

LINKS

A Production of Wittenberg University's Department of
Communication

Passport to the World



WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY

Spring 2008

Letter from the editor



INSPIRED BY PRESIDENT Mark Erickson's vision for "bringing the world to Wittenberg and bringing Wittenberg to the world," I decided to create the "Passport to the World" theme for this, my last issue of

Links for Spring 2008.

The beauty of this theme, however, is not the clever connection to Wittenberg's strategic plan (although admittedly, I feel I must give myself kudos for the global campaign's PR). Rather, the beauty of this theme lies in the alumni themselves, who, in only a matter of five years, have not only built and expanded the ever-growing communication department, but have also initiated amazing worldwide possibilities for themselves in such a short time since their graduation. Truly, Dr. Erickson's global vision for Wittenberg has come to fruition.

I hope you will find in these stories your very own passport to the world, exploring the varying opportunities and lifestyles your peers have chosen. Or at the very least, perhaps you will be inspired to take a little vacation.

Warm regards,

S08.kphelan@wittenberg.edu

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Additional *Links* Spring 2008 Staff:

Keeley Buehler, Staff Writer
S08.kbuehler@wittenberg.edu

Lukas Treu, Staff Writer
S09.ltreu@wittenberg.edu

“From the Hollow to Hollywood:”

A Professor Writes About Stars who Make Camp , An Alumnus Writes the Dialogue For Star Characters



PASSION FOR ANALYSIS OF GENDER communication has finally led to the publication of Dr. Catherine Waggoner’s first book, *Making Camp: Rhetorics of Transgression in US Popular Culture*

The book, which Waggoner co-authored with her long-time friend, Helene Shugart of the University of Utah, explores how gender is constructed in the context of popular culture, giving special consideration to image. Specifically, Waggoner and Shugart examine a practice that is usually associated with over-the-top exaggeration present in gay male culture—women who camp.

Xenia, The Warrior Princess, Karen from

Will and Grace, Macy Gray, and Gwen Stefani are evaluated on style, trope, and the symbols that people associate with these icons (anchors and foils). These case studies led Waggoner and Shugart to question whether making camp is a transgression of past norms or an attempt to establish new ways of understanding gender.

Waggoner’s research on gender construction has been published in journals and presented at conferences, and she looks forward to the consideration of a new path of research in the future—one that deals with how class is constructed in society.

—Keeley Buehler

The 2007 writer’s strike might have made frustrated television fans curse their dusty, unused, black boxes, but the strike gave one Wittenberg alumnus the opportunity to speak to up-and-coming creative stars about her path to Hollywood in an English/Communication colloquium, “From the Hollow to Hollywood.”

Class of 2000 (English) grad Lauren Schmidt has spent the last eight years working as a writer for some of the most popular shows in television: *Grey’s* spinoff *Private Practice* and *The West Wing*. Schmidt began her career as an intern for *The West Wing*, starting as a low-ranking coffee retriever and working her way up to a writing position. Eventually she earned a chance to write two solo episodes: the first, a faux documentary which earned Alison Janey an Emmy, and the second, the episode jokingly referred to as the “one when Josh and Donna get it on.”

Though she originally wanted to write long creative prose, after perusing a few of the *West Wing* scripts, Schmidt fell in love with dialogue and communication idiosyncrasies, many of which are inspired by her own experiences.

“Being a writer is all about living,” according to Schmidt, because the details of real life translate into dialogue. In fact, she has incorporated into *West Wing* a funny moment in Wittenberg’s own Myers Hall—a character’s passing thought about trying to catch a bat in a pillowcase, a feat Schmidt’s friend had actually tried to accomplish during her freshman year.

Schmidt recognizes she has been lucky. But she also knew what she wanted. “In terms of success, if you want to be a writer, do it. If you can’t, work at Barnes and Noble and read a lot.”

—Kari Phelan



HOLLYWOOD

New Faces ...

Greetings From Arizona!



Dr. Katie Warber

SHE'S NEW, FRESH OUT OF ONE OF THE TOP

Research I institutions in the country, young, and uses "like" in general conversation nearly as much as her millennial students. Meet Dr. Kathleen (Katie) Warber, the newest addition to the Communication Department faculty.

