

# Links

Connecting Alumni,  
Students and Faculty

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Wittenberg University  
Department of Communication  
Newsletter

2015

Photo credit: Dr. Stefne Broz

# Greetings from the Alumni Liaison

by Ciara Colvin ('16)

Welcome to another issue of *Links*, our annual Department of Communication newsletter!

It has been a pleasure working with the *Links* staff this year. These writers have been committed to making sure this year's newsletter is one of the greatest issues yet.

As you all read this newsletter I hope it makes you proud of your connection with our Communication Department. I'm happy that the alumni featured in this booklet are finding their purpose in life. There is no greater feeling than knowing where you belong, and your stories inspire us.

I want to thank the Communication majors who contributed their talents for their hard work in writing the features that appear in this issue. I also want to thank those alumni, students, and faculty who allowed us to feature you.

Lastly, I want to send out a huge CONGRATULATIONS to the graduating class of 2015!



*Director of Publicity and Alumni Liaison Intern, Ciara Colvin ('16)*

## *Links* Staff Writers

Meghan Concannon ('15)

Brenna Doherty ('16)

Pearl Ernat ('17)

Jenny Klose ('15)

Kristin Mercer ('15)

Victoria Perlak ('15)

Evelyn Ritzi ('17)

Rachel Tennison ('16)

Emily Van Buren ('15)

Kayla Villegas ('16)



## In This Issue...

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Pages 2-3<br>One Year Out:<br>Matt Pfouts ('14) and<br>Kelcie Webster ('14)               | Page 23<br>Department Launches LinkedIn<br>Profile and Group                          |
| Page 4<br>Dr. Warber: Director of the First<br>Year Experience                            | Page 24<br>Being Empowered & Challenged:<br>Keeley (Buehler) Hunter ('08)             |
| Page 5<br>From Here to Hollywood:<br>Haily Hall ('11)                                     | Page 25<br>Road to Medical School:<br>Ben Noble ('11)                                 |
| Page 6<br>Dr. Smith & Dr. Cunningham<br>Take Sabbaticals                                  | Page 26<br>Communication Majors Honored<br>at Spring Honors Convocation               |
| Page 7<br>Alma Mater and<br>Alma Lux Awards   | Page 27<br>Produced By Wittenberg:<br>Logan Beam ('12)                                |
| Pages 8 –9<br>Six Years Out:<br>Sara McKinniss ('09) and<br>Kathleen (Graham) White ('09) | Page 28<br>Communication Alumni Visit Witt  |
| Page 10<br>Lambda Pi Eta: The<br>Communication Honorary                                   | Page 29<br>Innovation is Key to Staying Ahead<br>of the Curve: Brian McCoach ('06)    |
| Page 11<br>Spring Colloquium: Dr.<br>Waggoner's Book Work                                 | Page 30<br>A Note from the Department Chair   |
| Page 12<br>C.A.B.L.E. 2015-2016   | Page 31<br>Dr. Waggoner's Gender and<br>Communication Class Talks with<br>Drag Queens |
| Page 13<br>A Bittersweet Experience:<br>4-Paws Dogs                                       | Page 32<br>Living Out Her Dreams:<br>Brynne Mayne ('13)                               |
| Pages 14 - 17, 20-21<br>Alumni News and Notes   | Page 33<br>Communication Students Complete<br>Valuable Internships                    |
| Pages 18-19<br>Communication Majors<br>Study Abroad                                       | Page 34<br>Integrated Media Corps   |
| Page 22<br>Take Me Out To The Ball Game:<br>Michael Holley ('08)                          | Page 35<br>The Experience at<br>Comic-Con   |
|   | Pages 36-37<br>Faculty News and Notes   |



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## 2 One Year Out — Happiness is Motivation: Matt Pfouts ('14)

by Emily Van Buren ('15)



Matt Pfouts ('14)

When Matt Pfouts was recruited to work for Compass Group North America, he had the rare opportunity to choose what location to start his life after graduation. Ultimately he chose Dallas, Texas. Although moving to a new state was a difficult decision, taking the chance has really paid off. He notes that it is one of the fastest growing cities and the job opportunities are unmatched.

His first job after he graduated was working as a Regional Sales Director for one of Compass Group's brands, Canteen, a supplier of coffee and vending services. He worked in a large sector dealing with over 2,000 businesses in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

Pfouts' experience working for Sodexo at Wittenberg helped prepare him for the work he has done in the world's largest food provider services. Real world application is what propels Matt Pfouts, which is what drew him to the Communication major in the first place.

"I developed an infatuation with the complexities of how we communicate with one another because it's not what I would call a 'textbook discipline,'" said Pfouts. He also found positive influences in the Communication Department's faculty. His first communication course was with Dr. Broz where he "fell in love with the discipline, and more importantly, her!"

He also found a mentor and friend in Dr. Warber, who "has made a tremendous imprint on my growth as a professional and as a person," and "has been a shoulder to cry on and one of my biggest cheerleaders."

Happiness is what motivated Matt Pfouts to be the person he is. He highly recommends the book *The Four Agreements*, for those who are looking to live their best life. He believes the happier you are, the more you will contribute to the world.

Although very active in his Wittenberg career, he says that nothing really prepares you for living in the real world. He believes though, that "the ability to cope, to thrive, to experience new things, to face adversity, to fail, and to rise again" is what's really important to develop. Ultimately, he notes, "Our Wittenberg journey is most definitely the best introductory crash course."

His advice to upcoming graduates is to explore being somewhere outside of your comfort zone and to not let a feeling of unworthiness hold you back from achieving your goals.

"When you love yourself and you live your best life; your energy radiates to others," said Pfouts. He takes his inspiration from Oprah Winfrey and says to trust your intuition. His last piece of advice is to consider the Maya Angelou quote, "When you know better, you do better."

"When you love yourself and you live your best life, your energy radiates to others."  
- Matt Pfouts

## 3 One Year Out — Skills and Knowledge Are Key: Kelcie Webster ('14)

by Pearl Ernat ('17)

A 2014 Wittenberg graduate from Beavercreek, Ohio, Kelcie Webster currently works for the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitor's Bureau. In addition to being a full-time student, while at Wittenberg Kelcie was a member of the Integrated Media Corps, worked as an intern with the Springfield Chamber of Commerce and Champion City Guide and Supply, and served as a Sunday school teacher.

"A Communication degree shows an employer that you have a wide breadth of skills and background knowledge in several fields."  
- Kelcie Webster

Webster's Communication degree from Wittenberg has been very helpful to her. "A Communication degree shows an employer that you have a wide breadth of skills and background knowledge in several fields."

Kelcie's Communication classes often focused on media and tied in with her Integrated Media Corps experience. Kelcie stated that the knowledge she gained through her communication classes at Wittenberg is now "second nature" to her.

At the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Kelcie juggles several different roles. Although she is officially an employee of the Bureau, she also works on projects through the Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Her experience there as an intern during her senior year led directly to an opportunity to begin her career there upon graduation.

At the Chamber of Commerce, Kelcie manages their mobile application named Springfield OH2Go. At the Greater Springfield Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Kelcie works with arranging tourism visits to Springfield and deals with promoting the tourism aspect of Springfield. For Champion City Guide and Supply, Kelcie acts in a manager role. The Champion City Guide and Supply store functions partly as a retail store that sells Springfield and Ohio inspired designs and consignments, but also functions as a site for visitor information.

Kelcie stated if she could have done anything differently while at Wittenberg she would "have taken more risks in school and work." Kelcie's advice for students looking to enhance their Wittenberg experience is to "learn about everything you can because you never know when one skill could really help something else."



Kelcie Webster with  
The Walking Dead Producer,  
Greg Nicoter

## Dr. Warber Takes on the First-Year Experience

by Ciara Colvin ('16)



*Dr. Warber with some of her First-Year Seminar students at a Columbus Blue Jackets game.*

Dr. Warber accepted the position as the Director of First Year Programs and assumed all administrative responsibilities associated with Wittenberg's new First Year Seminar (FYS), which replaced the WittSem as our new freshman experience in the Fall of 2014.

The year-long FYS program is required for all traditional incoming freshmen. Therefore, Dr. Warber works to recruit and train faculty, design curriculum for the program, and run several retreats and workshops throughout the year.

"I have a lot of help from great people all around campus who have made my job much easier," said Warber.

Dr. Warber felt this position would give her new experiences in administration and it would help her build her professional portfolio and make her more of a well-rounded individual in academia.

"I like being able to take a top-down view and look strategically at how to build a program that aligns with Wittenberg's mission and values," said Warber. "I felt this position was a great fit because I've done a lot of work as Grand Marshal and as a member of Programming Committee over the years, so this third position allowed me to triangulate three different aspects of campus and work to bring those things together."

Taking on this position gave her the opportunity to advocate and enact her ideas. She likes planning the program schedule, working with all different kinds of people on campus, and building a program from the ground up.

"There can be frustrations, though, for sure. I manage 72 people on campus ranging from faculty to staff to students to members of the senior staff/administration," said Warber.

One accomplishment Dr. Warber is most proud of is "pursuing a university-wide daily schedule change that created a common hour for the First Year Seminar when no other classes are scheduled to meet." This allowed for several common events with all 500+ freshmen throughout the school year. This also created an open time on Thursdays to use for meetings.

