

# Expressions

A SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS PUBLICATION 2013



**GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS

**“...no impression without expression...”** WILLIAM JAMES

**A**s our cover photo illustrates, every day there are many students who walk past the mural of William James, for whom one of the original Grand Valley State University colleges was named. In 1983, when the School of Communications was formed as part of the current university structure at Grand Valley, the quote from William James—“*no impression without expression*”—was especially appropriate for those who would study any form of communication. In 2013, as the School of Communications celebrates its 30th year, the idea is no less relevant.

That is why “*Expressions*” is a perfect name for this publication, an annual report and magazine celebrating the achievements of our students, alumni and faculty who express themselves in various ways and media.

In the following pages you’ll read about **artistic expressions**, such as in our Film and Video Production, Photography, or Theatre programs. You’ll learn about **mass media expressions**, whether in Advertising and Public Relations, Broadcasting, or Journalism. You’ll also be informed about the various forms of **scholarly and professional expression**, whether in our Health Communications and Communications Studies undergraduate programs, or our Master of Science in Communications degree program.

Collectively, we hope all of the articles in this publication illustrate the School of Communications’ mission and motto: to integrate liberal education with professional practice. Or, as we like to say, “inspiring thought and perfecting practice.”

In other words, we hope *Expressions* makes a good impression.



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## Expressions

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# Advertising and Public Relations Students, Class 'Clients' Learn Together

**A**dvertising and Public Relations courses have a long history of bringing organizations as "clients" into the classroom. Clients have the benefit of gaining an outside perspective on their business or organization, as well as a polished project. Students are able to work with professionals while honing their skills and applying lessons from class.



Advertising and Public Relations student Jennifer Oldham (right) presents her Corporate Communications project to the client, Jessica Manfrin (far left) and her colleague at Guiding Light Mission. Manfrin is a graduate of the School of Communications.

"In many other universities across the nation, they typically only use clients for a campaign class," said Tim Penning, associate professor of Advertising and Public Relations. "But we do this in several classes leading up to our campaign class so they've had three or four clients by graduation."

In Media Relations Writing, students concentrate heavily on news writing. They produce news releases, tip sheets, positions papers, media kits and other media relations tools. Corporate Communications also emphasizes writing, and students create communication audits and plans as well as a

variety of tactics for a client. In Public Relations/Advertising Campaigns, the class is broken into groups of 4-5 students who each work together as "agencies" to research, plan and develop an integrated campaign plan book. The campaign is a culmination of all the theory and practice gained from classes in the major.

With each of these classes, students meet their clients in the beginning of the semester and gain an understanding of the communication issue they will work on. Over the next 15 weeks, they take information learned in the classroom to compose professional-level projects. The clients remain available during the semester to answer questions, and then give feedback to each student once the semester comes to a close.

"The most exciting part is at the end of the semester, when students present to someone who's not a professor," said Penning. "Students get to defend to the client what they did, and why they did it."

This unique approach to the major gives students professional experience, samples for their portfolios and networking capabilities.

"I feel much more confident about working in communications after graduation because of the practical use I'm getting from these classes," said DeLain Bomer III, a double major in Film and Video Production and Advertising and Public Relations.

**“I feel much more confident about working in communications after graduation because of the practical use I’m getting from these classes.”**

DeLain Bomer III, a double major in Film and Video Production and Advertising and Public Relations.

DeLain Bomer, left, participates in a peer edit exercise with fellow student Rane Martin in a Corporate Communications class.



## Students Place in Top 10 In National Student Advertising Competition

The Advertising and Public Relations major at GVSU reached a new milestone in 2012 when a team of students won 10th place in the National Student Advertising Competition.

To even get to the national competition, held in Austin, Texas in 2012, the team of 25 students had to best 20 teams from other universities in Michigan, Indiana and Illinois in a district competition. It was the first time GVSU had placed first at the district level, after coming close with 3rd and 4th place finishes in previous years.

Sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, with the goal of giving students real-life advertising agency experience,

more than 150 teams nationwide were challenged to develop and design a \$100 million, 12-month campaign for Nissan to increase brand awareness and market share, specifically to multicultural millennials.

Grand Valley’s team of 25 Advertising and Public Relations students worked with School of Communications faculty co-advisers Roy Winegar, assistant professor, and Frank Blossom, affiliate professor. The team worked for two semesters on their campaign, compiled their results in a printed plan book and condensed their plan for a 20-minute presentation by five team members.

An additional achievement was realized when Gabriel M. Carter, one of five students on the presentation team, received the Bolton-Mac Vicar Best Presenter Award — a \$500 prize. “I later had a flashback to our early rehearsals when I felt like the weakest link on the team,” said Carter. “I also saw myself in a new light! We lived this campaign for nine months. It took a lot of practice, confidence, support and prayer.”



*The student presentation team in Austin. Affiliate Professor Frank Blossom is at right.*



*Students present their campaign in Austin, Texas as part of the National Student Advertising Competition.*

GVSU has earned a trophy in the NSAC District competition five times in the past six years, including two fourth place finishes, two thirds, and 2012’s first place which sent the team to the national competition for the first time.

