

Communication & Performance Studies

2017/2018 Newsletter



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY**

Dance Minor moves to CAPS

The dance program at NMU officially began in 2012 with the introduction of the dance minor. At that point in time there were four adjunct faculty teaching in the program, only one of which had a master's degree in dance, Jill Grundstrom, assumed program director duties in fall 2013 and worked to recruit students and adjust the quality and focus of the program over time.

Between the years of 2013 and 2015, Jill wrote two undergraduate proposals and created a new graduate course, all of which were approved. With the updates to the curriculum, the program evolved and fostered a close relationship with the theatre program on campus. As such, when the dance program was slated for dissolution in 2015, the theatre sub-area in CAPS expressed an interest in hosting the program to further their academic and artistic goals.

The dance minor as we know it is essential to the mission of NMU because it provides the only collegiate dance experience in the Upper Peninsula. Due to its adaptability, the program attracts students from various majors, allowing each student experience to be nurtured with on site and extra-curricular opportunities that integrate with their major.

In the Fall 2017, the dance program officially moved to CAPS. It has maintained its classes and minor, as well as attained its own dance space (formerly the old TV studio in the McClintock building) and has continued to produce an annual concert, while providing talent for the mainstage productions of *Scrooge*, the spring musical and other Forest Roberts Theatre productions (more on page 5).



Inside this issue

Faculty Service & Recognition.....	4
Outstanding CAPS Students	6-7
Dance Studio and Dr. P's Final Bow.....	8-9
Studio Changes	10-11
Autism Theatre Initiative.....	13
Alumni Recognition.....	14-18
Radio X and Public Eye News.....	19-20
Department Giving.....	21

Special points of interest

- Dance minor moves to CAPS
- "Studio P"
- Autism Theatre Initiative
- Joshua Ewalt, CAPS alumni honored

FACULTY CREATIVE WORKS

DWIGHT BRADY

- ◆ Service to Community and University:
Information Officer, NMU-AAUP (2015-Present)
- ◆ Won the 2017/2018 AAUP Merit Award

JIM CANTRILL

- ◆ *Conference Papers & Presentations:*
 “The Role of Place Identity in Communicating the Value of Trees and Water to Trans-National Populations.” Invited roundtable participant at the Public Communication of Science and Technology Conference, Dunedin, New Zealand. (2018).
 “Getting Personal with Climate Change: Analyzing Perspectives of Healthcare Practitioners.” Presented at the National Communication Association annual meeting, Dallas, TX. (2017). (co-author Rebecca Goodman)
 “Uniting Social Science Resources, Conversations, and Collaboration.” Presented at the Pathways Conference, Estes Park, CO. (2017). (co-Presenters Rudy Schuster, Fred Clark, Natalie Sexton, Tom Fish, Marilyn Tenbrink, Jessica Miles, Brett Meldrum, and Jeffrey Adkins)
- ◆ *Grants, Honors, and Awards:*
 J. Robert Cox Award in Environmental Communication and Civic Engagement Recipient, National Communication Association. (2017).

BILL DIGNEIT

- ◆ Conference Presentations:
 “LDI: Take Your Career Beyond Backstage – Finding Technical Careers Outside of the Theatre” (2018)
 “LDI: Help Your Students Think Outside of the Box—Technical Careers Outside of the Theatre” (2018)
 “The Las Vegas Night Club Design Intensive - Jewel” (2017)
- ◆ Service to Community and University
 First Nighters Club, Treasurer— Northern Michigan University (2017 - Present)
 External Communication Committee – Northern Michigan University (2017 - Present)
 Faculty Council – Northern Michigan University (2017 – Present)

JILL GRUNDSTROM

- ◆ Service to Community and University:
 Dancing With Our Stars Marquette; Director of Dance, Dance Pro, Dance Star, and Judge (2012-Present)
 NMU Hip-Hop Dance Crew Faculty Advisor (2015-Present)
- ◆ Selected Professional Experience—Stage, Film and TV Choreography and writing for NMU, Superior Arts Youth Theatre, Lake Superior Theatre, Marquette High School, Ishpeming High School, JLSW Design, LLC, Adam Whittington and New York University, Escanaba State Fair, So You Think You Can Dance and Frei Chevrolet
- ◆ Specialty Skills, Training and Education:
 FLX Certified Conditioning Specialist (April 2017)
- ◆ Professional Memberships:
 International Association of Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) (2012—Present)
 National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) (2012—Present)
 American Ballet Theatre (2008—Present)
- ◆ Consulting, Guest Speaking, Adjudication and Workshops:
 Oakland Dance Festival (guest teacher, presenter and adjudicator) (2017)
 Upper Peninsula Dance Outreach (consultant) (2017)
 NMU School of Business (2017)

VIC HOLLIDAY

- ◆ Memberships in Professional Organizations:
 U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology; Southeastern Theatre Conference and the American Society for Theatre Research
- ◆ Professional Experience:
 Lighting Design for: *NMU Dance Concert and Fringe Festival* (2018) ; *Noises Off* (2017)

TOM ISAACSON

- ◆ Refereed Chapters in Books:
 Isaacson, T. (in press, 2018). Is a rebuild a reputation threat? The Chicago White Sox in 1997 and 2017. In A.C. Billings, K. Brown, & T. Coombs (Eds.), *Reputational Challenges in Sport: Theory and Application*. New York, NY: Routledge.
 Brown, K., & Isaacson, T. (2017). Sport as public relations. In A.C. Billings (Ed.), *Defining Sport Communication* (pp. 326-338). New York, NY: Routledge.

FACULTY CREATIVE WORKS

DAVID PIERCE

- ◆ Professional Experience:
Lighting Design for: *Tarzan* (2018), *Rock the FRT*, *Constellations*, *Haunted Theatre*, *Battle of the Bands and Noises Off* (2017)
Technical Director and Production Manager at the Adirondack Theatre Festival (2017)

SARA POTTER

- ◆ Presentations:
Paper presented at Central States Communication Association Conference, Milwaukee, WI (April 2018). *"Different Rights (in) Different Times: Rendering the Invisible Visible through a Comparative Iconographic Analysis of the Women's Suffrage Parade of 1913 and the 2017 Women's March on Washington."* Paper was selected for the Top Papers in Communication Ethics, Activism and Social Justice Interest Group.
Paper presented at Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters at Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI. (March 2018). *"Investigating the Language of the Courtroom: Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Understand Polarization and the Framing of Symbolic Power Resources in the Sentencing Memorandums of the Stanford Rape Case."*
- ◆ Professional Development and Service:
Reviewer—*The Portage Review*, *Michigan Technological Student Journal* (2017-2018)
Michigan Technological University—Humanities Department RTC Steering Committee, Graduate Student Representative (2017-2018)

SHELLEY RUSSELL

- ◆ Professional Experience:
Director—*Constellations* (2017) and *Tarzan* (2018)
Costume Designer — *Tarzan*

MARK SHEVY

- ◆ Professional Service to the University:
Faculty Adviser for WUPX Student Radio (2018)
- ◆ Professional Service: and Development
Dance fitness video series for Z Dance Fitness, LLC. (2018). Produced a series of 15 videos of choreography to be used by students.
Sunrise video for TaMaMa Dance Company Performance. (2017). Produced a video of a sunrise customized for use as a central part of the set design for the Forest Roberts Theatre dance performance on June 26, 2017 and the 2018 NMU Dance Concert.
NMU Online Teaching Fellowship. Completed a semester-long program based on Quality Matters standards to develop an online course in Health Communication and Media. (2018).

