

LINKS

Alumni Achieving Success in the Workplace

*A Production of Wittenberg University's
Department of Communication*

Spring 2010

Letter from the Editor In This Issue... ¹



Greetings Communication alumni, students, prospective students, and faculty! For the past two years, I have had the wonderful opportunity to serve the Communication Department at Wittenberg as the

Alumni Liaison. What an outstanding experience it has been! Constantly receiving alumni updates about your successes in the workplace, graduate school, and other personal accomplishments is truly inspiring!

For this spring 2010 edition of *Links Magazine*, I thought that a fitting theme would be centered on the success that you as the Communication alumni have achieved since your time at Wittenberg. While this magazine highlights only a few among many successful alumni, I hope their stories, experiences, and achievements are interesting and encourage your own pursuit of achieving success.

I couldn't feel more fortunate to have experienced what the Department of Communication has to offer and I am fully confident that it has set my classmates and me up for success upon graduating. The alumni this magazine seeks to highlight and congratulate demonstrate the capabilities that our major enables, and I strongly encourage you, the Communication alumni, to keep sending your updates to the department!

All the best!

Kelly E. Clark

**Kelly E. Clark
Class of 2010**



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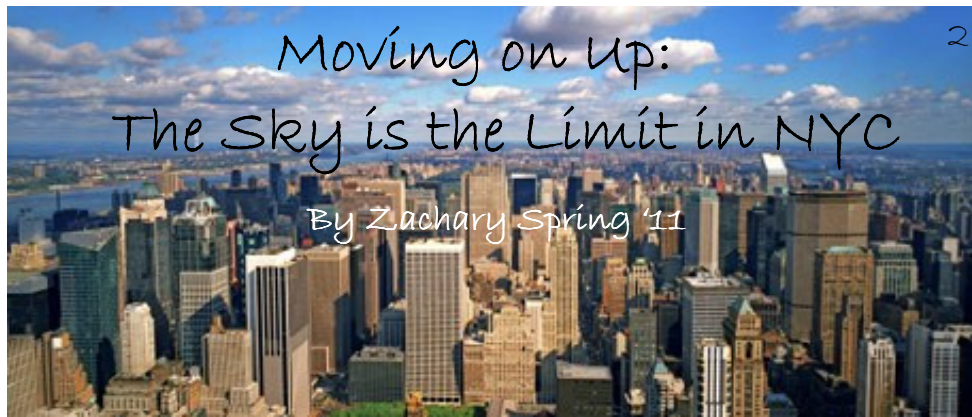


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Moving on Up: The Sky is the Limit in NYC

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By Zachary Spring '11

If living in New York City isn't exciting enough, Wittenberg Alumni Brian McCoach currently works on five major magazines for the Hearst Magazine Corporation, which includes *Smart-Money*, *Seventeen*, and *Country Living*. Graduating in 2006, Brian was a double major in Communication and Business Management.

Growing up in New Concord, Ohio, McCoach knew he wanted to be involved in the media industry. His first aim was to work at a major broadcasting network. Luckily McCoach's uncle used to work in publishing, and was able to pass along his re-

"Think outside the box whenever possible. When those goals are achieved, my job is always rewarding."

sume to former colleagues and as McCoach explains, "This got my foot in the door and allowed me to go to interviews and ultimately get a job at Hearst".

Between McCoach's junior and senior year, he had a summer internship in New York City in the Growth Markets Department for *Sports Illustrated*. When McCoach was constructing a resume, he relied on the WittPath Career Center here at Wit-

tenberg to help him fine tune his resume when he was starting to apply for internships.

"The main thing I learned from the internship was to think outside the box," he said. When working with magazines where their primary concern is print, McCoach had to branch out and also focus on television, online, etc. Along with thinking outside the box, he attributed that knowledge to Wittenberg, claiming, "instead of focusing on one specific area, I could branch out and apply what I learned in one department to something I was learning in a different department."