# WCKS, GVTV Grow in Popularity

Grand Valley is home to WCKS (The WHALE) and GVTV, which are student-run radio and television stations. In the past these organizations exclusively attracted Broadcasting and Film and Video Production students. While many students from these majors are involved with one or both of the stations, WCKS and GVTV bring other perspectives as well. They are both Student Life organizations, which means any student, regardless of major or prior experience, can get involved.



**“College is such a short time for students to get experience. We want the experience to be as close to the real thing to best serve both groups of students.”**

Len O’Kelly, Visiting Professor of Broadcasting

The stations are based solely on student-created content. The programming is mostly the result of class work from students in the Broadcasting and Film and Video Production majors, but is also supplied by volunteers who joined through Student Life. More students are joining, and both groups have seen an increase in membership.

“I started here as an advisor in 2010 and the radio station has grown from just a few to above 50 students,” said Len O’Kelly, visiting professor of Broadcasting. “I completely owe my career to my college radio station. When the opportunity came up to teach, I jumped on it.”

There are 11 student-produced television shows on the air, not including work for classes or promotional messages. When compared to other universities in the state, the number is staggering: Grand Valley has nearly double that of Michigan State University, which has six student-produced shows.

GVSU’s student-run radio station started in the 1960s and has changed its name and physical location several times throughout the decades. WCKS student-run radio, now known as The WHALE, is back in its first home in the lower level of the Kirkhof Center and even has its original door. The station’s door has traveled across campus throughout the years and serves as a functional time-capsule, displaying several decades’ worth of band and school stickers.

WCKS and GVTV are housed separately from the studios that serve as classrooms for Broadcasting and Film and Video students. Each studio was constructed to be as true-to-life as possible. All of the equipment is professional-quality, including the Ultra Nexus platform, which is also used by government and public access channels. This means that students who work in the studios on campus will have hands-on experience and confidence in their skills once they land their first jobs in either the film and video or radio industry.

“College is such a short time for students to get experience,” said O’Kelly, “We want the experience to be as close to the real thing to best serve both groups of students.”

As of 2012, students have gained the ability to broadcast live from any location that has Internet access. This has opened many doors for live-coverage for both on and off-campus events. Live varsity and club-sport coverage is on the horizon for these departments, as well as the coverage of many other student events.

Students have also taken advantage of the Internet in another capacity, broadcasting their content online. GVTV uploads



GVTV and The Whale Radio are student-run broadcast stations with studios on campus.

their content to YouTube, and connects with their followers through Facebook and Twitter. WCKS streams live through their website and also has Android, Kindle and Windows apps for smartphones and tablets, along with Facebook and Twitter. Broadcasting students, side-by-side with students outside of the School of Communications, are reaching out to listeners and viewers across campus using every means available to them.

**LISTEN TO THE WHALE ONLINE at <http://whaleradio.org>**  
**WATCH GVTV ONLINE at [www.gvtv.org](http://www.gvtv.org)**



## Students Earn High Achievements at MAB Awards

The 2013 Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB) student award winners included eight Grand Valley students, five of whom are part of the Broadcasting program. Much of the students' work was aired on Grand Valley Television (GVTV), which is available on the university cable system on channel 10.

Keith Oppenheim, assistant professor and coordinator of the Broadcasting major, submitted a project that Amy Akers completed for one of his classes in the previous year. Akers earned first place in the News Feature/Magazine category for that piece.

"Len O'Kelly, the advisor to GVTV, deserves particular credit for submitting these entries and in general, encouraging our involvement in the awards process this year," Oppenheim said. O'Kelly, visiting professor of Broadcasting, serves as the faculty advisor for GVTV. He was proud of his students, and their achievements at MAB.

"To earn this achievement, you have to have a panel of working professionals examine your work and determine its quality," said O'Kelly. "These students passed that test. The job market is tough, and adding 'award-winning producer of content' to a degree may likely help them as they begin their careers."

"We know our students do really good work in the classroom and outside of it for campus media," said Oppenheim. "So it's not surprising they would be favorably judged in a competition like this."

Grand Valley students had not been involved with the MAB awards in recent years. Although only five of the eight student-winners were broadcasting students, the courses in the program did prepare them for the MAB judging criteria, including technical quality and presentation.

"I do feel our courses focus on marrying technical, editorial and presentation skills," said Oppenheim. "For many in the major, part of the challenge in television is to be able to fuse studio and field production with writing and presentation. For some, building those skills in our courses was a helpful factor in receiving this recognition."

### THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS WERE AMONG THE 2013 MAB WINNERS:

#### **News Feature/Magazine Program**

First Place (Tie): Amy Akers (B)  
Honorable Mention: Bobby Nielsen, Steph Weinstein, Kristin Nill

#### **Sports Play-by-Play**

Honorable Mention: Dan Spadafora, Jordan Boze

#### **Talk Show**

First Place: Christina Choriatis, Sam Shields



Eight GVSU students won awards in 2012 from the Michigan Association of Broadcasters.



# Lecture Series Honors Late Professor

The Communication Studies major created the James Carey Lecture Series in honor of the communications scholar who served as a consultant to help found the GVSU School of Communications in 1983.

“We had decided to have a lecture,” said Valerie Peterson, associate professor of Communication Studies. “The first lecture was in 2011, and it went over really well. We decided to do that again the next year, and to put it in the strategic plan and make it something that we do every year. The series will be a contribution from the Communication Studies major and from the School of Communications to the larger university. We bring speakers in who have something interesting to say about communication to all of us.”