"A common meeting hour is something Witt has wanted to do, but nobody has been able to carve out the time and the faculty hasn't considered a daily schedule change in 20 years. The fact that I was able to get that through in one year, taking on Chapel hour to do so, is noteworthy," said Warber.



*Dr. Warber's FYS at Young's Jersey's Dairy*

## From Here to Hollywood: Haily Hall ('11)

by Evelyn Ritzi ('17)

After graduating in 2011, Haily Hall set her sights on Hollywood. After receiving degrees in both Communication and English, Hall moved across the country to Los Angeles with some of her closest friends from Wittenberg. With help from Wittenberg Communication Professor Dr. Warber, Hall was able to interview with the sister company of CBS, leading to a job as a sales assistant.



*Haily Hall ('11)*

Hall is an excellent example of the power of networking and making connections. It was through her connections with CBS that she next acquired a job with the ad firm UM (a subsidiary of McCann Erickson), where she was a Junior Buyer for the Sony Pictures account.

More recently, Hall worked as an Executive Assistant for Warner Bros. Entertainment in Hollywood. In this role, Hall directly assisted the Vice President of Global Communication, Michael R. Williams, in the WBTV department. She managed his schedule and calendar while ensuring the department's day-to-day operations ran smoothly.

Hall is passionate about television. Part of her job requirement at Warner Bros. was to keep up to date on all WB produced and distributed content, meaning she was paid to watch and analyze television. However, Hall's ultimate dream is to be a writer for television. Her Wittenberg connections are still helping her meet this goal.

*"Sink your teeth into whatever you love."  
- Haily Hall*

After connecting with alumna Lauren Schmidt Hissrich ('00), Hall was given the opportunity to do research for TV pitches and very recently acquired a job as a writer's assistant. She attributes her success in the competitive L.A. job market to having genuine connections, a willingness to work hard, and the courage to accept the opportunities with which she was presented.

Hall looks back fondly on her time at Wittenberg. "I just remember every professor I ever had being incredible, even the ones I never had classes with," said Hall. Hall especially remembers her experience in the Communication Leaders program (the forerunner to C.A.B.L.E.), which she participated in during her senior year with Dr. Warber and then-Director of Career Services, Karen Reynolds.

"It was a great experience and gave me so many great tools for my post-college job hunt," said Hall. Hall's current advice to Communication students is to, "Sink your teeth into whatever you love. Figure out what you're passionate about and use every resource you have now to turn that passion into something people will pay you to do."



## 6 Dr. Smith and Dr. Cunningham Take Sabbatical Leaves

by Ciara Colvin ('16)

This past year two of the Communication Department's professors took sabbaticals to pursue research projects. Dr. Matthew Smith went on sabbatical in the fall of 2014 and Dr. Sheryl Cunningham took hers in the spring of 2015.

Throughout the fall semester Dr. Smith completed multiple book projects, book chapters, participated in academic conferences, made contributions in the mainstream media, reviewed a book, and served on a four-person working group.

"I am grateful to the university for the opportunity to pursue these projects made available through the sabbatical program," said Dr. Smith.



Dr. Matthew Smith

Smith's book projects included his completion of the index and page proofs for the second edition of *Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture*, which was released in the United Kingdom and United States in February of 2015. Smith also was able to draft a proposal, negotiate a contract, and recruit more than 30 contributors to a new anthology project for *The Routledge Handbook to the Secret Origins of Comics Studies*.

Smith also researched and wrote essays for "The Silver Age Playbook: Minting the Modern Superhero," "Superhero Comics," and "How the Graphic Novel Works." Dr. Smith had the pleasure of delivering a keynote address on "Integrating the Ninth Art in the Curriculum" at the West Virginia Association of College English Teachers conference in October of 2014 in Wheeling, WV. He also delivered two panels, "Past President's Panel" and "Capitalizing on a Communication Tool: Animation," at the Ohio Communication Association conference at Franklin University in October of 2014.

"I also began a scholarly project examining leadership styles in the *Green Lantern* mythos and initiated work on a set of invited presentations that I will be delivering at the University of Puerto Rico in April 2015," said Dr. Smith.



Dr. Sheryl Cunningham

While Dr. Cunningham's primary focus is teaching her students at Wittenberg she believed sabbatical allowed her to do some intellectual exploration. Cunningham's sabbatical allowed her to take time to do research on news discourse of environmental issues in Ohio, specifically fracking and the Toledo water crisis.

"I am interested in the interplay of news discourse and public policy when it comes to environmental issues in the state," said Dr. Cunningham.

As part of her research on environmental issues, Cunningham had to read many books while on sabbatical. She stated the most influential pieces she read would be between *The Politics of Environmental Discourse* and *Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*. However, she also found "Storylines in the Sands: News, Narrative, and Ideology in the Calgary Herald" helpful in terms of thinking through her own research projects.

After finishing her research, Cunningham went to The Conference on Communication and Environment in Boulder, CO in June of 2015 to present her work.

## Twin Communication Students Are Awarded 7 2015 Alma Mater and Alma Lux

by Ciara Colvin ('16)

The Alma Mater and Alma Lux are the two highest awards a Wittenberg student can win, and this year they went to two Communication majors who also happened to be twins.



Trevor and Kayla Villegas ('16) at the Spring 2015 Honors Convocation.

According to Wittenberg the Alma Mater is "an honor bestowed upon a junior female on the basis of character and integrity, service to the community, concern for others, and high standards of scholarship" and the Alma Lux is "an honor bestowed upon a junior male student who possesses qualities of leadership, scholarship, and service."

Kayla Villegas has been involved in a wide array of activities thus far. She has been an RA, Student Senator to Union Board and Greek Life, and more. "I really think the best thing we can take away from Witt are the experiences you cultivate through our involvement in and outside the classroom," said Kayla Villegas ('16).

As a freshman Trevor Villegas joined Common Ground as Vice President. As a Sophomore he joined the Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity as well as the Interfraternity Council, where he is now President. He has also been an Orientation Assistant since his sophomore year.

Kayla expressed that she loves Wittenberg because it makes her feel uplifted and she has trust in her classmates. She feels that she is surrounded by nothing but kindhearted people.

"When I look back on my college days, I'll always smile fondly over the afternoons I spent drinking coffee on my porch or Frisbee games played in the Hollow. We really are lucky to be on a campus full of passionate people who are just plain fun," said Kayla Villegas.

"I love Witt because of the friendly people, opportunities, and open minds of faculty and staff. The Communication Department has really helped me to learn how to network and market myself while acquiring a new perspective on people," said Trevor Villegas.

The Communication experience for Kayla has "completely altered my way of thinking and perceiving individuals and their relationships with me and the world around them." She believes Communication challenges you to question why people respond the way they do.

"What their body language suggests, and how I can become a better communicator. It has helped me in every aspect of my life— if you can major in COMM, do it," said Kayla Villegas.

Trevor Villegas expressed that receiving this award is "Indescribable, the opportunities that Wittenberg has provided are invaluable and I am excited to give back to this place."

"I feel so honored. The history of the Alma Mater award is simply astounding and how many Universities can say that their first award of highest honor was solely to be bestowed upon a female student? I think the Alma Mater award speaks a lot to our commitment to diversity and spirit of passing it on," said Kayla Villegas. "I still can't believe I am the one who gets to hero that sentiment for a year!"

## 8 Six Years Out— The Communication Department and Networking Are Key: Sara McKinniss ('09)

by Kristen Mercer ('15)



*Sara McKinniss and coworkers with Brutus Buckeye during a promotional products show for ODW Logistics, Inc.*

An avid runner, baker, and decorator, Wittenberg University Communication alumna Sara McKinniss ('09) enjoys the domesticated lifestyle. She worked as the Senior Marketing Manager at ODW Logistics, Inc. in Columbus, Ohio. McKinniss credits the Communication Department for providing her with the skills she needs to excel in both aspects of her life.

For McKinniss, post-Wittenberg life started as a freelance public relations specialist for Wilt Public Relations in Springfield, Ohio. Eventually, McKinniss was offered a salaried position, becoming Wilt's first full-time hire. From there, McKinniss moved on to accept a position as Senior Marketing Manager at ODW Logistics.

ODW Logistics, Inc. is a supply chain and logistics company owned by the Ness's, a Wittenberg family. As a Senior Marketing Manager, McKinniss was responsible for overseeing all marketing responsibilities, which includes lead generation, content writing, social media, community relations, and public relations. Building upon the skills and experience she gained at OD, McKinniss moved into a Marketing Manager position with Continental Office Environments. In Columbus she is responsible for copywriting, social media management, marketing analytics, and competitor analysis.

The Communication Department at Wittenberg has played a critical role in McKinniss' career. She gives praise to Dr. Katie Warber and her Research Methods course, as the statistics and other material she learned is incredibly applicable to her career. Also, Dr. Stefne Broz's writing critiques have helped McKinniss become a better writer, which is crucial because she estimates that writing is about 60 percent of her job.

The Wittenberg education McKinniss has received as a whole has helped shaped her into the capable writer and successful businesswoman she is today.

"I think learning to read and understand those pieces of complicated text has been integral in a marketing role that requires research and critical thinking skills," said McKinniss.