A recent graduate of the University of Arizona, Warber was excited for the opportunity to be a part of a department where teaching, student relationships, and "a higher caliber of students" were emphasized. She does enjoy research, however; her ability to drop names of specialized researchers is nearly matched by her extensive resume of graduate research in communication. She hopes her experience at the University of Arizona will pave a path toward more undergraduate research opportunities for comm. students at Wittenberg. In fact, she is gradually propelling students toward research with small steps, like her addition of statistics into the research methods course.

Warber has enjoyed integrating herself into the Witt community. With youthful features that often mistake her for a student, Warber is actually fitting in at Wittenberg more than she bargained for. Recently a security officer actually mistook her late-night removal of an office mini-fridge for student theft.

Despite accusation of Hollenbeck theft by Witt Security, Warber has already been very impressed by Wittenberg and the Communication Department. On an academic level she finds students to be more inquisitive about subject material, better writers, and better speakers than the average student. The Comm Leaders program, a program designed in conjunction with Career Services to expose communication students to career and networking opportunities in the region, is one aspect of the department Warber thinks gives a great advantage to students interested in excelling in the workplace. On a more personal level, she finds Witt students to be well-rounded, committed to community outreach, and especially respects how involved Greek students are with service.

Her message to Communication alumni?

"You picked the best major. You set a precedent for what to expect from future comm. students. The way Dr. Broz and Dr. Smith talk about the personal ties they have to the students—they give glowing reviews. You laid a strong foundation for the standards of this department and are responsible for the good reputation comm. majors have at Witt. Future comm. majors have a lot to live up to."

—*Kari Phelan*

TWO YEARS AGO WITTENBERG'S NEW PRESIDENT,

Dr. Mark Erickson, announced that international awareness was one of his main goals for the university. And now, with the addition of Professor Mohammed Sati as Visiting Professor for the year, the Communication Department is following suit.

Sati, a Ph.D. candidate from Ohio University, originally a native of Sudan, brings as much unique perspective to the department as his cultural background. Quick to correct the assuming American regarding political conflict in his birth home, for example (from Sati's perspective, only a small portion of Sudan—Darfur—consists of a genocidal war zone, not the whole country), Sati shines a provocative light on his past in Africa as well as on his students at Witt.

Though Africa is home for Sati, he has spent the last six and a half years in the heart of the United States—Athens, Ohio. A natural interest in African affairs from an American perspective led Sati to the international studies program at OU after having completed his bachelor's degree in political science at the American University of Cairo. His world travels have landed him residences in Sudan, Ghana, Sweden, Egypt, and of course, Ohio, and his experi-

ence extends beyond the classroom to business. In fact, Sati earned an MBA from OU.

His teaching resume includes classes such as World Broadcasting, a comparative analysis of media systems that turned into a class he taught in the fall of 2007 at Wittenberg—Global Media Systems. At Witt he has also taught Media Law and Media Literacy as well as Public Speaking. What makes Sati different with respect to the classroom, however, is his self-noted "flare" for bringing an international spin to the classroom, whether through world media clips or abstract global comparisons.

"The world we live in today is more than just local," Sati explains.

So far Sati has been "very impressed by the standards of the students" and "with the education here" at Wittenberg. He urges all communication students and alumni to "strive as much as possible to broaden your horizon" through programs like study abroad or just communicating with people of different cultures. To Sati, interacting with different cultures is important and necessary because "this is the way society and the world is becoming."

—Kari Phelan



Professor Mohammed Sati

Sudan Welcomes You!

...From New Places

From Austria to Sri Lanka to Australia,



Vienna, Austria

Some kids grow up wanting to be teachers, but few kids grow up to be teachers in Europe. 2007 Communication graduate Samantha McCoy, however, is doing just that.

McCoy TEACHES ENGLISH ON A Fulbright teaching assistantship in three different Austrian schools. The Fulbright is a highly prestigious grant that promotes cultural education and understanding. McCoy, a fluent German speaker, is responsible for the English vocabulary development of “a considerable amount of [Austrian] students,” (12 classes’ worth)

and though some students can only speak a few phrases, other students’ English skills even surpass McCoy’s, she admits.