Only one month after graduation, he started working as the planning analyst for Hearst Magazine. While assisting the Planning Manager as an analyst, McCoach was always willing to learn new information. Through the participation in various communication-related organizations and his time spent inside and outside of the classroom, McCoach described his time at Wittenberg as his "final transition phase into adulthood. I had a great time at Wittenberg, and those four years went fast."

Following a promotion in August 2007 to assistant planning manager, McCoach was promoted to lead the Planning Manager in May 2008. When describing his new position at Hearst, McCoach said, "As Planning Manager I am responsible for managing the consumer marketing finances by minimizing cost and maximizing revenue when possible and ensuring each magazine meets its predetermined rate base." In this new position, McCoach has to obtain and retain subscribers for all five magazines so advertisers keep paying Hearst Magazine for their ads, along with his salary. Over the past couple years, McCoach has completed many financial studies within consumer marketing to determine the best course of action for certain magazines, such as reducing cost from outside businesses that sell McCoach's magazines.

Not only did he learn from his studies at Wittenberg and at Hearst Magazine, but McCoach still strives to learn from his few mistakes, learn new strategies, and "think outside the box whenever possible. When those goals are achieved, my job is always rewarding."

Representing Communication on a National Level: Working for the NCA 3

By Allie Persinger '10

Katherine Karsnak, a 2007 graduate, didn't intend on studying Communication when she first began her collegiate education at Wittenberg University. Influenced by her mother's nursing career while growing up, Karsnak developed a special interest in health and originally pursued biology. But the more familiar she became with the Communication department, it seemed that she would have more career opportunities by studying that instead. After much deliberation, she switched from majoring in a hard science to a social science.

She now finds herself representing communication on a national level working for the National Communication Association (NCA) in Washington, D.C. Within the NCA, she is a Specialist in Meetings and Conventions and assists the Convention Manager with the logistics of planning conventions across the country. She manages over 100 program managers and is the primary person in charge of the convention submission web site. Landing this job is no small achievement. Helping to plan the 95th annual NCA convention in Chicago, IL involved extreme passion and perseverance. Over 58,000 professors, professionals, and students who are NCA members attended.

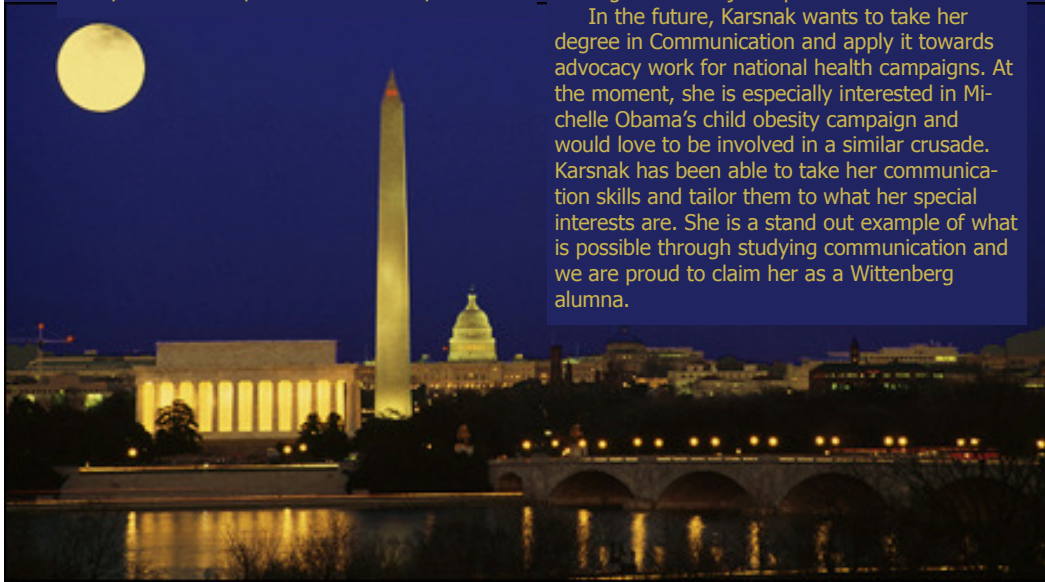
Karsnak commented on the value of studying Communication saying, "I love the versatility of the Communication major. It doesn't pigeon-hole you into one specific area of study or career

