Greetings from the interim

Dear Alumni,

Greetings from Jiafei Yin, the interim chair of the journalism department. Many of you may know already that Dr. Marron has left CMU to become the dean of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I’ve been on the journalism faculty for 18 years and may have had you in my classes. I often tell my students at the end of each semester that they may think I do not remember them, but I often can remember not only where they sat in the classroom but also the facial expressions on their faces, at least by the time when they ask me for a reference letter. That’s the best tradition and advantage of our program — our faculty members know our students by name. Many of our new faculty members have kept that tradition strong.

In the past year, the department has achieved many accomplishments: its students and faculty continued to win awards; the advertising major was experiencing fast growth; faculty were productive in research and service; and over the summer many students had the experience of a lifetime on unique internships. In this issue, you’ll learn about their internships through their photos and in their own words. And, our faculty members were busy expanding those opportunities. It’s a long road from Mt. Pleasant to Beijing and to the national parks in Alaska and Washington. We are immensely proud that we are able to provide these opportunities to our hard-working students.

The department is strong because of the dedication of generations of faculty and, most of all, because of your consistent and loyal support.

The department faces challenges, as well, given the fast advances in media technologies and the disruptive changes in the press industry. The department will be going through re-accreditation in the fall. We’ve been diligent in preparing the self-study and for the site team’s visit in early October. The success of the department depends on the efforts of its faculty and of people like you. We’re counting on your support. Together we can keep our program strong.

Fire up, Chips!
Jiafei Yin, PhD
Professor & Interim Chair

Summer internships

“There have been more than a few times during my internship at Denali National Park and Preserve where I’ve just had to step back and appreciate that this is my job. How many people can say that their work day involved hiking up a mountain during summer solstice to photograph the sunrise at 2 a.m.? Every day I work in the park I am amazed and inspired by the sights and people I’m surrounded by.” - Katie Thoresen, 2013 photojournalism alum

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Professors go beyond the classroom

Editor of The Headliner: Renae Gould
“This summer, I’m working for Bloomberg News out of its Southfield bureau. I’ve had the chance to cover General Motors’ massive recall effort, the automakers’ monthly sales reports, new car unveilings and more. I’ve also had the chance to cover non-auto stories, as well. It’s been a very busy, insightful and fun ride for me, so far. Being able to immerse myself in the auto industry in the midst of an amazing turnaround and in the city of Detroit, while working for one of the best and most respected news organizations in the world, is still surreal to me. I get to work alongside and learn from some of the best business journalists in the world, including a couple CMU alums, so I couldn’t be happier. This summer has been invaluable for me. I’ve already learned a ton, and I can’t wait to keep absorbing as much as I can from my co-workers over the next few weeks.”
- John Irwin, Westland senior

“I have been in China for only two months, yet I have already become a different person. Something about being immersed in a culture that is so different than mine has allowed me to understand not only the world better, but also myself. The language barrier and drastically different way of life have served more as opportunities than as obstacles; opportunities to connect with others in more ways than just verbally, opportunities to get lost in the unknown and cherish the wild adventure, opportunities to adapt to the unusual and gain real insight into who I am and what drives me. I could spend my whole life listening to lectures and sitting behind textbooks without ever learning about the world. Deciding to come to China was one of the single most important decisions I have ever made in my life.”
- Kurt Nagl, Clinton Township senior, interned at The China Daily. He enjoyed sampling the local cuisine, like this dish called “Pulling silk from sweet potatoes.”