But her job is only part of the experience. McCoy lives in Vienna with two Austrian roommates, cultivating new friendships, new traditions, and a new lifestyle. Despite her military family having lived all over the country, as well a previous experi-

ence studying abroad in Germany, living and working abroad, she says, is a whole new experience.

“It’s very humbling,” says McCoy, “No one holding your hand. Trying to go native...It’s not as superficial.”

Getting the hang of Austrian rules has been one of the bigger adjustments. Austria fosters a culture that appears to have an “honor code” rule for everything, as McCoy puts it, making her slightly paranoid about breaking one of them. However, all the rules create one of the safest environments she has ever lived in.

McCoy especially enjoys experiencing the mesh of peoples in Austria. The country shares its borders with Eastern European nations still working to reverse the backlash of communism; therefore McCoy finds a significant portion of the Austrian population to be immigrants from Hungary and Slovakia “trying to find a better life in Western Europe.” For a language-lover, the opportunity to be surrounded by all those different languages has been an especially interesting part of her experience.

As for entertainment, McCoy is certainly at no loss. “High culture” activities—ballets, museums, and art—are great and readily available.

But the best part of living in Austria? The pastries, she claims, which “are out of this world.”

Living in Austria is not solely about soaking in European culture, however, and McCoy finds representing America just as rewarding as learning to live like a true native Austrian.

“I think often times we [Americans] have a negative image from fast food and politics. And I really hate the picture of the U.S. for these kids. A lot of them have never met an American, but they know all these things about us because of our role in world politics. I hope I’m doing a good job shaping that image for them.”

—Kari Phelan

Communication alumni live and work abroad

After working on a UNICEF program to promote public health and hygiene in ailing Sri Lankan schools, 2006 graduate Shari Jayawardhana is now working toward a degree in public health in Australia.

UPON GRADUATION FROM Wittenberg, after having been inspired by an internship experience at Mercy Hospital, Jayawardhana “wanted to actively immerse [herself] in public health issues by gaining field experience.” To do this, she returned to Sri Lanka to work as a School Health and Hygiene Promoter for Malteser International, A German non-governmental organization (NGO) that was initiated and funded by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

“I was a part of a team that promoted child-friendly water and sanitation systems in rural schools in the Southern Province of the country. I was in charge of 11 schools in the Matara district. These were very deserving schools because they had little to no sanitation facilities available and running tap water was merely a luxury to these children.”

In fact, Jayawardhana said, in terms of facilities, the schools she was working in were actually in worse condition than those which suffered the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami.

“A major objective of the project” Jayawardhana noted, “was encouraging the school community, especially the children to participate actively in their school water and sanitation solutions. Through this method, it is hoped that the sense of ownership would encourage the school community to maintain the new facilities.”

Jayawardhana was most grateful to have been exposed to the issues of rural Sri Lanka and use her “skills to benefit

marginalized individuals.”

“[This job] opened my eyes to a lot of social issues that we as privileged urbane students had no idea about...I was shocked to see the conditions of these rural schools, some of which had no sanitation facilities and others which had ruins dating far back as 1960s.”

Her experience with Malteser International fueled her drive for the public health industry, but Jayawardhana realized she needed more education to “better equip myself...to effectively communicate and support large communities in meeting their challenges in healthcare.” As a result, she started researching opportunities for a Masters Degree of Public Health.

“It was important to me that I gain a global perspective in this field, so I chose University of Queensland’s Master of International Public Health program... [It] gives an international perspective to public health which would be benefit me should I choose to go back to Sri Lanka or work overseas.”

Jayawardhana is pleased with her decision to gain experience in the field before attaining her higher degree. “In the field of public health,” she noted, “I strongly believe that field experience or at least working in the health sector of a particular country is vital because it is going to help you understand the material better and you would have so many valuable insights to share from your own country.”

—Kari Phelan

Witt in Tokyo

Who would have guessed that the grounded simplicity of Minnesotan small town roots would have serendipitously blossomed into a fiery passion for tea ceremonies, Shinto shrines, and kabuki (traditional Japanese plays)?