path. You have the ability to try out different areas that interest you. It can also afford you some adaptability, compared to other majors, in finding graduate schools and/or jobs that suit your interests (especially in unpredictable economies)." Still passionate about the topic of health, Karsnak decided to further her education at Johns Hopkins University, pursuing a master's degree in Communication with a concentration in health communication. While she was at Wittenberg she presented a paper at the Ohio Communication Association, foreshadowing what her post graduation career move would be.

Karsnak referenced the interpersonal communication skills she gained through the department. She said that "studying Communication offers us a greater ability to empathize with the people around us. We are better able to understand how something was said and why it was said – to understand where a person is coming from. I feel this ability is beneficial when hearing stories, criticisms, and new ideas from both our membership and staff."

In November, delegates from Wittenberg's Lambda Pi Eta, the Communication honorary society, along with the Communication professors traveled to the NCA national convention in Chicago. Karsnak's Wittenberg education has come full circle as she is now helping run NCA conventions, events that directly impact her undergraduate major department.

In the future, Karsnak wants to take her degree in Communication and apply it towards advocacy work for national health campaigns. At the moment, she is especially interested in Michelle Obama's child obesity campaign and would love to be involved in a similar crusade. Karsnak has been able to take her communication skills and tailor them to what her special interests are. She is a stand out example of what is possible through studying communication and we are proud to claim her as a Wittenberg alumna.



Perpetuating the Community Service Mindset: ⁴

From Wittenberg to the Workplace

By Rebecca Karpowicz '11

Caitlin Coleman's '05 passion for volunteering and helping those in need was recognized early in high school, continued throughout her Wittenberg career, and is carried out daily in the professional world as a Volunteer Specialist at LifeSource, Chicagoland's Blood Center. Ultimately, it is Coleman's job to ensure that they have volunteer support when and where it is promised.

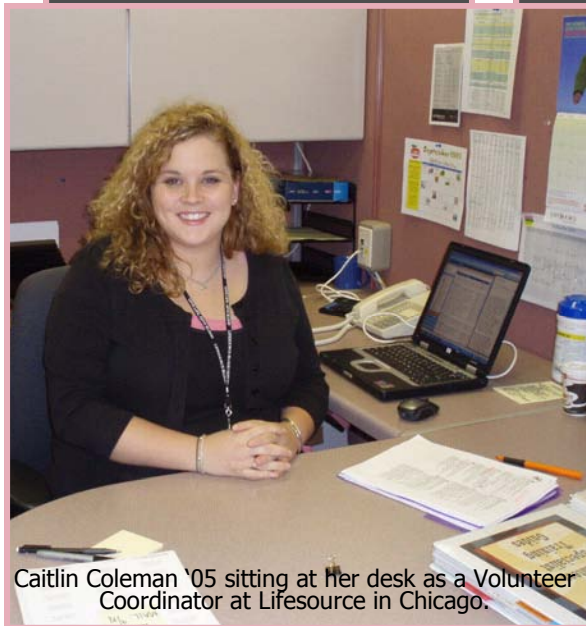
Her dedication to community service was recognized this past October at Wittenberg's Homecoming and Coleman was awarded the G.O.L.D Young Alumni Service Award.

At Wittenberg, her volunteer experience at Springfield's Parent/Infant Center left a positive impact, fueling her passion to continue to help people and explore the non-profit worlds. "I really enjoyed putting myself into a situation where I met people and learned about their

lives, all while serving a greater purpose," stated Coleman.