JESSICA THOMPSON

- ◆ Referreed Chapters in Book: McGreavy, B., Druschke, C. G., Sprain, L., Thompson J., & Lindenfeld, L. (2017). Praxis –based environmental communication training: Innovative activities for problem solving, T. Milstein, M. Pileggi, and E. Morgan (Eds.), *Environmental Communication pedagogy & Practice*. Routledge.
- ◆ Invited Presentations:
Freshman Research Projects. Presentation with students, Carley Dole, McKenzie Mathewson and Chloe Gerathy. Presentation to the NMU Board of Trustees (2017).
Just Park It! Changing the Conversation about Climate Change. Science on Tap, Ore Dock Brewing Company, Marquette, Michigan. (2018).

PAUL TRUCKEY

- ◆ Service to the University
Member of the CAPS Executive Committee (2017-2018)
Sock Hop—Beaumier Center, NMU, performer (2017)
New York City Field Studies Leader of 20 NMU students (2018)
- ◆ Professional Experience:
Director—*Noises Off* (2017) and *Fringe Festival* (2018)
Production Adjudicator—Kennedy Center American College Theatre festival Region III *Picasso, at the Lapine Agile*—Michigan Tech University, Houghton, MI; *Proof*—Hillsdale, College, Hillsdale, MI (2018)

Brady Wins AAUP Merit Award

Dr. Dwight Brady is known for being a highly effective teacher-scholar, providing career-building experiences and guidance for students in the classroom and in his professional video production projects. Students continue to speak highly of his teaching and find fulfilling job placement through his advising. He also continues to produce work that benefits NMU and the region, such as videos for the U.P. Luge Association, the City of Marquette, and a series on the state of public education in Michigan in collaboration with the NMU Department of Education. He even secured funding and supplied two of his personal computers to create a video system so that students could produce live NMU sporting events that were broadcast on television.



Over the years, Dwight, has continued to provide so much to his students, NMU, and the community in these noteworthy ways. However, Dr. Brady accomplished four monumental tasks during his last evaluation period that grabbed our attention for truly being meritorious.

1. Dr. Brady, along with 14 students, produced a documentary called *Boxed In*, which exposed a “dark store” tax loophole that prevented local municipalities from getting needed funds. Dr. Brady’s documentary won a Michigan Emmy award, bringing public attention and prestige to NMU.
2. Dr. Brady overhauled NMU AAUP’s image and public relations by serving as the NMU AAUP information officer. In this position, he created a new website for the union, wrote press releases and articles to help the public relate to professors, and organized a rally to garner public support during the union’s contract negotiations. These efforts created a palpable increase in morale among faculty members, improved a sense of goodwill throughout the community, and facilitated useful understandings between the union and administration.
3. Dr. Brady was elected to the new General Education Council, where he devoted an unhealthy number of hours to the arduous task of forging the new General Education curriculum. He took a leadership role in organizing and creating the structure that was adopted and implemented after so many failed attempts over the previous decades.
4. Dr. Brady gave vast amounts of personal time and resources to running for Congress. His goal in this civic duty was to offer all that he could to serve state and regional communities, including NMU. He employed his professional and academic expertise in media, journalism, and communication, and did it “on load,” taking no time off from his university duties. This active participation in democracy is a positive reflection on NMU and provides an inspiring example of service for students and all citizens.

It is because of these admirable qualities, skills and notable accomplishments that Dr. Brady was selected for and ultimately won the 2017/2018 AAUP Merit Award. Congratulations Dwight, you clearly deserve it.



**CONGRATULATIONS TO PAUL TRUCKEY (15 YEARS) AND
SHELLEY RUSSELL (35 YEARS) ON YOUR YEARS OF
SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO NMU**

PR Class Explores Why Freshmen Chose NMU

Prepared by: Kristi Evans, New Director



The Dance Minor

The NMU Dance Minor is open to majors across campus, but is particularly complementary to those in theatre, public relations, community health education, management of health and fitness, music, and outdoor recreation and leadership.

The curriculum allows students with various ranges of training to be successful. Courses are structured to accommodate the novice dancer, as well as the professional. The minor is 20 credits.

To view the requirements of this minor, please visit our programs listing found at: nmu.edu/caps/

An NMU public relations class completed an online survey of this year's first-time freshmen and facilitated focus groups to identify the leading factors that convinced students to enroll at Northern. Based on the results and a review of research on Generation Z (born between 1995-2010), the PR research methods class proposed several marketing ideas to enhance recruiting and increase enrollment.

Data from the survey of first-time freshmen, with 445 respondents, showed that the top three reasons they chose to attend NMU were: desired academic program; cost of tuition; and size of the institution. In the focus group results, distance from hometown—with Marquette's remoteness viewed as a positive—ranked second, between academic program and cost.

The focus group transcripts also revealed the top three perceptions first-time freshmen had of NMU had before enrolling: low name recognition, nature-based learning and low academic standards.

"From this initial reputation analysis, it is clear that there is room for NMU to enhance its academic reputation and marketing of the academic rigor that students experience in the classroom," the research report stated. "More than 84 percent of survey respondents said the instruction they are receiving is excellent or good, while 82 percent are either satisfied or very satisfied with the academic advising they are receiving."

The PR class recommended the university maintain and advertise its relatively low tuition to emphasize the "value" students get for their investment. It also suggested emphasizing academic

rigor and innovation, equity and community, and the variety of academic programs.

Focus group comments related to the latter included the following: "[NMU] has so much to offer and we are not really showing that to prospective undergrads ... The reputation is that Northern is for students who don't try hard in school or for students who aren't good enough to get in somewhere else. That's what people hear before they hear about how amazing it is ... We are focusing on all of the great nature around us that we are missing the greatness in our academics and the degrees people earn here."

Still, the proximity of Lake Superior and the pristine natural environment are routinely cited as appealing aspects of Northern. The PR students found those qualities are strongly promoted in NMU advertising and marketing materials. Within the bounds of campus, the new residence halls, John X. Jamrich Hall and the New Science Facility were mentioned multiple times as relevant to students' decisions to enroll.

Enrollment at NMU had declined since 2010, according to the report, but the number of first-time freshmen increased this fall. Motivated to research why that happened, the PR class administered a 56-question survey and facilitated five focus groups.

