



CAPS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Northern Michigan University

Spring 2009

The most obvious new development in the Communication and Performance Studies Department is that you are now reading the inaugural issue of what we hope will be an annual newsletter to our alumni and friends. As Northern Michigan University has grown to become a leading higher education innovator in the State of Michigan, so too has your alma mater's home department changed with the times. We have new faces in our halls, evolving facilities at our disposal and an eagerness to re-connect with our friends from the past.

In the summer of 2008, Dr. Don Rybacki decided to step down as the associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences as well as department head of CAPS. In his place, Dr. Jim Cantrill assumed the helm (relying heavily on Don's mentorship who remains on board as a regular faculty member) and has slowly come to understand just how large a sea he now has to navigate. Of course, others are along for the ride as well. In addition to several seasoned members of the department, we now have a fine complement of young faculty to carry on old traditions and chart new directions. And, on the horizon, there's yet another big change in the offing. After 32 years as director of the Forest Roberts Theatre, Dr. Jim Panowski has also decided it's time to relax a bit, and his pending retirement means that we are now anticipating the timing of a new director of theatre.

Those of you who have visited the campus in recent years know that NMU looks different than it did even a decade ago. In the CAPS Department, our facilities have changed as well. We have been strengthening our alliance with WNMU Television and Radio for some time and are on the verge of a major expansion that will



[Dr. Jim Cantrill]

integrate the education that occurs in our state-of-the-art audio and video labs in McClintock, the co-curricular activities our students pursue through Public Eye News and WUPX student radio, and the dazzling digital capabilities of public radio and television. In fact, together, CAPS and WNMU have invested close to \$700 thousand in federal and state allocation into our facilities in just the last 12 months. Not to be outdone, the NMU Board of Trustees has slated the Forest Rob-

erts Theatre for a major overhaul as part of a \$14 million capital outlay request. We may live in times of economic uncertainty, but it's comforting to know that our society remains a steadfast ally of higher education.

With all the changes taking place, we are still committed to the values that originally attracted you to our department:

- Top-flight undergraduate education in the areas of communication studies (a.k.a. the newly revamped speech communication major) electronic journalism, entertainment and sports promotion, media production and new technologies, public relations and theatre.

- A broad range of educational experiences in our classrooms, field studies, undergraduate scholarly and civic opportunities, and international venues.

- A caring faculty that remains interested in the well-being of our students, the vitality of our communities and the success of our alumni long after they leave NMU.

So, in a nutshell, that is what we've been up to recently. As you read the rest of this newsletter, please feel free to contact us with your questions and comments. We want to know what YOU are doing as a Wildcat alumni who knows a thing or two about communication!

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Information

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You might be asking “What is this newsletter all about?” or “Why am I just starting to receive this newsletter now?” Don’t worry, we haven’t forgotten about you since you graduated. This is actually the first edition of the CAPS Alumni and Friends newsletter. The CAPS Department is constantly stressing to its students about the importance of networking, so now it is time for CAPS to practice what it preaches. This newsletter is a new initiative that will be produced by CAPS students and annually provided to CAPS alumni and friends through e-mail and the department website. It will include happenings and events at NMU and in the CAPS Department, and achievements and projects of current CAPS students, student groups and other CAPS alumni. Newsletters are being e-mailed in order to avoid unnecessary strain on our environment and to increase the newsletter’s interactivity with links and videos. The newsletter will also be posted on the CAPS Web site at www.nmu.edu/CAPS. Be sure to check the website out for more news and stories about CAPS happenings.

STUDENT PROFILES

Katherine Stelmaszek

Katherine Stelmaszek (formerly Katherine Cox) is a senior majoring in media production and new technologies and communication studies with a psychology minor. Stelmaszek is the vice president of Model United Nations and a former producer of Public Eye News. Stelmaszek also works at the local PBS station as an assistant producer, was a teacher assistant for the CAPS department’s first-year experience block and is working with Dr. James Cantrill on a research project.

This year Stelmaszek started out not with classes, but with a trip to the Democratic National Convention doing an internship with Time magazine. “The internship was amazing. During my week as an intern, with an official Time t-shirt, I found out that the word intern can be translated to a person who does whatever somebody else tells them to,” says Stelmaszek. Her role included running errands, promoting Time’s webpage, ThePage, and helping to prepare the next issue of the magazine.

