



# The COMM Husker

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Department of Communication Studies Newsletter

## From the Chair's Chair



Fall in Lincoln— Husker Football, apple picking, leaves turning... but this year is different. The Memorial Stadium addition is complete, seating 92,000 fans:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mf0l6SSLnFM>  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qp0C31e\\_8oo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qp0C31e_8oo)

The Haymarket is celebrating opening the Pinnacle Bank Arena, seating 15,000 for UNL basketball, graduations, and concerts (Pink, Bon Jovi, Jay-Z, Elton John), including new hotels, outdoor areas, and over 20 restaurants, bars and other businesses. If you are trying to picture it, it is west of the Haymarket post office. Add Trader Joes and Whole Foods and Lincoln's cool factor has risen exponentially.

Things are exciting in Communication Studies as well. We've begun our new graduate and research Scholarly Initiatives centered around: Civic Engagement, Health & Well-being, Identity & Difference: <http://comm.unl.edu/files/grad/CS%20Emphases%2C%20Strat%20Initiatives%207%2019%2013.pdf>. We have excellent research going on, especially faculty-student collaborations. Our accomplishments pages feature Top Papers, publications and presentations. Dr. Damien Pfister and colleagues in Global Studies and the Center for Civic Engagement received a grant from the U. S. Department of State. Faculty members have national-level grant applications under review for research in narrative medicine and multi-ethnic identity. We kicked off our redesigned COMM 286 (formerly 311) course. Under the direction of Professor Kathy Castle,

the course, an innovative online and FTF blended design, serves over 1200 students per year. Drs. Damien Pfister and Carly Woods head our first Learning Community. We rolled out revisions to the undergraduate program, including our new general education COMM 101, Communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century taught by Dr. Aaron Duncan. Dr. Jody Kellas and the Undergraduate Committee are hosting our second COMM Careers week. Our Speech & Debate team kicked off the fall semester with a "Three-peat" as winners of the Big Ten Tournament and are off to a great year. We were delighted to host the British National Debate Team on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, debating doctoral students Jon Carter and Jessy Ohl on the topic of government surveillance. More than 300 people attended the debate. Our graduate program continues to thrive directed by Dr. Jordan Soliz. A large number of doctoral students will graduate this year and we added excellent new students.

Follow us on twitter, "like" the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Communication Studies on Facebook, and check out our website: <http://comm.unl.edu>. I want to hear your ideas for the department. Stop by, call, or email me. I'll be at the NCA Convention in Washington, D.C., and if you're going, please come to our reception Saturday evening 7:30-9.

"CommHuskies" past and present, do stay in touch. You are always part of us; we are proud of you. We appreciate your support of the department.

**Go Big Red!**

Dawn O. Braithwaite,  
Willa Cather Professor

## Issue 10, Fall 2013

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### Newsletter Editors

Kathy Thorne, Zeth Schlenker,  
and Dawn O. Braithwaite

## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

“Are you on the market?”—a five-word question that typically results in a somewhat



anxiety-ridden “yes.” The *job market year* represents the pinnacle of the doctoral program as Ph.D. candidates balance department teaching responsibilities, completion of those pesky dissertations,

and compiling application materials for academic positions. Like many doctoral programs, we make every effort to prepare our doctoral candidates for this process through our department professional development series and individual faculty mentoring. But, in the end, success in procuring an academic position really starts at the beginning of doctoral studies as students develop individual programs of research and build a research and teaching profile. Thus, while the department can provide a foundation to succeed on the job market, it truly comes down to the efforts and dedication of the student. At Nebraska, we are extremely proud of the success we have had over the years in placing our students in desired faculty positions. I will often hear people claim that this person or that person was “lucky” to land a certain faculty position. However, this reminds me of the adage: “the harder I work, the luckier I get.” In other words, the success we have had comes down to the time and

energy our students put forth in their development as scholars. To UNL alumni currently serving on faculty at various institutions (our academic *HuskerNation*), thank you for your hard work and for representing the department in such a positive manner. For those doctoral candidates—at UNL and other institutions—currently “on the market,” stay calm and carry on... and keep working on those dissertations! For students who will be “on the market” in the future, talk with your colleagues and faculty to get advice and learn from their experiences.



We are always identifying ways to best prepare our students to succeed on the job market. Therefore, if you have words of wisdom, please pass them on to me at [jsoliz2@unl.edu](mailto:jsoliz2@unl.edu) and I will make sure these are incorporated into our professional development activities. Please remember to follow us on *Twitter* @UNLCommGrad for announcements about grad student accomplishments and events.