The lecture series didn’t originally have a name.

“Carey had a lot of beloved students who thought he was great,” she said. “He just recently passed away, and I decided to name the lecture series after him because he appealed to the whole School of Communications. He’s relevant to the school, he had the right kind of attitude towards communication.”

The Communication Studies major offers courses like Speech, Story-Making and Communication Theory that serve all majors in the School of Communications. Those who major in Communication Studies are encouraged to take courses from other majors too.

“James Carey was part of helping to envision that arrangement,” Peterson said. “We may seem like an odd collection now, because a lot of schools don’t have the theater program in with the School of Communications; they have it with dance and music. It’s an interesting way to have everybody together, but the mix makes it a pretty rich territory.”

Carey was well known for his book “Communication and Culture”, where he presented an alternative to the transmission model, with ways to think of communication as a ritual. Peterson summarized a few of his ideas.

**Carey was well known for his book “Communication and Culture”, where he presented an alternative to the transmission model.**

“Maybe your grandparents like to sit at the table and read the paper on Sunday morning,” she said. “This is almost as much of a ritual as it is about getting information. It’s about the time you spend at the table, the sharing of the pieces of the paper and the occasional talking over it. It’s not just about transferring information, but about being with other people.”

In the first year of the Carey Lecture Series, Lance Strate, a media ecologist from Fordham University, gave a lecture on his book, “The Binding Biases of Time.”



“He talked about how time shifts as you use different media,” said Peterson. “If you turn your TV, radio and cell phone off and sit out in the woods, time moves slowly. You notice things you didn’t notice before. He also talked about much more than that, but it was something interesting to a lot of people.”

Lance Strate and Nathan Crick were the first two speakers in the James Carey Lecture Series.

In 2012, the series invited Nathan Crick from Louisiana State University. Crick is an associate professor of Rhetoric and

Public Address, with accomplishments including the book "Democracy & Rhetoric." He spoke about the intersections between art, science, rhetoric and democracy during his presentation, "The Birth of the Spectacle: Persuasion, Power and Production in Early Greek Tragedy." Fall, 2013 will be the series' third year, and Brenton Malin from the University of Pittsburgh will be the speaker. The speakers are not from Grand Valley, and Peterson thinks that helps a lot.

"If you bring in people from outside of Grand Valley, it's like getting an intravenous, extra-oxygenated-injection of new blood into your system," she said. "You bring in somebody who's got ideas that are interesting. It's always good to mix and mingle with people who have ideas and who come from different backgrounds."

As for the future of this honorary lecture series, Peterson has high hopes.

"The best case scenario is really great speakers, one lecture at a time," she said.



## School of Communications Hosts 14th Annual Media Ecology Association Convention

In June, 2013, Grand Valley's School of Communications hosted the Media Ecology Association's (MEA) 14th annual convention at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids. The MEA defines media ecology as the study of the complex set of relationships or interrelationships among symbols, media and culture. Communication Studies professors Corey Anton and Valerie Peterson co-ordinated this year's convention.

"The MEA is a group of people who want to study media as environments and environments as media," said Peterson. "Social media and micro-electronics have grown in the past few years, and not many groups have a grasp on this. The MEA is made up of not just media scholars, but humanities scholars."

"With media ecologists, it's not about content analysis," said Anton. "We look at the way a practice shapes a person's sensibilities."



This year's theme was "Media Ecology Unplugged," and featured papers, panels, creative projects, and other proposals presenting research and/or exploring topics and ideas related to the theme. The international convention's goal is to provoke academic dialogue, raise public awareness of media ecology, and discuss the relevance of media ecological thought to the broader culture. The following speakers were featured at the 2013 *Unplugged* convention:

- Lance Strate, former MEA president and author of "The Binding Biases of Time"
- Morris Berman, author of the "Trilogy on Human Consciousness" and "The Twilight of American Culture"
- Dominique Scheffel-Dunand, director of the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto

*Unplugged* had a goal of reminding people that media technologies are not simply plug-in devices. There were also media before the wired and plugged-in revolution of mass-media that many people no longer consider in their discussions about the topic.

Anton and Peterson both explained that media ecology is centered around what makes us human, and the affects that media have on us. In the context of the MEA, media means much more than television or radio; it extends to include social constructions like the clock, calendar and even the mirror.

*Unplugged* was a gathering for MEA members, and the public, to discuss these topics in-depth. The School of Communications, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the GVSU Provost's Office were major supporters of the event.

ABOVE: Professors Valerie Peterson and Corey Anton at a previous MEA Conference. They worked to bring the organization's annual meeting to Grand Rapids in 2013.



# Film/Video Alumna Credits Internship for Job With Penny Marshall

Film and Video Production Professor John Harper Philbin helped pave the way for many Grand Valley students to find internships in Hollywood. He traveled to "Tinsel Town" in the summer of 2012 to set the positions up through contacts he had made on a spring break trip.

"I organized ten interns to go to Hollywood," Philbin said. "Students worked for six weeks during the summer. I visited for a week out there to see how they were doing and talk more with their employers."