As far as her future plans go, McKinniss enjoys her time in Columbus and plans to continue growing there. She is also looking forward to passing her light on to other young professionals in Central Ohio. She recently adopted a rescued Pug, named Percy.



*Sara McKinniss and Dr. Stefne Broz at a Columbus Crew soccer game.*

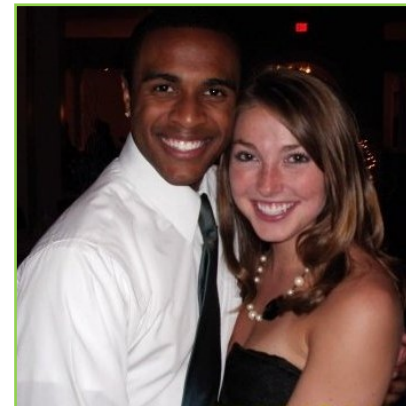
## Six Years Out— From An Internship To Her Career: Kathleen (Graham) White ('09)

9

by Allie Hermes ('15)

Kathleen White ('09) graduated from Wittenberg University with a degree in Communication as well as with two minors in Business and Spanish. She went on to receive her MBA from Capital University.

Since her time at Wittenberg, Kathleen married Brandon White ('08) in 2011 and they welcomed their first little bundle of joy, Declan, this past summer. Kathleen and her family currently live in Hilliard, Ohio but she commutes back to Springfield each day for her career at the Ohio Valley Division of Gordon Food Service.



*Kathleen White and her husband Brandon, who is a 2008 Communication alumnus*

Her history with Gordon Food Service began during her junior year at Wittenberg when she served as the marketing intern. She worked hard, networked, and executed the internship position that left a great impression on the Marketing Director. Even when the internship ended, Kathleen kept in contact with her supervisor, which led to a job opportunity six months later. Since then Kathleen has served as a Campaign Leader, Marketing Services Leader, and she recently took a new role as Fruits, Vegetables, and Dairy Category Leader. She can't speak enough about how much she enjoys the company she works for and the people she works with. As she points out, the organizational culture of a company is something grads should consider throughout the job search.

One Communication course that really helped Kathleen in her professional career is public speaking. Regularly, Kathleen leads meetings and trainings with more than 200 people in attendance. The skills and experience she received from the public speaking course have helped her to excel in her career. She pointed out how important it is to clearly articulate your messages in the business world and she credits the entire Communication curriculum to preparing her for that.



*Kathleen and her son Declan Callaghan*

She has hosted two C.A.B.L.E. site visits at Gordon Food Service to offer students a view into the organization as well as a chance to learn about different career paths. Kathleen is a shining example of a Wittenberg alumna that continues to pass the light onto others.



## Lambda Pi Eta: The Communication Honorary

In the Spring of 2015, ten new members were inducted into Lambda Pi Eta, our local chapter of the national Communication honorary. Two of the members were graduating seniors Kelsey Claar and Jenny Klose, so Fall semester began with eight members.

Shortly after the initiation, LPH held elections: Brenna D. is President, Kristina Fultz is Secretary, and Courtney Huck is Vice President of LPH. LPH is in the process of planning an event for the coming semester. Typically LPH hosts academic-focused events, such as inviting faculty to discuss their research.



From Left to right, top row: Courtney Huck ('17), Kelsey Claar ('15), Madeline Geiger ('16), Rachel Tennison ('16), Kayla Villegas ('16), Kristina Fultz ('16). Left to right, bottom row: Jenny Klose ('15), Linzey Rice ('16), Brenna Doherty ('16), Not Pictured: Andrea Mattingly ('16)

## Liberal Arts in Action: 2015 Celebration of Learning



**Kristin Mercer ('15)** Presented her work on *Ideologies of American Patriotism: An Analysis of Political Country Music*.

This paper was written for Dr. Cunningham's Political Communication course.

**The members of the 2014-2015 Integrated Media Corps** presented a multi-media session on *The Power of Promotion*, which featured their work for the university over the past year, from athletics highlight reels to promotional videos, social media efforts, and much more.



## Department of Communication Spring 2015 Colloquium: Dr. Grace Ahn

by Ciara Colvin ('16)



The Department of Communication welcomed Dr. Grace Ahn from the University of Georgia to present her research on "How Digital Media Transform Traditional Rules of Persuasive Communication."

Dr. Ahn is an Assistant Professor of Advertising in the Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication at the University of Georgia.

Her research focuses on how digital media transform traditional rules of persuasive communication. Her research projects include the use of digital media technology such as social media, video games, and immersive virtual environments as tools of persuasion, examining whether

the effect of these virtual interactions transfer into the physical world to influence how users think, feel and behave.

She explained that the research project included the use of digital media technology such as social media, video games, and immersive virtual environments as tools of persuasion, examining whether the effect of these virtual interactions transfer into the physical world to influence how users think, feel, and behave.

## Dr. Waggoner's Research on Southern Female Identity To Be Published in Forthcoming Book

Dr. Catherine Waggoner has been working on writing a book based on her work in the Mississippi Delta, a place many have called "The Most Southern Place On Earth."



Dr. Waggoner interviewing Mrs. Nola Leggitt

Over the past few years, she has interviewed Delta women about their Southern identities and the extent to which those identities are shaped by Southern mythologies (e.g., the Southern belle, the Southern lady, the Black mammy, the redneck woman). Her sister, Laura Egley Taylor, is providing photographs and assisting with the interviews.

It will be published by the University Press of Mississippi, and it's tentatively titled *Realizing Our Place: Real Southern Women on Living in a Mythologized Land*. She says that it has been a very rewarding project.

## 12 Ambitious Juniors Take Advantage of Their Opportunities: C.A.B.L.E. 2015-2016

by Kayla Villegas ('16)



The 2015 C.A.B.L.E. members (top row, left to right) Dr. Tim Bode, Alex Beebe, Dani Mace, Kayla Villegas, Nicole Cooney, Greg Heine, Andrea Logee, Taylor Gannon, and Madeline Kraft, (bottom row, left to right) Karen Reynolds, Meredith Keegan, Brenna Doherty, and Madison Straughn.

This past January, the Communication and Business Leadership Experience (C.A.B.L.E.) kicked off its 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. The group of eleven energetic and ambitious juniors majoring or minoring in either Communication or Business (or both) began two semesters of practical application of theories learned in classes as well as learning more about leadership, organic networking opportunities, business culture and language, and completing a semester-long case study to take on a real-world challenge and create change.

C.A.B.L.E. provides students with opportunities to visit and learn about a wide array of organizations—for profit, nonprofit, or government—and gives students an opportunity to experience the institution in hopes of determining the cultural right fit for their future careers. The group meets weekly to engage with Wittenberg alumni, educate themselves on relevant topics such as personal branding or professional etiquette, and to debrief from speakers and visits. This spring alone, the group has visited several companies including: Nationwide Financial, Kao, Gordon Food Services, TEKsystems and Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Each visit was hosted by managers and leaders who graduated from Wittenberg University.

Program advisers are Karen Reynolds, C.A.B.L.E. co-founder, and Dr. Tim Bode, Asst. Professor for the Wittenberg Business Department. When asked about the advantages of C.A.B.L.E., Reynolds commented on the program's goal of helping students feel more comfortable in the world of work and also developing a strong resume that's not task-focused, but results focused. "C.A.B.L.E. is my PASSION!" she added. Currently the group is focused on a case study for the University's Advancement Department and will present their work in late April.

The 2015 CABLE students are: Gregory Heine, Danielle Mace, Nicole Cooney, Kayla Villegas, Taylor Gannon, Andrea Logee, Meredith Keegan, Brenna Doherty, Madison Straughn, Alex Beebe and Madeline Kraft.

Interested students are encouraged to apply to the program in the fall of their junior year. Students complete a required internship during the summer following their junior year and receive one academic credit for each semester of the program. The experience will conclude this fall with a visit to Chicago and include case study presentations to Google and Leo Burnett and visits to four other organizations.

## A Bittersweet Experience: Communication Students Serve as 4 Paws Dog Handlers

13

by Allie Hermes ('15)

Every semester around the second week of classes, our favorite furry four-legged classmates arrive on campus. Wittenberg partners with 4 Paws for Ability in Xenia, Ohio to foster 10 to 13 service dogs each semester. 4 Paws for Ability is a non-profit organization that trains and places service dogs with children with disabilities in order to enrich their lives. These dogs are trained in seizure assistance, autism assistance, and food allergen detection, to name just a few of their life-saving capabilities.

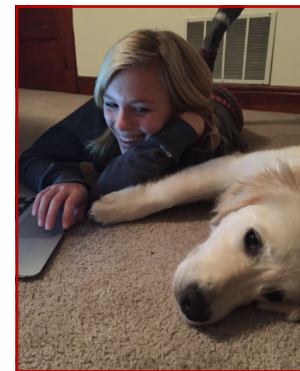
I, along with four other Communication students, were fortunate enough to be selected from among many applicants to foster a service dog this spring. As handlers, our main goal is to socialize the dogs by taking them to class, getting them out into the community, and most importantly, providing them with opportunities to interact with children.

Even though we only had one short semester with our dogs, all of us handlers made the most out of each and every second. Grace Monahan ('15) and Melanie Ellis ('15) recall how often their dog, M&M, brightened the day of those around her. Carli Swartz ('15) laughs about the time she and her dog, Widget, were in the bathroom and Widget crawled into the next stall, causing quite a commotion. Allie Ogden ('15) really values the bond that her and her dog, Giselle, formed.