“Working as a media intern at Sitka National Historical Park has been one of the most enriching experiences of my life. I knew that spending the summer in Sitka would give me the chance to take some beautiful photos of the landscape and wildlife, but I couldn’t have imagined everything else it would provide. I’ve learned about Russian American and Native Alaskan history, spoken to visitors from all over the world, and have fallen in love with the passionate and kind community of Sitka. Though I’m only halfway through my time here, I can say with confidence that I’ve grown both personally and professionally because of this internship. The greatest piece of knowledge I’ve come away with, so far, is that there’s a world of opportunity out there, waiting to be explored. I hope this experience will mark for me the beginning of a lifelong exploration.”
- Katy Kildee, Flint senior
SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNSHIPS

Students intern all over the country, world

“Every day here at Mount Rainier National Park, I look at the mountain and have to remind myself that this is my real life and I am experiencing my dream job. Not many people can say they were able to hike and climb onto a glacier or a mountain or look for endangered owls for their job. Every day is a new adventure and a chance to use my skills as a photojournalist to capture all the happenings at the park. I have learned so much more than I thought I would about geology, wildflowers and wildlife. It also has been a sobering experience to realize how dangerous the wilderness is by documenting a search and rescue operation at the park. The National Park Service is such a wonderful organization, and I am so lucky to be able to be a part of it. My hope is to use my photos to give the public understanding of what NPS is all about.”
- Emily Brouwer, Grand Haven senior

“Interning at People has given me the opportunity to apply what I learned in the classroom at a nationally-known magazine. My advisers and professors equipped me with tools needed to walk out of the classroom and walk into a professional newsroom. Professor Ed Simpson’s classes really helped me transition from student to reporter. Whether it be a quick course in coding or a semester-long project including pitching, story layout, presentation and content, I felt like his courses prepared me for interning. I’m also learning more than I could ever imagine on the spot. I talk with heroes of communities around the country by day and interview A-list celebrities at night, providing me experience in writing both human interest pieces and current news. On my third day, I was sent to cover a Jennifer Lopez concert in The Bronx and the following week I was interviewing Daniel Radcliffe on the red carpet. I’m also surrounded by some of the top editors in the industry, learning from them every day. Being in the ASME program has also been huge for me. I meet editors from different magazines every week for the program’s weekly lunches and I now have connections to someone at almost every top magazine in NYC.”
- Jessica Fecteau, Macomb senior

“Working at the Boston Globe has been an unbelievable experience. I’m working side by side with giants of the industry, photographers and reporters who have broken ground with their work. I learn so much every day, about how to work in a large newsroom, how to communicate an entire story with a single image, and most importantly, I’ve learned a lot about myself as a photographer, where my strengths and weaknesses lie in my work. I can’t believe I’ve been given this opportunity, and I’m grateful and excited to wake up every day and set foot in the Globe’s newsroom.”
- Zack Wittman, Novi senior
SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY

Miller, Ren scout out more internship sites

“I was delighted to be invited to make photographs for Acadia National Park in Maine in early June. It is a photographer’s paradise because of its rugged coastline that lends itself to beautiful scenery. During my weeklong visit, I photographed the coast, forests, lakes, carriage roads, wildlife, lighthouses, islands, rock climbers, park ranger programs and visitors. The park will use my photos in many publications to promote the park. They will also include them in an exhibit on climate change in 2016. I am working on an internship agreement with them. That’s one reason I went to the park, to scope it out so I can advise students. They hope to have an intern next summer.” - Professor Kent Miller

Dr. Richard Ren flew back to China this summer and spent four weeks at Weber Shandwick’s Beijing Office to refresh himself with the latest PR practices and PR cases.

During his stay at Weber Shandwick, he “worked” with a healthcare practice group and a digital communication group. He talked to many colleagues about PR practices and collected their award-winning case studies in China and in the U.S.

In addition to learning and sharing, Dr. Ren discussed potential summer internships for CMU PR students at the Weber Shandwick Beijing and Shanghai offices. The summer internship proposal was welcomed by Weber Shandwick management.

Dr. Ren said, “I am very excited about this summer internship opportunity with Weber Shandwick China. China is the most promising market in the world and PR is growing so fast. I believe this could be a great international internship opportunity for CMU PR students.”

Dr. Ren also discussed an internship opportunity with North Head in Beijing, a strategic communications and public affairs consultancy with a focus on the Asian region, especially China. Dr. Ren is optimistic about this internship program, as well.

SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY

Department’s founder Gil Maienknecht dies

Dr. Gilbert Maienknecht, known as the “father of journalism” at CMU, died Monday, Feb. 3. He was 94.

