

COMM Alumni Networking Event Homecoming 2016

Some 300 students attended the Department of Communications Media Alumni Networking Event during Homecoming Weekend. The event, at the HUB Ohio Room, was a first for the department, giving students the opportunity to meet graduates of the program, make connections for internships and gain valuable career advice.



More than 55 alumni and guests attended the event, representing careers in a variety of media and communications areas, including television broadcasting, video production, radio, public relations, social media management, health communications, event planning and many others. Some of the companies represented at the event included CBS Radio-Pittsburgh, Forever Media, Highmark Health, George Davison Studios, Excelsa Health, ROOT Sports Pittsburgh, Gatesman+Dave, Johnstown Tomahawks, Renda Broadcasting, and WJAC-TV, among many others.

Tom Havrilla (2003), pictured here on the right, talked to students about opportunities in video production along with Rob Pastoria (2002) on the left. Havrilla, a senior media producer with Wix Pix Productions in Johnstown, understands the importance of making connections, "I jumped at the opportunity to share my professional experience with students. The communications field has changed over the decades, but one thing that hasn't changed is the professionalism and preparedness of the IUP COMM Media students. The students had specific questions and were eager to hear the answers. I wish I had the opportunity to sit down with media professionals one-on-one and hear about their experiences when I was an undergrad. The fact this event exists is just another example of the leaders of the department, not just teaching, but becoming advocates for their students." **Story continues→**



COMM Alumni Networking Event Homecoming 2016

Jennifer Black (2007), a news anchor and reporter at WTOV-TV in Steubenville, Ohio, is pictured here (right) with Communications Media students Amelia Atkins (next to Black), Courtney Deems (center) and Kevin Irvin, Jr. (left). Black said this was a motivated group, "Had a blast talking to this trio! They are driven and destined for great things. I told them this photo was a way for me to track their success." Atkins, a junior from Pittsburgh, experienced her first networking opportunity. "Meeting Jennifer was awesome. She was very down to earth and so willing to give me knowledge on the reporting field. She gave me a lot of good information and made me excited about my plans for the future."



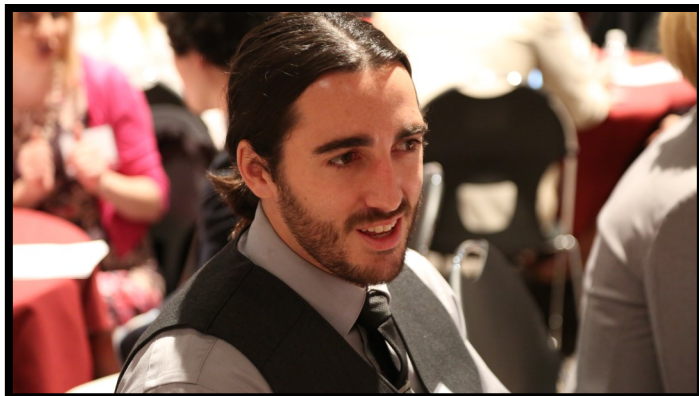
Dr. B. Gail Wilson, pictured left with Jennifer Black and Lindsay Ward (2008), chairperson of the Department of Communications Media, spearheaded the event, "I could not be more pleased with our students or more grateful to our former students for the success of this event. The "buzz" in the room was palpable. So many conversations going on at the same time. It was really very exciting." Wilson went on to say, "Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive. Our graduates were engaging, helpful and willing to answer questions. Some internship connections and job shadowing opportunities have already been set."

Megan Baker, a 1996 Communications Media graduate, was the featured speaker. Baker (pictured right) is president and CEO of Baker Public Relations in Albany, NY but started her career in television news as the evening news anchor for Capital News 9 and a news reporter and anchor for WXXA-TV both serving the Albany, NY area. Baker talked to the group about the reality of making career changes, "In this day and age, it's rare for people to stay on one career path. I transitioned from television news anchor/reporter to founder, president & CEO of Baker Public Relations."



[More photos from the networking event→](#)

Alumni Networking Event Photos



Matt Spangler (2008) is Director of Education and Community Engagement at WYEP-FM in Pittsburgh.



Bob Gillmer (1992) is Coordinator of Communication Media at North Penn School District in Lansdale, PA.



Lori Rieger (1999) left, Norm Jones (1999) center and Laura Sproull (2012) far right, talked to students about careers in marketing communication and advertising.