The results of the PR research methods class study were intended only for scholarly purposes, but will be utilized by NMU Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment for future collaborations with the class and by the NMU Marketing and Communications Office.

Jill Vermeulen, a double major in theatre and communication studies, was selected as the Communication and Performance Studies Outstanding Graduating Senior this year.

Jill graduated in May with a 4.0 GPA. During her time at NMU, Vermeulen played various roles in NMU theater and dance productions, including Morticia in *The Addams Family* musical. She also completed a summer 2017 internship at the Adirondack Theatre Festival. Vermeulen also worked as a student writer in NMU's Marketing and Communications Office.

Following graduation, she will spend the summer as a director for Superior Arts Youth Theatre in Marquette.



**CAPS
OUTSTANDING
GRADUATING
SENIOR**



NMU Honors Program

Allison Opheim, a CAPS public relations major, was one of the 2018 NMU Honors Program Anna and Rich Lundin Honors Summer Research Fellowship winners.

Allison was one of five winners who received \$5,000 toward the expenses involved in pursuing academic research. Her topic is "Communicating Scientific Research in a Social Media Age."

Allison will be supervised during her fellowship by her faculty mentor, Dr. Jessica Thompson, CAPS.



Madeline Wiles named to AAUW's National Student Advisory Board

Northern Michigan University student Madeline Wiles of Gladstone was one of 10 individuals selected to serve on the 2017-18 American Association of University Women National Student Advisory Council.

SAC members develop leadership skills and gain valuable resume-building experiences through campus activism projects, community outreach to AAUW student organizations and monthly conference calls. They also receive two all-expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C. The first one was in November to attend an SAC leadership retreat at AAUW's national headquarters. In the spring, they served as peer leaders at AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.

"I was honored and privileged," Wiles said. "Knowing that hundreds of thousands of people across the country applied for this position and I was selected is extraordinary. I think this council helped me refine my leadership skills and bring women's issues to the community of Marquette. By joining this my hopes were that this opportunity would further my skills in communications and open new adventures in my future."

Wiles is a communication studies major with a double minor in Spanish and gender and sexuality studies. This last academic year she was a student employee in NMU's Multicultural Education and Resource Center and worked as a teaching assistant with the Academic and Career Advise-ment Center. She coordinated many campus events, including RAD: LGBT+ Defense Training, the university's first Gender Fair and presentations on transgender patients in the healthcare

system. Wiles was also a member of the Gender Working Group, Diversity Student Alliance and the Student Finance Committee.

"Many students nationwide apply, and the selection committee was highly impressed by your leadership experiences and contributions to your community," wrote Abigail Lewis, vice president of campus leadership programs at AAUW, in an acceptance email to Wiles. "AAUW believes you offer a unique perspective on student life that is a great asset to our organization. In return, we hope to provide you with leadership opportunities and tools to help you create effective change on your campus and in your community."

Rachel Harris, director of NMU's Center for Student Enrichment and Gender Working Group member, nominated Wiles for the AAUW National Student Advisory Council. The SAC was founded in 2002. According to its website, former members have achieved notable feats, from working on Capitol Hill to creating their own nonprofits.



2018 NMU

Innovative Technology Student Award

The Congratulations to Dan Zini, winner of the 2018 NMU Innovative Technology Student Award! Dan repurposed and reconfigured old and new equipment to double the recording capacity of our CAPS Audio Studio and install a Dante network that will allow our studio to record and process audio from places such as Reynold's Recital Hall and the Forest Roberts Theatre. [#shareNMU](#) [#NMUCAPS](#) [#CAPSmultimediaProduction](#)



Pictured here are Dan and his wife, Traci, after receiving his award

PRSSA Spotlights NMU Student



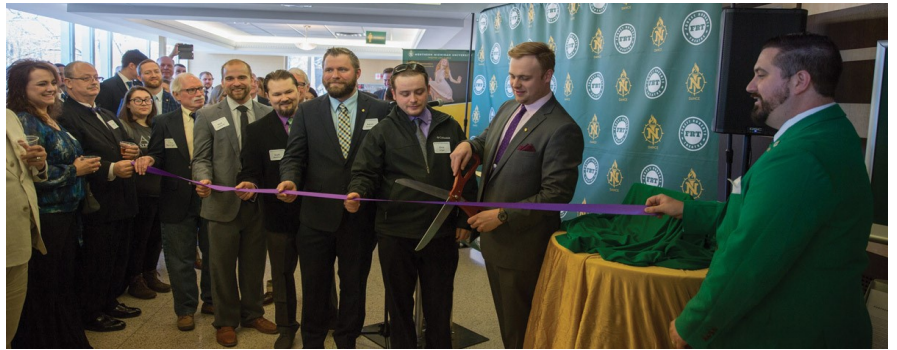
Prepared By: Kristi Evans

Heather Cook, 2017/2018 president of the NMU chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America, was selected for the first PRSSA Member Spotlight. The new feature recognized outstanding members who went above and beyond for their chapter, school and community. PRSSA wrote that "Cook worked tirelessly over her time in the chapter to create national conference funding, support and motivate chapter members and much more."



Lambda Chi Alpha supports NMU theatre through endowment

The brothers of Lambda Chi Alpha - Lambda Upsilon Zeta Chapter donated \$100,000 to the Forest Roberts Theatre this past year. The generous gift was given to support the NMU theater program, the Forest Roberts Theatre, and the students within the program. The gift was split into two parts: the first \$30,000 went to purchase a brand-new sound system inside the Forest Roberts Theater, and the remaining \$70,000 created the Lambda Upsilon Arts Endowment designed to support the growth of technology in the theater. The brothers of Lambda Chi Alpha attended the dedication of the Lambda Chi Alpha Lobby within the Forest Roberts Theatre in April. Their giving extended even after the dedication, where they raised another \$1,000 dollars for the endowment.



Pictured, left to right, are: William Digneit, Director of Theater, and Lambda Chi Alpha brothers Sean Hobbins, Chris Grigas, Aaron Bolthouse, Scott Washburn, Mark Updegraff, Ray Meininger and James Orth.



From left to right are CAPS theatre faculty: Vic Holliday, David Pierce, Jill Grundstrom, Bill Digneit, Paul Truckey, Shelley Russell, and seated is late Dr. J. A. Panowski

The Panowski Studio "STUDIO P"

Earlier in the fall semester, NMU held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new dance space, the Panowski Studio, a.k.a. "Studio P" (pictured below), named after long-time professor and director of the Forest Roberts Theatre, Dr. James A. Panowski. Regrettably, Dr. Panowski passed away on May, 23, 2018.

The space is located in the old mock TV studio down in the audio/video labs of McClintock and features a new sprung floor with harlequin vinyl, wall-mounted barres, as well as full lights and a sound system to illuminate rehearsals and small performances.

