Dear COM Alumni,

Welcome to the first edition of COMConnect, which is a newsletter dedicated to CMU's Communication Alumni. We are excited to keep you informed about your fellow alumni and about COM events at CMU. In particular, we hope to spotlight alumni and their experiences in future editions of the newsletter, so please email us your news at comconnect@cmich.edu.

In addition to hearing from our Alumni, we also enjoy meeting you during our alumni events or during your trips back to campus. Please connect with us on facebook or twitter (@cmichcom). Looking forward to hearing or seeing you soon!

All the best,
Bill Dailey, Chair

We Want to Hear from YOU!

Haven't filled out our alumni survey? Click here to tell us what you've been up to. We want to stay in touch and add you to our interactive alumni map! Where in the world are our CMU Communication Alumni? Let's find out...

Have questions, comments, concerns, or news? Email us at comconnect@cmich.edu

Follow us on Facebook or find us on Twitter: @cmichcom
Dr. Alysa Lucas received an Early Career Grant from CMU’s Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, which spans three years and is worth $43,610. In her first study, Dr. Lucas analyzes, longitudinally, how college freshmen develop friendships and communicate within those relationships about sex. A second study will help illuminate how talking about sex with friends before, during, and after sexual encounters influences decisions about sexual behavior. Dr. Lucas hopes the two longitudinal studies will help create a greater understanding of these relationships and their influence on safe-sex practices. In the future, Dr. Lucas hopes to develop safe-sex interventions that can be used on college campuses.

Dr. Joseph Packer’s article, “What Makes an Orc? Racial Cosmos and Emergent Narrative in World of Warcraft,” was published in the March 2014 edition of *Games and Culture*. In the article, Dr. Packer examines the narrative construction of race in the game World of Warcraft using collective emergent behavior and demographics as opposed to game text or individual player behaviors. Dr. Packer’s video game interests do not end there. In Spring 2015, Dr. Packer will instruct a class on first person rhetoric in video games. Students will be introduced to the history of video games, the game industry, and explore current issues and controversies in video game scholarship. As part of the course, students will play and discuss both recent and classic video games. In the future, Dr. Packer believes video games will increasingly become a part of our lives as they are already prevalent in our phones, education, and even scientific breakthroughs. Dr. Packer plans on continuing his video game research by examining the mechanics of how educational games influence the way players perceive the subjects that the games teach.

**New Faculty: Dr. Elizabeth Carlson**

**Hometown:** Saranac, MI  
**Education:** B.S. at Northwestern University; M.A. & Ph.D. at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
**Research Interests:** Inter-organizational conflict management, specifically in the context of disaster response.  
**Teaching:** Organizational Communication, Communication in Leadership, Survey of Research in Communication  
**So Far at CMU:** “I am really enjoying getting to know my students, my fellow faculty members, and the Communication graduate students. My students lead active lives and have lots of organizational experiences to talk about in class. I’ve been very touched by the welcome that I’ve received from my colleagues, and I’m excited about the future of the COM Area.”  
**Fun Fact:** Elizabeth just had her first baby (a boy!) with her husband Ryan. Little Reilly was born on November 11th, which she is very happy about given all the other “11s” in her life (Elizabeth and Ryan had their first date on October 11th and were married on July 11th).
Kevin Stevens, ‘14
CMU: MA in Communication, Assistant Basic Course Director & Graduate Teaching Assistant
Hometown: Jackson, MI
Current Position: Teach for America: Creswell School of the Arts 7th Grade Math Teacher

Kevin Stevens’ graduate assistantship as assistant basic course director and graduate teaching assistant for COM 101 helped him realize his passion for teaching and influenced his decision to apply for Teach for America. As a 7th grade math teacher for Teach for America, Kevin most enjoys seeing his students progress over the course of the school year not only academically, but also emotionally, socially, and mentally. He strives to help them realize and reach their full potential. Though teaching has been his most challenging task, it has also been the most rewarding one.

