertising industry.



Robin Spring
Assistant Professor,
Advertising/Public Relations

A journal article detailing our study, titled: *Liberal vs. Professional Advertising Education: A National Survey of Practitioners* is scheduled to be published in the upcoming issue of the Journal of Professional Communications.



A BRIEF HISTORY:

How the Equipment Room of the SoC Evolved into Production Support Services

By Scott Vanderberg, Facilities Manager, School of Communications

January 2018 marked the start of my 34th year with the School of Communications at Grand Valley. As facilities manager, and with the assistance of Jason Rutter and James Schaub, I oversee the labs and suites in Lake Superior Hall, as well as the studio facilities in the lower level of the Kirkhof Center.

But my No. 1 job priority is the management of the AV equipment checkout area now known as Production Support Resources. It was formerly known to many past and present students as the Equipment Room. This space earned its auspicious title when it began in a tiny room in the lower level of Lake Superior Hall in the 1970s when William James College began acquiring cameras and other support gear for the students in the film and video production courses. The initial inventory was sparse with primarily Super 8 film cameras and three-quarter inch Umatic Video Porta Pack systems.

I joined the School of Communications in January 1985 as the first full-time employee to hold the position of “equipment manager.” By this time, the Equipment Room had outgrown its initial space and was housed

in Room 12. Then 1986 brought a growth spurt in the student population in the School of Communications, and as the equipment inventory grew, we soon outgrew Room 12. During the summer of 1986, we moved the operation to Room 132 on the main floor, where it is today. More student population growth followed, as well as additional equipment purchases, and we soon saw ourselves outgrow Room 132. In the summer of 2000, the adjacent classroom, Room 134, was partitioned off to add an additional 400 square feet to the Equipment Room and to add a separate check-in area and a two-student checkout counter.

When the equipment checkout operation moved, Room 12 stayed on as the Resource Room. This space served as a checkout facility for students using the various lower level labs such as photo labs and film/video edit suites. The Resource Room, like the Equipment Room, was open 61 hours a week, with two student employees per shift. With 10 hours per week per student, we saw our equipment student employee pool grow to nearly 25 per year.

Production Support Services currently houses about 3,500 items for checkout – everything from batteries to video cameras – with an inventory value of over \$1 million. It averages nearly 7,000 equipment and room reservations per year, or an average about 45 reservations per day when there are classes.

When Professor Anthony Thompson became director of the School of Communications, after long serving and founding director Alex Nesterenko stepped down in 2008, he requested we shut down the operation of the Resource Room and blend its operations with those of the Equipment Room, thus saving us about 50 percent on student wages. We were now back to a more manageable student staff of 12 to 15 per semester. Looking back at those numbers over 33 years, I estimate nearly 600 to 700 student employees have called the School of Communications their employer during their undergraduate education.

With the number of student employees working from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., it soon became obvious that we needed evening supervision. In the fall of 1996, Vickie Burke became the second full-time employee as the evening supervisor, and she covered the afternoon/evening duties of the Equipment and Resource Rooms. When she left shortly before the fall 2000 semester began, we asked a recent film/video grad to pick up her duties as a temporary employee. Then, in October 2000, Jim Schaub assumed those duties on a full-time basis. It's a position he holds today.

As my duties were more personnel and daily equipment-order based, and as Jim's leaned more toward computer technology, our growing Photography program required a full-time technician to oversee the lower level lab operations. Jason Rutter came aboard in 2008. Jason had graduated from the Photography program in 2005 and was well-versed in our operations.

Over 33 years I have seen many changes in technology. The staff and faculty strive to offer our students state-of-the-art production equipment for their class projects. To that end, we have seen many cameras and other support equipment come and go over the years. Film cameras evolved from Super 8 to 16 mm to Super 16 mm, and video went from three-quarter inch to VHS to SVHS to mini-

DV to tapeless HD. In 1985 we had about 10 cameras. Today we have nearly 125 from such manufacturers as Sony, Panasonic, JVC, Cannon, ARRI, etc.