During her Wittenberg career, Coleman also worked in the Community Service Office, where she was exposed to other community partner sites goals, missions, and values that would allow her to realize a profession in the non-profit world was her ultimate goal. She also spent her time volunteering with the Lincoln Park Girl Scout troop, a non-traditional Girl Scout troop in downtown Springfield and was inspired knowing that she served as a role model for young kids. Coleman enjoyed seeing people embark on opportunities to help other people. Ultimately, these experiences guided her interest to coordinate volunteers for Lifesource, Chicagoland's Blood Center.

Coleman states that the most rewarding part of working for a non-profit is the knowing that she is able to make a difference by helping patients who are in need of an adequate and safe blood supply. Coleman truly believes in her organization's mission because it is important to her. "When I have a hard day, I can look back and realize that the work we are doing is saving lives and I am honored and privileged to have that opportunity," Coleman stated. She believes that people get what they give and she receives great satisfaction knowing that her efforts are making a big difference in peoples' lives.



Caitlin Coleman '05 sitting at her desk as a Volunteer Coordinator at Lifesource in Chicago.

Interning: The First Step to Success 5

By Megan Tassone '12



Imagine getting a dream job right out of college. Sarah Fetters '08 did just that and is one of five Media Relations staff members at East Carolina University. A softball player herself at Wittenberg, Fetters works with the softball and football teams. She attends all of the games, writes up the game stories for both sports online, sets up interviews between athletes and local media reporters, and creates the statistics page on the ECU site as well. Fetters appreciates Wittenberg's emphasis on strong writing, as she does quite a bit of writing online, and really acknowledges writing as a quality that has prepared her for her job. "The majority of my job consists of writing game recaps, feature stories, press releases and game note packages as well as speaking with members of our local media base," said Fetters. "My ability to formulate ideas and to write clearly and concisely has enabled me to excel in this field."



Sarah Fetters '08 during her Wittenberg softball career.

Sound like a busy job? It is. But Fetters' passion for her job fuels her energy, and her hard work certainly pays off. "Working in the athletic media relations department at East Carolina has opened more doors than I even knew existed," Fetters proclaimed. "Without the strong background in communication I received from Wittenberg, this career would not be possible." Whether she's watching ECU win, or seeing the feature that she made possible on TV, Fetters' position with Media Relations has continuous and fulfilling rewards.

How do you land a job that you like that much straight out of college? Well, Fetters started early by interning for three years with Ryan Maurer, the Director of News Services and Sports Information at Wittenberg,

which she claims to have been a great experience. A marketing internship with a minor league baseball team allowed her to shortly realize that she wanted to be involved in college athletics rather than professional. This baseball internship was not as successful as she wanted it to be, however Fetters stresses the value of interning and realizes that even though her first internship wasn't an ideal experience, it helped her realize what she truly wanted to do.

After playing Division III softball at Wittenberg, Sarah was curious to see what Division I athletics were about so she filled out 30 to 40 internship applications, ECU was the first place to accept her and she gladly accepted the offer.

Now, she is designing the sports pages on ECU's website, watching ECU on ESPN, and meeting and (eating lunch with!) people like SportsCenter anchor Rece Davis, motivational speaker and former Notre Dame football coach Lou Holtz, and sportscasters Mike Patrick and Holly Rowe.

To say that Sarah has achieved a successful career is an understatement, but to take her advice to start interning early and follow your passions is more than wise. Sarah encourages finding what you are passionate about and then "finding the avenue." You do not have to be right the first time, but sticking to what you love and what you are good at is one thing you can always do right. Sarah's passion and drive has allowed her to be promoted to a second team in the fall. She loves going to work every day - a true success in any job field.

"Without the strong background in communication I received from Wittenberg, this career would not be possible."

Professional Success is Owed to the Witt Light

By Kristin Komar '11

Even before coming to Wittenberg, Emily (Hiscar) Shearer '06, knew that the university would challenge her and prepare her for life after college. Little did she know, she would graduate with more skills for her future than she had initially bargained for.

