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Communication Department Deemed One of UNO’s Academic Priorities

By Kevin Warneke

The Communication Department’s selection as one of 13 academic priorities at UNOmaha is high praise for its faculty and staff and could lead to more opportunities for the department.

“This designation was an enormous vote of confidence for the department, especially for the faculty,” said Dr. Deborah Smith-Howell, department chair. “It assists our ability to recruit faculty and, perhaps, students.

“It really has energized the department to increase our efforts in assessing student outcomes, reviewing curriculum and developing and pursuing external grant funding.”

Chancellor Nancy Beleck incorporated the Communication Department in UNOmaha’s list of academic priorities.

“Through an inclusive process, we’ve identified our highest academic priorities, as well as important outreach and support areas. I’m very pleased with both the process and the outcome,” Beleck said.

Among the areas for evaluating and prioritizing academic programs were:

Teaching and learning
Research and creative activity
Service to the public and the university

Smith-Howell said the designation could lead to higher visibility for the department.

For example, the department has begun initial planning to create a School of Communication, which would include community outreach and research components. In conjunction with planning for a School of Communication, the department is pursuing additional external funding, such as government and foundation grants and private donations.

Smith-Howell said the department’s designation as an academic priority for the campus should motivate the faculty and staff to continue to excel. Of special importance, she said, is increasing community involvement by faculty and staff in student and professional organizations and through student internships.

Finally Smith-Howell said the prioritization will give students and faculty more opportunities to showcase their talents and expertise.
Letter From the Chair, Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D.

CommUNO is back. I am excited to have this edition of CommUNO after a two-year absence. With the very capable leadership of one of our newest faculty members—Dr. David Ogden—and a wonderful team of faculty, alumni and students, we plan to maintain contact with alumni and friends of the department with two newsletters a year. You also can keep up with the department by checking our Web page at: http://communication.unomaha.edu.

Much has happened in the past two years. In spring 2001, the department was selected as one of UNOmaha’s academic priorities—don’t miss the article on page 1. Renovation of Arts and Sciences Hall began in the summer of 1999. The department moved into temporary quarters for a six-month period and is now located in our new offices. If you haven’t visited us since the move, I encourage you to come by and see the exceptional renovation and our outstanding classroom facilities. Living in a construction zone for two years is rather trying but given the final results, well worth it.

In this newsletter, meet our newest faculty, join the department in saying “happy retirement” to three very special gentlemen, and learn a little about the activities of our student organizations, current faculty and alumni. We’ve got some catching up to do and this edition of CommUNO is a great start.

Please let us know what is going on with you by sending in the response card or email Dave or me. Mark your calendars for Thursday evening, May 2, 2002, for our annual Communication Awards Celebration—it is a great opportunity to see old friends and meet our outstanding current students.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Dsmith-howell@mail.unomaha.edu

Club News

PRSSA—Public Relations Student Society of America

Recent activities include: Arts and Science Hall dedication celebration in September. Members also assisted Cricket Wireless with its promotional activities on Oct. 16 and 18 at various locations around the metro area. PRSSA also just recently finished its fall service project “Getting Canned for a Cause,” where the teacher whose students brought the most cans to class got “fired” for the day. One thousand pounds of canned food items collected throughout the week went to the Omaha Food Bank.

Ad Club—Advertising Club

After a one-year hiatus, the UNO Ad-Club is re-forming and looks to be very busy in the coming year. Plans include visiting local advertising companies, hearing presentations from industry professionals, participating in workshops and service projects, participating in national competitions and developing closer relationships with area professionals.

SPJ—Society of Professional Journalists

SPJ members T.J. Accola, Guerin Austin, Jeneca Jones and Valerie Robert attended the organization’s national convention, which featured the theme “2001: A News Odyssey” and included many sessions on journalists’ responses to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on America.

The UNOmaha chapter also is continuing its Off the Record speaker series. The first presentation of the fall featured Jeff Koterba, editorial cartoonist for the Omaha World-Herald, who showed examples of his work and talked about his career.