One of the best experiences that Stelmaszek says she had at the convention was being able to watch the speakers at the Pepsi Center with reporters from Time. Watching the convention from press seats was a bit different than watching the convention from the floor. Since Time is a magazine, its allocated seats did not provide a great view of the stage. “Even though the view wasn’t great, being at the convention allowed me to feel the speakers’ energy in a way that doesn’t always translate on television. However, as a member of the press you must remain

politically neutral, and you are not allowed to cheer for the candidates,” says Stelmaszek. She explained that despite this neutrality, Ted Kennedy’s entrance did get a standing ovation from everyone at the conference, including the press.

According to Stelmaszek, the highlight of her trip was going to INVESCO field as a spectator for Time magazine to watch Barack Obama speak. Dr. Nelson from NMU’s Political Science Department, with the help of our local congressmen, was able to get all of the students who went to Denver tickets to the event.

Stelmaszek added, “The day was nothing short of spectacular. It started off slow with a crowded metro ride to INVESCO and an hour or more wait to get into the stadium. Once inside, the experience was more than I could have imagined. I saw different artists perform including Jennifer Hudson singing the national anthem and Stevie Wonder singing “Sign, Sealed, and Delivered”. Politicians, including Al Gore and Governor Bill Richardson, spoke. The best part was that I can tell my children and grandchildren that I was a part of history. I saw the first African American to accept his party’s nomination to become the President of the United States.”



[Katherine Stelmaszek (in pink)
at the Democratic National Convention]

**Katherine Stelmaszek
was voted by the CAPS
faculty as the Outstanding
Graduating Senior in both
communication studies and
media production and
new technologies.**

Jennifer Henry

Jennifer Henry is a senior, majoring in theatre, with a focus in stage management and stage properties. Henry's main endeavors during her final year at NMU are acting as the properties supervisor and as the staff stage manager for the Forest Roberts Theatre.

For many years, there has been discussion of reorganizing the Forest Roberts Theatre properties deck, which according to Henry, "had become an assorted mess of chaos." Henry says that various eager-eyed students had attempted, and in some cases even started this project, but as each graduated, the task was passed on to fellow classmates. She also says she was happy to report that she not only mapped out and organized the props deck, but also formed a detailed catalog containing pictures of almost every item. By creating this catalog system, slides can now be viewed to see what props are available, rather than transporting props around.

Throughout the reorganization of the deck, Henry found dust-covered props that no current students knew existed and other items that she had long since forgotten. Henry explained that many of the resurrected props prompted laughs and puzzled looks, but some resulted in the telling of the stories that went along with them. Through conversations with Kim Hegmegee and Vic Holliday, Henry and other staff say that they learned a lot about the FRT's past. Included in the rediscovered props were flags from a show done over 30 years ago. "It was wonderful to go through these things with someone like Professor Holliday, and to be able to see the past of the FRT come to life. Although we mostly kept the practical things, we did keep some of the more unique props as well, such as a t-rex telephone."

Henry says she is very satisfied to know that even though she is graduating this year, she is leaving something wonderful behind.

Jefferey Sims



[Jefferey Sims]

Jefferey Sims is a senior majoring in media production and new technology and minoring in marketing. Sims takes part in multiple student groups and extracurricular activities. His peers and professors say that he never seems to turn down anyone who asks for his help.

In the summer of 2008, Sims worked at WLUC-TV6 in Marquette, an NBC affiliate. At TV6, Sims worked mostly with the cameras and was in charge of checking scripts. Sims says that he believes that this job

adds to his credentials. "I liked working there, because it was an entry level job that allowed me to gain real world experience while still an undergraduate. When I do graduate, I will have an edge on most job seekers in my field."

During the school year, Sims works with the NMU football team, videotaping practices, traveling with the team to tape games and working with the coaching staff to evaluate the tapes. Sims is also a volunteer at Public Eye News, where he helps to shoot the student-run newscast on local WNMU TV13. Sims says he credits Public Eye News as the foundation of his television filming and thanks Public Eye News for preparing him for TV6. Sims added, "I love helping out at Public Eye News, because I can still pick up valuable lessons, as well as share some of my base experience with new members of the group."