The Department of Communication Studies examines human symbolic activity. We help students succeed in an increasingly pluralistic, global and mediated culture.

Inside Higher Education featured good news on the job market in our discipline: The job market for Communication faculty members may be better now than it was before the economic downturn. Read more on the NCA website and see the job trends in our discipline: <http://www.natcom.org/Tertiary.aspx?id=job>

## From the Director of Undergraduate Studies

We have had a lot going on “behind the scenes” in the undergraduate program, and I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the great ideas, changes, and outcomes that have come of that work.

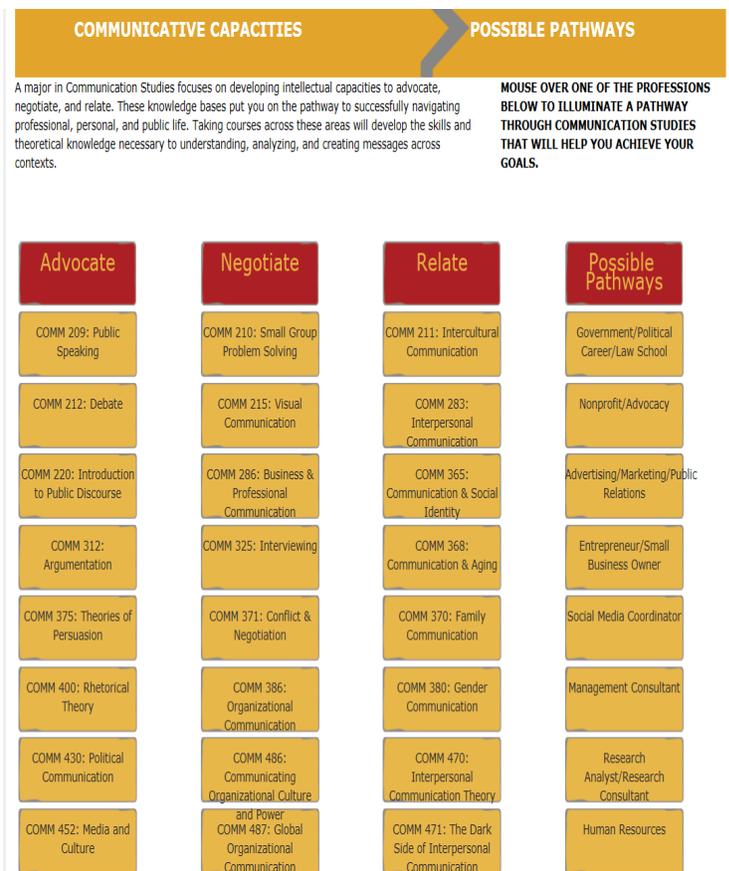
As you have probably already seen, we updated our website some time ago to better showcase the Department of Communication Studies. One of the pieces we think is most exciting is the interactive tool on the undergraduate page. Students, potential students, parents, and anyone else interested in the pathways possible with a COMM major can go to <http://comm.unl.edu/ugrad> and mouse over any of the possible pathways (i.e., careers) in the right hand column to light up a path of courses that might best prepare students for those careers. Because we believe in the importance of a flexible major that allows students to follow their own paths, none of these courses is required. However, students love the guidance that this tool provides and the ways in which it visually helps them map out their major with a possible end goal—a career—in mind!

This focus on careers is central nationally and at UNL. In November, we feature our second annual COMM Careers Week during which students can explore the many internship opportunities available to supplement their coursework in the major and the many career possibilities available to COMM graduates. Once again, we are partnering with UNL’s Career Services to help students achieve their career goals.

Finally, we have thought carefully about how to best enable our students to gain competencies in Advocate, Negotiate, and Relate (ANR). To that end, we developed a new introductory course: COMM 101: Communication in the 21<sup>st</sup>

Century. This course takes a problem-centered learning approach and provides students with an understanding of how communication can be applied to solve everyday problems we face in our public, professional, and private lives. With 101, students in and outside the major will build a foundation of ANR competencies. We also are developing new 200-level foundational courses in each of these areas that will allow students to gain more in-depth understanding of advocacy, negotiation, or relating and further fortify the scaffolding of their knowledge before moving into their upper division courses.