ASTD—American Society of Training and Development

The goals of this new student organization are to: foster an understanding of careers in the training and development field; promote mentor-type relationships with trainers in the community; allow students to network and make contacts with other trainers and companies; and foster interaction between students who share common interests in training and development.
Lynn Phares
1987

Lynn Phares has gone from directing public relations for one of the nation’s largest food companies to heading the nation’s largest corporate initiative to fight childhood hunger in the United States. She serves as president of the ConAgra Feeding Children Better Foundation, which is revolutionizing the approach to combating hunger among children.

By the end of 2002, the foundation plans to have opened at least 100 locations throughout the nation to provide after-school food programs for children. These “Kids Cafes” will be in churches, schools, Boys and Girls Clubs and other places where children congregate.

Under Phares’ leadership, the foundation is also assisting the nation’s food banks by providing trucks for transporting foodstuffs and by helping to fund computerization across the food bank network.

In cooperation with the Ad Council, the foundation is distributing public service announcements to media nationwide to heighten awareness of the child hunger problem. The campaign tagline is, “The Sooner You Believe It, the Sooner We Can End It.”

“In our research we saw clear evidence that most people just don’t believe that child hunger is a major problem in America,” Phares said. “In Nebraska alone, about 30,000 children are at risk of hunger every year.”

Phares is also involved with the American Dietetic Association in another public awareness campaign. That campaign focuses on food safety in the home and is managed by the ConAgra Foods Foundation, which Phares also heads.

Phares has headed ConAgra Foods’ philanthropic efforts since 1990 when she was appointed vice president of public relations and community affairs. In 1995 she became vice president for corporate relations. Phares and her colleagues at ConAgra Foods launched the Feeding Children Better program in 1999.

Despite its short history, the program touts a long list of national awards. ConAgra Foods’ Feeding Children Better program has received the Silver Anvil, the Public Relations Society of America’s highest honor for a public relations program. The publication, PR Week, selected the program in 2000 as the overall campaign of the year, and as the community relations campaign of the year.

Phares, who received her Master’s degree in communication from UNO in 1987, joined ConAgra as manager of public relations in 1983. From 1980 to 1983 she served as associate director of public affairs at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Previously, she worked at Smith, Kaplan, Allen & Reynolds Advertising Agency in Omaha.

“The faculty at UNO were terrific,” said Phares. “I received valuable insights and knowledge from every professor.”

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Mark your calendars now!

Communication Department Awards Banquet is May 2.
If you would like to attend please call the Communication Department at (402)554-2600.
Spotlight on Alumni

Jeff Bundy 1992

Jeff Bundy’s career took root as an eighth-grader in Fremont when he published his first photograph in the Fremont Tribune.

That career blossomed while he was a student in the Department of Communication at UNO. In his 11 years as a photojournalist at the Omaha World-Herald, he met presidents, witnessed and recorded the ravages of war on the other side of the world and developed a thorough knowledge of Nebraska and its people. Bundy’s interest in photography began early in life.

“My father enjoyed photography as a hobby,” he said. “He had cameras all around, and he had a darkroom in the house.”

In the eighth grade, he became the photographer for his school year book. At Archbishop Bergan High School, he traveled to away games of the football and basketball teams, and his photographs from those contests regularly appeared in the Tribune.

“I had my own traveling kit for developing film,” said Bundy, who received his Bachelor of Science degree from UNO in 1992.

At 16, Bundy began working part-time for the Associated Press. He considered the University of Missouri and the University of Kansas for his undergraduate studies, but he chose UNO so he could continue his work at AP. He’s glad he did. He said he remembers his news writing and reporting class and Dr. Warren Francke’s frequent admonitions about checking and double-checking facts.

“I remember some very stern talks from Dr. Francke about that,” he said.

In 1991 during his senior year, he landed the full-time job at the World-Herald. In 1993 he was named Photographer of the Year by the Nebraska News Photographers Association. He received the award again in 2001.