California is a popular destination for many people who want to become involved with film, in any capacity. Because so many job-seekers move there, it can become more difficult to be recognized and land a job.

"Los Angeles is a big place and trying to get your foot in the door can be intimidating," said Philbin. "An internship is one of the best ways to break in to the film and television industry. Happily, there is a growing number of GVSU film and video alumni out there, so those who follow will be able to reach out to those who are now settled there."

One student who benefited from Hollywood internship connections is Amanda Morton, a Film and Video Production alumna. She accepted a position as Penny Marshall's executive assistant in late 2012. Marshall has an extensive resume, including the role of Laverne on "Laverne & Shirley" and various roles on "Saturday Night Live."

But Morton has earned quite a bit of experience herself. Before landing this job with Marshall, Morton kept busy with several hands-on jobs and internships: she worked on six film sets including "30 Minutes or Less" and "Genesis Code", and was also an intern for WOOD TV doing freelance work.

In 2011, she interned in film development at Universal Studios. She learned that a representative from Universal Studios would be in Saugatuck for the Waterfront Film Festival, so she drove down to Saugatuck for a panel discussion.



**"Los Angeles is a big place and trying to get your foot in the door can be intimidating. An internship is one of the best ways to break in to the film and television industry."**

John Harper Philbin, Film and Video Production Professor

"I jumped at the chance to make an important connection," she said.

After the Q & A session, she waited until the crowd thinned and introduced herself as a film student, telling the representative that he did a nice job handling the challenging questions. She expressed an interest in moving to Los Angeles and asked for his advice. He handed her his business card, and said he would help her get an internship with Universal. They spent months e-mailing back and forth, but then she was put in touch with the internship coordinator, and applied for the position.

ABOVE: An increasing number of Film and Video Production students have been doing internships in Hollywood.

“Film studies allowed me to hold an intelligent conversation and my background in business taught me the right way to approach the situation,” Morton said.

She believes the combination of these skills helped her land a paid internship with Universal Studios.

“My internship at one of the major studios gave me the qualifications to be Penny’s executive assistant,” she said.

After her internship at Universal ended, she spent the next several months job searching.

“It was a difficult time, but occasionally I took short-term jobs to help relieve my savings account,” said Morton. “I was hired as Penny’s executive assistant approximately a week after my interview and shortly after that I was contacted by Disney as a finalist for their development associate program. I guess it is

true, good things come in pairs. I withdrew from consideration with Disney, but I am honored that I got that opportunity.”

As an executive assistant, Morton manages Marshall’s e-mails, phone sheets, calendar, and a lot of script coverage.

“Penny has done some amazing things for women in film,” she said. “It’s an honor to be able to work for someone as intelligent as her.”

Her responsibilities in her new job are very similar to her internship at Universal Studios. “There’s one big exception,” she said. “If anything goes wrong, it’s my responsibility.”

After working for Marshall, her next goal is to seek out a position as an associate producer or an assistant for a producer with a film in production.

## *Cinesthesia Offers Students Online-Platform for Scholarly Discussion of Cinema*

In 2012 the School of Communications launched *Cinesthesia*, an online journal featuring student essays about film. Content is submitted by students who are interested in film, and their writing can be entered in three categories including *Spotlight on a Theory*, *Cinema and Discourse*, and *Current Cinema*.

Film and Video Production Professor Toni Perrine serves as the journal’s advisor, with the following students working as editors:

Danica Butkovich (2012)

*Film and Video Production, Fiction Filmmaking emphasis*

Joe Hogan

*Film and Video Production, English Language and Literature*



Professor Toni Perrine (left) with student editors of *Cinesthesia* toast the inaugural issue (with sparkling grape juice).

Nikki Martin

*Film and Video Production, Cinema Studies emphasis*

Kelly Meyer, (2012)

*Film and Video Production*

***Spotlight on a Theory*** examines film texts in the context of a specific theory or theorist. In each publication, Spotlight highlights multiple student perspectives on one given theory and its application. ***Cinema and Discourse*** is the most broadly defined section of the journal, and discusses any perspectives on cinema that students can take. ***Current Cinema*** embraces the way film and culture interacts with one another. It is an open, intellectual forum for students to engage in an ever-changing discourse on the cinema as it continually grows and expands. *Current* will typically include critical film review over many mediums including the Internet.

This online publication holds a critical tone and serves as a great resource for students to get involved in a scholarly discussion about their passion for film.

READ *CINESTHESIA* ONLINE:

<http://cinesthesiajournal.wordpress.com>

# Professionals Share Experiences with Health Communication Students

Many students wonder what positions they should apply for within the health communication field, because the career options are so versatile. To help, a panel of health communication professionals from various organizations in Grand Rapids spoke about the roles available for Health Communication majors after graduation. The event, expected to be an annual occurrence, was created by Health Communication Affiliate Professor Lorie Jager.



“During the first week of [senior seminar] class, I spent time inquiring what students felt they needed at this point in their academic career,” said Jager. “One of the things they mentioned was a better idea of potential directions they could go with their degree.”

Jager contemplated the best way to help her class with this issue, and realized other students might also benefit from exposure to a variety of possible career paths.

“Instead of bringing individuals to my class one at a time, it made sense for me to create the panel, and invite all Health Communication majors, and also include Public/Nonprofit Administration majors emphasizing in community health,” she said. “The class made a list of the types of ‘functions’ they were interested in learning more about, which created the types of people I targeted.”