We are excited about all of these advancements and the ways in which they will not only help students secure fulfilling careers, but also the ways in which they will enrich their experiences throughout their college career.



# Spotlight on Graduate Alumnus Dr. Paul Schrod

## Professor of Communication Studies at Texas Christian University



Dr. Paul Schrod is the Philip J. & Cheryl C. Burguières Professor of Communication Studies at Texas Christian University. Dr. Schrod was awarded the 2012 Bernard J. Brommel Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Family Communication from the National

Communication Association, the 2011 Early Career Award in Interpersonal Communication from NCA, and the inaugural Sandra Petronio Dissertation Award from NCA's Family Communication Division.

### 1. When did you earn your degree at UNL?

I attended UNL from the fall of 2000 until the summer of 2003, at which time I graduated with my Ph.D. in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Interpersonal & Family Communication.

### 2. Why did you choose a degree in Communication Studies?

As an undergraduate student, I bounced around different majors until I completed my first course in interpersonal communication. I fell in love with the subject of communication and personal relationships, and that prompted me to switch majors from Mathematics to Communication Studies.

### 3. What brought you to study Communication at UNL?

Quite simply, the people – I attended my first NCA convention in 1999, and I met Dr. Braithwaite and several other graduate students during the convention. I really enjoyed

the conversations (and the fit) I had with the faculty and students at UNL, and that led me to choose UNL for my Ph.D. program.

### 4. What have you been doing since leaving UNL?

I am the Philip J. & Cheryl C. Burguières Professor of Communication Studies at TCU and I serve as the Graduate Director for our department. My wife (Danielle) and I have two sons (Isaac and Eli), and we spend most of our "spare" time watching the boys play sports.

### 5. What is a favorite memory of your time in Communication Studies at UNL?

Tailgating at Husker football games with friends and colleagues! I had season tickets all three years I attended UNL, and my favorite memory was attending the 2002 Rose Bowl game in Pasadena and tailgating all day with Dr. Seiler.

### 6. In what ways can alumni support our department and students?

An important way that we can support our department is by giving scholarships to students and other donations to support the faculty in their research and teaching activities. Another way that we can support our department is by staying connected through social media.

### 7. What advice do you have for current undergraduate/graduate students in our department?

For undergraduates, participate in an internship that provides professional experience in a field that you may want to pursue after graduation. For graduate students, cultivate your relationships with your peers and with the faculty so that you build a strong, supportive network of colleagues.

## Research In Action



Katherine Castle

UNL doctoral student Katherine M. Castle and Dr. Jordan Soliz have collaborated on the research project, “*Voice of Medicine and Voice of the Lifeworld: Outcomes of Physician and Patient Convergence in the Medical Encounter.*” Based on the

movement in both medical and academic circles toward identifying the potential benefits of patient-centered care which is driven by the needs and concerns of the patient, the purpose of this study was to investigate the manner in which physician and patient communication affect perceptions of the medical encounter.

Patients and physicians come to the medical encounter representing distinct groups characterized by distinct “languages”— the *voice of medicine* and the *voice of the lifeworld*—that may serve as a barrier to effective medical encounters.

In order to explore how convergence in the medical encounter influences patient perception of the physician, patient and medical encounter, Castle and Soliz framed this study using Communication Accommodation Theory. In collaboration with local physicians, they constructed three scripts depicting a patient being diagnosed with asthma. One script demonstrated the physician converging to patient language, another represented the normative medical encounter (patient and physician maintaining their distinct languages), and the last script depicted the patient converging to the physician’s language. Participants read one of the three scripts, and then responded to an online survey. The researchers found that when either physicians or patients adopt one another’s language (a) the medical encounter is perceived to be more desirable, (b) perceived physician credibility and engagement increases, (c) perceived patient competence and

engagement increases, and (d) patients are perceived as more likely to comply with medical advice. Patient competence and engagement were highest when patients adopted the physician’s language, followed by when the physician adopted patient language. Perceived physician power was highest in the normative condition and in the condition where physicians adopted the patient language, but decreased in the condition where patients adopted physician language.

Reflecting on the practical applications of this research, Kathy Castle remarked, “These results demonstrate that both physicians and patients can contribute to a more positive healthcare experience through their communicative choices, highlighting the importance of a partnership between the physician and the patient in a patient-centered healthcare system. Further, as patients use medical language to discuss their conditions with their physicians, the physician effectively loses power in the interaction. Further research should examine the ways in which physicians negotiate the shifting power balance in patient-centered healthcare interactions.”