Maienknecht was the founding chairman of the department in 1959, and retired in 1983 after 30 years at CMU. In 2002, he became the first inductee into the department’s Journalism Hall of Fame.

According to a condolence note from Eleanor Myers Quinlan, who worked with Maienknecht at CMU, he was “the most kind and wonderful person to work with, along with being a good friend. He was a devoted teacher, and there are many journalism alumni out in the work force that he encouraged and mentored.”

As stated in his obituary: “He was characterized by his honesty, humility, sense of humor, warm chuckle, fierce loyalty, love of family, exceptional storytelling, and use of pep talks and slogans.”
SPOTLIGHT ON RECOGNITION

Wittman, Proctor, CM Life, Grand Central win big

Junior Zack Wittman won second place and a $4,000 award for his photography in the Hearst National Championships in Washington, D.C., on June 5.

Winning college journalists in the National Writing, Photojournalism, Broadcast News and Multimedia Championships were announced by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation’s Journalism Awards Program.

The Hearst Championships are the culmination of the 2013-2014 Journalism Awards Program, which are held in 105 member colleges and universities of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication with accredited undergraduate journalism programs.

From June 2 through June 5, 29 finalists – all winners from the 14 monthly competitions – participated in the 54th annual Hearst Championships, where they demonstrated their writing, photography, radio, television and multimedia skills in rigorous on-the-spot assignments. The assignments were decided by media professionals who judged the finalists’ work throughout the year and at the Championships.


Wittman won the honor for the second year in a row.

Sophomore Daytona Niles took third place in the College Photographer of the Year competition.

Alum Sean Proctor won Photographer of the Year. Proctor is a staff photographer at the Midland Daily News.

Grand Central, our online magazine, also won a variety of awards.

Society of Professional Journalists Competition
1st place for best independent website
1st place in feature photography – Shannon Millard
Editor and Publisher Eppy Awards
Honorable mention

Central Michigan Life was named “College Newspaper of the Year” by the College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers.

CBAM is a professional organization for students and advisers working with business and advertising departments in college and university newspapers across the United States.

In addition to Newspaper of the Year, the staff also won:
First place for best black and white display ad
First place for best classified page/section
First place for best sales incentive program
First place for best training program
First place for best mobile app sales increase
Second place for best sales representative of the year

Second place for best newspaper promotion multi-media campaign
Second place for best sales strategy for a special section
Second place for best social media strategy
Second place for best mobile app strategy
Second place for best sales promotion materials
Second place for best newspaper marketing/promotion plan
Second place for best new group promotion concept
Second place for best PR/marketing manager
Third place for best back-to-school/orientation issue
Third place for best interactive or digital rate card/media kit
SPOTLIGHT ON RECOGNITION

Fitzgerald, scholarship winners honored

Rick Fitzgerald, director of the Office of Public Affairs & Internal Communication at the University of Michigan, came back to campus to accept the Alumus of the Year award on April 9.

He was awarded a plaque at the 14th annual Department of Journalism Awards Luncheon. The event also honored the department's scholarship winners.

Fitzgerald graduated from CMU in 1975. He has been a strong supporter of CMU's journalism program. Throughout his journalism career, he offered internships and job opportunities to students and shared his professional experience as a guest speaker in our classrooms. He has been involved with the CMU Journalism Hall of Fame since its inception in 2002.

The winners were: Amanda Brancecum and Snowy Decaen won the Robert E. McCabe Scholarship; Taylor Tyson won the Fitzpatrick/Wood Scholarship; Mark Cavitt won the Jack and Nancy Benedict Endowed Award; Breann Wasson won the Roger and Lisa Hart Award; John Irwin won the Dr. Michael Petrick Journalism Scholarship; Carlee Campbell won the Dennis Jeffers Memorial Scholarship; Anna Palm won Friends of Journalism; Wyatt Bush and Taryn Wattles won the Suzanne Nichols Endowed Scholarship in Journalism; Taylor Arnett won the Outstanding Senior Award; Octavia Carson won the Study Abroad Scholarship; John Irwin won the Pam Klein Memorial Endowed Journalism Scholarship; Dominick Mastrangelo won the Leadership Award; Kurt Nagl won the Journalism Scholar of the Year Award for Merit; Wyatt Bush won the Jim Wojcik Scholarship for Merit; Taylor Arnett won the Gilbert O. Maienknecht Scholarship for Merit; Arielle Breen, Kurt Nagl, Kai Niezgoda and Morgan Taylor won the Matt Dobek Endowment; Arielle Breen won the Dennis Durkee Endowment; and Chelsea Komblevicz won the Opperman Public Relations Internship Endowment.

SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

High school students attend Journalism Rocks!

Professor Betsy Pollard Rau organized Journalism Rocks!, which brought 71 high school students to campus to learn more about the basics of journalism.

Students could attend sessions about photography, design, online journalism, public relations and multimedia. They also had an opportunity to talk to faculty members, eat in a dining hall and tour campus.

Bobby Hawthorne, a writer and journalism instructor at numerous workshops, was the featured keynote speaker. He talked to students about how to make their reporting and writing really stand out from the competition.
Four alumni join Journalism Hall of Fame

Four new members were inducted into the Journalism Hall of Fame on Friday, Nov. 15, 2013, at the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant.

Neil Hopp, former CM Life adviser and newspaper publisher and editor; Wayne Kamidoi, art director of The New York Times; Tom Marquardt, editor/publisher of The Capitol of Annapolis, MD; and Kallie Bila Michels, University of Michigan associate vice president of communications, attended the event and shared their stories and advice with faculty, alumni and current journalism students.

Kameel Stanley, a reporter for The Tampa Bay Times, was honored as Young Journalist of the Year.

The program also included special recognition of the 1983-1984 staff of CM Life for their 30th anniversary.

Digital Discovery offers total college experience

Digital Discovery was an intensive, 2.5-day, digital-only clinic offered to high school students from June 27-29. It was directed by Dr. Ed Simpson.

Those selected for the program got the total university experience: to work with top-notch professors passionate about the future of news, to stay and work on campus, to develop lifelong friendships and contacts, to learn the latest in digital newsgathering and production techniques in CMU’s state-of-the-art journalism laboratory, and to produce a digital news publication with stories, video and slide shows.
Catey Traylor reports for News21 project

Online journalism major Catey Traylor believes her work on the Carnegie-Knight News21 project at Arizona State University has given her connections that will last throughout her professional life.

“The connections you make, you can’t make anywhere else,” Traylor said. “I would never have had that opportunity if it had not been for News21.”

Traylor, a South Lyon senior, was one of 24 college journalists from across the nation chosen to work on the project, titled “Back Home: The Enduring Battles Facing Post-9/11 Veterans.” The multimedia project details the issues veterans face as they “negotiate a federal bureaucracy that is often overwhelmed and ill-equipped to deal with them,” according to a project press release.

The Department of Journalism faculty nominated Traylor and committed $10,000 for her to participate in the project.

“It was such a big honor to be chosen,” Traylor said. “It was a huge honor to represent CMU and get our name out there.”

Former Chair Dr. Maria Marron said Traylor was nominated because she has a strong academic background and the faculty thought she would be a great fit for the program.

“She has the sort of enquiring mind and the professional dynamo that made her a great candidate for this particular program,” Marron said.

Traylor began work on the project in January 2013 with weekly seminars via Skype. In May, she moved to Phoenix and worked on the project until the beginning of August. She traveled to San Antonio, New York City, Boston, Hartford, Conn., and New Haven, Conn., to interview between 50 and 60 people for her story on homeless veterans.

She said she gathered so much information from her interviews that she had to use much of it as background information.

“I had so much information, that I would still be writing now,” Traylor said.

She said her editor, Pulitzer Prize winner Jacquee Petchel, taught her how important patience is in the newsroom.

“The story isn’t going to just spring up,” Traylor said. “You have to keep working and wait for it.”

She said her education at CMU, specifically her knowledge of AP Style, her JRN 202 class, and her experiences on Central Michigan Life and Grand Central magazine prepared her for the project.