During the panel, the speakers discussed the critical role of communication in their career success. They shared what a typical day is like in their current positions, and also talked about how they got to the positions they currently hold. The following professionals were in attendance:

- Jaman Alexander, *YMCA Annual Fund Development Director*
- Alexandra Willey, *American Cancer Society Associate Director of West Michigan*
- Maya Shah, *Spectrum Health Communications and Marketing Coordinator*
- Dave Smith, *GVSU Benefits and Wellness Director*

“As the Health Communication internship coordinator, I’ve made a point to connect to people within a variety of organizations that Health Communication students either are involved or could be involved with,” Jager said. “Personally, I’ve had a variety of experiences with some of these same organizations and people as well. So, taking the list that we

created in class, I began to reach out to individuals in the areas they were interested in, which fortunately had people I knew, and sent emails requesting their participation. I was happily surprised at the overwhelming willingness to participate."

The event took place in late March, 2013 and was a success, with many students remaining for even greater information during an informal Q&A session afterwards.



"We will definitely continue this event and will probably change a few things, including adding Health Communication alumni," said Jager.

Three years ago, Professor Haiying Kong was made the first tenure track faculty member in the Health Communication major, at the same time that Jager was brought on as an affiliate professor.

"The two of us have been working together on creating and moving toward accomplishing goals for the Health Communication students, and the panel meets one of them," she said. "We are now working on forming a Health Communication student group to continue to provide opportunities for our students and to raise the profile of the major both on campus and in the health, wellness and medical community."

ABOVE: Jamon Alexander of the YMCA talks with student Brandon Erhart. Professors Lorie Jager and Haiying Kong are in the background. LEFT: A large number of Health Communications students attend the panel.



## Health Communication a Fast-Growing Field

Health communication has been one of the fastest-growing areas in the fields of both communication and health care management. According to the Public Relations Society of America, there was a 35 percent increase in the number of jobs in this area through 2012.

While the field has become popular across the country recently, the GVSU School of Communications began offering a Health Communications major already in 1987. The major prepares students to study communication in a variety of contexts within the health care environment. Students in the program will learn the history of medicine, the U.S. health care systems, the dynamics of health, professional-patient communication, the delivery of health care services and policies, and health education and promotion communication strategies.

Currently, 112 students are majoring in Health Communications at GVSU.

A major in Health Communications prepares students for a variety of careers including public relations in a healthcare context, hospice management, and health communication specialist/director for corporations and many others.

# Journalism Grad is School of Communications Distinguished Alumnus for 2012

The School of Communications selected Dr. Jeff Brand as its “Outstanding Alumnus” for 2012. Brand graduated in 1986 with his B.A. in Journalism. He later received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

He now lives in Australia, where he is an associate professor and an associate dean at Bond University and is recognized as an international media expert. He made the long flight back to Grand Valley to accept his award, and spoke about his time at GVSU as an undergrad student.



Dr. Jeff Brand travelled back from Australia to Allendale to speak to students as the 2012 ‘Distinguished Alumnus’ in the School of Communications.

“It’s surreal [to return],” he said. “The heart of the campus is still here, but it’s changed a lot. I can see the old buildings like Lake Superior and Lake Michigan Hall, and I see old parts of the campus, but they’re now... not buried, but they fit inside a much bigger shell. It seems strange.”

Brand mostly enjoyed interacting with current students.

“The best thing though, is that I went into three communications classes and talked to students, and it was so special,” he said. “It was like the circle had closed for me. It was a way of coming back and engaging with Lakers again, sharing my experiences and listening to them. Honestly, the heart of Grand Valley is still here, which is the most important thing to me. It’s still a very personal learning community, and that’s beautiful.”

He offered advice to students who are about the graduate with a communications degree.

“There will be jobs,” he said. “There will be a lot of jobs. They may not come in the first week after graduation. They may not come in the first three weeks, or even three months. But they will come. The most important thing for students is to keep doing whatever it is they learned. If you learned to write articles, keep writing articles, even if you don’t get paid. Give them away. Eventually, you’ll get traction. You’ll find work in the newest form of the news media, or public relations or advertising, or broadcasting. It may be narrowcasting, but it will still be a big audience, because that’s now possible with digital media. Don’t give up. Stay the course. You will succeed.”

Brand has published over 40 research articles on interactive games, playable books, digital publishing, mobile learning, multimedia, and global media. A sample of his work can be found on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/SpartyGuy>



## Student-Newspaper Expands Reach, Grows With Technology



The Lanthorn has recently expanded its reach via the web site and mobile app.

The Grand Valley student-run newspaper, the Lanthorn (pronounced Lant-horn), was the first Michigan weekly newspaper to have a website. Today the paper is offered for its audience through print, mobile and tablet platforms. In the fall of 2012, an app for Apple and Android was offered to the public.

“Our students are delivering original information about Grand Valley in the



platforms students prefer," said Larry Beery, associate professor of Journalism. "We're seeing a growth in the tablet and mobile platforms as more and more students have smart phones."

"The Lanthorn" is largely self-funded, and is investing in web, tablet and mobile delivery.