Dr. Jordan Soliz



## Find Your Voice with Commconnect

**Commconnect**, the undergraduate student club, is back again for another round of making connections and lasting impressions on the UNL campus! This year the executive board has been making moves to recruit new members and create more opportunities for student involvement. Last year we had a snazzy new name and this year we've updated our mission statement and executive board roles. We are more focused, now than ever, on creating ethical leaders of tomorrow and helping students bridge the gap between campus connections and community connections that will set our students up for successful careers in the future.



With those goals in mind, this semester **Commconnect** has been working hard to develop local community connections with business professionals from all over the Lincoln Metropolitan

Area. Some of the organizations include, Gallup, PayPal, Swanson Russell, and Humanex Ventures. This semester **Commconnect** plans to take its students to multiple businesses around Lincoln. This will allow students to see for themselves the places that hire Communication Studies graduates. We all know that UNL does an outstanding job at making opportunities available for resume assistance and mock interviews, so this is our way of bridging the gap between university and real life success. Many may remember last year's COMM Careers Week where Communication Studies Majors and Minors could learn tips and tricks to furthering their career in communications over a weeklong event hosted by the College of Arts and Sciences, **Commconnect**, and Career Services. This is another avenue available for students to learn the possibilities of their major post graduation. Members of these organizations plan to return to campus and meet with our

students as an Expert Employer Panel, where they will answer any questions and give advice on the best practices for the application / interview process. If you are interested in being a part of these activities and making community connections, then join **Commconnect**!

Last year President Kayla Simms and Vice President Brittney Ernesti, as well as other members of The Arts and Sciences Department, were able to create major enthusiasm for Communication

Studies at the Big Red Road show, recruiting incoming freshman and future seniors in high school, and educating them on the opportunities Communication Studies offers.

To continue our spirit for

**CommConnect** this year, we were among the many organizations that participated in the Registered Student Organization Fair at the Nebraska Union. Executive Board members Kayla Simms and Arielle Raymond, Advisor Audra Nuru, and Graduate Studies Committee member Sarah Baker were able to recruit over 20 new members and the emails are still coming in! Find your voice in **Commconnect** and join us in making community connections while becoming ethical leaders of tomorrow.

We are more excited than ever to see what this year has in store and hope to see where the new year takes us.

*Comm Club President,  
Kayla Simms*



For questions about Comm Club, contact Audra Nuru at [anuru@huskers.unl.edu](mailto:anuru@huskers.unl.edu)



University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
RECEPTION at NCA 2013  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Those attending the National Communication Associations  
99th conference  
in Washington, D.C., are cordially invited to join us at  
UNL's reception.

Saturday, November 23, 2013  
7:30 – 9 PM  
Delaware A  
Marriot Wardman Park



## HELP THE DEPARTMENT AND STUDENTS

- Do you see value in your Communication degree?
- Has UNL Communication Studies made a difference in your life and career?
- Is there a Communication professor who made a special effort toward your education?

If you answered yes to these questions, as a student you benefitted directly from alumni donations to the department when you participated in COMM Career Week, a visiting lecturer event, our NCA reception, the Speech & Debate program, or received travel support.

*Annual and monthly donations make a big difference in what we can do for students.*

Visit with Department Chair Dawn O. Braithwaite about donation opportunities:

- **Communication Studies General Fund** (bring experts to campus, recruit new students, host NCA reception, help undergraduate and graduate students attend events).
- **Phyllis Japp Student Development Fund** (help graduate students across areas with conference and research expenses).

Visit with Director of Speech & Debate Aaron Duncan about donating to the team. We have a critical need these next two years to raise additional support for travel as the national tournaments are in Phoenix, Arizona, and Portland, Oregon. Aaron and the coaches need significant help to get the students there.

- **Donald O. Olson Memorial Fund for Speech & Debate.** Funds go for team travel and Scholarships.

One-time or recurring gifts can be set up easily via the UNL Foundation: <https://nufoundation.org/unl/college-of-arts-sciences/departments/departments-of-communication-studies>

**Your support is important and we are incredibly grateful!**

## Spotlight on Undergraduate Alumnus Nathan Fuerst



We caught up with Nathan Fuerst who graduated from our program in 2002. He is now the Director of Admissions at the University of Connecticut. We are very proud of Nathan and appreciate how he applies his

Communication degree in his career every day.