Additionally, our facilities have changed dramatically. As we have once again outgrown our Production Support Resource space, we have had to add overflow space in five other rooms in LSH.

The School of Communications production facilities are ever-changing. The lower level has been remodeled numerous times, most notably from small single-use spaces to open collaborative lab spaces. Summer 2015 saw dramatic change on the second floor where 14 offices made way to a large classroom/lab space for the Film/Video program. It had outgrown the Kirkhof Studio space, which also has seen many changes. For example, the television production equipment has been updated to a full tapeless HD system, and tungsten studio lighting was retired in order to introduce energy saving LED lighting.

In addition to my daily duties, for nearly 30 years I have enjoyed teaching as an adjunct professor in both the Film/Video major as well as the Broadcasting (now Multimedia Journalism) major.

Scott Vanderberg has started his 34th year as facilities manager of Production Support Services for the School of Communications. He is assisted by associates Jason Rutter (left) and James Schaub. Photos by Jason Rutter.



The Need for Health Communicators is Growing

By Haiying Kong, Assistant Professor, Health Communication

Health communication is important to individuals, organizations and society. Effective communication in health empowers patients, enhances personal and social well-being, and increases the overall quality of care.

Health communication as a dynamic field of study has grown tremendously in recent years. One key contributing factor has been the development of formal undergraduate and graduate academic programs, areas of emphasis, and certificates in colleges and universities. While health care providers are shifting from a biomedical model in practicing medicine to a biopsychosocial model, communication is even more crucial to: a) help both providers and patients to meet medical goals; and b) to assist health professionals educate the public about health issues and concerns.

The Health Communication major at Grand Valley is very unique with well-established courses that integrate multidisciplinary experience to its curriculum. Students will learn communication skills critical to health-related professions;



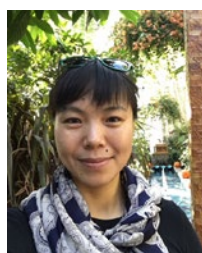
Students at Grandville Elementary School are eager to participate in a recent program, “Physical Activity,” which is a campaign to promote more physical activities among children. The campaign is a collaboration between the school district and the Health Communication program.

be able to identify and analyze communication strategies; and apply health behavior change models that are most effective for health promotion and wellness.

Our students have learned that one of the best ways to transmit health information is through health communication campaigns. Such campaigns can produce changes at individual, organizational and community levels, or at a society level. Each individual student has the opportunity to design and execute a health campaign or collaborate with a community organization to promote a health-related event. For example, students in the senior seminar class work in groups to identify a particular group, organization or a community in order to design a campaign or an educational program targeting certain health issues. Some of them chose to work with a school district, some worked with a local nursing home, others with an organization. This field experience is so valuable that they can apply those skills toward the betterment of their careers in the health professions.

In addition to the development of formal academic programs, the importance of health communication also has been noted and advanced by key government, nonprofit and private health organizations. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has established an Office for Health Communication in order to integrate health communication into its prevention programs; The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has also incorporated health communication into its development of health improvement activities, which all heavily depend on effective health communication. All of the important activities and campaigns/programs initiated by any health care organization, locally or nationally, require a workforce of professional/effective health communicators who have been properly educated about health communication.

It is an exciting and challenging time to study health communication, especially when the health care system is facing critical challenges to control costs and provide people with high-quality care.



Haiying Kong, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Health Communications

Comm(unity) Instinct in the Making

By Melba Velez Ortiz, Associate Professor,
Communication Studies

The Leopoldian land ethic is uniquely suited as an ecological dialogic principle in our environmentally perilous times.