"We're a little bit more focused on trying to be realistic about where journalism is going and what people want, and how they want their news," said Anya Zentmeyer, Journalism student and editor-in-chief for the Lanthorn. "People don't necessarily want to pick up the paper, as much as they used to. We're trying to meet those demands, but also maintain that journalistic integrity of what we're doing, the craft of accuracy and giving people things that are important without devaluing journalism."

But the various formats has changed the content they offer to a degree.

"The web offers multi-media packages, so we're including videos and slideshows," Berry said. "We're up-grading and investing in a major redesign of the website this summer that will be rolling out in July. It will enhance the users' experience even more. It's a significant part of our growth."

"The Lanthorn" has two missions. The business mission is to offer opportunities to students and a service to the Grand Valley community. The education mission is to run the newspaper as professionally as possible. Students are learning how to work with multiple platforms in a real-world environment, and the responsibilities involved therein.

More than 100 students were employed by the paper during the 2012-2013 academic year, and most of the positions are paid.

Writing for the web has evolved from when the students started in 1995. In the beginning, they were just shuffling the printed story to the web. As technology has evolved, they've added a comment section and embedded links to stories.

There has been some concern that web-based information won't be as relevant or hold credibility the way printed stories do.

"Just because it's online, doesn't make it any less important than what's in print," said Zentmeyer. "There's a paradigm-shift with the difference between content in print and online. Before, you'd have web-exclusives, and now we think of it as print-exclusives. You're always trying to get that rolling content on the web, and that's getting the information you know, and you have confirmed, up as fast as you can. Then we expand on the web stories as more information comes in."

2012 saw expansion and changes for the Lanthorn, and the paper plans to stay ahead of the curve. The organization is looking to the future, and contemplating ways to improve along with technology.



**"We're a little bit more focused on trying to be realistic about where journalism is going and what people want, and how they want their news."**

Anya Zentmeyer, Journalism student and editor-in-chief of the Lanthorn

"The copy-editing desk of the future will see stories presented a little differently for each of the platforms," said Beery. "Look for some of the enhancements in the writing in the fall. The writers will be better-able to tailor the information for each platform. It takes more effort, but the overall goal is still to provide quality and informative information. The presentation is just another layer added on to that."

ABOVE: Anya Zentmeyer, Editor-in-Chief of the Lanthorn, at work with the editorial team in the Lanthorn offices.

# Former Student Returns as Professor

**N**ate Abramowski has come full-circle at Grand Valley. He earned his Bachelor's of Science in Film and Video Production and Photography from GVSU in 2005. Now he is back on campus teaching Photography and Film and Video Production.

After his undergraduate education, he chose to work in New York City in television and film. He also achieved noteworthy success working commercially, before entering graduate school at Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. There, he pursued his Master of Fine Arts and graduated in 2009. In 2010, he was appointed as an adjunct Photography professor in the School of Communications. He now takes a multi-media approach to his photography curriculum.

"As mediums evolve, channels for content distribution change, yet knowledge embodied by the written word endures," he said.

**Abramowski pushes his students to reach the high level of success he knows they are capable of achieving. He stresses that learning never stops, and takes place in more than just the classroom.**

"As a professional, I have been fortunate enough to implement a philosophy that embodies learning both in the workplace and classroom," he said. "I firmly believe learning occurs, perpetually, in all facets of life. When working with students I cultivate an environment where they can reach their own solutions. I seek to craft experiences that will continue outside of the classroom."

Abramowski has been working in various mediums for the past several years and recently focused on photography as his primary form of artistic expression. He has an extensive resume, including works in photography and film and video,

and has been a featured lecturer at Point Park University and St. Vincent's Academy. The School of Communications is proud to have a former student return to share his experience and guidance with new students.





## Photo Students Visit Art Institute of Chicago

Every year, the Photography major hosts several field trips to the Art Institute of Chicago to supplement students' education. During the group's Fall 2012 trip, students were able to view original work in albumen, platinum and silver by 19th century artists such as Nadar, Julia Margaret Cameron and Peter Henry Emerson.

"The opportunity to see such work first hand is an essential part of students' education at Grand Valley," said Stafford Smith, assistant professor of photography. "We encourage everyone to go at least once, if not many times, on this trip."

Students were able to visit the photo archives at the Art Institute as well as exhibits of the latest work of world-renowned artists. They also participated in an interactive exhibit at the Cultural Center where patrons could keep paper bags if they posed for a picture wearing the bags and then sent it to the artists.



During the group's Fall 2012 trip, students were able to view original work in albumen, platinum and silver by 19th century artists such as Nadar, Julia Margaret Cameron and Peter Henry Emerson.

Photography students participate in interactive exhibit at the Cultural Center in Chicago.

# Theater, Spanish Professors Collaborate on American Debut of Golden Age Play

The Theater major helped make history by creating the first English translation and stage adaptation of the Spanish play “Antona Garcia.” The play was written by Tirso de Molina in 1635, but was recently translated and adapted by James Bell, assistant professor of Theater, and Jason Yancey, assistant professor of Spanish. The world premiere took place in 2012.



Bell is a seasoned playwright and dramaturge, with accomplishments including “Autumn in the Valley”, “Prisoner” and more. “Antona Garcia” stands apart from other works of the same time period, and Bell took that into consideration while working on this project.