### 1) During which years were you a student at UNL and when did you graduate? Which degree(s) did you earn at UNL?

I was at UNL 1997 to 2002, earning my B.A. in Communication Studies, followed by my M.B.A in 2006.

### 2) What have you been doing since leaving UNL?

I've worked in Enrollment Management at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and now at the University of Connecticut as the Director of Admissions.

### 3) Why did you choose a major in Communication Studies?

I changed my major from Agriculture to Communication Studies after taking an introductory course in Communication Studies. For the first time in the classroom, I was able to pair learning with fun.

### 4) How has your communication degree helped you in your life and career?

I emphasize to our team that effective communication is a process. No one

communicates perfectly all of the time, and when we are stressed, the 'hard wired' tendencies, in particular, the more ugly ones, come out. My degree has helped maintain a focus on constantly improving our communication to effectively advocate, negotiate and relate to achieve our goals.

### 5) What is a favorite memory of your time in Communication Studies at UNL?

I recall how Ron Lee's course pushed me intellectually. I realized that I enjoyed being pushed in this way. I recall a high level of satisfaction on what I learned and accomplished in that particular course. This helped to shape a work ethic that has continued to reward thus far in my career.

### 6) In what ways can alumni support our department and students?

Mentorship is critical. I encourage undergraduate students to attach themselves to anyone who they aspire to be later in their career. Draw upon their strengths, learn about their weakness and don't hesitate to openly acknowledge to your mentor(s) that you view them in this way.

### 7) What advice do you have for current undergraduate students in our department?

Work with passion, celebrate your achievements, but always hold an appetite for the greater challenges ahead. Take a moment now and again to consider how you can turn everything on its ear. Find ways to achieve progress both incrementally and monumentally.

**Find Your Voice:  
DISCOVER the  
promise and possibility  
of COMMUNICATION.**

# UNL FACULTY MEMBER AND GRADUATE STUDENT RECEIVE AWARDS AT CSCA



## CSCA HALL OF FAME



Dr. William Seiler was awarded Central States Communication Association's Lifetime Achievement Award April 3, 2013.



Amanda Holman accepted the coveted Cooper Award for Ph.D. student teaching at the Central States Communication Awards convention in Kansas City, Missouri on April 3, 2013.

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## UNL COMMUNICATION STUDIES HUSKERS



## ATTEND CSCA

# UNL Speech & Debate Students

## UNL Speech & Debate Team Wins Swing Tournament



The UNL Speech & Debate Team's season got off to great start with a win at the Hutchinson and Sterling College Swing Tournaments in Hutchinson, Kansas. The tournament was attended by a total of eighteen schools from across the Midwest. UNL placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the team division of Lincoln Douglas Debate, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Speech, and 1<sup>st</sup> overall for the combined portion of the swing. The team's victory was highlighted by individual wins by senior Josh Planos (communication analysis, informative speaking) and senior Grace Kluck (prose interpretation). The debate team compiled an overall record of 35-20 for the weekend and placed three speakers in the top five: junior Jeff Garst (3<sup>rd</sup>

place), junior Derrick Stevens (4th place), and freshmen Kelsey Maher (3<sup>rd</sup> place novice division). The tournament was highlighted by junior Jeff Garst's perfect 7-0 record on his way to capturing 1<sup>st</sup> in the varsity division. In addition to a great freshmen class, the team welcomes a new graduate student coach, Jonathan Carter. Jonathan is joined by second year graduate assistant coaches Amy Arellano, Allison Bonander, Jamie Downing and fourth year graduate assistant debate coach Darrel Farmer. Director of Speech & Debate Aaron Duncan is returning for his ninth year with the team. On October 12-13<sup>th</sup> the team traveled to Northwestern University and repeated as champions of the Big Ten Tournament.

### UNL Speech and Debate Facts

- Since 2000, our team has produced five national champions.
- The UNL Speech & Debate team has placed among top twenty teams nationally for the past fifteen years in a row.
- We were the Prose Interpretation National Champions in 2008 and Prose Interpretation National Runner-Ups in 2009.

# Department of Communication Studies

## Departmental Accomplishments

### Faculty Accomplishments

#### Faculty Awarded Grants

**Damien Pfister** and colleagues Patrice McMahon (Global Studies) and Linda Major (UNL Center for Civic Engagement) received a State Department grant for the institute, "**Study of the U.S. Institute on Civic Engagement.**"

**Carly Woods** was awarded a **Helen Faust Women Writers travel grant** to support her research visit to the Eberly Family Special Collections Library at Penn State University.