One question that we often get asked is "How are you going to be able to give the dog back at the end of the program after you have formed such a close bond?" The answer to that question is quite simple. It would be selfish for me to keep my service dog, Dania, because it would prohibit her from reaching her full potential. But most importantly, it would be taking away a child's best friend and potential life-saver.



Carli Swartz ('15) and Widget



Allie Hermes ('15) and Dania studying

Carli Swartz ('15) stated that she joined the program because she "wanted to make a difference." This is true among all of us handlers. While we would love to keep our dogs forever, we had it in our hearts going into the program that we were doing this for the children receiving the service dogs, not ourselves.

My favorite part of this experience has been watching Dania grow and being able to physically and emotionally see what an enormous difference she is going to make in a child's life. I think it's fair to ask the question: Who helped who? Dania has made a huge impact on my life, and it's wonderful to see her doing so well with the little boy she is with now.



## Alumni News and Notes

## 2003

**Todd Dillion** is living in St. Louis, MO and working for a rad digital agency called Matchbox Design Group (matchboxdesigngroup.com). His title is Partnerships & Special Projects.

## 2004



**Aaron Copley-Spivey** is working for the Luthern School of Theology at Chicago as the Associate Director of Human Resources and Housing in Chicago, Illinois.

**Erin Pence** took a position as an Event Photographer at Wright State University in Fairborn, Ohio.

**Michael Wesbecher** lives in Chicago, Illinois and works for the University of Illinois College of Medicine as the Director of Development Communication.

## 2005

**Jake Rollefson** was promoted to Sales Executive— Programmatic/Performance. He also moved from Pandora's headquarters in Oakland, California to their office in Chicago and now calls on the Midwest region.

## 2006



**Sarah Gearhart** is a freelance writer in New York City and has released two 10-page features. She is finalizing an art book she has been working on and collaborating on a New York City travel guide.

**Brian McCoach** lives in New York, NY and is employed with Hearst Magazine as a Senior Director of Portfolio Strategy (see feature on p. 29).

**Phil Steffes** is an Underwriter at Kemba Financial Credit Union. He is married to Sarajane (Stofac) Steffes ('09). They have a 2-year-old daughter named Brielle.

## 2007

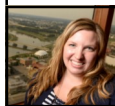
**Rachel Dunn** works at Unilever as an Associate Marketing Manger.

**Melissa (Crosby) Rosenberg** lives in Brooklyn and works as a Research Analyst at Converse in New York City. She got married to Adam Rosenberg in June, 2015.



## Alumni News and Notes

## 2008



**Jocelin (Baker) Dean** is living Dayton, Ohio with her husband and their 4-year-old daughter, Sophia. She recently became the Membership Director for the Dayton Racquet Club.

**Kelly Eggers** is the Executive Business Manager in the Office of the CEO for Dow Jones & *The Wall Street Journal*. She is currently living in New York City.

**Sarah Fetters** is in her second year at Duke University working in Sports Information. She was promoted from Assistant Director to Associate Director.

**Michael Holley** was promoted to Senior Director of Marketing and Fan Experience with the Staten Island Yankees.

**Zoe Lamberson** resides in Grandview Heights (Columbus), Ohio and is an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Fairfield County, Ohio.

**Amy (Fickert) Southgate** is embarking on her seventh year with Royal Caribbean International and her fourth year as a Cruise Director for the company. She recently got married to Andrew Southgate on May 9th, 2015.



## 2009

**Kat Bremer** is currently working as a case manager in Houston, Texas for DeLizio Law. Her and her husband celebrated their fourth wedding anniversary in November 2015.

**Carmine Cesario** works for Rehrig Pacific Company as Inside Sales in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

**Andrea Lauer** is working at The Urban Land Institute as a Senior Associate— Councils. She is getting married on November 14th, 2015 to Martin R. Schell III.



**Nicole (Hollis) O'Brien** is the Personal Lines Operations Manager at Dempsey & Siders Insurance Agency in Cincinnati, OH. She married Johnathan O'Brien in 2010. Their first son, Deacon Aaron, was born in December 2013 and they welcomed their second son, Bennett Michael in July 2015.

**Kristian (Kovacs) Grizzell** is employed at Alliance Data Card Services as a Senior Coordinator in Co-Brand Sales Support in Columbus, OH.

## Alumni News and Notes

### 2009, cont'd

**Sarajane (Stofac) Steffes** works for the Development Department of National Church Residences as the Relocation Project Leader and Communications Coordinator in Upper Arlington, OH.

### 2010

**Joelle Ghanem** was accepted among other Account Executive applicants at Leo Burnett to go on a week long trip to Cannes, France. She was promoted to Senior Account Executive in October at Leo Burnett.



**Amy (Prugh) Lintern** lives in Indianapolis with her husband Mark. She is working as the Marketing Coordinator for Automatic Irrigation Supply Co. They welcomed their daughter on December 10, 2014.

**Gretchen McIntosh** graduated in August from The Ohio State University with a Ph.D. in Cultural Policy and Arts Administration. She is the Director of Evaluation & Stewardship at Dublin Arts Council and a part-time instructor for the University of Kentucky masters program in Arts Administration. She lives in Columbus with her husband, Jim ('10), and their two children.

**Anna (List) Morris** received a promotion and now works as the Communication Specialist for the Ohio Resource Center, housed within the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University. Anna and her husband, Scott ('10), recently welcomed their baby boy named Noah Alexander Morris.



**Katie Nemeth** is serving as Individual Giving Manager at the Cincinnati Symphony & Pops Orchestra.

### 2011

**Christy Brinkhoff** recently moved to Texas with a Wittenberg alumnus, Ross Roeding ('10). She works with Fidelity Investments as a Registered Financial Advisor, Investment Consultant.

**Emily Shaw** has been promoted to a Work Opportunity Specialist with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. She started taking classes at Wittenberg to finish her second English degree.

## Alumni News and Notes

### 2011, cont'd

**Jacob Sigafoss** recently became an instructor at the Ohio Media School teaching video production. He also started his own Photography and Videography business known as Spell Bender Media.

**Stephanie Sodders** is currently living in Cincinnati, OH and is working as a Digital Solutions Coordinator for Cengage Learning.

**Zach Spring** recently finished his last year for his MS for Marketing and Communication through Franklin University. He is currently working at Battelle in Columbus, OH as a Buyer. He will be relocating to Charlotte, NC in late November 2015.

**Chris Tabler** is working as a Manufacturers Representative at Garber Engineering Company in Piqua, OH.

### 2012

**Alyssa Brake** is living in Hilliard, Ohio and is working at TEKsystems as an Internal Sourcing Specialist.

**Brian Duke** recently accepted a new position with Prosum in Denver. He will be working as a recruiter to help build a new office and book businesses in a brand new office the company recently opened in Denver

**Mike Evans** is living in Orlando, FL and has accepted a job offer at Web Benefits Design Corp. He works as a Account Executive.

**Nishant Makhija** moved to New York City on August 13 from Columbus, Ohio. He is working on the Brian Lehrer Show at WNYC Radio, New York Public Radio, an NPR affiliate.



**Dana Makstaller** graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Master's of Art in Communication Studies in April of 2014. In March of 2015, she took an Account Manager position at AGAR.

**Hannah (Leguillon) Taphorn** was promoted to Research and DataBase Manager for REDI Cincinnati.



**Katie Wenger** is living in Chicago and is currently working at DuPage Credit Union as Online Marketing Specialist.

(continued on p. 20)

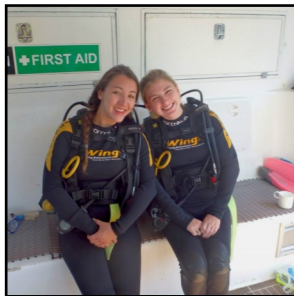


# Oh, the Places You'll Go: Communication Students Study Abroad

by Brenna Doherty ('16)



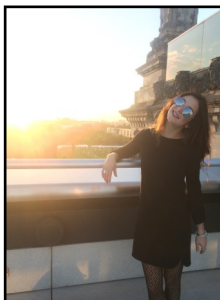
*Katie with a koala bear*



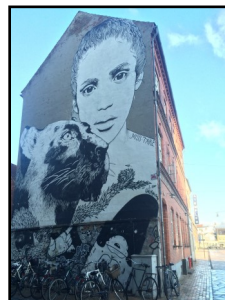
*Katie and her friend Isabella going scuba diving*

Always having the desire to study abroad, Katie Lewis ('16) traveled to Australia to study at Bond University. While there she took Communication and Business classes, as well as an Australian history class.

She advises students who want to go abroad to, "Go. Don't be worried with what you will miss at Witt. Witt will always be here, but the people and experiences you will encounter abroad are irreplaceable."



*Maddy visiting Berlin during her semester in Denmark*



*Maddy's favorite picture in Aarhus, Denmark*

Due to her natural curiosity, Maddy Straughn ('16) has always had the desire and need for new experiences and new people. She studied in Copenhagen, Denmark in the Fall and took many classes such as: Strategic Communications, Strategic Planning for Leaders, and The Meaning of Style.