“The Spanish Golden Age plays were serious/comic diversions, usually about powerful men who fell in love with beautiful women, or women characters who dressed as men to vindicate their honor,” said Bell. “Antona Garcia is different in that one woman is the dominant character, and she doesn’t hide the fact that she’s a woman, but rather is valued for her beauty, strength and accomplishments.”

The story is of a young, beautiful woman named Antona who shows courage and heroism during Spain’s war against Portugal. The world-premiere of the English translation of this work took place in El Paso, Texas.

Bell and Yancey, along with theater professor Karen Libman and 29 students, traveled to the Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso to perform the play at the Siglo de Oro Spanish

Drama Festival. Grand Valley State University was the only group from the United States invited to perform during the 2012 festival.

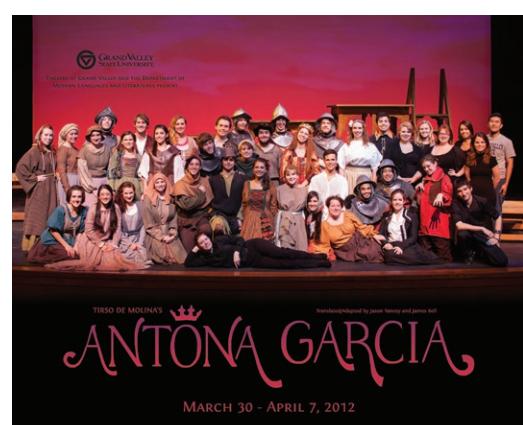
“It is a huge honor for Grand Valley to be invited to perform as part of the Spanish Drama Festival at the Chamizal National Memorial,” said Libman. “The other groups invited are professional theater companies from Mexico and Spain.”

Though the production was performed in English, it featured traditional entremeses, which are short, comic performances of one act, usually seen during the interlude of a long dramatic work. The entremeses were performed in Spanish by 12 of Yancey’s Spanish drama students.

“This play is an adventure/romance, filled with action and rollicking with humor in the vein of “The Princess Bride”, or “Xena, Warrior Princess,” said Yancey. “The tone is set for the audience by the entremeses, which are Spanish scenes interspersed throughout the performance, yet they are unrelated to the play. They serve more as comic-relief intermissions and are also distinguished by the use of masks worn by these performers.”

After premiering in Texas, the group gave encore performances at Grand Valley’s Louis Armstrong Theater.

GVSU Theatre students performed the world premiere of *Antona Garcia* in El Paso, Texas in 2012.





## Student Advances to Regional Level of Play Writing Contest

While many students think of Theatre as being on stage, one found success off stage as a writer. Andrew Wernette's play was a finalist in a regional play writing competition.

The American College Theater Festival (ACTF) is an annual play-writing event, hosted by the Kennedy Center. The ACTF was created in 1969, and is a national theater program involving 18,000 students from colleges and universities across the United States. Overall, they aim to improve the quality of college theater and provide a platform for theater departments and student artists to showcase their work and receive outside evaluation from Kennedy Center ACTF judges.

Every year, students send their plays to the ACTF to be considered for the prestigious competition. Michigan is part of Region III, and the 2013 regional judging took place at Saginaw Valley State University in January 2013. The entries can be full-length, one-act, or ten-minute plays.

"For my category, the ten-minute-plays, there were nearly 100 entries," said Wernette, who is majoring in Advertising and Public Relations and Writing. "Of those, six were chosen to go to the regional festival."

Wernette's play, "A Whale in Hilton Head", did advance to the regional level. His play is about a groom, Tyler, who locks himself in a closet after a whale beaches itself at the site of his wedding. Tyler's best man, Jeff, and his sister, Jo, struggle to convince him to leave the closet while fighting amongst themselves about why they're helping Tyler in the first place. "While [at the regional level], the plays were work-shopped with a director and dramaturge," he said. "At the end of the festival, the six plays were performed before an audience. Then, two of those plays were selected as finalists, mine being one of them."

Twelve regional winners then submitted their work to be judged for entry into the national level of the competition. Those winners were pared down to four writers who would read their plays at the Kennedy Center.

"It's very exciting to be a finalist at the regional level," said Wernette. "I hope to be a playwright one day, so there's this constant voice in my head saying 'You better compete on the national stage; playwriting is competitive, and it's cut-throat.' But then there's this bubbly excitement that I'm even being considered at all. Even if I don't move on, I'm really happy to be where I am."



**"I hope to be a playwright someday, so there's this constant voice in my head saying 'you better compete on the national stage.'"**

Andrew Wernette

After the regional competition, Wernette submitted his final draft for consideration at the national level. The final winners were announced in March.

"My ten-minute play did not make it into the top spot," he said. "I'm just happy to have won on the regional level. I'll be back at KCACTF next year, and I hope to do better then."

ABOVE: Andrew Wernette wrote a play that was a finalist in a regional competition.

# Master's in Communication Program Fills Need, Grows

The School of Communications was created in 1983, and Dr. Alex Nesterenko, Communication Studies professor, became its first full-time director in 1984. At that time, the university had approximately 5,000 students. The university has grown considerably since then.