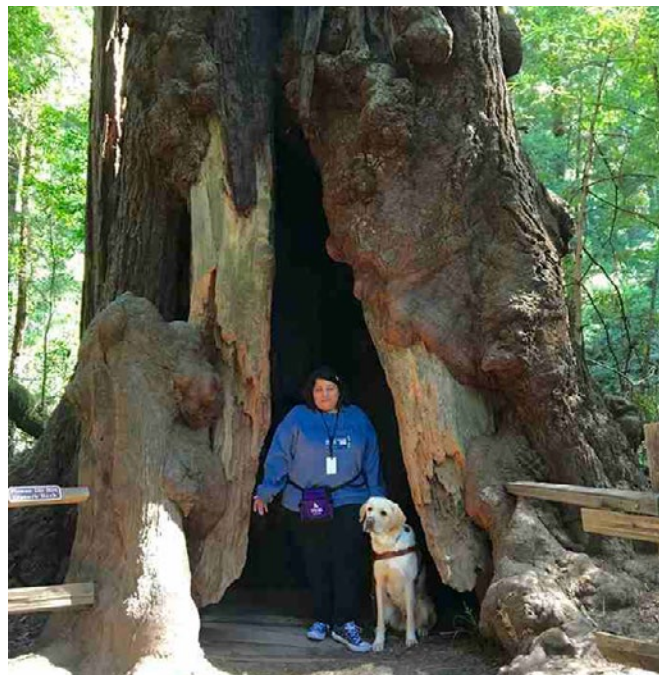
The land ethic is based on the concept of a healthy land, and it is human beings who negotiate the meaning of a healthy land. The interpretation of the word “health” is relative to its historical, political and ecological contexts. Thus, human communication, as the conduit of such discussions, is an integral component of a land ethic.

“*An ethic, philosophically, is a differentiation of social from anti-social conduct. These are two definitions of one thing. The thing has its origin in the tendency of interdependent individuals or groups to evolve modes of cooperation.*”
— Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

Proposed by the father of wildlife ecology, Aldo Leopold, the land ethic calls for the conceptualization of all species on the planet as belonging to biotic communities, i.e., communities that sustain some form of life in a particular landscape and for a given period of time. Such a concept is fundamentally concerned with conserving the self-renewing capacities of the land so that it may sustain the greatest level of biodiversity and facilitate the survival of its citizens, including, of course, human beings.

Eric T. Freyfogle, a leading Leopold scholar, says the end goal of a land ethic is a “shared duty” that reflects “the existence of an ecological conscience, and this, in turn, reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land.”

This may sound like a difficult point to sell to the public at large, but as Leopold observed in this book, “No change in ethics was ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections, and convictions.” The ecological dialogic challenge is to transform our instrumental relationship to land by understanding ourselves as part of a greater community that depends on one other.



Melba Velez Ortiz stands with her guide dog, “Chad,” in California’s Redwood Forest. They were there to complete guide dog service training.

Admittedly, the concept of interdependence sometimes flies in the face of our popular, and particularly western, cultural worship of independence as an ideal, i.e. the self-reliant, self-made capacities of the liberal subject.

Americans today eagerly purchase the latest technology, support development, and desire progress for the sake of achieving independence. For example, a quick perusal of the stories behind the ever-growing number of pipeline and fracking projects propping up all over the nation, cite “energy independence” as the benevolent goal behind these dangerous enterprises. Thus, in a society where no longer needing to rely on others to meet one’s basic needs is looked up to as the ideal, the land ethic’s ecological foundation of inter-dependence will undoubtedly generate some cognitive dissonance.

However, “land health” reflects the dynamic and broad set of contexts in which conservation can provide ethical norms in trying to adjudicate between the “one-and-the-many.” Specifically, as a dialogic tool, the land ethic can help shift our daily communication to using the language of biotic communities to refer to landscapes inhabited by humans and non-humans alike. In doing so, our communication will foreground our interdependent relationship to other biota and resources, like water and land. More importantly, it frames this non-negotiable state of our interdependence with the earth and the limits of our freedom.

Concluded on Page 19.

ALL ABOUT CATS AND DOGS



Janet Vormittag, owner and publisher of *Cats and Dogs* magazine, delivers a recent edition to the Kirkhof Center on GVSU's Allendale campus. The magazine is devoted to companion animals. It is a free publication supported by advertisers and is distributed throughout West Michigan. Photo by Emily Frye.

By Janet Vormittag, GVSU Class of 1994,
Journalism

In the summer of 2006, both my parents were dealing with cancer, my husband and I each had a lawyer and were battling through a divorce, and my freelance work at *The Grand Rapids Press* was drying up.