FACULTY FEATURES

Dr. Wally Niebauer

Dr. Wally Niebauer specializes in the teaching of public relations and organizational communication. Dr. Niebauer says he feels fortunate to be in public relations, a field that fits very well with NMU's emphasis on the application of coursework to actual situations. In an area as rich in volunteer organizations as Marquette, he says this gives him virtually unlimited opportunities to be involved and to help his students become involved in enriching life experiences.

Dr. Niebauer's newest project is working with Janzen House, a beautiful former railroad hotel on Spring Street that helps down-on-their-luck men by offering low cost housing. He has been asked to help develop a PR strategy for the facility.

Dr. Niebauer's students are gearing up for the U.S. Olympic Team Trials and World Cup short track speedskating to be hosted on campus in fall 2009, the first time one place has ever hosted both events in the same year. Dr. Niebauer's enthusiasm for the events he promotes carries over to his students and to the audiences he is hoping to attract. Dr. Niebauer says, "In our case, the two events will be in two months, which should be exciting and challenging, just the way I like it. Think resume and portfolio builders."



[Dr. Wally Niebauer with Wildcat Willie]

Dr. Shelly Russell

Theatre professor Dr. Shelley Russell began 2008 by costuming (or what Dr. Russell called “un-costuming”) *The Full Monty*. According to Dr. Russell, “*The Full Monty* was a joyful experience. The show was surprisingly family-oriented and keyed to themes of self-knowledge and community.” Dr. Russell’s recent artistic efforts included a “recycled” *Cinderella*, the groundwork for a new musical about generational responsibility and connectedness in contemporary America, and the outline of a costume design for Dr. Jim Panowski’s pre-retirement production of *The Tempest*. Dr. Russell says, “Last year I had a wonderful epiphany about life through the artist’s spyglass. The view continues to expand as long as you keep your eyes open, and the more effort you give to artistic exploration, the more visions and voices demand your examination.”

Dr. Russell recently staged a musical and a light, “yooper” comedy, played Titania in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, costumed a couple of the Lake Superior Theatre’s summer shows and built a very large trout as a stage prop. She says, “It was the hours spent stitching the fish that reminded me that much of my work is not affixed to obligation, but to education and an artist’s ongoing need to explore and to quest.” Theatre prop trout as guru? Perhaps not, but according to Dr. Russell, the year’s journey of artistic creation, like the rip-away “Monty” pants, flour and fabric rainbow trout, simple melody sung by a magnificent voice, linguistic spell of Shakespeare’s words and simple costume design for Paul Truckey’s production of *The Foreigner*, reminded her of the extent of art’s offerings and the grave and constant responsibility to the humanity which art serves.

Dr. Russell says, “In all of art’s rich hoard there may be something we can offer to offset our nation’s economic and emotional frailty. Here at the end of 2008, this nation’s citizenry faces questions that have no simple answers. Art history instructs us that when the questions grow so complex that they seem to have no answer, we may need to apply the tools of art and imagination to our other methods.” Dr. Russell says she is encouraged and humbled by the challenges facing her students, and she looks forward to learning with them as they begin to accept the necessary changes in their lives and in their artistic works. She says she is also very proud that the Forest Roberts Theatre began the 2008 season with a green initiative to produce more responsible, more sustainable theatre. According to Dr. Russell, “Mistakes of the past offer a great opportunity for the present. So, at least in the theatre arts, I hope to participate in a more positive, conscious and conscientious American arts scene in 2009.”



[Dr. Shelly Russell]

Dr. Dwight Brady

Dr. Dwight Brady teaches courses in electronic journalism and video production and is a videographer and documentarian. His works include *Michigan’s Grey Wolf: Ghost of the Big Timber* and *The U.P. 200: A Community Pulling Together*, which were



[Dr. Dwight Brady]

produced in conjunction with and aired on WNMU-TV 13. These productions were recognized for their excellence by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters in competition with programming produced by commercial and public television stations throughout the state. More recently,

Dr. Brady received an MAB award and an Emmy for his investigation of alternative energy sources in the state. *Michigan’s Green Energy Economy* was aired as part of the award-winning series *Michigan at Risk*, produced by WKAR, Michigan State University’s public broadcasting station.