CMU Memories: Kevin’s favorite memory at CMU was attending Dr. Kirsten Weber’s class and having “meaningful, theoretical conversations with other students.”

Hey Alumni!
Know of a job opening? Share it with us and we can pass along the information to COM alumni and students. Email us at comconnect@cmich.edu

Andrew Keller, ‘07
CMU: BA in Journalism (PR Focus) & Minor in Public Affairs
Hometowns: Sacramento, CA & Rogers City, MI
Current Position: Senior Program Manager, Common Threads, Washington, DC

Andrew Keller’s employer, Common Threads, is a national nonprofit organization that provides cooking and nutrition-education programs in underserved communities, which promote cross-cultural understanding. Andrew’s degree in journalism helped him become a better consumer of information, exposing him to the broader world and inspiring him to pursue a career in international relations and social justice causes. In his current position, Andrew is able to see the positive impact of his work every day. By observing classes to witness the students’ cooking skills and analyzing program data for improved nutritional comprehension, Andrew is continuously reminded why his work is important.

CMU Memories: Andrew fondly remembers his time living on the 3rd floor of Merrill with his best friends and wrestling teammates.

We want to hear what you’re up to! Email us at comconnect@cmich.edu with updates on your life.
Our Com Students: *Involved inside and out of the classroom*

**Jessica LeMire, MA Student**

- **Hometown:** Grand Rapids, MI
- **Current Position:** Assistant Basic Course Director & Graduate Teaching Assistant

During her time at CMU, Jessica has been active both in and out of the classroom. Not only does she serve as an assistant basic course director and graduate teaching assistant for COM, but she is also involved in Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU) and pickleball. In fact, she has competed in the USA Pickleball Association National Tournaments in Arizona the past two years. Her favorite memory at CMU so far has been building relationships with both faculty and classmates through late-night “BullPen” cram sessions and Walleyball matches. One of Jessica’s favorite experiences has been helping train the first year GTAs during the August session and seeing them grow into the “impactful instructors they are.”

**Kelly Wright, MA Student**

- **Hometown:** Eaton Rapids
- **Career Goals:** Lobbyist or Professor

Kelly leads a very active life in the CMU community. She has served on a multitude of committees and groups including CMU’s Student Government, Student Budget Allocation Committee, Academic Senate & Executive Board, Quality Initiative, Strategic Planning, Homecoming Parade Coordinator, Committee on Committees, Phi Alpha Delta, Lunch Buddies, College Days, and Campus Ambassador. Kelly has also spent considerable time working with Michigan Youth in Government. The memories she created at NCA influenced her decision to pursue a role in higher education.

**Charles Mahone, Senior**

- **Major:** Communication & Political Science
- **Minor:** Leadership
- **Hometown:** Chesterfield, MI

As Student Government Association President, Charles enjoys working with student leaders to improve the experiences of fellow CMU students. In his own words, Charles aspires “to run for elected office and truly work on behalf of those who choose to have me represent them.” **CMU Memories:** His favorite memory at CMU is becoming the Gold Ambassador at the first Homecoming he could actually attend. In the COM area, Charles enjoyed finding faculty whom he could connect with and who were interested in his success.

**Mark Moultrup, Senior**

- **Major:** Communication
- **Minor:** Leadership
- **Hometown:** Clarkston, MI

As Wheeler Resident Assistant, Mark developed the educational program *Dream Up Success!* to teach students the importance of setting goals and action planning by creating Dream Boards, which are visual representations of dreams, goals, and ambitions through words and pictures. These boards are hung in a place students will see them everyday to help the students stay inspired. **CMU Memories:** Mark’s favorite memory at CMU is seeing the difference he has made in the lives of his residents. In the COM area, he fondly remembers the first day of Small Team Com when Instructor Adam Barragato made the new groups have a dance-off to get acquainted.
CMU will soon have a state-of-the-art facility for human and environmental health with a focus on hands-on research and learning. The new four-story, 169,000 square foot Biosciences Building—accruing costs over $90 million—will emphasize a collaborative environment with open floor plans, cooperative laboratories, community study areas, and an active learning classroom. The building will also host multiple specialty research facilities including:

- A vivarium to replicate aquatic conditions for research
- A Biosafety Level 3 lab for working with infectious diseases
- An isotope laboratory
- An Imaging center for scanning and transmission electron microscopes
- A herbarium
- A staging and processing storage area for ecological fieldwork

The building will balance safety, technology, and energy efficiency. Construction is scheduled to be completed by September 2016, and the building will be open for classes in January 2017. The building resides next to Moore Hall where our COM students have been able to watch its progress since building started this Fall.

**Coming in 2015...**

- **January 20**: Michigan Undergraduate and Graduate (MUG) Communication Conference presenters notified.
- **February 20**: COM will host the MUG Communication Conference. For information, click [here](#).
- **March 2**: Future Alumni Association presents Build Your Brand Business Fashion Show.
- **April 15 - 19**: COM Alumni and Friends will gather at the 2015 Central States Communication Association Reception in Madison, WI.
- **May 9**: Spring ‘15 commencement for Undergraduate, Graduate, and Doctoral students.

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**2014 Highlights & Events**

**August:**
- This Fall CMU welcomed more than 3,700 freshmen to the university. For leadership safari highlights click [here](#).
- President Ross accepted the ALS challenge (click [here](#)).

**September:**
- Sept. 17: The CMU community gathered for the groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the construction of the new $95 million Biosciences Building. See the time-lapse video [here](#).

**October:**
- Oct. 4: CMU celebrated the University’s 90th Homecoming including winning 28-10 against Ohio University; watch highlights [here](#).

**November:**
- Nov. 22: COM Alumni and Friends gathered at the 2014 National Communication Association Reception in Chicago, IL.

**December:**
- Dec. 13: Fall commencement for Undergraduate, Graduate, and Doctoral students.
- Dec. 20: Michigan Undergraduate & Graduate (MUG) Communication Conference submissions are due. For conference information, click [here](#).
MA Comprehensive Exams

- Brogan Darwin
- Nicole Ruth
- Kevin Stevens
- Paige Calamari
- Vince Cavataio
- Beth Morningstar-Binder
- Emily Sullivan
- Katie Watson

MA Theses

**August 2014**

Kelsi Stoltenow -
Semiotic Pedagogy in Modern Art Museums

**December 2014**

Marco Ehrl -
Arguing about Privacy and National Security: US and Germany Negotiate Rules for Strategic Maneuvering in Light of the NSA Spying Scandal

Undergraduate **May 2014**

- Andrew Aulds
- Tyler Basch
- Eric Bettinger
- Michael Birkmeier
- Victoria Chappel
- Darcy Cook
- Justin Gawronski
- Kina Gladney
- Justin Handley
- Sybil Jacob
- Patrick Kaminska
- Ryan LaBarge
- Alexandra Lawley
- Stephanie Legan
- Sarah Lovinger
- Tiffany McAllister
- Benjamin McCulley
- Calley McMillan
- Thomas Medick
- Matthew Mitchell
- Gerilyn Moser
- Allison Mullen
- Katelynd Nadolski
- Sara Nannini
- Paul Paonessa
- Samantha Papa
- Kathleen Patterson
- Joseph Pendergrass
- Amber Penman
- Zackary Ramirez
- Carla Raymond
- Ryan Roznowski
- Stephanie Santostasi
- Cory Schneider
- Lydia Scholtens
- Kelly Skolarus
- Angela Sorrentino
- Ellaine Ursuy
- Jake Walczak

Thank you Alumni & Friends

The COM Area gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its alumni and friends. You, too, can make a significant impact by giving back to the COM Area. For information on making contributions, please contact Dr. William Dailey, Chair, at 919-774-3177 or by email to daile1wo@cmich.edu.