So what did I do? I started a business.

I had been meeting weekly with a friend and going through Julia Cameron's *The Artist Way*. The book helps people discover and recover their creativity. In doing the exercises at the end of each chapter, I concluded my two passions in life were writing and animals. Then I had a brainchild that combined those interests—to start a monthly magazine devoted to pets.

I made a list of what it would take for such a venture: how would it make money, where would it be printed, would I need a new computer, what about content, how would it be distributed. It turned into a daunting list, which made me hesitant to commit to the project. I remember talking to one of my sisters about the idea while we picked blueberries.

“If you don’t do it, you’ll always wonder what would have happened if you had,” she said.

That clinched it. I leaped. And as the saying goes, “Leap and a net will appear.”

My net came in the way of friends and family. One friend had seen a similar magazine when she traveled in the south and was able to get me a copy. When I held that publication in my hands, my idea became viable. That same friend owned a printing company. Her business didn’t do the type of printing I would need, but she offered to print me a prototype that I could use to sell ads. Revenue would be generated through the sale of advertisements.

One of my nieces had a degree in graphic design. She recommended an Apple computer and Adobe InDesign

software for layout. She also designed a template for the magazine and taught me basic design principles.

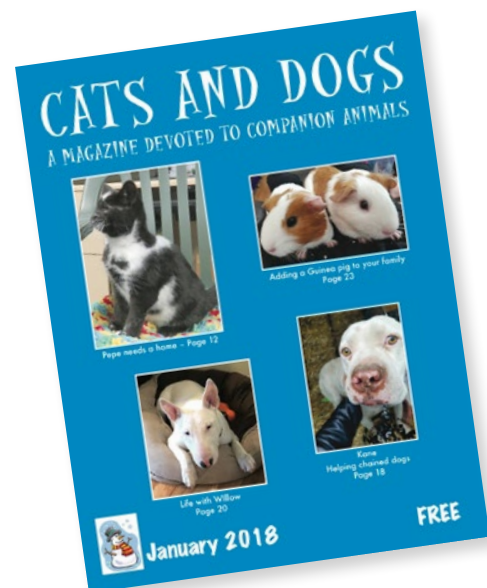
“Call me if you need me,” she said. Call her I did, on numerous occasions.

When I bought the computer at the Apple store they offered me tutorial sessions. For \$100 I got in-store, one-on-one, hour-long sessions on how to use the computer and software. I could attend once a week for a year—I used all 52 sessions.

I had another niece who had a degree in English and worked for a time as a proofreader. She offered to proofread for me.

Another friend had a quirky bull terrier. She said yes when I asked if she’d write a monthly column about her Sally. Sad to say Sally died last year, but she now writes about her puppy, Willow.

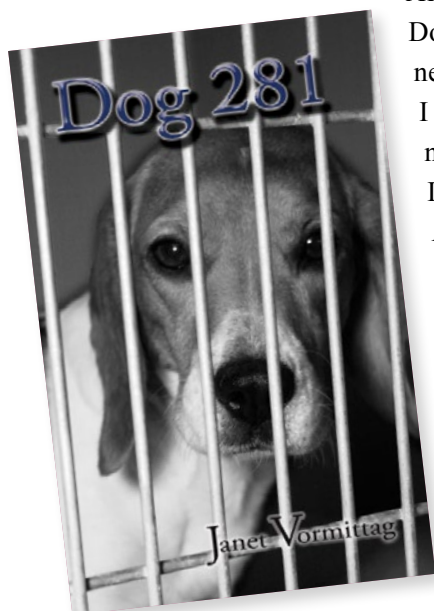
Another friend helped sell those first ads. Other friends suggested drop-off spots and offered to help with deliveries.



The first issue of *Cats and Dogs, a Magazine Devoted to Companion Animals* was December 2006. It had a print run of 5,000 copies. Eleven years later that number has more than doubled, and I’ve published 135 issues.

My dad died in September 2007. My divorce was final in October of that year. Four months later my mom passed. What kept me sane during those life-altering events was my work, the monthly rhythm of planning, organizing, writing, layout and distribution.