As the current Marketing and Promotions Coordinate for Athletics at Austin Peay State University, in Clarksville, Tennessee, Shearer owes her success to her time here at Wittenberg.

Shearer stresses that Witt taught her all about time management, how to stay organized, and how to challenge herself, among many things.

"I learned the importance of public speaking and having self confidence when making decisions to lead people and have them follow your plan," she reminisced.

Shearer was very involved when she was on campus, being a member of Delta Gamma, S.A.A.C., College Democrats, and the Communication Club as well as being on the women's soccer and lacrosse teams for all four years. She majored in Communication and minored in Management and Women's Studies.

Her hard work and dedication to multiple things paid off. In grad school at Ithaca College in New York, Shearer felt

her time at Wittenberg placed her above many of her other classmates.

"I was so much more prepared than so many of my grad school classmates," she stated. "I honestly believe I did so well in graduate school because Witt had taught me to expect more of myself."

At her current job, Shearer is responsible for many differ-

"I can honestly say my favorite school with my favorite memories will always be Wittenberg."

ent things that have to do with athletics. She is in charge of creating and implementing marketing plans for all of the athletic programs, works with sponsorship contracts, and plans game scripts, including announcements, special recognitions, halftime groups, etc. She even helps advise the student spirit group, the Peay! Nuts.

Having the success that Shearer did at Wittenberg helped create an exciting future for her that constantly keeps her challenged. While she has had many adventures in her life so far, she still reminisces on her time at Wittenberg.

"I can honestly say my favorite school with my favorite memories will always be Wittenberg," Shearer stated. "Having light we pass it on."

Combining Passions Creates Ideal Career Path for Sarah Gearhart '06

By Kelly Clark '10

When alumna Sarah Gearhart '06 wakes up to go to work in the morning, an exciting day usually awaits her. A typical day for her may involve meeting and interviewing a professional athlete, directing a photo shoot, or traveling cross-country for product previews and media summits.

As the Associate Editor for STACK, a magazine dedicated solely to athletes that highlights athletic performance, training and lifestyle information, Gearhart has pursued her love for sports and journalism – two passions that she put into practice during her experience at Witt as a communication major and member of the cross country team.

"I knew I wanted to enter the magazine journalism profession prior to coming to Witt. My parents subscribed to tons of magazines," said Gearhart. "I was exposed to different writing styles and genres at a young age which was ultimately beneficial because it fueled my interest, and I subconsciously picked up on different writing techniques."

Gearhart enjoys many facets of her profession. "I really enjoy being able to express my creative side through writing and directing the photo spreads," Gearhart proclaimed.



Sarah Gearhart '06 sitting at her desk amongst athletic gear as the Associate Editor for STACK Magazine.

"I appreciate that I have the opportunity to meet and interview professional athletes, some of whom include Adrian Peterson, Troy Polomalu, Larry Fitzgerald, Dwyane Wade and Ryan Howard."

Gearhart also feels fortunate that her job has provided her with the opportunity to travel across the country. Some of her visits include Nike World Headquarters in Beaverton, Ore., Adidas U.S. headquarters in Portland, NYC, and San Diego for media summits.



"Sink-or-Swim Situation" Finds Mike Holley 8 '08 Succeeding with SwitchFast

By Tyler Hall '12

Following his exciting and involved four years at Wittenberg, Mike Holley '08 knew he wanted to get involved into the field of marketing. What he did not anticipate was the turbulent yet exhilarating environment of working for a small information technology firm in Chicago during the beginning of the recession. Despite the big shift from college life to marketing manager of SwitchFast Technologies, Holley thrived on the demanding circumstances and the opportunities presented to him in his first years on the job.