As Jill Grundstrom, CAPS contingent instructor for the dance minor summed it up at the end of the semester, "I was a little teary-eyed locking up Studio P after my final final. This. This program, this space, this group of students and faculty ... have been a long time coming. Generations long before me have worked to put this all in motion. From creating the dance minor, to rewriting the program, to having the program closed, to having the program reinstated and relocated- it's been a roller-coaster. There have been many (and I mean MANY) days in the last few years when I wondered if I was in the right place ... it turns out, there really is no place like home."

*"Theatre is a verb before it is a noun,
an act before it is a place."*

- Martha Graham

Did you know?

- ◆ The friends and family of Dr. P. established the James A. Panowski theatre scholarship in 2009 in honor of his retirement.
- ◆ Dr. P. was a man of many words (or so some say). He will always be remembered especially by those who received his special handwritten notes (and sometimes flowers too) that he would send out to those he wanted to thank, encourage or just support.

One of Dr. P's favorite quotes:
*"If you read this line, remember
not the hand that writ it;
for I love you so
that I in your sweet thoughts
would be forgot
thinking on me then should
make you woe."*
- William Shakespeare



- ◆ The Forest Roberts Theatre has received \$7,500 in private support from parents, alumni and friends for their autism theatre initiative (more on page 13).

Remembering a Theatre Legend: Dr. James Panowski Panowski's Final Bow



Dr. James Panowski, a.k.a. "Dr. P.," former director of the Forest Roberts Theatre (FRT) here at Northern Michigan University passed away the morning of May, 23, 2018.

"Dr. Panowski served as the director of the theatre from 1977 to 2009, and advanced the Upper Michigan art and cultural scene with his efforts to educate NMU students by presenting a wide variety of productions at the FRT. Dr. P was the driving force behind the NMU Forest Roberts Theatre for over 30 years and was a long-time regular morning show guest," said Walt Lindala of the Sunny Morning Show in Marquette.

Per Jim Cantrill, department head of the Communication and Performance Studies department, "Dr. P. was a true champion for the NMU theatre program and arts on campus. We will continue his legacy of giving 110% of our time to our students and our community, just as he did."



"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being."
- Thornton Wilder

All three photos on this page are of Dr. James Panowski

FOX Sports Gets Assist from NMU Staff, Students



Northern Michigan University students and staff played a major role in producing the FOX Sports Detroit coverage of two 8-player men's football state championships played back on Saturday, Nov. 18, at the Superior Dome. The live-to-tape games were regionally broadcast Tuesday, Nov. 21.

NMU's reputation with FOX Sports Detroit was solidified through its assistance with Western Collegiate Hockey Association game broadcasts. Typically, FOX Sports Detroit crew members fill most positions. For the football coverage, NMU staff and students took on all responsibilities except truck technician, producer and graphics coordinator.

"This hasn't happened during the 17 years I've been here, where we were responsible for 95 percent of all crew positions," said Michael Lakenen, producer/director for sports and video at WNMU-TV. "Usually we are filling in the last 20 percent. It was new for everyone. My colleagues and I hire, train and choose the students for productions like this. Most of the students have been working for us for a couple of years and it is over that time that we can train them in a professional environment. It is a big reason why they are able to get this kind of opportunity, and are ready for this kind of opportunity."

In addition to Lakenen's directorial role during the football games, NMU staff positions included a technical director, audio one and audio two. There were 12 student positions. Their roles included camera operators, replay, stats, timeout coordinator, stage manager and a utility person.

NMU student Samantha Carter served as the instant replay operator. She said she had an opportunity to work with top-of-the-line equipment and learned how a professional production truck coordinates an event.

"Being in such close proximity to other media professionals allowed me to see what working in this field after I graduate will be like," Carter said. "My experience learning to run replay for NMU home hockey games, and using similar software as FOX had in its production truck, more than prepared me to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of professionals. For the Hockeyville I'm glad that WNMU-TV and the NMU hockey production crew has given me the opportunities, skills and experience I need to be prepared in this career field."

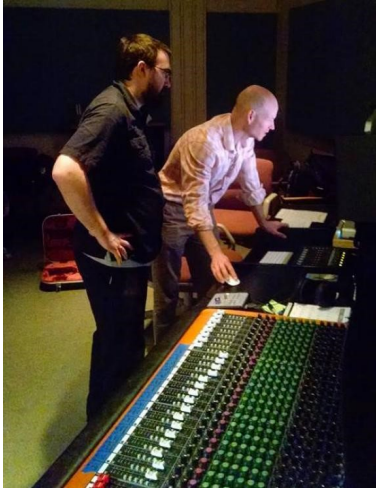
NMU student Rachel Fromwiller operated the first camera that encompassed the entire field.

"Other cameras captured individual plays or calls, but I had the responsibility of keeping every aspect of the play in frame so everyone at home could see everything at all times," said Fromwiller. "I have also operated cameras for TV 6 and Local 3 news, as well as hockey, basketball, soccer and volleyball games for NMU. These opportunities, as well as working as a runner for Hockeyville, prepared me for this, and I'm thankful for all of the opportunities presented to me thus far in my academic career."

The 8-player state football championships featured Central Lake against Deckerville in Division I and Forest Park against Portland St. Patrick in Division II.

CAPS Audio Recording Studio Upgraded

Prepared by" Kristi Evans, News Director



Dan Zini (left) and
Dr. Mark Shevy (right)

Recent upgrades to Northern Michigan University's audio recording studio are aligning with new demands in emerging areas of digital media production. Mark Shevy, professor of multimedia production in the CAPS department, said the project is being made possible "due to a perfect storm—in a good way."

"It started with a senior citizen who wishes to go by the anonymous name 'Mike Lima Bravo,'" said Shevy. The man learned about the studio while taking Shevy's audio production course and decided to give the recording facility a boost by donating nearly a dozen new microphones and other equipment.

"The prospect of donations was exciting," Shevy said. "But we also needed someone who had the time and expertise to help develop a comprehensive plan. Fortunately, Dan Zini, a graduate student with professional experience in this area, was doing an independent study with me. We made the studio upgrade his semester project."

Additionally, Zini worked with CAPS Department Head Jim Cantrill to get funds to repurpose unused equipment and double the studio's recording capabilities. Zini also coordinated with the Music Department and theater program to develop a network system that enables high-quality recording and broadcasting from locations such as Reynolds Recital Hall and Forest Roberts Theatre.

Another main element in the storm is NMU alumnus Mike Picotte. Picotte is a senior sales engineer at Sweetwater, a leading music technology and instrument retailer, and talented audio engineer on the side (see a related feature on Picotte on page 18). He provides qualified guidance about media production industry and technology trends. His input helped take the studio to a higher professional level, and he is helping NMU become one of very first universities to have a teaching studio for 360/VR audio production.