After publishing *Cats and Dogs* became routine, I needed another challenge. I always wanted to write a novel so I took that plunge. In 2012, I self-published *Dog 281*. Of course, it's about animals—a dog is stolen and its owner turns investigator and tracks the dog to a USDA licensed Class B animal dealer. By then the dog was sold to a research facility, which makes recovery even harder.



The story has a happy ending—people worry that the dog doesn't survive the ordeal. Ironically, it's okay for people to die in fiction, but it's not okay for pets to be killed.

Dog 281's sequel, *More Than a Number*, was published three years later.

My latest book is a humorous memoir, *You Might be a Crazy Cat Lady if...* It's a collection of short stories about my cats both owned and fostered.

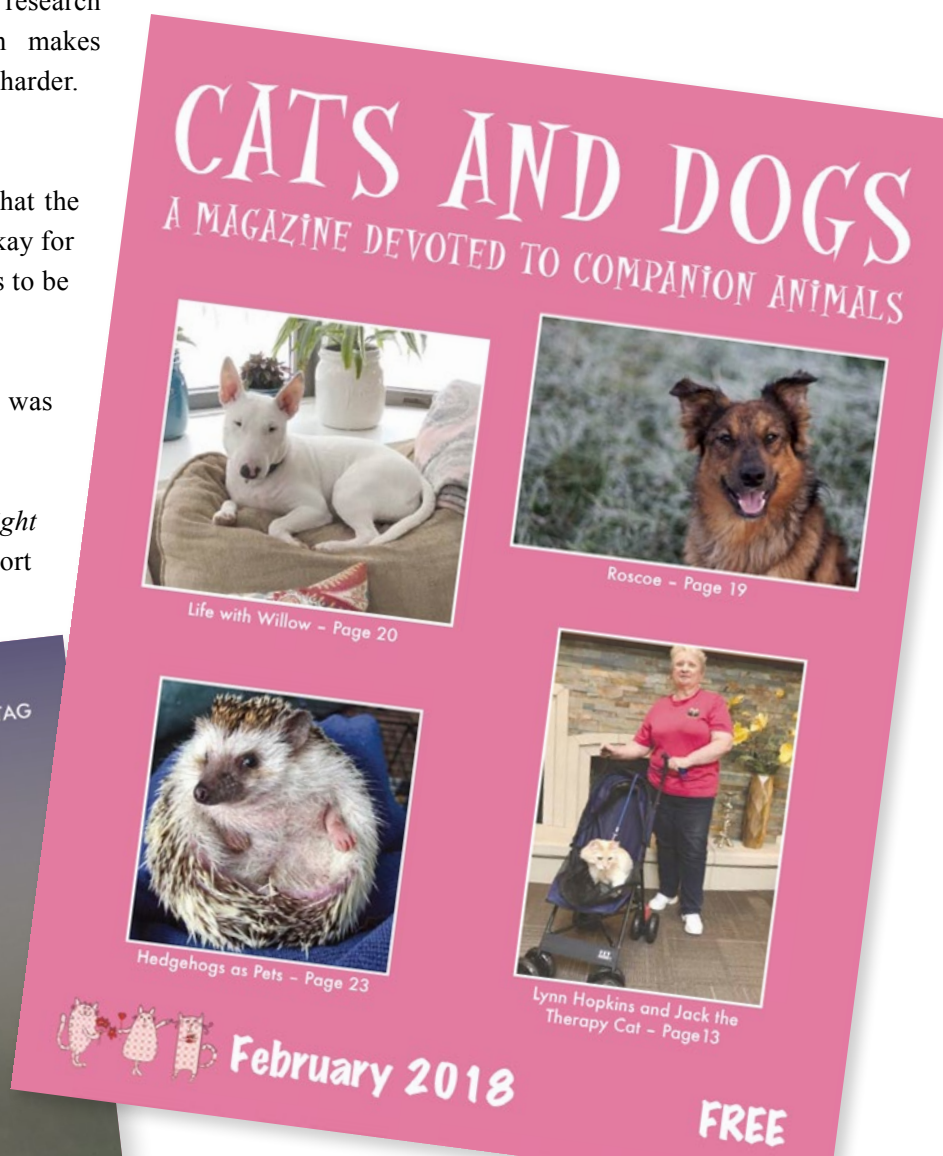


Now I'm worried I have become a crazy cat lady. I even found an online quiz that would determine if I was a crazy cat lady. Guess what? I'm only 68 percent crazy! I hate being anything less than 100 percent so I'm at a crossroads. Should I aim higher?