#### UNL Communication Studies Faculty published these articles:

**Braithwaite, D. O.** (in press). "Opening the door": The history and future of qualitative scholarship in interpersonal communication. *Communication Studies*.

Breshears, D., & **Braithwaite, D. O.** (in press). A dialectical analysis of discourses surrounding children's experiences of parental disclosures of homosexuality. *Journal of Family Communication*.

Metts, S., **Braithwaite, D. O.**, Schrodtt, P., Wang, T., **Holman A., J., Nuru A. K., & Stephenson Abetz, J.** (2013). The experience and expression of emotions of stepchildren at critical events in stepfamily life. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 54, 414-437.

**Duncan, A., & Arellano, A.** (in press) "Hip Hop and Sexuality," *Teaching Media*.

**Duncan, A.**, (forthcoming, Fall 2013). Reimagining the Self-Made Man: Myth, Risk, and the Pokerization of America. *Western Journal of Communication*.

Galvin, K. M., & **Braithwaite, D. O.** (in press). Family communication theory and research

from the field of Family Communication: Discourses that constitute and reflect families. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*.

**Koenig Kellas, J., Suter E.**, Accounting for lesbian families: Lesbian mothers respond to discursive challenges. *Communication Monographs*, 79, 475-498. (NCA GLBT Division's Article of the Year)

**Koenig Kellas, J.**, Kranstuber, H., Willer, E. K., & Carr, K. (accepted for publication). The benefits and risks of storytelling and storylistening over time: Experimentally testing the expressive writing paradigm in the context of interpersonal communication. *Health Communication*.

**Koenig Kellas, J.**, Willer, E. K., & Trees, A. R. (2013). Communicated perspective-taking: Spouses' perceptions of each others' behaviors during stories of marital stress. *Southern Communication Journal*, 78, 326-251.

Thorson, A., Rittenour, C., **Koenig Kellas, J.**, & Trees, A. R. (in press). Quality interactions and family storytelling. *Communication Reports*.

Colaner, C., **Soliz, J.**, & Nelson L. (article forthcoming): Communicatively managing religious identity difference in parent-child relationships: The role of accommodative and nonaccommodative communication. *Journal of Family Communication*.

**Woods, C.S.** (in press). Repunctuated feminism: Marketing menstrual suppression through the rhetoric of choice. *Women's Studies in Communication*. 36 (3).

**Woods, C.S. , Ewalt, J.P. & Baker, S.J.** (2013). A matter of regionalism: Remembering Brandon Teena and Willa Cather at the

## Faculty Accomplishments (continued)

Nebraska History Museum. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99 (3), 341-363.

## UNL Faculty Take on National Leadership Roles

**Dawn O. Braithwaite** was elected to the Executive Board of the national Council

on Contemporary Families.

## UNL Faculty Keynotes at National Communication Conference

**Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite** was a 2013 keynote speaker at the National Communication Association Hope Conference for Faculty Development in Holland, Michigan.

## Graduate Student Accomplishments

### Publications

**Arellano, A.** "Performance, Dialogue, and Debriefing: Examining Frank Ocean's Coming Out" appears in *Teaching Media*, 1.3 (Spring 2013): 2-33.

**Arellano, A.** Hobbs J. (in press) "The Use of Pathos in IPDA Debate," the *IPDA Debate Handbook*.

**Click, K.** The Gaming Research Report, *The Daily Nebraskan* [http://www.dailynebraskan.com/arts\\_and\\_entertainment/article\\_f39221b4-ad44-11e2-b49c-0019bb30f31a.html](http://www.dailynebraskan.com/arts_and_entertainment/article_f39221b4-ad44-11e2-b49c-0019bb30f31a.html)

**Moore, J.,** Scarduzio, J. A., Plump, B., & Geist-Martin, P. (in press). The Light and Shadow of Feminist Research Mentorship: A Collaborative Autoethnography of Faculty-Student Research. *Journal of Research Practice* Special Issue on Research Assistantships. Schultz, A.

**Moore, J.,** & Spitzberg, B. (in press). Once upon a midnight stalker: A content analysis of stalking in films. *Western Journal of Communication*.

**Ohl, J.,** & Potter, J. (2013). United we lynch: Post-Racism and the (re)membering of racial violence in *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*. *Southern Communication Journal*, 78(3), pp. 185-201.