The studio is used for audio production classes and other campus projects. Thanks to the upgrades, students have been able to produce professional recordings of NMU music ensembles such as the jazz band and choral groups for broadcast on WNMU radio and online streaming. They have also produced recordings for theater performances, NMU Marketing and Communications and others. This summer, the Native American Studies department will use a grant it received to bring in a professional audio engineer to record an album of the on-campus Native American drumming group, Morning Thunder.





Jill Vermeulen (CAPS Student) and David Pierce (CAPS Technical Director)

NMU Represented at NY Summer Theatre Festival

Prepared By: Kristi Evans, News Director

Northern Michigan University professor David Pierce and student Jill Vermeulen of Marquette gained valuable experience last summer working behind the scenes at the Adirondack Theatre Festival (ATF) in Glens Falls, New York. They were part of the best-selling show in ATF history, *Nikola Tesla Drops the Beat*. This musical depiction of the misunderstood genius and his battle with mentor-turned-rival Thomas Edison is described as “*Hamilton* meets Tesla.” Given the subject matter, it is no surprise that the production required electrifying technical elements. Pierce was immersed in that aspect through his role of technical director and production manager.

“There was an extensive amount of work required to enhance the audience experience,” he said. “It ranged from LED lighting to moving lights to pixel mapping 130 individual LED lights in order to use them as a video wall. Everything came together seamlessly. The show generated a lot of buzz, not only in the region, but the entire theater community. Multiple Broadway producers made the trip upstate to see it. The production was even featured in *Live Design*, one of the more popular industry magazines. Audiences were energized and awestruck.

“You always hope the show you’re working on becomes a smash hit. In this case, that became reality. Being part of that invigorates me to keep pushing the boundaries of my own capabilities and pushing students at Northern to achieve greater things they feel they are capable of.”

Pierce has helped several students secure internships with the Adirondack Theatre Festival since he started working there in 2010. Vermeulen, a double major in theater and communications, is the latest. She is a marketing and social media intern, helping to promote this season’s lineup of eight shows presented over eight weeks.

“I was handed so much responsibility there and the amount of faith the staff had in its interns was truly empowering,” Vermeulen said. “It’s was a lot of work, like all summer stock, but being able to help market an eight-show season of new and contemporary works with Broadway-level talent is the best kind of busy and very rewarding. *Nikola Tesla Drops the Beat* was an exciting start to the season. I loved it there. I appreciated all the things I’ve learned and the opportunities I was granted.”

FRT SEASON TICKETS

The Forest Roberts Theatre offered a new season ticket structure, along with a Flex Four Pass option, for its 2017-18 Mainstage productions.

Season tickets offered a same night/same seat guarantee. This year’s Mainstage season included six shows instead of the usual four. The tickets covered admission to *Noises Off*, *Constellations*, *Scrooge*, the Fringe Fest, the NMU Dance Concert and *Tarzan*. Also new this year was a free post-show red carpet gala with complimentary food, beverages, music, photo booth and a meet and greet with the cast and creative team on all opening nights of the Mainstage productions.

As the name implies, the Flex Four Pass offers convenience and flexibility. Audience members can use it like a punch card to reserve a select number of seats for the shows and nights they choose.

Both options are available at all NMU EZ Ticket outlets or online at nmu.edu/tickets.



Forest Roberts Theatre Offers Sensory-Friendly “Tarzan” Performance

Prepared by: Jill Vermeulen, Student Writer

During the winter semester, Northern Michigan University's Forest Roberts Theatre (FRT) partnered with the Theatre Development Fund (TDF) in New York City to produce this “Theater for All” performance of the musical *Tarzan*. This modified performance of the musical was geared toward children and adults who are on the autism spectrum or have sensory issues. The goal was to preserve the entertainment value of the show so families can enjoy it together while also creating a supportive environment. Free admission was made possible through private donor support.



friendly performances on Broadway have included *Mary Poppins*, *Spider-Man*, *Matilda*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Aladdin* and *Wicked*.

To prepare for the FRT initiative, a Northern delegation traveled to New York City to see a sensory-friendly performance of *Wicked* and took note of how producers trained audience volunteers, set up the venue and dealt with situations that surfaced during the show. They

also had conversations with actors about the differences they would encounter with brighter lights and potential movement and talking during the show.

FRT Director Bill Digneit said TDF provided resources and guidance on creating a sensory-friendly version of *Tarzan*. A consultant came to watch the show in advance to identify potential triggers for those on the autism spectrum. Some of the changes made included removing or reducing the strobe effects and keeping the house lights on a little during the performance so individuals could move freely throughout the theater,” Digneit said. “The lobby doors remained open and the sound was restricted to the 90-decibel level. There was also hearing protection available. One of the best parts were these fidget and squeezable toys for those who find comfort in them. We didn’t take a lot out; we just made sure everything was at an acceptable level.”

Families who reserved tickets received a mailed packet in advance of the show with information on FRT, the seating chart, *Tarzan* characters and the musical's storyline to build familiarity before the performance.

Digneit said there is a large, underserved population of children and adults on the autism spectrum in the Upper Peninsula. Sensory issues prevent some from being able to enjoy movies, plays or concerts. FRT aims to change that through the partnership with the Theatre Development Fund.

TDF launched its Autism Theatre Initiative in 2011 with Disney's landmark musical *The Lion King*, the first autism-friendly performance of a Broadway show. Fueled by its success, the program continues to make theater accessible to children and adults on the autism spectrum. Other sensory-

FRT is also collaborating with NMU's Behavioral Education, Assessment & Research (BEAR) Center and School of Education, along with MARESA and the Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL). Digneit said the “Theater for All” performance program will expand next season to include three productions: *Beauty and the Beast*, *Scrooge!* and a dance concert.



Photo: Director Shelley Russell and Devin Murphy, who played Kerchak, leader of the gorillas in *Tarzan*

Alumna Directs Play that Premiered at NMU

Prepared By Jill Vermeulen, Student Writer

NMU Alumna Returns to Hometown Dance Studio

NMU alumna Gabrielle Revord ('17) has joined her hometown dance studio's creative team as a choreographer and instructor. Revord danced at Julie's Top Hat Dance Studio in Kingsford for 15 years before attending NMU, where she majored in health and fitness management and minored in dance. She was president of the NMU Hip Hop Dance Crew and assistant choreographer for *Scrooge* and *The Addams Family*.

Prepared By
Jill Vermeulen
Student Writer

Students Attend USITT

- ◆ Back in March, four NMU students participated in the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT) Conference and Stage Expo in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. The four female students that attended included Emily Baker, Hannah Cormier, Lily Howder and Regan McKay. While there, better known as the "Messy Bun, Getting' it Done" team, the ladies also participated in the USITT Technical Olympics as the only all-female group.