Melanie Morrissey Clark 1989

The impending birth of Melanie Morrissey Clark’s triplets in 1997 didn’t slow her from giving birth to another important part of her life. When hospitalized so doctors and nurses could monitor her high-risk pregnancy, Clark brought her high-tech fax machine, computer and printer so the inaugural issue of Today’s Omaha Woman Magazine wouldn’t be delayed.

“They’d only let me work in the morning,” Clark said. “They made me take a break in the afternoon.” Her triplets -- Cooper, Sophie and Simon -- are doing well, as is the magazine. Today’s Omaha Woman, published every other month, has a circulation of 25,000. The magazine has brought numerous accolades to Clark, including alumni achievement awards from Marian High School and the UNO Department of Communication. A 1989 UNO journalism graduate, she was also among the Omaha YWCA’s “Women of Distinction” in 1998.

The magazine is among several projects in which Clark has combined her talent as a journalist with her advocacy of women’s health. Clark’s 1994 book, “Straight Talk About Breast Cancer,” has sold 50,000 copies and is in its ninth printing. Her latest book, “The Fertility Handbook: A Guide to Getting Pregnant,” co-authored with Omaha physician Maud Doherty, is scheduled for release in December or January. Both are published by Addicus Books in Omaha.
New Faculty Add Experience and Expertise to Communication Department

Professor Hugh Reilly

Professor Reilly earned a bachelor's of arts degree in journalism from UNO in 1978 and a master of arts in communication from UNO in 1996. He has 25 years of advertising and public relations work experience, including work for two newspapers, an advertising agency, two national non-profit organizations and one of the nation's largest cable TV companies.

He is the co-author of two books, “Letters From the Front,” and “Boys Town: A Photographic History” and has written a marketing workbook for non-profits. He has had numerous articles published in regional and national magazines and is the current president of the Nebraska Writer’s Guild.

Professor Dave Ogden, Ph.D.

Professor Ogden received his bachelor's of Science degree in broadcasting in 1974 from UNO. The following year, he joined the University of Nebraska Medical Center’s

public information department as an editorial assistant. In 1983 he was appointed director of the department.

He left UNMC in 1988 to return to graduate school and received his master's degree from the Department of Communication at UNO in 1990.

In graduate school, Ogden transformed his interest in baseball into a passion for baseball research. Ogden began his full-time teaching career at Wayne State College, where he served as the faculty advisor for the campus radio station (KWSC-FM) and taught courses in public relations, broadcast writing and radio production. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1999.

Professor Barb Pickering, Ph.D.

Professor Pickering is a native of the Cornhusker state, growing up in Syracuse. Her undergraduate degree is from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she studied speech communication with an emphasis in secondary education.

She began her educational career as a high school teacher in Nebraska, teaching at Bellevue East High School and Millard South High School. After eight years, she was ready for a new challenge and left Nebraska for southern California.

She received her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. She taught at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and was then hired as director of the forensics program. In 1998, Pickering headed to James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA., as director of forensics.

Professor Timothy Loatman

Professor Loatman is a graduate of Minnesota State University, Moorhead, and is a long time supporter of and participant in forensics. At MSU he studied courses in professional public speaking and the theoretical base that entails.

He received his master's degree from Colorado State University where he studied rhetoric.

Loatman then became the assistant director of forensics at Minnesota State University, where he taught public speaking, performance studies, and coached forensics.

Loatman has spent the last two years teaching at Northern California Community College and had been volunteering his expertise in forensics there.

As the new director of forensics at UNO, he is able to pull from his diverse experience to benefit the Department of Communication.
Retired Faculty Will be Missed

By Amy Niewohner and Christine Kasel

The spring semester of 2000 marked the end of an era for three of UNO’s communication professors. Dr. Warren Francke, Duane Aschenbrenner, and Dr. Otto Bauer ended their combined 77-year careers as communication professors at UNO, in exchange for a new career in retirement.

Francke, appointed as an instructor of journalism in 1965, became full professor in 1979 and graduate chair of communication in the early 90s. A major force in the Communication Department, Francke affected the lives of countless students during his 35-year tenure at UNO. Students knew Francke as a tough instructor.