"My favorite part of the academic experience here was the field studies I took with each class. While here, we were able to learn hands on and truly experience the differences between cultures in the workplace."



*Jordan visiting Barcelona, Spain during his semester abroad*



*Jordan exploring Prague, Czech Republic*

Jordan Allen ('16) studied in Edinburgh, Scotland in the Fall. While abroad Allen took classes such as Scottish Culture and Society, Entrepreneurship, and Marketing Ethics. Allen also completed an internship with a property management company called the Edinburgh Address.

"All you need to do is go out and get lost in a foreign country; there is so much more to see beyond America," said Jordan.



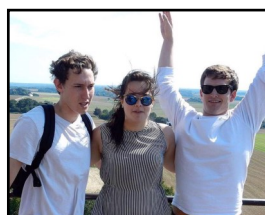
*Madelyn visiting Spain during her semester in Austria*



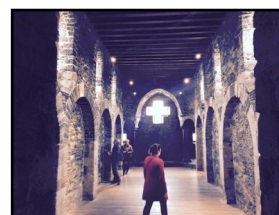
*Madelyn having the time of her life*

Madelyn Johnson ('17) spent Spring semester in Vienna, Austria. While there, she took music and history classes, as well as a German class. She also learned valuable life lessons about how to communicate with people from cultures different from her own.

When looking to study abroad, Madelyn recommends students "Look for a place that will suit you and enable you to pursue a lot of your interests."



*Kate with friends atop the Lion's Mound at the Battlefield of Waterloo*



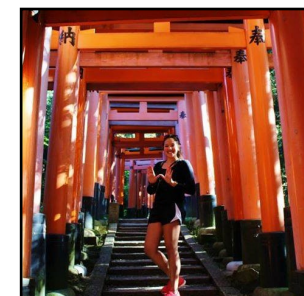
*Kate walking through Gravensteen Castle in Ghent, Belgium*

Kate Koelling ('17) spent Fall semester in Brussels, Belgium. She wanted to study abroad "to take a step back and experience something other than my regular life. I wanted to do something big for myself." Her favorite class was French because of how the language connected her to the people and culture.

About study abroad, Kate says, "You definitely should go. Take yourself into account and realize what is best for you. Maybe you need to go on your own and meet people, or maybe you need to go with a group of friends. Don't be discouraged by prices—there is always a way to make it possible for you to travel and jump out of your comfort zone."



*Kayla and the care package her parents sent her while abroad*



*Kayla taking a hike up to the Inari Shrine*

Kayla Villegas ('16) studied in Osaka, Japan at Kansai Gaidai University in the Fall. While in Japan Villegas was able to take two intensive Japanese courses as well as fulfill her 'A' Gen Ed requirement. She also took International Marketing and Intercultural Communication courses.

She traveled abroad because of "The adventure! I wanted a change of pace and to challenge myself. I've lived in the same state my whole life; it was time for a change of pace."

## 2013

**Stephanie Davis** went to Mazatlan, Mexico for a Discipleship Training School in September 2015.

**Shelly Gregory** moved to Omaha and works at LinkedIn as a Product Engagement Specialist. She is leading a new product launch there.



**Elizabeth Guyer** is still working at WorldStrides but has been promoted to Account Manager. She will be overseeing the communication strategy plan for the Junior League of Charlottesville in the 2015-2016 year.

**Kailee Kratoville** lives in Columbus, Ohio and is working at HR Advisor at Alliance Data with the Client Sales Department.

**John Reynolds** finishing up the last two weeks of his graduate work at the University of Dayton with my M.S.E.D. in Higher Education Administration. John and his wife Morgan welcomed in a future Tiger named Thomas Robert Reynolds. He was a large 9.28lbs.

**Breanne Ziegler** was promoted to copy and print supervisor at Staples in Columbus, OH. She is still a weekend air talent (DJ) with Classic Hits KOOL 101.7FM WNKO/ Talk 790AM WHTH.

## 2014

**Jordyn Baker** recently transferred from Southern Illinois to University Carbondale to the University of Dayton. In May of 2017 she will graduate with a Masters of Science in College Student Personnel.



**Kaitlyn Carter** lives in Columbus, Ohio and is working as a Digital Marketing Strategist at RevLocal in Granville, Ohio.

**Julia Devine** recently accepted a position at Brunner Advertising working as the Media Coordinator in Pittsburg, PA.



**Quin Gable** is currently working in Chicago as an Account Manager for the largest magazine and media company for salon professionals Behindthechair.com. She had the opportunity to cover events such as: New York Fashion Week, Miss Universe, and the Kardashian Beauty Launch where she interviewed Kim Kardashian.

## 2014, cont'd

**Regina (Gasser) Sigafoos** is working at Thomas & Marker Construction as a Proposal Marketing Coordinator. She is married to Jake Sigafoos. They will be celebrating their one year on September 27, 2015.

## 2015

**Sebastian G.W. Anderson** is working at Anderson Consulting Services as the Sole Proprietor. He provides his clients with reputable advise and administer effective solutions to better their company's daily function. He is currently living in Lexington, KY.

**Samantha Catanzaro** is in the process of moving from Springfield, OH to West Palm Beach, FL to use her Communication degree and begin working as a leasing agent at an apartment complex.

**Beth Hubbard** is living in Grandview, OH and is working at Abercrombie and Fitch Home Office as a Fashion Merchant for Abercrombie Kids Boys Graphics.

**Bobby Kirwin** moved to New York, NY and is working as a Media Assistant at Serino/ Coyne.

**Kristen Mercer** is living in Plainfield, IN and is working as the Community Liaison for Cornerstone Home Healthcare.



**Hannah Yalaz** is working as the Communications Intern and Social Media Manager at Wittenberg University Office of Communications.

## Alumni, we want to hear from you!

*One of the most common questions the faculty in the Department of Communication get asked by prospective students and majors is, "What can you do with a Communication major?" We like to answer that question by handing them this newsletter and inviting them to explore the many different interesting and fulfilling things our wonderful alumni are doing with their degree.*

*But we need your help! Please send us your news about where you are and what you're doing! We also appreciate photos – from your wedding, of your baby, at your job, etc. Please send all of your updates, especially your current mailing address, to [wittcomm@wittenberg.edu](mailto:wittcomm@wittenberg.edu) for inclusion in the Alumni News and Notes section of next year's issue. Keep in touch!*



## Take Me Out to the Ball Game: Michael Holley ('08)

by Victoria Perlak ('15)



Michael Holley ('08)

There's a lot more to those peanuts and Cracker Jacks at the ball game than you think. Michael Holley ('08) is the current Director of Marketing and Fan Experience with the Staten Island Yankees minor league team in New York City. Holley's job is essentially to ensure every single fan in the crowd is enjoying their time at the game.

Holley was a Communication major and Music minor during his time at Wittenberg. On campus he spent a lot of time working with America Reads at the Salvation Army, had a weekly radio show at WUSO, and was a Communication Leader. He also went through the Departmental Honors' process,

which he believes was among the best decisions in his college career.

"Taking the Research Methods class is one thing, but putting it all into motion from scratch was entirely another," said Holley.

Some of Holley's primary tasks with the Staten Island Yankees are planning the season's promotional schedule, ordering and distributing promotional items, and gathering and implementing fan feedback. Though a very demanding and stressful job, Holley believes it is also very rewarding.

"I walk out onto the concourse on game day, everyone's having fun and eating hot dogs, and I get to be a part of what makes that happen," said Holley.

Looking forward into his career, Holley would love to keep climbing the ladder and get into the big leagues. Holley advises that 'on the job' experience is really important as Wittenberg students look towards a career path.

He also recommends students to, "go into your first job humble, patient, and ready to learn and adapt; you'll quickly distinguish yourself as a valuable asset."

Holley admits that he had many Wittenberg memories, but nothing could compare to the first day. Beginning his Wittenberg experience he says that, "Opportunity is intoxication, there's nothing more exciting than a blank slate."

"Opportunity is intoxication. There's nothing more exciting than a blank slate."  
- Michael Holley

## Department of Communication Expands Alumni Network to LinkedIn

by Dr. Stefne Broz

The Department of Communication has always valued the connections we maintain with our alumni. Our first efforts came in the form of this newsletter, starting back in 2004.



A few years later, the growing popularity of social media prompted us to create a Department of Communication page on Facebook, as well as a closed group exclusively for our alumni to communicate with each other on a variety of topics, such as job postings, alumni events, and other useful information. Along with our Twitter presence, these initiatives have helped us remain in contact with our alumni, and they also indirectly help our current students understand the many different career paths our alumni have taken.

In an effort to increase the connection between our alumni and current students, the Department launched a LinkedIn profile this year. As one of fastest-growing and professionally valuable social media platforms, LinkedIn provides our alumni and current students the opportunity to connect with our Department and each other, in order to further facilitate networking and information-sharing opportunities.

Students and alumni of the Department of Communication are asked to first initiate a connection with our Department profile (Wittenberg Univ. Dept of Communication). Once the connection has been confirmed, the next step is to ask to join our closed student/alumni group (Wittenberg University Dept of Communication Alumni.)