Tyler Graham (2011) left, Mike Nicastro (2013) center and Josh Hill (2016) right, spoke to students about their work in sports media, including ROOT Sports Pittsburgh.



Emily Skopic (2004) is Senior Social Media Specialist with Highmark Health.



Meredith Shubert Mongelluzzo (1994) is seen on the left talking to students about careers in marketing and advertising.

The future looks bright for Communications Media with these enthusiastic undergraduates who attended our Networking Event.



COMM Alumni Social

Homecoming 2016

An evening social gathering at the Rustic Lodge followed the afternoon networking event on Friday. Alumni and guests had the opportunity to reconnect with classmates and former professors. Yes, we may have “borrowed” some of these from your social media posts.



A group from the early 1990s. Bob Gillmer, Cheryl Weber Gillmer, Janet Jacob, Mike Fetsko, Paul Fitzgerald and Bill Jacob.



Michelle Gapsky, Dr. Piwinsky and Kendra Reith



Dan Sprumont (2010), Jennifer Black Ganser (2007), Dr. Lamberski, Michelle Gapsky (2009) and Kendra Reith (2009)



Aaron Hoffman (2002), Dr. Wilson and Alan Friday (2003) at the Crimson Huddle on Saturday.



Janet Kosakowski Jacob, Dr. Start, Paul Fitzgerald and Cheryl Weber Gillmer.

[More Photos →](#)

COMM Alumni Social



Lori Reiger (1999), Megan Baker (1996), Amy Muntean Mauk (1999), Jerome Brown, II (1997) and Norm Jones (1999).

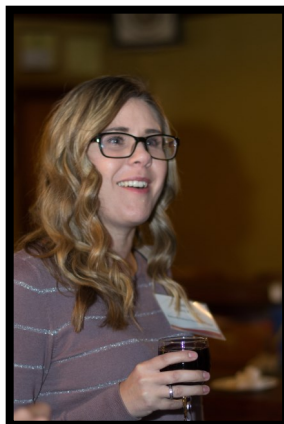
Homecoming 2016



Kenny Meier (1998) and Dr. Wilson



Ashley Brewer Patterson (2000) and Jamie Smolinski (2002)



Cherie Cain Peters (2004)



1988 classmates, Scott Weber and Frank Gerardi



Chris Maust (2011)



Eli Jevicky (2001)



Mike Fetsko (1994)

Communications Media—DC alumni event

A summer visit to Washington, DC by Communications Media faculty included an opportunity to see several alumni living in the DC area. The event was coordinated by Department Chair, Dr. B. Gail Wilson, hosted at The Washington Center Headquarters.



Shawn Kline (1989) with Dr. Leidman. Shawn is an analyst with the National Center for Education Statistics.



Dr. Muchtar with Annemarie Agnew (1989) and Chris Morsey (1999). Annemarie is a strategic business advisor for Comcast and Chris works for the Department of Homeland Security in information technology.



IUP Development Officer David Maudie with Maurice Grant (1981). Maurice is a marketing professional with Urban InSight.



Dr. Wilson and Aric Caplan (1988). Aric is President of Caplan Communications.



Dr. Lamberski with Marc Hutzell (1997), Chris Reese (1996) and Jerome Brown, II (1997). Marc is the Director of Information Technology for the German Marshall Fund, Chris is President of Resolve Solutions and Jerome is a national security consultant for the US Government Accountability Office.

[More photos from DC→](#)

More Photos from the DC Alumni Event



Dr. Lamberski talks to Brad Kohlenstein (1999) and Jeff Massie (1999). Brad is Senior Vice President for Blink Films, USA and Jeff is Vice President of Broad Street Realty.



Dakota London (2015) with Dr. Wilson. Dakota recently moved from CNN Washington to CNN Atlanta as a news assistant.



Dr. Leidman with Karl Kalbaugh (1987). Karl works for Discovery Communications as an audio mixer and sound designer.



Above, Neal Hobson (2003), Andrew Morris (2009) and Sam Hakes (2008). Neal is communications coordinator for Beacon Hill Staff Group. Andy recently left the DC area for a position as an e-learning technology specialist with AmeriaGas in the Philadelphia area. Sam is a videographer at George Mason University.



Left, Dr. Wilson with Bob DelPizzo (1991). Bob goes by the on-air name, Bob Delmont, as a country music DJ for iHeart Radio in Baltimore.

SPOTLIGHT ON LEGAL SUCCESS...