NMU alumna Korinne Griffith ('16 BS) has crossed paths twice with playwright Kate Danley, both as a student and professional. They first met during NMU's developmental workshop reading of Danley's *Building Madness*, the 2016-17 Panowski Playwriting Award winner at NMU. Griffith graduated before the NMU production, which served as the play's U.S. premiere. Little did Griffith know that as she approached her first post-graduation directing job, she would reconnect with Danley to produce *Building Madness* at a high school in Woodstock, Ill.

"Being in the room with Kate at the NMU workshop and hearing her thoughts and opinions on her script, as well as the analysis from multiple others, was immensely beneficial in my directing of the show," said Griffith. "I was able to understand the script on a whole other level that directors almost never get to see, right down to small details like why Kate chose to purposely make one character's name—Gwen Gladwell—a bit of a tongue twister so that the actors would have to pronounce it slowly with reverence."

Griffith said that she began student directing in high school and continued throughout college. She took a directing class with theater professor Paul Truckey and was his teaching

assistant for an acting class. She also performed in several NMU productions.

"These experiences most definitely helped me gain further confidence in my abilities to lead and teach a group of performers," said Griffith. "I strongly believe the best thing a director can do is to take acting classes and perform in shows. Understanding what it's like to be onstage as the actor gives excellent insight into how to direct. More than anything, I credit my acting training for my directing abilities."

Griffith said that she wanted to direct a comedy, but was having a hard time selecting one. After seeing a photo from NMU's production of *Building Madness* on Facebook, she immediately emailed Danley asking to direct the play at Woodstock High School. Griffith said that she and Danley communicated throughout the entire rehearsal and performance process.

"Prouder than punch," wrote Danley, who was named a best-selling author by *USA Today*, in a Facebook post promoting Griffith's production of *Building Madness*.

Griffith majored in theater at NMU. She recently returned to the Marquette area to work as a multi-media journalist for WJMN-TV Local 3 News.



NMU Honors Alumni Awards



From left: Alumni board VP Sue Bilkey, Chandler, Francisco, Fonger, Robyn Stille, executive director of Alumni Relations, Ewalt, Blemberg, Holmstrom and Jenkin

Seven Northern Michigan University alumni were honored during Homecoming festivities Sept. 22-23 for significant achievements in their fields, substantial contributions to society and demonstrated exceptional leadership and civic qualities. The recipients and their awards were: Paul Blemberg ('72 BS) of Alexandria, Va., and Todd Holmstrom ('90 BA) of Mohawk, Mich., Distinguished Alumni; Kevin Chandler ('00 BS, '03 MPA) of New Haven, Mich., and Ron Fonger ('86 BS) of Flushing, Mich., Alumni Achievement; Jim Jenkin, ('81 BS, '84 MBA) of Appleton, Wis., Alumni Service; and Joshua Ewalt ('08 BS) of Salt Lake City, Utah, and Lee Francisco ('02 BS and '05 MS) of Marquette, Outstanding Young Alumni.

Our very own CAPS graduate, Joshua Ewalt ('08 BS) was one of those lucky alumni to receive an award. Ewalt, who studied speech communication at NMU before entering grad school, is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah. His courses teach the importance of public discussion regarding contemporary topics, analyzing operations of power, applying communication theory to practical situations, and learning ways of enacting and negotiating differences of identity in communicative contexts. He was previously employed as an assistant professor in the School of Communication Studies at James Madison University. Ewalt was selected to participate in the National Endowment for the Humanities' Summer Institute on Space, Place and the Humanities this summer at Northeastern University. He is the author of 12 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters and has given more than 20 presentations at regional and national conferences.

"There was something so overwhelmingly inviting about how NMU framed itself," Ewalt said. "I knew it was the right place. When visiting here, I got to meet with a professor, and talking about literature and ideas, I was elated. When we left, I told my mom that would be me someday. Northern is a small school where mentorship extends beyond the classroom walls. It is here where my experience at NMU becomes most salient. For no matter how large of a university I might be working at, I maintain the same idea: Each student deserves a professor who will know their name, who will notice and support them and give them a chance to succeed. I might even say each student deserves to feel as if they were attending NMU."



NMU Alumna Writes Two Plays
Set in Upper Midwest
Prepared By: Jill Vermeulen, Student Writer

Northern Michigan University alumna Karen Saari's ('96 BS) play, *In a Clearing*, will have its world premiere this summer under the direction of NMU alumnus Andrew Gall ('95 BS), interim managing artistic director of Magnetic Theatre Company in Asheville, N.C. Another play by Saari, *Bad in Bed*, is set in Marquette and features characters who are NMU alumni. A developmental production of *Bad in Bed* is took place in February at the Aca-diana Repertory Theatre in Lafayette, La.

Gall directed Saari in several theater productions when they attended NMU together. "I can't wait to see *In a Clearing* done as a full production by someone I hold in such high regard," said Saari. "It is going to be surreal. I remember being blown away in college by how Andrew could look at a script and see it in a completely different vision than I could have seen at that time. I remember thinking, 'I need to learn how to see things beyond the page like that. That is amazing.'"

In a Clearing, a dramatic play, is a semifinalist for the 2018 Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference. It has received some developmental workshop feedback, such as at the 2015 Wisconsin Wrights New Play Festival. After that festival, Gall contacted Saari and asked to read the play, which ultimately led to the collaboration.

"*In a Clearing* is a better, stronger play now thanks to festival and workshop feedback," said Saari. "I got a rejection letter from the O'Neill conference last time I submitted this play. This year it's a semifinalist, so that says something about the development process, too. I used to take my writing for granted. I knew I could write a story or play. I hadn't really

pursued playwriting until I had *In a Clearing* burning a hole in my head. This play and the Wisconsin Wrights festival experience lit the spark within me to become a playwright."

In a Clearing is set in a fictional Wisconsin town that Saari describes as being similar to the Upper Peninsula. "The reason my plays are set in the Midwest is a combination of familiarity and, honestly, because we see a lot of plays set in places like the south, L.A. and New York. We don't see many plays based on these far-north rural characters. For *In a Clearing*, I worked really hard to make my characters fleshed out and real."

Because of the Marquette setting for *Bad in Bed*, Saari said she decided to make it about NMU alumni. Some characters are embellishments and combinations of people she knew at NMU. There is even a lot of Saari in one character. She said there are also a few Marquette ties in the play, like Yooper accents, that feed into the comedy.

Saari credits her NMU educators for encouraging her to read and analyze texts while in college. "Theater professor Shelley Russell taught me about how you can use language as imagery to help solidify who characters are and what is motivating them. Having done a little bit of everything theater-related at NMU really helped prepare me as a playwright. Having all of that exposure helps you as a writer because you can then consider various perspectives of how the play will be feasible. It helps you consider the big picture."