Certainly not Dr. Stefne Broz, despite her background in intercultural communication. But because of her newfound love for the intricacies of Japanese culture—intricacies that extend far beyond “stereotypical images” of “sushi and samurai”—communication students will now have the opportunity to discover for themselves intercultural communication at its finest.

Perhaps surprisingly, Broz was an

undergraduate Spanish major, from which a desire to study abroad naturally flowed. But not surprisingly (to which most who have studied abroad can attest) Broz found her experience fundamentally life-changing—astounded by her own capability to survive while “widening [her] perspective on the world.” Upon earning her Ph.D. she vowed to one day provide a similar experience to her own students.

Enter Hawaii Conference. Through funds provided by the Freeman Grant, Broz was able to attend a conference about teaching an intercultural course specific to Japanese communication in Japan.

And that is when it clicked.

For the last year and a half Broz, as well as her East Asian Studies counterpart, Dr. Terumi Imai, have been preparing for their inaugural six week abroad course, which will depart in May. The course is designed for “studying Japanese culture through its essential values and seeing how they manifest themselves in Japanese communication.”

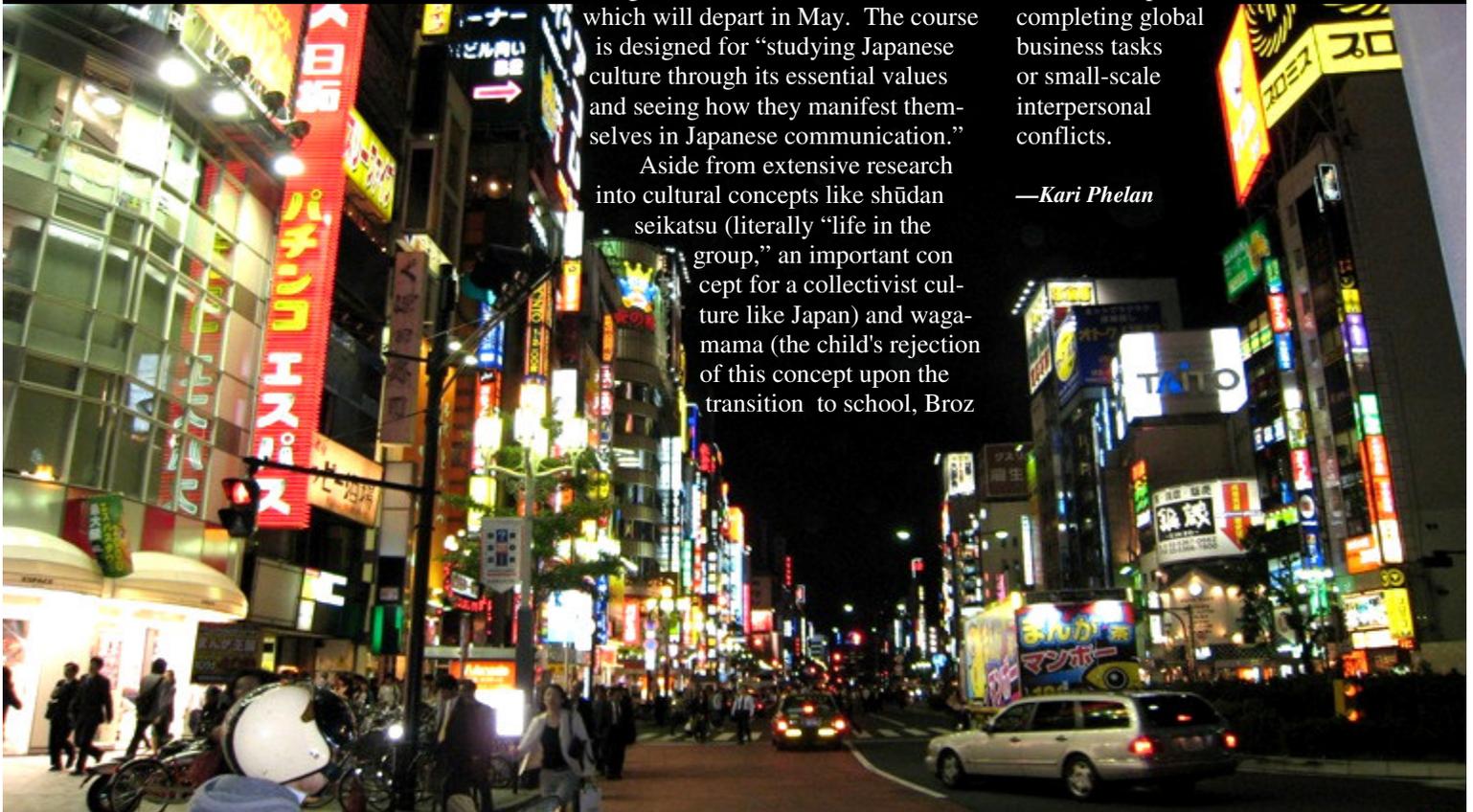
Aside from extensive research into cultural concepts like *shūdan seikatsu* (literally “life in the group,” an important concept for a collectivist culture like Japan) and *wagamama* (the child’s rejection of this concept upon the transition to school, Broz