I blame my craziness on the magazine—it presents too many opportunities to save lives. Thousands of cats are euthanized each year in this country. Their only crime was to be born into a society that thinks death is the solution to overpopulation.

Society may call me crazy, but in reality I'm just compassionate.

For more information about Janet's books or the magazine visit www.janetvormittag.com.



Understanding Nonprofit Donors' Preferred Types, Qualities and Sources of Information



Tim Penning, Ph.D.
Professor, Advertising/
Public Relations

I was happy to speak to a group of nonprofit professionals in February about how to reach out to potential donors based on the information they are interested in, not just what nonprofit organizations want to send them.

The presentation was at the GVSU Johnson Center for Philanthropy, Grand Rapids, as part of its “Brown Bag Lunch and Learn” series.

I was sharing data and information from my chapter “Nonprofit Financial Communication: Donors’ Preferred Information Types, Qualities and Sources.” The chapter is included in the recently published *Handbook of Financial Communications and Investor Relations*. The study of the information nonprofit donors seek is an extension of my research on individual investors when they are considering purchasing a stock.

Attendees were interested in the results of my survey of a sample of 173 donors to a large community foundation. The book chapter includes a lot of statistical analysis of results. In the presentation, I hit the high notes of practical takeaways about the types of information (i.e., content), qualities of information (ranging from length to tone and more) and the sources of information (meaning the people or communication tactics). The brief results are as follows:

Top preferred types of information:

1. Mission of the organization
2. Impact of the organization and the donations received
3. Where money is spent by category
4. Location of organization (local, regional or national)

Top preferred qualities of information:

1. Personalized appeal
2. Focused on organizational need
3. Stressing a specific giving opportunity versus general gift to organization
4. Focused more on results of organizational work vs. its need for support

Top preferred sources of information:

1. The organization’s web site
2. The organization’s newsletter
3. Other donors (i.e. word of mouth)
4. The organization’s annual report
5. Conversations with staff of the organization (i.e. interpersonal)

It is interesting to note that the news media does not rank highly in the responses of donors as a source of information for donors to nonprofits. Media relations and publicity are helpful, but it turns out not the most persuasive form of communication strategy when trying to gain attention and raise funds.

The news media was valued but came in after other sources of information when donors were asked what was the “most useful” source of information and presented with people and organizations, not tactics. Their response in order of preference was:

1. The nonprofit organization itself
2. Other donors
3. A charity expert (such as a financial planner)
4. The news media

When so many people confuse “PR” for publicity, it is important to note that the strategic communications and relationship-building aspects of public relations – the real root of the profession – are most effective in the minds of donors.

In my study, and to a degree in my Johnson Center presentation, I went over the association of variables. In other words, when donors are looking for specific types of organizations, they look to specific sources. I also explained that when they want certain qualities of information they favor specific sources.

The room full of nonprofit pros had a good variety of questions and observations. In the end, the discussion showed that public relations, and nonprofit public relations and fundraising, is far more sophisticated and strategic than “getting the word out” or “just raising awareness.”

Support the School of Communications

There are many ways to support Grand Valley State University. You can designate your gift specifically to the School of Communications by giving to any of the following funds. Learn more about giving to GVSU and the School of Communications at www.gvsu.edu/giving

School of Communications Scholarship

The School of Communications Scholarship is designed to honor upper-level School of Communications students who have demonstrated promise in their chosen field of study. Scholarship funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. The student must have declared a major in the School of Communications, be in good academic standing, and have completed a minimum of 30 credits at GVSU.