This initiative to expand our alumni network is in response to a six-part promise to incoming students, adopted last year. Called the Wittenberg Commitment, and starting with the Class of 2019, this promise assures students access to the following features of a Wittenberg education:

- A full-year, first-year seminar (directed by Dr. Katie Warber; see feature on p. 4)
- Comprehensive advising that focuses on students' interests and career goals
- Active and engaged learning opportunities, such as internships and practicums
- WittFolio, an electronic portfolio of students' formative and summative work
- Four-year graduation guarantee, provided all requirements are met by the student
- The Wittenberg Network, connecting current students in each major to alumni

*Alumni and current students:*

*Please connect with us on LinkedIn (Wittenberg Univ. Dept of Communication), and then ask to join our closed group for students and alumni (Wittenberg University Dept of Communication Alumni.) Thank you!*



## Being Empowered and Challenged: Keeley (Buehler) Hunter ('08)

by Ciara Colvin ('16)

In her second year as a Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor at the University of Denver, alumna Keeley Buehler gives the Wittenberg Communication Department credit for the reason why she became a professor.

She explained that the faculty at Witt empowered and challenged her to study what she loves: Fashion as a form of communication. Her interest has morphed since being at Wittenberg and she is now into issues that surround consumerism, consumption, and capitalism.

"I remember talking with Dr. Waggoner at one point during my junior year. I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do. I mentioned how fascinated I was by a recent research talk hosted by the department," said Buehler. "She wasted little time responding with something like, 'You need to go to graduate school. If you do anything else you will be bored.' I remember wrestling with this interaction and eventually deciding that she was right. In this brief interaction the seed was planted for becoming a professor."

"Having a person who you trust and who is invested in your success, concerned with your well-being, and smart is one of the best resources you will ever have in life."  
-Keeley Buehler

Buehler earned her PhD in Rhetoric and Ethics from the Communication Studies Department at the University of Denver in June of 2014. Her cognate was Communication and Cultural Studies. Even though Buehler is a faculty member at DU, each year her contract is up for renewal. She is currently looking for a position that centers her teaching on Rhetoric and Cultural Studies in a Communication Studies Department.

"I am not sure how long this job will last and I am always looking for something more secure (hopefully in the great state of CO). But, I love my job and I am so grateful to be teaching an array of great classes at DU," said Buehler.



Keeley (Buehler) Hunter ('08)

Most job positions require her to have a combination of teaching, service, and research responsibilities. Therefore, she is preparing several dissertation chapters for publication that she feels most passionate about. As a result she is looking for a position where the publication expectations are low pressure and the department highly values teaching and service.

"That being said, I do believe that being a good teacher goes hand in hand with doing research and I am committed to integrating the two to sustain growth in my knowledge about communication," said Buehler.

She advises Witt students to cherish their time at Witt and she recommends they find a mentor at Wittenberg who you can maintain a relationship with beyond the Witt education.

"Even if you are not planning to go into academia, these relationships are so valuable and helpful. Having a person who you trust and who is invested in your success, concerned with your well-being, and smart is one of the best resources you will ever have in life. It also makes you more prepared to mentor others, which is a great gift! This is one of my favorite parts of my job," said Buehler. She also advises students to put in hard work and own your education.

Buehler is currently on leave from DU this quarter due to expecting a baby boy in September. She will return to teaching in January of 2016.

## Ben Noble ('11)

by Victoria Perlak ('15)



Ben Noble ('11)

Ben Noble ('11) is a great example that the career options with a Communication degree are endless; he's going to medical school. Noble was a Communication major at Wittenberg, and a member of the Communication Leaders program. Since graduating, he has finished his post-bachelor's degree in pre-medical studies at Wright State University, taken the MCAT, and has been traveling all over for medical school interviews.

Noble admits that for a while no career path really stood out to him. He believes that he was able to learn a lot about himself during his time at Wittenberg to ultimately pick the career that was right for him. He never considered medicine as an option until he took an introductory biology class and met Dr. Mason. Wittenberg opened his eyes to medicine as an option.

"Without being exposed to such a wide variety of career options, I wouldn't have known what was out there and would still be in a career that wasn't right for me," said Noble.

Even though he started to lean away from Communication and Business as a career field,

Noble believes that all of the Communication professors were very supportive, going out of their way to get him information on the field and how to get into it.

"The constant encouragement and open-mindedness of the department really helped me to eventually pursue my goals," said Noble.

Noble will be entering medical school in the fall, and despite the long road ahead of him, he is ready to get started. At the end of the road, Noble is looking forward to becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

Noble stated that Wittenberg students should focus on two things: What they want to do, and how they will get there. He goes on to say, "Don't worry about what other people want you to do, or what is practical, because at the end of the day you are the only one who has to live your life, so do something that truly matters to you."

"Without being exposed to such a wide variety of career options, I wouldn't have known what was out there and would still be in a career that wasn't right for me."

- Ben Noble



## 26 Communication Students Earn High Awards at the 2015 Honors Convocation



*Kelsey Claar was named the 2015 Laurels in Communication recipient. She was tapped by the faculty and crowned by her Academic Advisor Dr. Matthew Smith in Senior Seminar prior to the campus-wide Honors Convocation.*

**Kelsey Claar ('15)** was awarded our department's highest honor, Laurels in Communication.

**Trevor Villegas ('16)** was awarded the Alma Lux, and **Kayla Villegas ('16)** was awarded the Alma Mater (see feature on p. 7).

**Rachel Tennison ('16)** was awarded the G. Kenneth Andeen Scholarship.

**Brian Brown ('15)** was awarded The School of Community Education's Award for Excellence in Liberal Studies.

**Kelsey Claar ('15), Brenna Doherty ('16), Kristina Fultz ('16), Madeline Geiger ('16), Courtney Huck ('17), Jennifer Klose ('15), Andrea Mattingly ('16),**

**Linzey Rice ('16), Rachel Tennison ('16), and Kayla Villegas ('16)** were recognized for membership in Lambda Pi Eta, the national Communication honorary.

**Andrea Mattingly ('16)** was recognized for membership in Sigma Delta Pi (Spanish Honor Society).

**Brenna Doherty ('16), Katherine Lewis ('16), Victoria Perlak ('15), Madison Straughn ('16), and Kayla Villegas ('16)** were recognized for membership in Tau Pi Phi (Business Honor Society).

**Courtney Huck ('17)** was recognized for membership in Ivy Ring and Pick and Pen.

**Kayla Villegas ('16)** received the Alpha Delta Pi Scholarship Award.

**Evelyn Ritzi ('17)** was recognized for membership in Alpha Lambda Delta.

**Brenna Doherty ('16)** was recognized for membership in Mortar Board.

**Andrea Mattingly ('16)** was recognized for membership in Omicron Delta Kappa.

**Kristina Fultz ('16) and Andrea Mattingly ('16)** were recognized for membership in Chi Alpha Sigma.

## Produced by Wittenberg, Made in America: 27 Logan Beam ('12) by Kelsey Claar ('15)

Not far from our small campus is the small town of Arcanum, Ohio, the home of a company that is doing big things with a Wittenberg Alumnus. Logan Beam ('12) went from playing football on Edwards-Maurer field to pitching story ideas to executives of major media corporations for the All American Clothing Company.



*Logan Beam ('12)*

Beam had always hoped to work with Marketing and Communication, having an interest in distributing a company's key branding statements. Luckily, he was able to find this position before he was even a Wittenberg graduate. While attending his mother's class reunion in 2011, Beam met Elizabeth Nickol, whose father and brother started the All American Clothing Company. His conversation became a networking opportunity, which led to an interview. Beam was then hired as an intern and soon became the Director of Marketing and Communications, where he "implement[s] a national communications and marketing program, professionally distributes public information through national media organizations, e-commerce, web messaging, and social media outlets with presentations and appearances."

Beam says that he finds himself using experiences that he gained from his Communication degree to benefit his ability to do his job and the tasks that go with it. He admits that he observes his audiences, reading body language and verbal cues, during meetings, saying, "I can read whether or not someone is interested in a pitch that I am sharing and adjust my approach if needed."

Acknowledging the Communication faculty's expectations for their students and the continuous challenge of "reaching new heights" within the department, Beam believes it has prepared him for the business world – as he has found similar expectations within his profession. "Sometimes it will be tough, sometimes it may seem easy. Sometimes you'll need to figure it out on your own with no assistance. Sometimes there will be someone to help you. No matter what happens, just keep pushing to find ways to be successful!"

And this is exactly what Beam has done. Up to this point, he has had countless publications and has worked with many high profile media figures, such as David Muir and the ABC World News team, the United States Senate, Mike Rowe, Larry King, Duck Dynasty's Mountain Man, Eric Church, Wheel of Fortune, USA Today, Good Morning America, CNN, Sirius XM, Huffington Post, The Blaze, Forbes, Entrepreneur Magazine, FOX Business, HLN, and many more. But Beam isn't stopping here. Recalling Coach Fincham's advice at football practice, he's either "getting better or getting worse" and continues to become a better professional with each new day. His passion for American-made products is ever-growing and to him, his job isn't just a job, it's a way to make a difference in the world and create more American careers.

After reflecting on his time as a Wittenberg Communication Major, Beam offered the following advice to graduating Communication seniors: "Do not waste valuable time comparing yourself to others. Utilize that time to keep learning, get better, and become the best version of yourself you can be. Tiger up!"