has been an active student of Japanese language at Wittenberg, has visited Japan twice, and has hosted Japanese exchange students to help her gain a deeper understanding of the culture. She has even replaced the traditional desk candy dish with a collection of sesame-seaweed snacks.

They do taste like seaweed.

Aside from exposure to Japanese culture, food included, Broz hopes her students “gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for cultures that seem different from their own.” From her own experience, she explains that understanding of culture “transcends that culture” to help students communicate with those who are different, whether that communication takes place while completing global business tasks or small-scale interpersonal conflicts.

—Kari Phelan



Making it in Chicago (at one of the top PR firms in the country)

Inspiration, aspiration, competition, accomplishment. Such describes the career path of 2007 graduate Megan Jackson.

Jackson first heard of GolinHarris, a highly acclaimed public relations firm in Chicago, on a Communication Leaders trip and shortly thereafter pursued an internship with the company. Though an internship was not what Jackson hoped for herself upon graduation, she quickly realized that big name agencies do

“I just loved Wittenberg, and I didn’t know how I’d fare but I’ve really adapted well. ..there is life after college.” —Megan Jackson

not accept recent grads without having first been an intern. After securing a first interview through connections with Wittenbergs’s Career Center (and four or five subsequent interviews), Jackson discovered she would be one of 10 interns at GolinHarris competing for only one permanent position with the company.

Jackson describes the experience as “a bad reality tv show,” with rigorous competition, weekly challenges, and class work. Though she felt intimidated by her Ivy League and PR-major competitors, Jackson felt like her Wittenberg education, especially oral communication skills, prepared her for the big presentations that ultimately de-

cidated who would earn a position with the agency.

“I’ve never worked harder in my life,” said Jackson of her internship experience. “I learned a lot about work ethic and working your way up.”

Jackson now works as an Assistant Account Executive for the Consumer Brands Group of GolinHarris. Translation—Jackson works on managing a positive image for three brands: Good Humor/Breyers, General Mills, and McDonald’s. “Basically,” Jack-