Upon graduation, Holley knew he was ready for a change. After spending his life in Columbus, he moved to Chicago with a friend in hopes of finding a fulfilling career. "I didn't have a job and didn't have much money saved, but I knew I needed to take a risk to be happy," Holley explains. "I absolutely made the right decision." It was in Chicago that he was hired onto an entry-level marketing position at SwitchFast and began his exciting journey with the company. As he worked with his fellow employees to pull the company through the struggles and challenges of the economic climate, Holley gained invaluable experience in a short time frame.

Working in the marketing sector for a company who previously attracted clients by referral was no small task. With time and progress, however, a twosome grew to a group of ten. "Seeing our department thrive and grow so quickly has been an incredible learning experience." Even though he is not involved with a relatively large firm, Holley is grateful for where he is— "Overall, working for a small business has been great because it's extremely encouraging to see how the work that I do affects my company on a day-to-day basis." Indeed, his responsibilities involving online lead generation, creating market materials, and general

"I have greatly benefitted from not being afraid to take big jumps and proactively shape my life"

brand strategy spreads the word on SwitchFast to numerous small businesses looking for technological support.

Reflecting on his Wittenberg experience in relation to his career, Holley has nothing but praise for the Communication department and its faculty. He credits the professors for supporting him in all his college endeavors as well as assisting in the transition to the professional world. "As soon as I understood the power of communication as a tool, the possibilities seemed endless," says Holley. "The confidence and discipline I developed through the Communication department is something I can apply in everything that I do."



Mike Holley '08 in front of office doors at Switchfast Technologies in Chicago.

He contributes this success in the Communication field to the dedication and fervor of his professors to see him succeed. "I'll never forget how much energy they brought to the classroom every day. You can hear it in Dr. Waggoner's voice, even at 8:00 in the morning."

He goes on to explain how programs like Comm Leaders helped to shape his experience: "The existence of programs like Communication Leaders is evidence that everyone in the Communication department is dedicated to preparing the student body for the next stage in life, and I take a great deal of pride in the work that they've all done." This pride has led Holley towards continuing to provide support to his alma mater and the Communication department in any way he can.

Mike Holley has not been away from Witt too long, but he has already been exposed to a myriad of challenges and accomplishments. He presses onward in his career with the knowledge and wisdom he carries from Wittenberg, along with the investment and care of those here at Wittenberg. He leaves this word of wisdom for those seeking advice in succeeding after graduation: "I have greatly benefitted from not being afraid to take big jumps and proactively shape my life. If I had to give any piece of advice to undergraduates today, I would encourage them to do the same."

Alumni

2003

Jill Hobelman – teaches autistic students for the Special School District in St. Louis, MO, and masters candidate in Severe Disabilities at Webster University.

Nicholas Williams - Special Projects Manager, Big Ass Fans Company, Lexington, KY. He and his wife Molly (Spath)' 03 welcomed their first son Tucker Sheldon Williams in March, 2008.

2004

Amy Kibby - Development Coordinator, Godman Guild Association, Columbus, OH.

Erin Pence - Wittenberg University Photographer, Springfield, OH.

Laura Russel - Associate Basic Course Director, GradCo President, School of Communication Studies, Ohio University.

Natalie (Sobonya) McAllister - Account Manager, Global Prairie, Shaker Heights, OH. Married Matthew McAllister in July 2008 and had first child in April 2009.

Tiffany Caito - Regional Sales Manager, Brightpoint North America, Plainfield, IN.

2005

Aubrey Anderson Davis - Program Assistant for the Writing and Speaking Skills Program for The World Bank Group, Washington, D.C.

David Fleenor - Admissions Counselor, Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL.

Stephanie (Beery) Herbert - Senior Accounting Specialist, Exel Logistics, Delaware, OH.

2007

Abby Hurt - School Based Coordinator, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH. Engaged to be married.

Greg Mustric - President/Founder, PRIORITY LAWN CARE, LLC, and Development Specialist, The Woda Group, Columbus, OH.

Loren Breen - Advertising Executive for *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, OH.