JIM LOGUE, CLASS OF 2002



Law might not be the first thing you think of for a Communications Media graduate, but Jim Logue, is using his IUP education as an attorney in Harrisburg. As Jim explained, “Law is writing and argument intensive. You need to cater to your audience, which is a very similar skill learned through a Communications Media major.”

After graduating from IUP in 2002 with a B.S. in Communications Media and a minor in Business, Jim attended Widener University for his Juris Doctorate. He went on to pass both the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Bar Exams. When asked about why he chose to go into law, Jim stated, “I always felt that I was a persuasive ‘arguer’. I did not decide on law school until my junior year of college. I was a member of the National Broadcasting Society, and

we had a guest speaker (an IUP alumna), and she was in her second year of law school at Pitt, focusing on communications law. That was what got me thinking about education beyond my Bachelors.”

According to Jim, law and communications media go hand-in-hand and complement each other well. Jim said Communications Media “teaches you to cater to a specific audience (whether it is radio, television, advertising or public relations.” One of the focuses of the department is effective message delivery, persuasive writing and clear and concise communication. Jim claimed, “These skills can help one accelerate in any career. Presenting a case to a judge and/or jury requires original and creative delivery. Some say that presenting a legal case is similar to acting or catering to your audience.”

Jim recalled what he remembered from IUP, “A lot of my classes were writing and/or “message delivery” oriented. I think I really honed my skill of writing persuasively and effectively to an audience. I specifically remember Dr. Wilson's broadcast news writing class, and Dr. Lenze's internet research class. Law requires a lot of research and persuasive writing/argument.”

Jim and his wife Brandy have a 3-year old son named Dean. In addition to his work and family responsibilities, Jim has completed 3 marathons, a handful of half marathons and 10 mile races. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, skiing and volunteering in the community. In 2009, Jim was awarded the York County (Pennsylvania) pro bono award for assisting those less fortunate with their legal unemployment cases.

Jim’s advice to current Communications Media students is to “*persevere in any and all areas of your studies, especially those that interest you the most. The possibilities truly are endless.*”

SPOTLIGHT ON LEGAL SUCCESS...

CHRIS WELCH, CLASS OF 1992

Chris Welch (1992) is a partner and practicing attorney at the Indiana, PA law firm, Budash and Welch. As a student in the Department of Communications Media, Chris was heavily involved in radio broadcasting and advertising. After completing his B.S. in Communications Media, Chris continued his IUP education getting an MBA in 1995. He attended Duquesne University School of Law where he received his Juris Doctorate Degree.



Working as a trial attorney, Chris states “communications media helped me be able to communicate and visualize in order to present a case. I know what should be said, seen, and heard.” When asked about the most significant thing he took away from the Communications Media program, Chris responded, “Every single class, whether it was photography, radio, TV, advertising, or writing was absolutely excellent and taught me a variety of things. However, I would have to say Career Planning was by far the class that was the most beneficial. That class taught me how to market myself and how to prepare for a career.”

Chris’s first jobs out of college were working in radio stations and recording studios. He worked as an on-air personality and as an advertising executive. “Advice I would give to COMM Media students now is to work and gain as much experience as you can to build a strong resume.”

While attending IUP, Chris was a member of the drumline and continues to play the drums with a bagpipe band. He is married and has a daughter and stepdaughter.

When asked what he would tell current students, Chris said, “*Advice I would give to COMM Media students now is to work and gain as much experience as you can to build a strong resume.*”

SPOTLIGHT ON LEGAL SUCCESS...

LINDSAY (MONECK) BARD, CLASS OF 2001



Lindsay Bard is the Senior Attorney for the Regulatory Law at Group FedEx Ground In Pittsburgh. She recalls taking an entertainment law course in the Communications Media department at IUP. After doing well in the course, she says Dr. Mary Beth Leidman suggested to Lindsay that getting into law might be a good career path for her.

After she graduated from IUP in 2001, she got a job as an entry-level administrative assistant at a law firm in Pittsburgh. In 2002, she headed to New York City, where she got a job at a large firm in mid-town Manhattan. "There I was able to learn more about the ins and outs of the legal profession, and I decided that I wanted to be a part of it. A year later I was accepted into Duquesne University School of Law." Lindsay earned a Juris Doctor degree from Duquesne in 2007.

Communications Media can play a small or big part in any career path. Lindsay states that various other COMM Media skills translated well to her profession. "During radio and television production courses, you learn to think on your feet and to address technical and human glitches to ensure the best production for the Radio and TV audience. This skill translates well to arguing in court, handling tough questions during a training class, or dealing with a technical snafu during a major presentation."