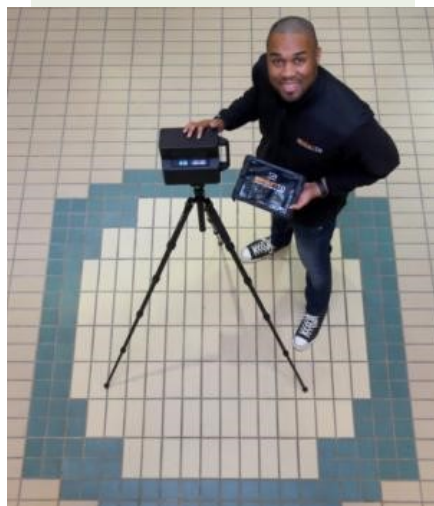
Karen Saari

Saari is a native of Mass City. She was a broadcasting major and theater minor at NMU. In addition to being a playwright, she is a marketing copywriter, voice talent, actor and mother of two. She lives in the Madison, WI., area.

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Alumnus Profiled for Digital Marketing Savvy

By: Katie Byard
Beacon Journal/Ohio.com



Mylan Murphy

BS 2012, MS 2014

Photo courtesy of
Phil Masturzo/Beacon Journal/Ohio.com

Mylan Murphy started Novel Clothing Co. when he was in middle school, designing T-shirts that sold for \$10. In fact, in 2006, Murphy was a junior at Woodridge High School in Cuyahoga Falls when the Beacon Journal wrote an article about his T-shirt business.

After graduating from Woodridge, he attended Northern Michigan University on a full basketball scholarship where he graduated in 2012 with a BS in entertainment and sports promotion, a minor in information systems and in 2014 an MS in performance improvement. Murphy, now 28, has gone from old-school graphics to new-fangled technology that he uses in his digital marketing company.

The Akron resident is one of the few entrepreneurs in the area with a camera created by California tech company Matterport that allows the user to digitally scan an area, creating a virtual reality tour for online visitors.

"It's the closest thing to the naked eye," said Murphy, who spent more than \$4,000 for the camera. "It's like the images surround the viewer with a floor-to-ceiling, 360-degree view," Murphy said.

"It's like you're there but you're not," said Dick Kanatzar, owner of the Chop & Swizzle restaurant located in Green. Kanatzar hired Murphy to create a 3D-like tour of his restaurant tucked in a plaza at 3700 Massillon Road.

Web users can zoom in on the restaurant using Google Maps Street View and do a virtual walk-through; the handsome wood interior adorned with Tiki masks is not the typical plaza eatery space, Kanatzar said.

Kanatzar has hired Murphy — who calls his company OriginTD — for social media and website work for about four years.

Other interiors Murphy has scanned include the LeBron James Arena at St. Vincent-St. Mary High School in Akron, Harbor Castings machine shop in Cuyahoga Falls, Mercedes-Benz of Akron and 111 Bistro in Montville Township.

Murphy also has scanned the interior of homes for sale for area real estate agents. Guy's Party Center hired him to create tours of its three ballrooms.

Clients post the tours on their websites or social media platforms. They all can be found via Google Street View. Murphy posts them on his website, origintd.com.

He had garnered attention selling the shirts at events such as the King of the Court basketball tournament attended by LeBron James at Perkins Park in Akron.

Murphy worked on his skills while serving as a digital media intern and later as a content assistant for the United States Olympic Committee in Colorado.

He created content related to the 2012 Summer Olympics in London and the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

He's thrilled to have settled in Akron. "I'm glad to have landed home," he said. "It's centrally located, where it's big enough to keep me busy," but also, "I can travel and continue working out of state and expand the company."

NMU Grad Works with Grammy Artists

By: Kristi Evans, News Director

As a Northern student, Mike Picotte (BS 2001) spent much of his free time in the campus audio production labs, becoming proficient in their specialized software and equipment. Now he is realizing a major return on that investment. The Gwinn native is a senior sales engineer for Sweetwater, billed as “the world’s leading music technology and instrument retailer.” Picotte advises clients on gear purchases and designs recording studios and live venues. He also consults on complex sound systems for large tours by artists such as Carrie Underwood, Katy Perry and Justin Timberlake. In addition to his day job, Picotte has earned a stellar reputation among high-profile artists for his side passions: serving as a front-of-house engineer for concerts; and mixing/mastering records.

“There’s a rush that comes with delivering a performance to a large crowd at a live show,” Picotte said. “But you have only one shot to get the sound right; you can’t press stop and fix something. I like that pressure. It requires you to think fast and be a good problem-solver. If there’s a technical issue, you’ll destroy an artist’s confidence if they see you panic. You just have to roll with it and work around it.

“In the studio, the rush is in the creative process of influencing the final product in a beneficial way. But you don’t want to over-produce it to the point it doesn’t sound like the artist anymore. Even with all of the technology, you still have to approach it artistically with an ear for music, an appreciation for the blend and an understanding of the artist’s vision.”

Picotte has carved out a niche in the Latin pop market. He worked on an album by Mario Bautista on the Warner Mexico label, which had crossover success in the United States. That led to an opportunity to master a few songs for Luis Fonsi, though not on his Grammy-nominated Despacito album. Other high-profile artists he has collaborated with range from Earth, Wind and Fire, Styx, Lee Ann Womack and the Steve Miller Band to Pharrell Williams, Coolio, Theory of a Dead Man, 10 Years and Hollywood Undead.

There are a number of perks associated with this work. Picotte has received special guest admission to the Grammy Awards. He has worked in studios many artists aspire to record in, such as the Village in Los Angeles and Ocean Way in Nashville. Picotte was invited to sit in on a film mix at Sony Pictures while in California attending NAMM, one of the largest music, sound and event technology trade shows. He also was hired to record, mix and master a live record with Ray Fuller & the Bluesrockers at



Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago.

Staying active in the music industry is a natural complement to Picotte’s day job with Sweetwater, which he started in 2002. He said the Indiana-based retailer is on the forefront of introducing new technology to the market, offers intensive training and certification programs to employees and boasts clients around the world. He added that Sweetwater’s Gear Fest trade show each June draws about 15,000 people to its campus.

Beyond the musical realm, Picotte is consulting with the NFL on technology used to transmit the Super Bowl. The goal is that future game coverage be piped between the host stadium, Culver City, Calif., and producers and directors in New York City via fiber networks. Picotte specializes in a relevant product line from a brand that Sweetwater carries.

Picotte recently worked with an NMU grad student and professor to update a campus audio recording studio (see related story on page 9). He was named outstanding graduating senior by the Communication and Performance Studies Department and still keeps in touch with faculty members. His most influential mentor was the late Professor Chuck Ganzert.

“My advice to students is to dive in and take advantage of all opportunities available and build relationships with Northern professors because they’re helpful and have an open-door policy. Also, do more than what’s required and don’t procrastinate on projects. It can be scary stepping into a new professional environment after school. You have to be confident in your abilities and willing to continue learning and training to stay on top of your game. I feel blessed that I’ve reached the point that people value my opinion and ask to work with me.”