## Communication Alumni Visit Wittenberg

by Ciara Colvin ('16)



*Kelly Eggers ('08) with her fiancée.*

Whether visiting classes or just stopping by to chat with the faculty, several Communication alumni came back home this past year.

**Kelly Eggers ('08)** visited Wittenberg in April with her fiancée to see Dr. Warber and her swim coach Natalie Koukis.

**Brian McCoach ('06)** also stopped by in April to briefly catch up with a couple of professors and staff, as well as see the campus. He briefly caught up and reminisced with Dr. Waggoner and Professor Fenimore (Business) because he was a double major during his time at Wittenberg (see feature on p. 29).



*Brian McCoach ('05)*

**Zoe Lamberson ('08)** visited Wittenberg in January to speak with Dr. Smith's Media Law class. She discussed with the class her career path after Wittenberg. She graduated from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. After graduating she took a position as an Assistant County Prosecutor. While there she also had the chance to catch up with Communication professors Dr. Broz, Dr. Warber, and Dr. Waggoner.



*Zoe Lamberson ('08) speaking with Dr. Smith's Media Law class.*

**Matt Pfouts ('14)** visited Wittenberg in September to speak with Dr. Warber's Relational Communication class. He is serving as a mentor to the class on their project. (See feature on p. 2.)



*Dr. Smith and Dr. Broz with Amy Fickert ('08) and Kat Bremer ('09)*

**Amy Fickert ('08)** and **Kat Bremer ('09)** stopped by Wittenberg on September 17, 2015 to speak with the Communication and Business Leadership Experience (C.A.B.L.E.) students.

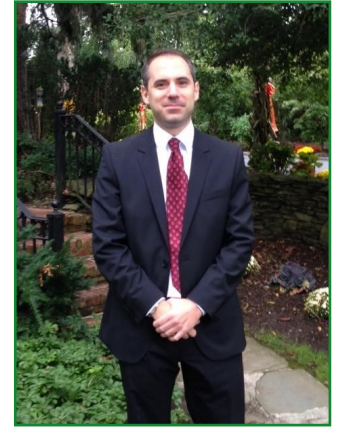


*Matt Pfouts ('14) speaking with Dr. Warber's Relational Communication class.*

## Innovation is Key to Staying Ahead Of the Curve: Brian McCoach ('06)

by Rachel Tennison ('16)

A self-described analytical planner, Brian McCoach ('06), has taken his Wittenberg education and put it to good use. He currently works for Hearst Magazines as the Senior Director of Portfolio Strategy and resides in New York City. His responsibilities include circulation audit management, profit analysis, and portfolio strategy.



*Brian McCoach ('06)*

At Heart Magazines, he enjoys strategizing to determine "tactics the department should undertake for various magazines within the Consumer Marketing Group." His position requires accurate forecasting and detailed analysis, skills McCoach has refined during his time with the company. When he has free time, McCoach enjoys staying active by biking, obstacle course racing, and traveling.

While at Wittenberg, McCoach double majored in Communication and Business Management. Looking back, he especially values Wittenberg's belief in wholeness of person.

"The liberal arts approach was beneficial to me as it helped widen my scope and background," said McCoach.

"Proving that I could work independently, ask appropriate questions, and meet deadlines were aspects that my soon to be employer found attractive."

- Brian McCoach

During his senior year, McCoach took Dr. Smith's class on the history of comics and he cites the work he completed in this course as influential to the interest of potential employers.

"The class required strong independent work which I raised during job interviews. Proving that I could work independently, ask appropriate questions, and meet deadlines were aspects that my soon to be employer found attractive," said McCoach.

For those preparing to enter the job market, he encourages innovation. "With consumer preferences and technology changing at a fast pace, one has to stay ahead of the curve. Innovative ideas provide the opportunities for growth on an individual and business level," said McCoach.



## A Note from the Department Chair

Greetings to our alumni, current and prospective students, and everyone else who has paused to peruse our Department of Communication newsletter!



*Dr. Broz and her husband Mat cheering on Columbus Crew SC in the MLS Cup at Crew Stadium in Columbus in November.*

As you can tell from the contents of this booklet, there are many exciting things going on within and beyond our program. We hope you enjoy reading about the exciting experiences and successes of our alumni and students. It makes a department chair very proud to know that the people who we've had the privilege of knowing are doing such important and gratifying work. Given the many different kinds of careers our graduates are able to pursue, it's not surprising that our major continues to be as popular as ever.

Many thanks to our alumni for keeping us posted on what you're up to! We love reading about the fulfilling work you're doing with your Communication degree! We especially appreciate our alumni coming back to visit us, and this past year several alumni came and spoke with current students about their work.

Regardless of the nature of your connection to the Department of Communication, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments, news or updates, or just want to chat! I can be reached at sbroz@wittenberg.edu

Sincerely,

Dr. Stefne Lenzmeier Broz, Chair, Department of Communication

## Dr. Broz's First-Year Seminar Students Get to Know Witt and Yellow Springs



Along with co-facilitators Paco Labrador (Women's Volleyball Coach) and Maddy Straughn (senior Comm major), Dr. Broz has helped her FYS students acclimate to Witt with a Pizza, Trivia & Volleyball Night when the Tigers took on Hope College at home, a classroom visit from Ezry the Tiger, and a trip to Yellow Springs.

## Thank you for your support!

The Department of Communication would like to thank those alumni and friends who have given back to the program since graduating from Wittenberg. We are moved by your acts of generosity and the kind words you send to us as you reflect fondly on your time in the Communication program.

The Wittenberg Fund provides financial support for virtually every purpose and function of the Wittenberg learning community. Contributions provide sustaining support for academic, scholarship, cultural, and athletic programs; faculty retention and recruitment; campus renewal and beautification; and other department programs and initiatives. Your gift makes the difference in the lives of current and future students, so support the Wittenberg community by making a gift today at [www.wittenberg.edu/give](http://www.wittenberg.edu/give)

Should you choose to give financially to Wittenberg, you may designate your gift for the Department of Communication. Thank you for supporting your alma mater!



## Dr. Waggoner's Gender and Communication Class Talks Gender Identity With Drag Queens

Dr. Waggoner's Gender and Communication class welcomed drag queens Amaya Sexton and Stacy Layne Matthews (who competed on RuPaul's Drag Race season 3) and their promoter Cody Kincaid on April 23, 2015 to discuss gender construction.



Cody Kincaid with Drag Queens  
Amaya Sexton and  
Stacy Layne Matthews



Dr. Waggoner's Gender and Communication class talking with the drag queens.

## Living Out Her Dreams: Brynne Mayne ('13)

by Jenny Klose ('15)



Brynne Mayne ('13)

Using the skills learned during her time as a Communication major, as well as hard work, Communication alumna Brynne Mayne has earned her “dream job” of working with a nonprofit that gives back to her community. She works in marketing at the Madison County Chamber of Commerce in London, Ohio.

After graduation, Mayne worked at Agape, a Lutheran summer camp located in North Carolina. Mayne comments, “If I could be a professional camp counselor, I absolutely would!”

After the summer ended, Mayne returned to London, Ohio with no job leads. To pay off those dreaded student loans, Mayne decided to take a receptionist position at Columbus OB/GYN in September of 2013. Not long after she started the position, she noticed that she “had a skill-set that could really benefit the people there.” She took the initiative to start Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts for COG. After proving her capabilities, the company was impressed and moved her to the Columbus office the following May, where she was given the title of Communications Specialist—a position that COG made specifically for her.

In this role, Mayne marketed the practice for their seven offices around central Ohio. She managed their online presence through social media, the website, and major search engines. She relayed messages from patients and informs them about new services. Not only does she work with communications online, but internal communications within COG. Mayne explains that she worked with employees to “make COG one of the best places to work in Columbus.” She even successfully planned a meeting that served over 100 people.

Mayne shares, “I am so lucky to have landed at such a welcoming company” as well as to have a “supportive boss that... pushed and challenged me to be better everyday.”

Not only does Mayne thank COG for the skills she has learned, but the Wittenberg Communication Department as well. The professors certainly made an impact on Mayne: “They made you believe that if you wanted to achieve something you could— and more importantly, they equipped you with what you needed to do it.” She believes that Wittenberg’s liberal arts education and diverse classes allowed her to find her passion, and prepared her for a breadth of different areas after graduation.

“They made you believe that if you wanted to achieve something you could, and more importantly, they equipped you with what you needed to do it.”  
- Brynne Mayne

## Communication Majors Gain Valuable Internship Experiences

by Ciara Colvin ('16)



Lindsey Gaterman ('15) presenting about her internship experience

Communication majors at Wittenberg are strongly encouraged to complete an internship as part of their liberal arts education. These hands-on experiential learning opportunities give them a distinct advantage when it comes time to seek employment after graduation. Here are just a few of the internships Communication majors completed for academic credit recently:

- **Anthony Corsi** ('16) was a campaign manager at Smart Circle
- **Kelsey Claar** ('15) was a Marketing Intern with Seasons Bistro and Grille in Springfield.
- **Lindsey Gaterman** ('15) was a Fashion Intern at *Good Housekeeping* magazine.
- **Allie Hermes** ('15) was a Marketing Intern at Gordon Food Service, Ohio Valley Division.
- **Carly Jones** ('16) was a Communications Assistant at Toledo Zoo and Aquarium.
- **Ryan King** ('16) interned at Cuttone and Company on Wall Street in New York.
- **Kristen Mercer** ('15) was a PR intern at Wilt Public Relations in Springfield.
- **Evelyn Ritzi** ('17) was a Creative Services Intern for WDTN-TV/Dayton’s CW
- **Carli Swartz** ('15) was a Marketing Intern with C & N Contractors in Springfield.