“They (the students) dreaded it,” said former student Veronica Rosman. “But when you did survive (the class), you felt you had really accomplished something.”

Francke said he has been so involved in writing a history book and his new project that he realized that “a whole semester had gone by and I realized that I haven’t been to campus.”


“I’ve never enjoyed anything more in my life than writing the History of the Presbyterian Church,” Francke said.

Another faculty member who left the halls of UNO in 2000 was Dr. Otto Bauer. Bauer, joined UNO’s communication department in January 1995. After retiring as vice-chancellor of academic affairs, he immediately took on a full schedule teaching Argumentation and Debate, Small Group Communication and Leadership, and Language and Thought.

“Otto challenged, provoked, and daily demonstrated his concern and commitment to his students. His perspective and humor will be missed by everyone who has worked with him,” said Dr. Deborah Smith-Howell, chair of the Communication Department.

Upon his retirement, Bauer hoped that he would “have one more book” in him. He is now working on a book about trust which he hopes to complete within three to four years.

Although busy writing, Bauer misses the interaction with the students at UNO.

“The students were invigorating,” Bauer said. “They were always doing something that made class a lot of fun, every day.”

There is no debate that Duane Aschenbrenner will also be missed after his distinguished 37-year career at UNO. Aschenbrenner prepared almost four decades of students to meet both the challenges of competition and life head-on.

Aschenbrenner came to UNO in 1963 as a debate coach and forensics director and later became parliamentarian for the Faculty Senate. He also helped develop the first National College Debate Workshop in 1968 that prepared students for competition in intercollegiate debate resolution.

Aschenbrenner plans to catch up on fishing and playing duplicate bridge, a game that requires at least three hours of complete concentration and pits skill against skill. Along with fishing and card playing, his number one priority is writing the history of forensics at UNO.

“I hope students felt they learned a great deal from my classes that helped them in their professional careers in oral communication,” Aschenbrenner said.

One of his former students, Martha Bruckner, associate professor and chair of the educational administration department, confirmed Aschenbrenner’s hopes.

“Honestly, working with him in debate changed my life. Everything I’ve become is because of him. I think on my feet. I make arguments and defend the points I believe in. These are skills I have used every day of my life since then.” she said, “Why I am, who I am, is because of him.”
Faculty Updates

**Chris Allen**—served a two year term as the education representative on the national board of the Radio and Television News Directors Association. Currently serving on the board for the Northwest Broadcasters Association.

**Sheleen Bingham** — conducted a service-learning project through her interpersonal conflict class for Blackburn Alternative High School. Developed a conflict mediation course, which will be taught Spring 2002. Conducting a study on the communication of social support to students who have been sexually harassed.

**Robert Carlson**—on leave for Fall 2001, working on developing multimedia materials for public speaking classes and potentially offer the course via distance. Represented the department and university, visiting universities in China and Japan in May 2001.

**Ana Cruz**—full time in the department now, completing her Ph.D. UNL emphasizing family and cultural communication.

**Karen Kangas Dwyer** — co-authored a book on public speaking, “Vanzelfsprekend (Talk for Yourself),” currently in press with Swets and Zeitlinger Publishers; co-authored a journal article (with UNO professor of communication Robert Carlson and S. Kahre), “Communication Apprehension and Basic Course Success: The Lab-supported Public Speaking Course Intervention,” Communication Course Annual, 14, (in press); presented a paper (co-authored by UNO associate professor of communication Randall Rose and J. Thomas), “Communication Apprehension and Exercise Adherence: There is a Relationship” at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association in Atlanta, Ga., November 2001.

**Hollis Glaser**—on leave for 2001-2002 in New York City; unfortunately felt and saw the World Trade Center disaster from offices at Pace University near the WTC.

**Paula Hazelrigg**—taught an honors section of the public speaking course (Sphc 1110) for Fall 2001, and will also do so for Spring 2002. Taught a section of the public speaking class that was paired with an English 1160 class to foster relationships between students from different areas.