Lindsay loves to travel with Steven, her husband of 9 years. She has been to six countries and to 35 of the 50 US states. She plans to visit all 50 states, and many more countries.

When asked what advice she wants to give today's IUP students, Lindsay claims networking is the key. *"I recall going to the National Broadcasting Society Conference in Los Angeles with Dr. Wilson and meeting loads of people. They all had such unique and interesting jobs; careers I'd never heard of before. COMM Media isn't just producing TV shows and being on the radio, but you won't know about these other jobs until you start asking around. Keep in touch. You never know when a classmate or professor might become a colleague or a professional reference."*

CMIT Graduate Honored by COE-ET



Dr. Bradley Wiggins, associate professor and head of the department of Media Communications at Webster University in Vienna, Austria, received the 2016 College of Education and Educational Technology Alumni Scholar Award.

Wiggins graduated from the IUP Communications Media and Instructional Technology (CMIT) PhD program in 2011, where he focused his research and dissertation on cultural implications in online learning settings. Wiggins states “The CMIT PhD program prepared me to fully understand that being a teaching professor also means producing quality scholarship.”

After graduating from IUP, he joined the faculty at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, where he became head of the Communication Department in 2014. In his current position, Wiggins is responsible for accreditation and assessment of the Media Communications program, working with representatives from the St. Louis-based Webster University campus as well as media department heads in Switzerland and The Netherlands.

As Wiggins explains, “The best part of working in Vienna is that I have the privilege of teaching truly diverse students. I am allowed to witness their genuine curiosity and eagerness to know more. This challenges me to continue to make classes interesting, inviting, and a comfortable but stimulating zone for learning.”

Wiggins’ research investigates technology and the uses of technology as cultural forces. He is co-author of a textbook to be published by Fountainhead Press, *Writing the New Landscape*, which focuses on composition in new and social media, expected 2017. He has also published several articles in critically acclaimed journals such as the *International Journal of Communication*, *New Media and Society* and the *International Journal of Game-Based Learning*. Wiggins has completed extensive research on games, simulations, gamification, and memes.

Wiggins states that learning about communications and media is significant. “Without a critical understanding of these and many other related issues, we merely use language and other forms of communication without realizing their actual power, potential for impact, positive or negative change, and so much more.”

In addition to honoring Wiggins, the college recognized 2016-17 scholarship recipients. A total of 782 awards in the college resulted in \$1,050,507.24 being awarded to students.



Guests at the event included IUP President, Dr. Michael Driscoll and Dr. Kurt Dudd, Professor Emeritus and former chairperson of the Department of Communications Media.

WELCOMING NEW COMM MEDIA FACULTY

Rachel Porter: Photographer

To most, images of toppled cakes, smashed pies and shattered dishes are a cause for frustration and possibly even a few tears. However, in Rachel Bee Porter's, *The Joy of Cooking*, these images represent a more profound meaning; the idea of the perfect mess representing the imperfections of life. This is the kind of creative expression Communications Media professor, Rachel Porter, brings to her photography.

Hailing from Williamsport, PA, Porter worked as a professional photographer and a college professor before joining the department in Fall of 2016. Porter's work has been exhibited in a number of venues such as the Center for Photography at Woodstock, Texas Women's University, Aperture Gallery in New York City, and the Samek Art Gallery at Bucknell University. Furthermore, her photos have made their way into publications like *Aesthetica*, the *British Journal of Photography* and, most recently, *Flash Forward Tenth*.

Porter completed her undergraduate degree at Rochester Institute of Technology where she earned her BFA in Professional Photographic Illustration. Upon graduating, Porter realized she wanted to teach photography. Prior to pursuing her Master's degree, Porter attended a post-grad program at Bucknell University for two years. There, she worked as a teaching assistant and created new work that helped her transition into the fine arts side of photography. Porter obtained her MFA from Parsons School of Design, The New School in New York.

Porter's passion for photography was cultivated during her time in high school where she worked with photographic film to make prints. It was here that she fell in love with photography as she worked in the darkroom to process photos. Loving the darkroom, Porter explains, "there is a certain magic" that is lost when producing photos digitally. While her photos differ from shoot to shoot, she ultimately loves dealing with themes that circle around "the sphere of the domestic". She loves turning conventional photos on their heads by creating unexpected twists within her photos.