“When I first got here, on the drive in there was a place by a tree where cows used to wallow,” said Nesterenko. “During my first year, we had exactly 90 students who were majoring in the School of Communications and when I stepped down, we were at about 1,800 students. It’s a very different looking campus now than it once was.”



**“It was pretty clear in the ‘80s that we could start growing a master’s program and there would be a community out there of people who would be interested in it.”**

Graduate education was not considered a high priority in Nesterenko’s early days as the school’s director. However, the organization knew that the school would eventually top-out with undergraduates, and they decided to be proactive about the creation of graduate courses. According to Nesterenko, Grand Valley saw a growth-era in the 1980s.

The undergraduate programs that showed potential for drawing large crowds were the ones considered for master’s programs. Specifically targeted were the programs which had a professional community within the region.

“It was pretty clear in the ‘80s that we could start growing a master’s program and there would be a community out there of people who would be interested in it,” he said. “And

that was true; I knew that when I interviewed here in 1984. There was no master’s program in communication or public relations or advertising, or any of those programs, within this immediate region. Since Grand Rapids is the second-largest city in the state, we would likely find interest in this here. There was an obvious deficiency in this area, and we could solve that problem.”

He created a model with a theme centered around the concept of communication management. It was meant to be applicable to students of all communication majors, but he had an idea it might have a higher draw for one group of students in particular.

Typically, students take one or two courses per semester, which is the suggested model for the program. Following that outline, they can finish in a six semester period over two calendar years. Currently, there are about 80 to 90 students enrolled, which is considered mid-sized to slightly larger for a master’s program.

The curriculum hasn’t changed much since its development, because the information is still consistent with what communication students experience in their fields. However, there have been some recent thoughts about making adjustments to the program.

“One of the areas we are just beginning to explore is whether or not there is an interest in more than just the academic version of this [master’s program],” Nesterenko said. “What we have in place is more of a professional program. The people coming into the program are people who see themselves getting a master’s and probably stopping at that. Not all of them; we have had some people go on for PhDs and that’s great. There’s nothing about the program that would prevent a person from getting a doctorate, but it’s really designed around a working professional.”



Dr. Alex Nesterenko is director of the Master of Science in Communication program.

A master of communication degree has the potential to help students who are vying for management positions within their industry. Currently, the program focuses on management techniques for the communications field, as opposed to a more research-based, or academic approach. The proposed academic

emphasis would not replace the professional focus, but would be a different track. The potential addition of an academic emphasis would be in line with the rest of the university's focus on research-based learning. Research is being conducted to determine the desire for an academic track, which could be in the School of Communication's future.



## Students Explain Their Interest in a Masters Degree in Communication

### Amy Sawade

I chose Grand Valley because I had such a great experience in my undergrad, it was such a great school, and I've come to know a lot of people with the organization. I was looking forward to getting back in that environment.



Amy Sawade

What I enjoy about the program is the courses, but also the people you meet, the connections you make and the group projects. All the students come from such a different background, so you learn about others' experiences and what they're taking out of the program.

Some of us are in a traditional PR role, some people are coming from corporate communications, and some are coming from broadcasting and going in to

communications. It's really diverse, and I think that's one of the great things about this program.

My particular employer didn't push me to get my masters, but once he saw what I was bringing to the table, he did really appreciate that. But at first he thought I was crazy. I've taken two classes per semester, and went a little bit more hard-core with completing this program. I think the professors do a really good job of realizing that we are full-time professionals.

### Nick Katsarelas

I did my undergrad at University of Michigan, and then went to law school in Detroit. It was a horrible experience, and I didn't enjoy it at all. I changed careers several times, and have had careers in journalism reporting, advertising, and corporate communications. But I have been at Amway as the Head of Employee Communications for the past 15 years.



Nick Katsarelas

I thought I was done with school. But, I always try to challenge myself. With that in mind, I thought, 'I can go back to school for my Masters.' I started here, and it's much harder than I ever thought it would be. The course work is rigorous, and the reading is extensive. I am mentally fatigued for the first time in years, and I think it's a great thing. This is one of the wonderful benefits of going back to school; I'm learning, and I never want to stop learning. Grand Valley is a perfect place for me. This program has been fun; it's been a great experience. It's just hard work, which is a good thing because if it wasn't hard it wouldn't be challenging and if it wasn't challenging I wouldn't be learning anything.

# Consider Supporting 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/give](http://www.gvsu.edu/give)



## 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, 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&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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Eastman Scholarship Program

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

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

For Photography and Film/Video students.

## Joseph Ehrenreich Scholarship: Press Photography

5 \$1000.00 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 a criterion.



# School of Communications by the Numbers 2012

## FACULTY

- More than **22** awards and honors
- More than **160** scholarly or creative works
- **26** journal publications
- **45** conference presentations
- **320** service activities to the university and community
- **\$44,000** in external grant funding

## STUDENTS

- **3** academic competitions for students
- **2** student scholarship day presentations
- **13** student organizations
- **362** for-credit internships completed

## FALL 2012 DECLARED MAJORS

- **461**—Advertising and Public Relations
- **150**—Broadcasting
- **274**—Communication Studies
- **386**—Film and Video Production
- **114**—Health Communication
- **101**—Journalism
- **132**—Photography
- **48**—Theatre
- **48**—MS in Communications
- **1,714** Total Students

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