As a result of producing *Michigan’s Green Energy Economy*, Dr. Brady was asked to work with the Union of Concerned Scientists as a media consultant. In 2008, he was appointed by Michigan’s Governor Jennifer Granholm to serve on the Michigan Climate Action Council. Brady says, “As a member of the Climate Action Council, I am working with representatives from utility companies, the auto industry, environmental lobbyists and other academics to draft policy recommendations intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Michigan.” This type of work is a bit removed from teaching journalism and video production, but Dr. Brady says that writing good policy requires some of the same skills he teaches his students, “You have to be clear, concise and use reliable sources to back up your key points.”

“We may need to apply the tools of art and imagination...” - Russell

ALUMNI PROFILES

Dr. Jessica Thompson

Jessica Thompson graduated in 2001 with a major in speech communication and a minor in public relations. Thompson completed her doctoral studies at the University of Utah in the spring of 2007. She also completed facilitator training and earned an interdisciplinary certificate in adaptive management of environmental systems, which focuses on integrated and participatory modeling in stakeholder processes. She is now an assistant professor in the College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University.

Dr. Thompson recently published her first book, entitled, "Interdisciplinary Research Team Dynamics: A Systems Approach to Understanding Communication and Collaboration in Complex Teams." The book is the result of a four-year ethnographic study of how teams address complex environmental problems while negotiating knowledge, science and power among multiple stakeholders.

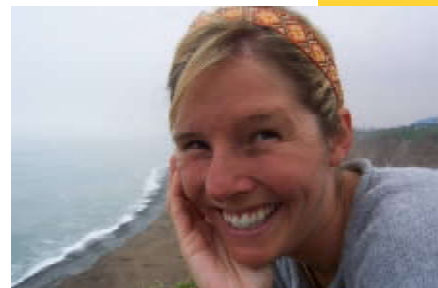
Her current research and teaching focus is on communicating and managing environmental conflict about complex ecological issues, such as global climate change and natural resource conservation. She has published her research in peer-reviewed journals including *Science Communication*, *Society and Natural Resources*, and *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*.

Specifically, Dr. Thompson has developed three new courses for her students at CSU: (1) Group Decision Making in Natural Resources, (2) Environmental Conflict Management and (3) Natural Resources and the Media. She also teaches the capstone course for environmental communication students, in which the students

create communication campaigns related to internal and public communication about climate change in the West.

A majority of Dr. Thompson's current research is focused on communicating about climate change. She is working with the National Park Service to develop a strategic plan for coordinating climate change action across the entire organizational structure. She is also responsible for organizing and hosting numerous workshops for public land managers related to communicating climate change and coordinating climate change efforts across bio-regions and landscapes, transcending political and jurisdictional boundaries.

Dr. Thompson recently returned from India, where she was part of a team establishing an on-going collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India. Dr. Thompson says that the Institute is experiencing challenges balancing human and wildlife habitats on shared landscapes. Indigenous tribes are being forced to relocate out of protected areas, especially, critical tiger habitats. The complexity of human relocation projects is rife with social, ethical, legal and ecological questions. Dr. Thompson adds, "I am interested in understanding how relocation is promoted, encouraged and completed, and more importantly how people cope with relocation and what impacts relocation has on the human spirit." Dr. Thompson says she believes that India will provide an early example of human relocation efforts, and, as environmental degradation becomes more severe, will possibly bear witness to massive relocations of human populations.



[Dr. Jessica Thompson]

Check out what's going on at Forest Roberts Theatre...

<http://webb.nmu.edu/ForestRobertsTheatre/>

Orion Couling

Orion Couling graduated in 2003 with a major in theater and a minor in broadcasting. For the past seven years, Couling has been busy blending stage combat with social activism. Couling is recognized as an associate teacher for dueling arts and as an advanced actor combatant for the Society of American Fight Directors. Couling is the founder of Esteem Development through Greater Expectations, where he challenges youth through the use of combat mime to make connections with each other and the world around them. One of the most fascinating locations where Couling has used his expertise at “fight acting” is upon the tall ship, “The Royaliste.” Couling works with the crew of this ship as they do pirate reenactments. He also does demonstrations with kids where he teaches them how to thrust, parry and even portray a convincing demise.