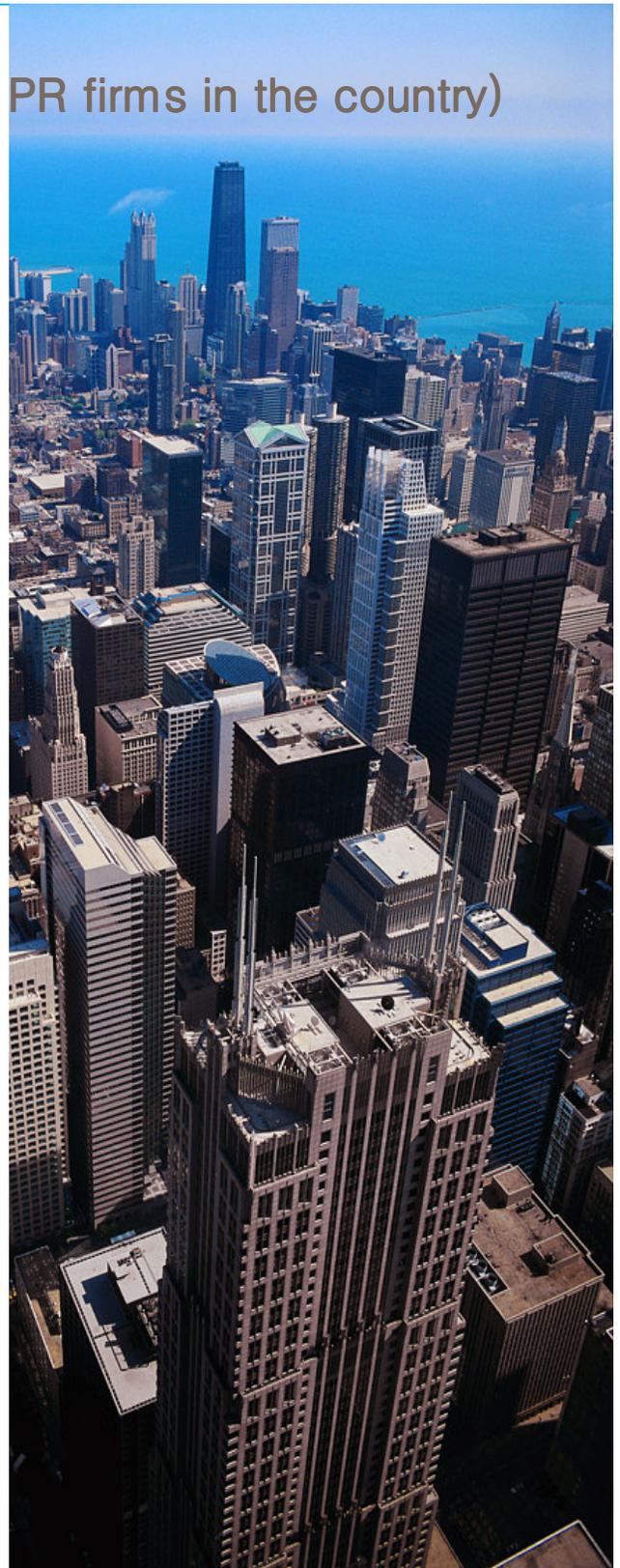
son describes, “our job is to get McDonald’s in the media (obviously in a positive light). To do this we plan a lot of events/PR stunts and pitch stories to magazines, newspapers, and television outlets.”

Her tasks vary, from phoning reporters to meeting celebrity demands, and she is rarely bored.

Being a part of the “making news” process is as rewarding for Jackson as living in the city of Chicago itself, which is full of youth, energy, and the excitement of making connections with other corporate singles.

“I just loved Wittenberg, and I didn’t know how I’d fare but I’ve really adapted well. ..there is life after college.”

—Kari Phelan



Communication Honors Candidates Present Theses Results

When many students hear the words, "Honors Thesis," as far as they are concerned the words may as well have been, "unnecessary hard work." It is hard to blame them; the requirements of writing a thesis, successfully defending it before a committee, and presenting it at a colloquium can seem daunting. Regardless of how intimidating attaining Departmental Honors may seem however, year after year multiple Communication majors still take the thesis path.

This year five seniors presented theses at the annual Honors Colloquia, and not one seemed to regret their decision. The first colloquium was held on March 27, featuring Keeley Buehler and Mike Holley. Buehler, first of the presenters, examined the way values construct arguments in the high fashion industry. Following Buehler was Holley, who presented the findings of his experimental study on the interaction between audio and visual aspects of television-commercial-based images on overall affective re-

sponse.

The second colloquium, held April 3, featured Kara Dennis, Kari Phelan, and Sarah Fetters. Dennis first presented her analysis of support websites for the bereaved, followed by Phelan, who explained the phenomenon of retaliation against social aggression among teenage girls. Fetters, an avid sports fan and former intern with the baseball team "The West Virginia Power," closed the show with her thesis on fan identification with professional sports teams.

As is evident, the topics varied significantly from one thesis to another, showing the true diversity of the Communication discipline. Perhaps the process seems intimidating, but in the words of Katy Bodey, 2004 Communication alumna, "Writing an honors thesis was one of the best decisions I made while at Wittenberg."