### Successful Dissertation Defense

Ph.D. candidate, **Jenna Abetz**, successfully defended her dissertation on October 18, 2013.

She is pictured here with her advisor, Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite.



**Scott Church** successfully defended his dissertation, *All Living Things are DJs: Rhetoric, Aesthetics and Remix*, and graduated with his PH.D. in August 2013.

**Rachel Stohr**, Ph.D. candidate, will graduate in December 2013. She successfully defended her dissertation: *Toward a Global Organizational Public Sphere: Non-governmental Organizing and Democratic Legitimacy in a Postmodern World*.

### Religious Communication Association's Student Submission of the Year

**Downing, J.,** "An Ancient Modern Rhetoric: Calling Upon Traditional Rhetorical Practice in the Fight for Jewish Emancipation." The paper will be presented at the Star Panel during the RCA pre-conference at the NCA convention in Washington, D.C. in November.

### Undergraduate Accomplishments

**Emily Veys** was accepted to present her work at the Nebraska Lambda Pi Eta conference at Wayne State College on April 15th. Emily submitted her capstone project on eldest siblings and Communication Theory of Identity. Emily was selected for the Top Paper Panel.

## Alumni Updates: Personal & Professional Endeavors

**Diane Breahers (Ph.D. 2011) and Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite** were interviewed by the *Lincoln Journal Star* for their study on lesbian and gay parents coming out to their children. [http://journalstar.com/news/local/telling-your-kids-you-re-fay-how-children-deal-with/article\\_fa8e97c9-770a-548b-ae44-74e976854037.html](http://journalstar.com/news/local/telling-your-kids-you-re-fay-how-children-deal-with/article_fa8e97c9-770a-548b-ae44-74e976854037.html).

**Audrey Fox (B.A. 2013)** works as an Analyst, Client Service and Developmental Specialist for HUMANeX VENTURES.



Audrey was an intern with the organization for two years prior to working for them full-time. She works with client partners throughout the country in

industries such as education, healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, retail and others to help organizations select top talented individuals into their companies and learn how to build a more positive and dynamic culture. This role incorporates sales, marketing, client service, research, consulting and presentation skills.

**Nicole Lopez (B.A. 2012)** Since graduating from UNL, Nicole Lopez has gotten engaged to a fellow UNL Alum, Michael Bettendorf! “We both graduated in 2012 and have been planning our wedding for a few months. The happy nuptials will happen in May of 2014!”

**Tiffany R. Wang (Ph.D. 2012)** contributed a Translating Research into Instructional Practice essay to the NCA Virtual Faculty Lounge in July 2013 and co-authored an article with colleagues at Illinois State, TCU, and UNL: Metts, S., Braithwaite, D. O., Schrodtt, P., Wang, T. R., Holman, A. J., Nuru, A. K., & Stephenson Abetz, J. (2013). An exploratory study of experience and expression of emotions of stepchildren at critical events in stepfamily life. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 54, 414-437. doi:10.1080/10502556.2013.800400. Tiffany was also appointed Newsletter Editor for CSCA

and Chapter Advisor for University of Montevallo’s Lambda Pi Eta Lambda Nu Chapter.

**Rebecca DiVerniero (Ph.D. 2010) Assistant Professor, Dixie State College**, will be awarded The National States Advisory Council (NSAC) Scholar of the Year Award for 2013 to be presented at the NCA Conference in 2013 for her article “A Turning Point Analysis of Stepchildren’s Communication with their Nonresidential Parents’ Family,” which appeared in volume 44 (Fall 2012) of *the Iowa Journal of Communication*.

**Jessica Rick (B.A. 2010)** started the Ph.D. program at the University of Missouri in the fall of 2013 in Organizational Communication.

**Michelle M Maresh-Fuehrer (Ph.D. 2009)** published her first book, *Creating Organizational Crisis Plans*, Kendall Hunt Publishers. Articles from the book were featured in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Bulldog Reporter’s Daily Dog* PR Trade Journal and in the *Corpus Christi Caller–Times* newspaper. Her paper was accepted for presentation at the National Communication Association Convention in Washington, D.C.: “Connecting Academics and Practice: Using experiential learning in Crisis Communication Education.” Michelle conducted a scholar-to-scholar session on “Increasing Student Retention with experiential learning at the Texas Speech Communication Association Convention in Corpus Christi, Texas. She also received the Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi ELITE Outstanding Faculty Member Award and was nominated to be the Faculty speaker at the First-Year Islanders Convocation. Michelle was selected by the University President to attend breakfast with the Texas A & M University System Chancellor and Board Regents in College Station, Texas, and was appointed Rotary International District. 5930 Rotary Awareness Committee Chair.