[Orion Couling]

Another of Couling’s recent activities again revolves around a tall ship. He opened a new show and adventure in October 2008 on “The Windy,” which is harbored at Navy Pier in Chicago. The event is called “Spirit Ships and Haunted Harbors.” (<http://www.tallshipwindy.com/>)

According to its promotional materials, “It’s a rousing sail and story-telling adventure that peers into the dark waters of Great Lakes ghost ships and darker deeds of souls that sailed its shorelines. Written and performed by area historian, playwright and story teller, Orion Couling, the WINDY invites you to sail through the misty curtains of time to hear stories that uncover mystery, history, legend and lore of our Sprit Ships and Haunted Harbors.”

Recently, Couling received “The Commitment to Excellence Award” for his work with UPS for Downs, a support group for families dealing with Down’s Syndrome. As part of this effort, Couling directed a production of Disney’s High School Musical at Gymkhana Theatre in Hanover Park, Ill. The production included 25 individuals with Down’s syndrome and 15 non-disabled children. (http://abclocal.go.com/wls/story?section=news/disability_issues&id=6156610) “We are thankful to the most amazing children’s theatre director on the planet, Orion Couling, for his passion, creativity and genuine belief that young people of all abilities will do great things together on stage!” says an article in the UPS for Downs newsletter. According to Orion, “It was an incredible experience for everyone involved, including the actors, their families, and the audiences of all five of the sold-out performances.”

“I’ve been busy, but I’m manifesting my own reality and loving it,” says Orion.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Public Eye News

Members of Public Eye News say that the organization is still going strong. This student-run, produced and directed news report, shown on PBS Channel 14, brings together students from all departments to create a 15-minute daily report. The members say they find value in working together and learning from each others’ mistakes. There are at least 13 people required for each broadcast. Public Eye News provides students with life experiences they can take with them as they step into both the broadcasting and business world. Alumni are currently working in the U.P. and for companies across the U.S., including two for ESPN.

Public Eye News is busy not only with its daily reports on the news, sports and weather, but also with its preparations for the major transformations of the WNMU station that will take place in May. WNMU received the World Department of Agriculture Rural Development (federal) grant for \$633,000, in order to renovate its central control room. On top of renovations in the studio, Public Eye News will take on a new look and news reports will be broadcast in digital.

Members of Public Eye News say they devote a lot of time and effort to the “Public Eye News” program, but it is not all work. “Public Eye news is about having fun,” says supervisor Robert Thomson. According to Thompson, the typically high-stress jobs of the broadcast are lightened with annual work parties and events that bring members closer together and give the organization a family feel.

Members of Public Eye News are continually encouraging other students to join their team. Thompson says that current members hope that the organization will keep growing in size, talent and spirit. (<http://wnmutv.nmu.edu/pen.htm>)

Superior Edge

Other universities have leadership programs, but NMU is the only university in the U.S. that packs community engagement, diversity awareness, leadership development and real-world experience into one, life-changing program. In fact, CAPS students constitute one of the largest enrollments in NMU's "Superior Edge" program.

To get started with Superior Edge (www.nmu.edu/superioredge), students attend a one-hour orientation where criteria and instructions on recording their hours devoted to community service, multicultural diversity, leadership and career-related activities are explained. To complete an "edge," students document 100 hours of relevant activities and write a reflection paper articulating what they learned through the process.

A student enrichment transcript documents each edge. The student enrichment transcript gets sent out with a student's academic transcript. If students finish all four edges, they get the distinction of being a Superior Edge graduate.

If you participated in the Superior Edge program, did it have a significant effect on you? Or, are you interested in contributing to CAPS students' participation in the program? If so, we would like to share that experience or involvement in a future newsletter. Please contact Leanne at (lp1ath@nmu.edu).

PRSSA

The NMU Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America has approximately 25 dues paying members this year. Every October, members attend the National PRSSA conference that brings together chapters from all around the nation and PRSA professionals. This year's assembly was held in Detroit, and 13 NMU members attended.

There are currently two NMU student organizations that are PRSSA clients, Student Athletic Training Organization and Associated Students of Northern Michigan University. These clients have helped PRSSA members get hands-on experiences with real-world public relations by performing tasks such as creating posters and brochures and doing press releases for events and services.

PRSSA members are also finished their second annual fundraising campaign for a non-profit organization. The 2007 non-profit campaign was to raise money and awareness for the genocide in Darfur. PRSSA raised over \$2,000 in donations and event registration fees.