Kristen Mercer ('15) presenting about her internship experience

*If your company is hiring interns, please let Wittenberg’s Career Services know! Send position descriptions to [careers@wittenberg.edu](mailto:careers@wittenberg.edu)*



## 2015-2016 Integrated Media Corps Takes on Wittenberg Athletics

by Ciara Colvin

Integrated Media Corps is a co-curricular initiative with the goal of providing opportunities for students to gain hands-on media productions experience. First Year, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students are eligible to apply and go through the interview process.

The students of IMC will work with Wittenberg's Department of Communication and The Office of University Communications to gain experience in multi-media with the Tiger Sports Network, content management, radio broadcast, PR, photography, social media, and many other deliverables.

This year, Integrated Media Corps has developed the expanding of roles for the returning seniors. Seniors Kayla Villegas ('16), Brenna Doherty ('16), and Madeline Geiger ('16) will take on mentoring duties to those who are new to IMC.

"Three of us are student managers for IMC this year and what that means is we take on a mentor role for the first year members. We have split the new members into three groups based on their interest," said Geiger.

Geiger has taken those students interested in video and photography, Villegas is mentoring those student interested in web design, and Doherty is covering the sports communication side of IMC.

"Basically I ensure that their duties in IMC align with what kind of skills they need to grow for that future prospective job. We literally have them print out job applications and make sure IMC is fulfilling those requirements," said Villegas.

By splitting up roles, the IMC members can really focus on what skills the new members want to learn and develop.

"As a student manager, I am excited to see the progress that will be made by the entire group. I think our teams are excited to learn and produce great work that they can then take with them when applying for jobs in the future," said Geiger.

"The IMC presents students with the opportunity to develop their production skills in a number of different media. I expect students to take advantage of the opportunity to work with the professionals in the Office of University Communications to challenge themselves to try new modes of communication and see how far they can stretch their skills," said Dr. Matthew Smith.

IMC is providing its members with experiences and opportunities they can't gain from any other group or organization on campus. These students will graduate from the program with real-world skills they can apply to many facets of everyday life.



*The members for the 2015-2016 (top to bottom: left to right) school year are: William Norelia, Simon Pappas, Kristina Fultz, Louis Bruck, A. J. Meyer, Courtney Huck, Kayla Villegas, Madeline Geiger, Marley Tullis, Rachel Tennison, Stephanie Glass, Jordan Crow, Brenna Doherty, Pearl Ernat, Nicole Cooney, and Evelyn Ritzi*

For more information please visit

[http://www.wittenberg.edu/administration/university\\_communications/imc.html](http://www.wittenberg.edu/administration/university_communications/imc.html)

## The Culture of Comics and Cosplay: The Experience at Comic-Con 2015

by Evelyn Ritzi ('17)



*Students at the 2015 Experience at Comic-Con*

Whether you're a die-hard comic fan or simply love the entertainment business, there's no doubt you'll have a fascinating time at Comic-Con. For the tenth consecutive year, Dr. Matthew Smith has offered college students the chance to join him for The Experience at Comic-Con, an ethnographic research study unlike any other.

Each year, over 140,000 fans, actors, authors, directors, producers, and artists converge in San Diego, California to the mecca of pop-culture, Comic-Con International. Dr.

Matthew Smith has a passion for comics, and knows the value of attending the annual con-

vention for both entertainment and educational purposes.

On this year's excursion, ten students representing Wittenberg University, Columbia University, Lynchburg College, and University of Denver had the opportunity to not only enjoy the fun of the Comic-Con, but also earn college credit for their research. Before the trip, the students were assigned readings to learn more about Comic-Con and participant-observation research, or ethnography. By engaging in ethnography, the students were able to fully immerse themselves in the culture of Comic-Con. They learned about marketing, cosplay, literacy, and communication.

Each day, the students were free to attend panels of their choosing, take pictures with "cosplayers" and celebrities, visit with hundreds of vendors, and explore the latest developments in television, film, and comics. Some even had the opportunity to network with Disney executives and writers, as well as executives from a video game company. One of the most exciting aspects of this experience each year is the opportunity for students to actually present their discoveries in a professional panel. This year, the students presented their preliminary findings before an audience of over 70 people.

The Experience at Comic-Con is an extremely rewarding opportunity for students to study the many aspects of popular culture from the inside out. As Dr. Smith states, "Nowhere else but at Comic-Con can you see in such stark detail how our love of popular genres is celebrated by the fans or exploited by the cultural industries." He also adds, "Anyone interested in marketing strategies for the twenty-first century would learn something from the experience, but the folks who have the most fun are those who are interested in or already invested in popular culture."

The students who embarked on this trip had nothing but positive things to say about their experiences. Kate Egolf remembers, "I loved being in an environment where people were open, enthusiastic, and weird. It is good to put yourself in situations where comfort zones are non-existent and neither are insecurities so that you learn to always overcome them— or better yet, leave them behind." She also added, "The whole trip was a highlight, really, and I know it will be a highlight of my time at Witt."

For more information about this annual field study, please visit

[www.powerofcomics.com/fieldstudy](http://www.powerofcomics.com/fieldstudy)

## Department of Communication Faculty News and Notes



Dr. Stefne Broz scuba diving in Montego Bay, Jamaica

**Dr. Stefne Broz** continues to serve as Chair of the Department of Communication. This has been her fifth year in this role, and she enjoys the administrative duties as well as the contact it affords her with all new declaring majors and prospective students and parents. She taught a First-Year Seminar in the Fall as part of the new First Year Experience program (directed by Dr. Katie Warber; see feature on p. 4 and photos from Dr. Broz' FYS on p. 30). She also is serving on one of Wittenberg's committees related to the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation process, which Wittenberg will undergo in December 2016.

This work involves researching current practices on a wide variety of academic processes and standards at Wittenberg and reporting back to HLC to help make a case for the university's continued accreditation.

**Dr. Sheryl Cunningham** spent her sabbatical doing research in the area of Environmental Communication (see feature on p. 6). In June she attended the Conference on Communication and the Environment in Boulder, Colorado and while there she presented the paper "Telling the story of fracking in Ohio: News coverage in the *Columbus Dispatch* and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*." She is currently revising that paper and plans to submit it to *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture* later this year. She is also working on a project analyzing the images of fracking in national news coverage.



Dr. Sheryl Cunningham with Dr. Warber in Sedona, CA



Dr. Matthew Smith peddling his latest book at Comic-Con International in San Diego

**Dr. Matthew Smith** continues to publish in the area of comics studies, including a second edition of *The Power of Comics: History, Form, and Culture*, a co-authored textbook first established with input from students in the Department of Communication (see feature on p. 6). Smith also published two book chapters this year, "The Silver Age Playbook: Minting the Modern Superhero" in *Critical Insights: The American Comic Book* and "Working Girl: Diana Prince and the Crisis of Career Moves in *Wonder Woman*" in *The Ages of Wonder Woman: Essays on the Amazon Princess in Changing Times*. Smith and his frequent collaborator, Dr. Randy Duncan of Henderson

State University, were also named to co-edit a new series of books under the title of Routledge Advances in Comics Studies.

## Department of Communication Faculty News and Notes



Dr. Catherine Waggoner with sons Graham and Ian in the Grand Tetons, WY

**Dr. Catherine Waggoner** continues her fascination with Southern culture, drag, and the circus! She used her fall 2015 sabbatical to complete her book on Mississippi Delta women, *Realizing Our Place: Real Southern Women on Living in a Mythologized Land*, now under contract with the University Press of Mississippi (see note on p. 11). Last September, she was an invited panelist for a program at the Ohio State University on the future of feminism, and in November, she was honored on a panel with other previous Bonnie Ritter Book Award winners at the National Communication Association convention.

**Dr. Katie Warber** accepted the position of Director of First Year Programs, and as such, assumed more administrative responsibilities associated with Wittenberg's new First Year Seminar (see feature on p. 4). In addition to directing and teaching in the FYS, Dr. Warber also taught the Senior Capstone course alongside Dr. Waggoner and directed a senior honors thesis in Psychology. She co-authored an article with Dr. Jesse Fox in the *Journal of Communication*, a flagship journal in the field of Communication, as well as an article on evolutionary psychology in the *International Encyclopedia of Interpersonal Communication*. She also traveled to conferences in Chicago, Dallas, and San Juan. In February, Dr. Warber got a new puppy, Matilda, who has become quite the ambassador for the Department of Communication. Dr. Warber continues to serve as Wittenberg's Grand Marshal.



Dr. Katie Warber as Grand Marshal with Dr. Ray Dudek (Chemistry) helping out





# Congratulations, Class of 2015!



*The dramatic reading of Plato's Gorgias by 2015 Senior Seminar students. The capstone course focused on communication ethics, and the performance of the Gorgias provided some good food for thought.*