## Alumni Updates (continued)

**Blair Thompson (Ph.D. 2007)** Received an internal grant to conduct research with K-12 school districts across the state of Kentucky to learn about their challenges and strategies related to communication during and after school crises. Dr. Thompson and his research team will also visit schools nationally that have experienced school shootings within their districts. This first stage of the project is aimed at developing support for a larger external NSF grant proposal with the Cyber Security Division.

The research team is hoping to expand their research and develop training and curriculum that can be used nationally both in the university setting and individual school districts.

**Karla Mason Bergen (Ph. D. 2006)** Received Extended Contract and Promotion to Associate Professor, March 2013. Karla was appointed Director of General Education, Fall 2013. She also became the grandmother of twin boys, Jax and Jase Bergen, born 12-26-13 to her son, Michael (UNL grad, Ag Sciences, '06) and his wife, Kelsey, of Henderson, Nebraska.

**Mark Zmarzly (2005)** Founder & CEO, recently launched a new startup called Hip Pocket. Hip Pocket is the easiest way for consumers to gain context and confidence in their financial products. More information is available at [www.YourHipPocket.com](http://www.YourHipPocket.com),

**Matt Davis (2004)** will be receiving the National Communication Association's Oberle Award for outstanding teaching Grades K-12. Matt teaches and coaches the Speech & Debate Team at Lincoln East High School.

**Wes Durham (Ph.D., 2004)** has accepted the position of Director of Graduate Studies at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville.

**Dr. Shawn T. Wahl (Ph.D. 2003)** Lead article in *Communication Education*, Wahl, S.T. (with

Simmons, J., Lowry-Hart, R., McBride, M.C. (2013). Understanding the African-American student experience in higher education through a relational dialectics perspective. *Communication Education*.

**Rob Patterson (Ph.D. 1997)** Worked with Junior State of America's (JSA) program at the University of Virginia this summer, lecturing on great historical speeches by Frederick Douglass and FDR's "Stab in the Back" speech given at UVA in June, 1940. Rob served as JSA's official sponsor this year and delivered the program's commencement address in the Dome Room of the Rotunda in August. JSA operates programs in content areas such as communication, media, history, and government at summer programs at Princeton, Georgetown, Stanford, and UVA.

**Donna Pawlowski (Ph. D. 1995)** Recently accepted an Associate Professor position with Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minnesota, where she will be working with curriculum development and assessment to enhance the Speech Communication offerings across the campus. She loved her 19 years at Creighton University and will always have fond memories of her colleagues and students; however, she is excited for this new opportunity at BSU, as it embraces the same student-centeredness while allowing her to continue professionally, and be closer to family.

## Department of Communication Studies Faculty

Dr. Dawn O. Braithwaite  
Willa Cather Professor and Chair  
Interpersonal & Family Communication

Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas  
Associate Professor  
Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Interpersonal & Family Communication

Dr. Kathleen Krone  
Professor  
Organizational Communication

Dr. Karen Lee  
Professor of Practice  
Rhetoric and Public Culture

Dr. Ronald Lee  
Professor  
Rhetorical Theory  
Political Communication  
Critical Study of Contemporary Public Discourse

Dr. Damien Pfister  
Assistant Professor  
Public Deliberation, Digital Media,  
Network Culture, and Rhetorical Theory

Dr. William J. Seiler  
Professor  
Instructional Communication

Dr. Jordan Soliz  
Associate Professor  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Interpersonal & Family Communication

Dr. Carly Woods  
Assistant Professor  
Rhetorical History and Theory, Cultural Criticism,  
Gender and Sexuality Studies,  
and Argumentation

Dr. Aaron Duncan  
Director of Speech & Debate  
Rhetoric and Public Culture

Dr. Charles Braithwaite  
Research Professor  
Cultural Communication

Professor Kathy Castle  
Director of COMM 286 and  
Distance Education

### Professors Emeritus

Dr. Vince Di Salvo  
Professor Emeritus  
Organizational Consulting & Training

Dr. Phyllis Japp  
Professor Emeritus  
Contemporary Rhetorical Theory