Prominent music schools have learned of Picotte’s reputation and tried to recruit him. He said he plans to immerse himself in his career for another 20 years, but does anticipate a future shift to education. He enjoys teaching master classes for advanced audio students from a nearby college and leading training sessions for new employees at Sweetwater University.

His motto: “Only those who risk going too far will ever know how far they can go.”

(Photo above is of Mike Picotte, left, and NBA player Paul George)

Radio X a.k.a.WUPX 91.5

By: Alex Skinner, Sports Editor

Radio X, also known as WUPX 91.5, is celebrating its 48th anniversary as a student organization here at NMU. Over the past 48 years, music of all varieties has been served up on a daily basis, ranging from contemporary indie rock genres to epic doom metal.

Senior computer science major Daniel Saubert (pictured), the general manager at Radio X, knows the importance of diversifying your library in a competitive, yet stale radio market here in the Upper Peninsula.

"We are the only variety music station in a 60-mile radius," Saubert said. "If you go on your radio dial and try to find the vast variety that we offer, you won't find anything. That's kind of the niche we fill. The weird, the fringe, and we try to cover it all. We play close to 60 genres every week."

Saubert finds himself quite busy nowadays. Tuesdays starting at 7 p.m., local bands are invited into the station lobby to perform music broadcast live on the Radio X air waves, a new event Saubert hopes will bring in listeners.

"Some of the bands that we're going to bring are used to playing live shows, but might not be used to the amount of equipment that we have to offer," Saubert said. "A lot of them are used to basement shows with 30-second sound checks and playing as loud as they can, where we give them 30 to 40 minutes to set up and get everything tuned really well."

Radio X often supports events around the community, notably helping the Ore Dock Brewing Co. bring exposure to local artists through promotional spending and digital plays of the artists' music on-air.

Senior media production and new technology major Donny Ede has been involved with Radio X for three and a half years and was recently hired as training director at the station. Ede began as a DJ and now trains new DJs into the station, making sure they know how to properly work the computer system and vinyl machines. There are rules the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has set in place that every DJ must abide by, such as ensuring any sort of profanity be kept off-air.

"You always want to run something in your head before you say it on-air, and keep an upbeat manner," Ede said.

"Just relax and have fun. When you're having fun doing something you love and playing things you love, it's worthwhile." Training is available to any NMU student, regardless of class standing or major. Freshman Ian Schenkel is an outdoor recreation major and hadn't worked around radio production equipment before. "The training period is pretty simple," Schenkel said. "It's

all pretty much in a digital system, and they show you how to put it on the air. They walk you through how to use the mixer to broadcast your voice live, and how to alternate between the vinyl machines or digital computer."

Schenkel added that he's excited to broadcast his selection of music with his peers. "It's a great way to not only play music that you find interesting, but a way to put NMU students in the Marquette community music scene," he said.

NMU students can volunteer to become a guest DJ by submitting an application through the Radio X Facebook page or by picking up a physical copy at the Radio X studio, located in the University Center room 1204.



Public Eye News

By: Noah Hausmann, Features Editor

Beneath the heat of studio lights, dressed in formal clothes, they smile and do their best not to stumble reading the teleprompter. The student anchors sit behind the news desk and deliver the daily headlines live over the airwaves of public television.

Public Eye News (PEN) is a 15-minute live, TV news broadcast that is completely run by NMU students and open to all majors who want to get involved. The program, which started in 1975, airs weekdays at 4 p.m. on WNMU-TV Channel 13.1 from September to May.



Students are responsible for all aspects of the newscast: anchoring on-air, writing stories, operating cameras, directing the show and producing local news packages. This gives them valuable, real-world experience in the TV news industry.

“In this field, especially, [employers] are looking for experience,” said Bob Thomson, PEN adviser, director and producer of WNMU-TV. “Sure, they’re looking for a degree and a well-rounded personality, but at the top of the list, they’re looking for what this person has done in the field. To be able to say, ‘I’ve been working for a PBS affiliate, U.P.-wide,’ it’s the real deal, and it makes a difference.”

Usually about six to eight students work as cast and crew for a PEN news day, helping on afternoons when they’re available. There are two paid student positions as producer-directors, who choose what news stories to run each day and are responsible for supervising all aspects of the broadcast. The rest of the cast and crew are student volunteers.

In the PEN office and studio in the basement of the Learning Resources Center, the anchors arrive at 1 p.m. to edit and prepare their stories for on-air that day, then the rest of the technical and camera crew are on hand for practice shows starting at about 3 p.m. At 4 p.m., it’s for real: a live show that’s broadcast on public TV across the Upper Peninsula.

Jillian Wurmlinger, a freshman multimedia production major, was one of the news anchors on Monday’s show. Like most students at PEN, she has worked many of the different crew positions, from camera to graphics, to communicating cues from the producer in the control room to the cast on-air. But she described anchoring as both her biggest challenge and most rewarding experience. The first time she anchored, she was “terrified,” Wurmlinger said, afraid to mess up reading her script. But after the show, she felt relief and a wave of confidence. “I was like, ‘OK, this isn’t so bad.’ It was comforting to know that I could actually do something that I thought I was incapable of,” Wurmlinger said.

The PEN crew is some days understaffed. Halfway through the show on Monday, when the recording turned to the weatherman and green screen, Wurmlinger took a turn operating a camera, so the sports anchor, who’d also doubled as cameraman, could take a seat at the news desk and deliver his sports highlights. “It is like a circus, but we’re all flexible, so it works out,” said PEN producer Samantha Carter, a senior media production major. Carter has been involved in PEN since her freshman year, and she said she enjoys passing on her broadcast skills to a new generation of students joining their “PEN fam,” as she affectionately called the group.

“It’s really fun, especially since I remember being in [a newcomer’s] position... learning about PEN and learning different jobs. Being able to teach other people the things I’ve learned is exciting,” she added with a smile.



NORTHERN MICHIGAN
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Our Mission: *The disciplines represented in the Communication and Performance Studies (CAPS) Department share a focus upon understanding how messages are used to manage relationships with others in contexts ranging from "one-to-one" to "one-to-many" using personal, public and mass-mediated channels of communication. Although the goals for different majors may flow from specific arenas and methods of social interaction or performance, graduates of CAPS programs share a fundamental appreciation for what it means to live in a symbolic world, to engage in life-long learning, and acquire a suite of skills that can be transferred to a wide array of career options. Thus, students majoring in CAPS learn to critically examine the role communication plays in daily life, to embrace the multicultural foundations for human discourse, to work in teams as well as independently regarding the application of communication concepts to practical situations, and to use what they have learned in the practice of civic engagement.*

As a CAPS alumni, let us know
what you have been up to by
visiting www.nmu.edu/update.



The Communication and Performance Studies Department has several initiatives to give our students hands-on learning and research experiences. We invite you to support the department's fundraising initiatives. To find out more about the various initiatives and how you can help make a tangible difference in the quality of education that we can provide NMU students, please contact the NMU Foundation at:

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