Julia Machledt - Master's candidate at Indiana University's School of Social Work.

Jerrod Swanton - Food stamp outreach coordinator with Catholic Charities in Springfield, OH.

Having Light We

NOTES & NEWS

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Kristin Collin - accepted to MBA program at Franklin University.

Megan (Jackson) Shroy - Assistant Account Executive, Paul Werth, Columbus, OH.

2008

Caitlin (Agustus) Shoemaker - Woodruff Enterprises, Director of Events and Marketing, Cedarville, OH.

Claire Johnson - Account Manager, Cincinnati Bell, Cincinnati, OH.

John Flaherty - District Executive, Simon Kenton Council, Boy Scouts of America, Columbus, OH.

Kari Phelan Kozlowski - Doctoral student in the Department of Sociology at the University of North Carolina.

Kelly Jurivic - Associate Account Executive, Launch Creative Marketing, Chicago, IL.

Lesley Levy - Capital University Law Student.

Zoe Lamberson - Attending law school at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Columbus, OH.

Nicole Wade - Technical Recruiter, TekSystems, Tampa, FL.

2009

Carmine Cesario - Client Manager, Credit Consultants, Columbus, OH.

Erin McBride - Cleveland State University Law School.

Jeff Hannah - Environmental Manager at the Telecommunications Industry Association, Washington, D.C.

Jenna Oliver - Leasing Consultant, Casto Reality, Columbus, OH.

Kathleen Graham - Campaign Leader, Gordon Food Service, Springfield, OH.

Kelly Eggers - Personal Assistant to Jean Chatzsky, the financial editor for the NBC *Today Show*.

Kristian Kovacs - Office administrator, Ohio Technology Group, Springfield, OH.



Communication alumni Loren Breen '05 and Sarah Simpson Pelfrey '04 celebrate Ana Steinbaugh Bennett '05 and Ryan Bennett's wedding.

Pass It On To Others



Department of Communication

Communication Seniors Present at the NCA Conference



Senior Lambda Pi Eta members Emily Willis and Allie Persinger presented at the National Communication Conference, highlighting the success of the honors society's shift towards community service. Last fall, the honorary was awarded a national grant to effect positive change in Springfield and bridging the gap between the Springfield community and Wittenberg. Willis and Persinger presented to other Lambda Pi Eta chapters that were present at the November conference in Chicago.

Lambda Pi Eta currently requires its members to commit 5 hours of community service per semester and will be very involved in planning the Ohio Communication Conference which will take place in Springfield next fall.

"It was very neat being an undergrad at the convention, because I was able to see what was possible," said Persinger. "A lot of times one thinks that your involvement in your major might end when you complete your undergrad work, but it absolutely doesn't."

Noteworthy Award Winners:

Senior **Erin Slattery** earned university-wide recognition with the M. Alice Geiger Award, which goes to one senior woman for her contributions to campus throughout her college career.

Junior **Heather DeSantis** was singled out for the Community Service Champion Award for her organizing several service projects to help the needy in Springfield.

Senior **Lilly Manzi**, a double-major in Communication and French, won the Kurt J. Fickert Award for academic achievements in the Language department.

Seniors **Katie Nemeth** and **Maryam Rezayat** were honored with Laurels in Communication, the department's highest award, which recognizes academic excellence, personal integrity, commitment to the community, and potential to use communication towards socially responsible ends.

Wittenberg's Greek Life awarded senior **Katie Nemeth** with the Campus Woman of the Year and **Dr. Sheryl Cunningham** as the Outstanding Faculty Member.

Meet the New Alumni Liaison!

Katie Wenger '12

For the next two years, Katie Wenger will fulfill the role of the alumni liaison for the communication department. Katie is a sophomore communication major, journalism minor from Granville, OH, and a cheerleader for Witt. Keep in touch with the Communication Department! Send your contact information, career, and graduate school updates to s12.kwenger@wittenberg.edu.