This year's campaign was for the local Voices for Youth organization. Voices for Youth assists young, homeless adults by providing them with a temporary home and emotional and financial support. The young adults that Voices for Youth helps are often disowned from their homes, struggling with addictions or want to start a new life that isn't achievable at their current living situation. PRSSA created a campaign to raise awareness and financial support for the organization. Arranged fundraising events for Voices for Youth included a ski and snowboard rail competition held at Marquette Mountain, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament held at the PEIF and a clothing drive.

Other PRSSA news includes that Dr. Wally Niebauer, the advisor of PRSSA, received the Advisor of the Year Award in 2008 and that Leanne Plath was sent New Orleans in order to represent the NMU chapter at the PRSSA National Assembly.

Upcoming events for PRSSA include working on the events for the U.S. Olympic Team Trials and World Cup short track speedskating that are going to be held at the Berry Events Center next fall. (<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/group.php?gid=2338672968&ref=ts>)



[PRSSA presenting a check to
Voices for Youth]

Standing O

Standing O is a student-run organization that is made up of volunteers who are mostly from the CAPS Department. By being involved in Standing O, students gain hands-on experience producing shows that are broadcast on NMU's Channel 20. Students take charge of audio and camera work, technical and floor directing, and editing as they prepare the show at the WNMU-TV13 studio, located in the basement of the LRC. Student performers step into the spotlight to provide the program with musical performances. Recent acts have included everything from acoustic performances by Tom Lavery and Radio: AWESOME, to acts by the Ska/Punk group Project Mayhem and the heavy metal group Steal Your Image. Other acts have included Strict 9, Gravity Guild, Boogie Tank and Leah Anton.

At the end of the 2007 winter semester, Dan VanderMeuse graduated from NMU and planned to pass on his role as the producer to Dan Digneit. Digneit initially accepted the position, but his plans subsequently changed when he was offered an internship with CBS on "Late Show with David Letterman." This was an opportunity that Digneit says he could not turn down. Josh Koltowicz was then given the producer position for the 2008-2009 school year. Koltowicz has been learning more about broadcasting and producing with the filming of each episode. Koltowicz says that he attributes much of his success to the help he receives from Mike Lakenen and Bob Thomson, who work for Public TV 13.

In November of 2008, Standing O members chose to stray from their classic, single-act showcase. Dr. Louis Bourgaunt, who has done a lot of work and research on AIDS in Africa, came up with the idea to record a special edition show devoted to World AIDS Day. This special edition show involved multiple performances, some of which did not rely solely on music. The show's acts included a short story read by Shannon Prill with Richard Hendrix accompanying on guitar, two songs played and sung by Hendrix, a short skit performed by Ben Filipowicz and Ella Bartlett, and an interpretive dance performance by Alexandria Holley, Jessica Carpenter and Andrea Otis set to the poem, "No One Ever Said AIDS." The show aired on Dec. 1, 2008. (<http://www.myspace.com/standingonmu>)

Faculty & Student Achievements in the Communication & Performance Studies Department, 2007-2009

Individual Faculty

Dwight Brady (Broadcasting) won an Emmy Award in Michigan for his documentary on Michigan's green economy.

Dwight Brady (Broadcasting) was given the Distinguished Faculty Award in 2008.

Louise Bourgault (Broadcasting) was given the Outstanding Scholarship Award in 2008.

James Cantrill (Department Head) was a consultant to the Great Lakes Regional Collaborative (Executive Order of President Bush) and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for whom he web-posted two of his case studies regarding ecosystem management in the Great Lakes Basin.

Charles Ganzert (Broadcasting) was given the Outstanding Teaching Award in 2008.

Charles Ganzert (Broadcasting) is a contributor to the text *Catching Stories: Oral Histories* (Swallow Press).

Charles Ganzert (Broadcasting) is the academic service learning Coordinator for NMU.

Wally Neibauer (Public Relations) was named NMU student organization "2008 Advisor of the Year" (the only person at NMU to earn the honor twice).

Donald and Karyn Rybacki (Public Relations) published the 7th edition textbook, *Advocacy and Opposition* (Allyn Bacon).

Kim Hegmegee (Theatre) was given an outstanding service award by NMU in 2009.

Department as a Whole

Various faculty have regularly been web-streaming to larger audiences events for which they help coordinate communications (e.g., U.S.-China boxing competition, the GOP and Democratic National Conventions in 2009).

CAPS will be playing a major role in coordinating entertainment, public relations, and media outreach for the upcoming U.S. Olympic Team Trials and World Cup short track speedskating.