Porter currently teaches Beginning Photography, Photography II: The Print and Documentary Photography and is the advisor for the Student Photography Association (SPA). When asked about teaching, Porter expressed, "I love seeing new perspectives. Everyone has a different way at looking at things and a different way of approaching things." Continuing, she states, "I like watching students grow and develop." Before coming to IUP, Porter taught at Bucknell University and Point Park University.



WELCOMING NEW COMM MEDIA FACULTY

Jeremy Waltman: Filmmaker

Being an award-winning director kind of makes you a big deal but you would never know it when talking to Jeremy Waltman, one of the Department of Communications Media's newest professors. Waltman has directed two feature-length films that were both nominated for and have won a number of awards including: Best Picture for the New Jersey Film Festival (*Locomotive*) and Director's Award for the North Carolina's Film Award (*It Plays Like Love*). He has also worked as a writer and as an artist, making him extremely versatile individual.

Born and raised in Portage, PA, Waltman attended Penn State University and received his bachelor's degree in Drawing and Painting. Continuing his education, Waltman then attended Florida State University (FSU) and got his MFA in Studio Art. When asked about what inspired him to get involved with filmmaking, he replied that when he was drawing independent comic books, he began to make short commercials for them.

Eventually, those became gallery short films that led to him making his first feature-length film, *Locomotive*. He states that his background in art assisted him in understanding composition, color and narrative when creating movies. His most recent film, *It Plays Like Love*, was screened this fall at IUP as well at the Covellite International Film Festival, the Southeastern International Film Festival and at his alma mater, FSU.



Waltman became involved with teaching during his time at FSU when he worked as a teaching assistant. With eight years under his belt as a college professor, Waltman has worked in Georgia at Young Harris College as well as in Philadelphia at La Salle University. Currently, he is teaching Script Writing, Advanced Video Production and will teach Media Production for the CMIT PhD program in the spring. He is also the advisor of the IUP Student Film Association (SFA). When asked what he loves most about teaching, he cited his love for sharing information and being enthusiastic about the subject matter.

Film and teaching make up nearly the entirety of Waltman's life. He even went to go as far as to say "that if I wasn't doing something that involved film or teaching, I would find a way to film or teach it." Clearly, Waltman is passionate about his career and it shows within his work. When asked if he

had any advice for younger filmmakers, he kept it simple: "Just do it."

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT...

GET SOMETHING OUT OF GIVING BACK!

Job shadow or informational interview

- Host a student at your company for a “job shadowing” day
- Participate in an information interview for students

Invite current students to intern at your company

- Help advance your business and the careers of students
- Email your information to Dr. B. Gail Wilson (bgwilson@iup.edu)

Be a guest speaker in a class

- Share your experience at IUP and give advice to students

Attend an IUP Career Fair

- Recruit potential employees for your business
- Contact IUP’s Career and Professional Development Center 724-357-2235 or career-development@iup.edu

Come back to IUP

- See how much has changed on campus
- Walk the halls of Davis and Stouffer
- Reconnect with old friends and former professors
- Attend a future alumni networking event

Make a donation to your favorite Communications Media organization

- Your donation is key to the department’s success!
- Next time the IUP Foundation reaches out, contribute to the our program of your choice

FOUNDATION CODE: DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAM

224663: GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA SUPPORT

224722: IUP–TV SUPPORT

224765: COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA JOURNAL & CONFERENCE

225302: DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP & RESEARCH

228431: WIUP-FM RADIO SUPPORT

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



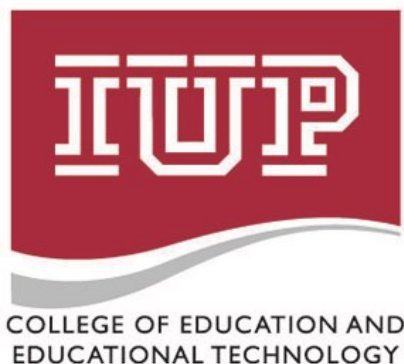
Our social media accounts keep students, alumni, faculty, and prospective students up to date on department activities. Follow us to see if you will be featured in our #TBT (Throwback Thursday) posts, get information on events the department, and see what our students and faculty are doing!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/iupcommmedia>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/iupcommmedia/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IUPCommMedia>

The Link is produced by the Department of Communications Media with help from student photographers and writers Hayley Bush and Kwame Stroman.



The Department of Communications Media is housed in IUP's College of Education and Educational Technology .