Maybe theses aren't as scary as they sound after all.



—*Luke Treu*



From left: Holley, Fetters and the Wittenberg softball team, and Buehler

Alumni Notes

Matt Cash, 2003

Works for Mueller Industries, Delran, New Jersey

Megan Heck, 2003

Missionary, Athletes in Action, New Carlisle, Ohio

Jen Stacey, 2003

5/3 Bank's Institutional Investment Group, Nashville, Tennessee. Training for fifth marathon with Team in Training for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

Angela Trego, 2004

Built Crowell Collier website
(www.subscriptiontoamerica.org)

Mike Wesbecher, 2004

Just finished teaching for a year in Seoul, South Korea

Aubrey Anderson, 2005

Masters candidate, International Communication, American University, Washington, D.C.

Caitlin Coleman, 2005

Volunteer Specialist, LifeSource, Chigaland's Blood Center

Jodi Stooksberry, 2005

Masters Student, College Student Personnel, Miami University. Will begin Ph.D. program fall 2008. Also works as a Graduate Assistant to the Office of Alumni Relations

Lara Bachelder, 2006

Assistant Media Buyer/Planner, Fahlgren Advertising, Columbus, Ohio

Leslie Banas, 2006

Marketing and Committees Coordinator, American Bar Association, Chicago, Illinois

Claudia Dattilo, 2006

Assistant Media Planner/Buyer, Fahlgren Advertising, Columbus, Ohio

Kylie Evans, 2006

Married Adam Majot (Wittenberg 2006)

Sarah Gearhart, 2006

Finished second marathon May 20, 2007

Emily Hiscar, 2006

Married Peter Shearer spring 2008

Laura Lachman, 2006

Admissions Counselor, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia

Karen Obee, 2006

Married Jeff Klukas (Wittenberg 2006) in 2007

Rachel Adeniran, 2007

Counselor Clerk at Cameron Academy, San Antonio, Texas

Josh Cohick, 2007

Volunteer Specialist at LifeSource, Libertyville, Illinois

Melissa Crosby, 2007

Graduate Student of Media Studies at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

Rachel Dunn, 2007

Marketing Coordinator, SYSCO Food Services, Columbus, Ohio

Suzy Feuer, 2007

Marketing Intelligence at Legacy Marketing Partners, Chicago, Illinois

Amy Holden, 2007

Corporate and Foundation Relations Coordinator for OhioHealth

Andy Hutter, 2007

Strategy Intern for Ologie, Columbus, Ohio

Megan Jackson, 2007

Assistant Account Executive, GolinHarris, Chicago, Illinois

Katie Karsnak, 2007

Graduate Student of Communication at Johns Hopkins University, Washington D.C., also works for the National Communication Association as a Convention Planning Assistant

Thomas Kincaid, 2007

Ohio Regional Sales Manager for MeritCard Solutions, Columbus, Ohio

Kelly Kreiger, 2007

Catering Manager, Wittenberg University/Sodexo, Springfield, Ohio

Julie Machledt, 2007

Assistant Project Manager for Walker Information, Indianapolis, Indiana

Sam McCoy, 2007

Fulbright English Language Teaching Assistantship Program, Neusuedlam See, Austria

Greg Mustric, 2007

Acquisition Specialist for The Cornell Group, Columbus, Ohio

Anne Nichols, 2007

Works for Americorps*VISTA, Habitat for Humanity, Springfield, Ohio

Ashley Petersen, 2007

Works for Wittenberg University Office of Alumni Relations, Springfield, Ohio



From left: Seniors Kara Dennis and Claire Johnson present at the poster session. Top: Alumni Aaron Copley, Heidi Mowrey, Erin Pence, Greg Mustric, Stephanie Herbert, Caitlin Coleman, Rachel Dunn, Claudia Dattilo, and Lara Bachelder at Alumni Career Day. Right: Greg Mustric speaks at Alumni Career Day. Bottom: Senior Lambda Pi Eta Co-Presidents Keeley Buehler (left), Kelly Juravic (right), and 2007 alumnus and induction speaker Ashley Petersen