A number of faculty members have been awarded "action grants" for developing academic service learning opportunities.

The CAPS Department has hosted an average of three international scholars or artists each year.

Students

Julie Ruden (Public Relations) was elected as vice-president of the national Public Relations Student Society of America in 2008.

Katie Cox-Stelmazek (Communication Studies) was an intern at the GOP national convention for Time.

Jessica Thompson and Glenn Rochester (Communication Studies) co-authored (along with James Cantrill) "Exploring a Sense of Self-in-Place to Explain the Impulse for Urban Sprawl" in *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*.

Broadcasting students have consistently won honors each year from the Michigan Association of Broadcasters (see: www.michmab.com/MABF/hscolawards07.html; www.michmab.com/MABF/hscolawards08.html)

CAPS Faculty

Bourgault, Louise - MPNT, Professor
Brady, Dwight - EJRN, Professor
Cantrill, Jim - Head - Comm. Studies, Professor
Ganzert, Chuck - MPNT, Professor
Hampton, Jan - Secretary
Hegmegee, Kim - Technical Director, Theatre
Holliday, Vic - Theatre, Asst. Prof
Jerome, Pat - Comm. Studies, Assoc. Prof
Leathers, Kyle - Comm. Studies, Instructor

Neibauer, Wally - PR, Professor
Panowski, James - Theatre, Professor
Potter, Sara - Comm. Studies, Instructor
Russell, Shelley - Theatre, Professor
Rybacki, Don - PR/ENSP, Professor
Rybacki, Karyn - ENSP, Professor
Shevy, Mark - MPNT, Asst. Professor
Truckey, Paul - Theatre, Assoc. Professor



NMU's Roadmap to 2015 and Beyond: The CAPS Highway

In the spring of 2008, President Leslie Wong of Northern unveiled a new strategic plan called the Road Map to 2015 and Beyond (www.nmu.edu/roadmap2015/). This framework identifies specific priorities that your alma mater will address in the coming years, as we focus on various opportunities and challenges facing NMU. In particular, Road Map to 2015 and Beyond highlights the role that information technologies, internationalization and Northern's geographic location play in moving our institution through the first two decades of the 21st century.

The Road Map is comprised of four broad themes (i.e., nurturing innovation, promoting meaningful lives, leveraging campus attributes, and engaging our communities) for which those in the CAPS Department have identified specific initiatives they want to pursue. Some of these initiatives have already started, while others remain in the planning stages. Since you might be interested in learning more about where the CAPS department may be traveling to in the years ahead, here is a sample of some of the initiatives it is engaging:

- establishing student exchange programs with communication departments at foreign universities.
- developing a talk show produced in the CAPS television studio to address global issues, cultural diversity and world concerns.
- creating a health communication program with an emphasis upon rural health systems.
- instituting formal advisory boards for each CAPS specialty, thereby enlisting the expertise of both alumni and invited corporate sponsors.
- designing a "Media and Interpersonal Literacy" course employing large lecture and lab sections to service the liberal studies program at NMU.
- moving the costume shop to a more suitable space.
- nurturing a touring theatre program to provide greater service to a wider range of regional stakeholders.
- working with student organizations to produce public service announcements and short news reports on issues of local, state or national significance.

If you are interested in helping with any of these or other initiatives, please get in touch. As initiatives and projects unfold, we will keep you informed of where the road is taking us.

FEEDBACK FROM AND FOR THE EDITOR

Editing a newsletter is not always an easy task, especially at the start. This is the first CAPS Alumni and Friends newsletter, so we want to know what you think. Please tell us what features and aspects of the newsletter you like and what you do not like. We understand that there is always room for improvement. Any comments or advice that you can provide on what can and should be changed in order to make the newsletter helpful and interesting for you will be greatly appreciated.

Besides getting your feedback on the newsletter, our managing editor, Leanne Plath (communication studies and public relations) wants to know where you are and what you have been doing since your time at NMU. Many successful and interesting people have graduated from CAPS, but it is impossible to keep track of everyone. Send us (caps@nmu.edu) or her (lplath@nmu.edu) an e-mail with your thoughts and stories. We are also trying to compile a more current and complete list of CAPS alumni e-mail addresses and mailing addresses, so let us know if your current email address and/or your mailing address has changed.