Dr. Margaret Proctor School of Communications Scholarship

The scholarship is intended to benefit School of Communications students who write in a vivid, direct and unique voice. It is designed especially with fiction-writing in mind, which includes writing for film and theater.

The Warren Reynolds Scholarship

The Warren Reynolds Scholarship is named in honor of the longtime sports director at WOOD-TV in Grand Rapids. Warren Reynolds, who died of cancer in 2000 and was a champion of charitable causes throughout the region, and who left a legacy of integrity in broadcast journalism. This scholarship is intended for students who exemplify these ideals and show a passion for electronic media. Preference will be given to students pursuing a career in sports broadcasting.

John J. and Marjorie E. Shepard Communications Scholarship

Established in memory of John J. and Marjorie E. Shepard, to support students in the Grand Valley State University School of Communications. It was their wish that a portion of their estate be designated for a scholarship to benefit students pursuing careers in broadcasting.

Calder Scholarship

Full tuition for a senior student working in the Arts (Photography, Film and Video, Theatre). Applicants are nominated by academic units. Each unit may nominate up to three candidates. Applicants should be completing their third year of study. The scholarship provides full tuition for their senior year. The committee awards one scholarship per year.

Eastman Scholarship Program

Annual tuition and fees to Film and Video majors. (Requires going through Film and Video faculty.)

William J. & Margaret G. Branstrom Fund Award for partial tuition

For Photography and Film/Video students.

Joseph Ehrenreich Scholarship: Press Photography

Five \$1,000 grants per year from the National Press Photographers Foundation. Students must submit a portfolio of their work demonstrating skill, versatility and potential. Financial need is also considered.

Dirk Koning Film/Video Scholarship

Dirk Koning was the founding director of the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids and an adjunct faculty member at GVSU. Dirk was a media visionary, a passionate ambassador for public access, who believed that the airwaves belong to the people. He was an internationally recognized media activist and champion for free speech. Dirk died unexpectedly in 2005 at the age of 48. We have named this scholarship in his honor. Scholarship moneys from this fund are awarded on a competitive basis to upper-level Film and Video Production majors who have made or intend to make media that contributes to the improvement of society.

Frederick A. Chapman Endowed Memorial Public Relations Scholarship

This fund assists students in Public Relations who are committed to community service.

Friends of West Michigan Public Broadcasting Student Employee Scholarship

Two annual full tuition scholarships. Available to one TV and one Audio student, each of whom have worked at TV or radio stations WGVU/WGVK-TV or WGVU-Radio.

MCA-A Bill Rigstand

Communication Scholarship

Annual \$2,000-plus Detroit-area internship.

From Page 13:

Comm(unity) Instinct in the Making

The type of ethical communication described here, then, is about environmental issues, and it teaches us that we are born into a sociocultural universe where values, moral commitments and existential meanings are both presumed and negotiated.

For Leopold, it is not enough to presume these relationships of interdependence in which human beings operate, but it has become necessary to create a new “community instinct.” One that self-consciously, *and through communication*, works within the constraints of our interrelated nature to reach not just for the flourishing of one community within a given ecosystem but for the health of the land overall.

In the end, our human survival is rooted in the principle that we have inescapable claims on, not just one another, but on the land, which cannot be renounced except at the cost of our humanity.

The above is an excerpt from the forthcoming book chapter “Fragments, Limbs, and Dreadful Accidents: The Burden of an Ecological Education in a World of Wounds.” In F. Cooren & R. C. Arnett (Eds.), *Dialogic Ethics*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Co. (2018)

REGISTERED INTERNSHIPS 2017

Major Program	Students
Advertising and Public Relations:	220
Communication Studies:	91
Health Communication:	50
Multimedia Journalism:	52

By the Numbers

All data as of Fall 2017 semester

REGISTERED STUDENTS BY MAJOR

Major Program	Students
Advertising and Public Relations.....	459
Advertising.....	283
Public Relations	176
Multimedia Journalism	167
Communication Studies.....	331
Communications	53
Graduate Students	53
Health Communication	112

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