“I wouldn’t know how to be the journalist I am without CM Life and Grand Central,” Traylor said.

Journalists share their experiences, advice

In Fall 2013 and spring 2014, the Department of Journalism brought in six journalists from around the country and world to speak to our students as part of the Hearst Visiting Professionals program.

Dale Duncan, a 1976 Department of Journalism alum and former president of MaineToday Media, stressed how important it is to take advantage of all the resources CMU makes available to students.

“You training here will give you a leg up,” he said.

Chicago Tribune photojournalist Scott Strazzante showed students that visual variety is the key to successfully telling a story with images.

He told students during a visit to CMU that a photograph needs various elements that people can look at. He said to pay attention to composition, lighting, a moment and color.

Osama Siblani, publisher of The Arab American News, wants students to dig deeper and get the whole story before they rush to judgment about ethnic groups, particularly Arab Americans.

Portuguese journalist Filipe d’Avillez has worked for Grupo Renascenca, an online news outlet and radio business in Lisbon, Portugal, for five years. He also writes a blog titled Actualidade Religiosa. He understands how difficult it can be to report on faith-based stories.

Photojournalist Danny Wilcox Frazier hosted a weeklong workshop for photojournalism students, where they went out into the community and created photo stories. Those stories were presented to students and faculty in a slideshow presentation, titled “Michigan & Me.”

John Ketchum, a CMU alum, talked to students about online journalism. He is an assistant producer for Marketplace’s wealth and poverty desk.
Six students and one faculty member, Professor Teresa Hernandez, spent three and a half weeks on a great photo adventure in Cusco, Peru. The group, which consisted of photojournalism, broadcast and communications majors experienced the culture first-hand with homestays and Spanish classes at San Blas Spanish School. The course, Peru Multimedia Experience, concentrated on helping the students expand their visual storytelling skills beginning from where they were. The students learned directly and gained a sense of history from their weekend excursions to The Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu and ruins near the city of Cusco. Through their intense Spanish classes and interactions with their host families, the students improved or developed their language skills.

Within the rich visual environment, making photographs and multimedia pieces enriched the students’ ability to tell provocative stories. Forced to communicate with their subjects in a foreign language, the students pushed themselves outside their comfort zones and met the challenge of creating journalistic pieces, some in a medium fairly new to them.

The direction of the class towards a more empathetic approach, helped the students to develop their unique vision and approach to storytelling.

As Allyson Garstecki, one of the students, wrote in a blog entry, “I have been approaching photography in a new way and trying to do things differently and it turns out, I do have a certain style; a quiet intimacy as Teresa described it. My photos seem to match my personality, which is actually one of my strengths because people don’t notice me right away and I am able to get genuine moments.”

But besides working hard on their photography and Spanish, the students found time to learn to Salsa and improve their culinary skills. They enjoyed dancing as they took in the nightlife in Cusco. The school provided cooking classes put on by one of their Spanish teachers. All returned safe and sound with a greater appreciation and desire for more adventures outside the country.

Six CMU students and Professor Teresa Hernandez traveled to Cusco, Peru, for an immersive course in multimedia storytelling.

Dr. Johnny Sparks won the Provost’s assessment award for his work on assessment of the advertising program. He received a $10,000 award.

Dr. Elina Erzikova hosted a question and answer session with reporters, journalism students and faculty at Kommuna, a regional newspaper in Voronezh, Russia. Participants asked questions about media freedom in the U.S., professional challenges and the future of the profession.

Erzikova also gave two academic presentations at the international conference, “Human Rights in the Digital Era.” She also conducted three workshops on digital public relations in Perm and Penza, Russia, and led a seminar on PR leadership for students at Penza State University.
I would like to support the Department of Journalism’s outreach programs.

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Thank you for your contribution! CMU, an AA/EO institution, strongly and actively strives to increase diversity within its community (see www.cmich.edu/aaeo.html).

Upcoming Alumni Events

October 4 - Homecoming

November 15 - Hall of Fame Dinner

April 10 - Awards Luncheon