**Mike Hilt**—currently graduate program chair, new book forthcoming with Jeremy Lipschultz—Crime and Local Television News—Dramatic, Breaking, and Live from the Scene

**Nancy Hultquist**—developed a public relations campaign for Cricket Communications, a wireless communications company, through her media relations and public relations classes. Cricket Communications in turn donated money to the UNO chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America.

**Holly Miller**—began her seventh year of teaching in the Department of Communication and serves as a volunteer for several community organizations.


**Teresa Lamsam**—joined the faculty in Fall 2000 teaching newswriting and reporting, news editing, and introduction to mass communication; completing Ph.D. from the University of Missouri; research interest in tribal press.

**Jeremy Lipschultz**—new book with Hilt, developed New Media curriculum for broadcasting majors, working with a new interdisciplinary media technology minor and potential major; coordinated the development of non-linear video editing labs funded with a $100,000 grant from the University of Nebraska foundation.

**David C. Ogden** — authored a review of the book, Rickey and Robinson: the Preacher, the Player and America’s Pastime, for Nine: The Journal of Baseball History and Culture, 10(1), (in press), and is continuing research on African-American involvement in select youth baseball.

**Barbara Pickering**—participated in roundtable discussion on rookie division debate at the National Communication Association convention this fall in Atlanta; chaired a committee for the American Forensic Association; and, served on a committee for the Commission on International Debate and Discussion.

**Marshall Prishell**—continues teaching a wide range of interpersonal communication courses including nonverbal communication, interpersonal conflict, and communication and human relationships.

**Hugh Reilly**—writing a chapter for Johansen’s book, Native American Treaties in Contemporary Context, and is writing a book on the history of Douglas County.

**Cynthia Robinson-Moore**—joined us for 2001-2002 as a temporary replacement for Hollis Glaser; teaching public speaking fundamentals, interviewing, and cross-cultural communication; completing Ph.D. at the UNL.

**Randy Rose**—continues teaching many

(Continued on page 9)
Owed to Warren

By Bob Reilly

You know what dedication is? It means “self-sacrificing devotion.” This quality is becoming rare in our mobile society, where a single perception terminates a commitment. To be dedicated means sticking to a post, even when tempted by sweeter offers, even when the routine seems interminable. Why? Because the belief in that enterprise is so strong, it stifles thoughts of deflecting. It’s the difference between a career and a job.

After performing any task for multiple years, one tends to get bored, stale and careless. But Warren Francke never lost his passion for the classroom, his affection for his students, or his respect for his profession.

Warren had a national reputation and could have left this campus to pursue other attractive opportunities. But this city, this university, and especially these students kept him anchored to Omaha.

He genuinely cared about his students, viewing his mission as preparing them as well as possible for the challenges of journalism. He was a stickler for detail. Misspelling a mayor’s name with a misplaced “O” earned you an “F” regardless of the quality of the rest of the paper. Warren knew, and his graduates know now, that this sort of accuracy is paramount in a reporter’s life.

Warren was also proud of his students and often shared their work with other faculty members, commenting on how fortunate he felt to have these writers in his classes.

He also delighted in the achievements of his colleagues, minus any envy or complaint, seeing their honors as good for the department, the school and their students.

While his outward professorial demeanor could sometimes seem coolly dogmatic, anyone who really knows Warren realizes he is a marshmallow. Tears come easily to his eyes when reading a particularly moving passage in a book or a student paper. And for all his sporadic cynicism, his is a positive thinker and a spiritual person. He thinks and lives his faith.

He is also incredibly lucky. His first wife, Sue, died far too young. She was a bright, quick, loving woman and anyone would feel blessed to have wed her. After her death, Warren was very lonely. Then he met and married Carol, another unique woman. For him, a double blessing. He talks about her children with the same affection he shows toward his own son and daughter.

When I joined the department, we shared some of the same courses. We even shared a SUN NEWSPAPER column, alternating weekly. Both of us are competitive (most people would see that as an understatement), and this could have led to friction. Instead, it led to friendship. We were doubles partners in tennis (I used to be good, but he carried me), squared off in neighborhood basketball courts, took each other on in miniature golf venues in Omaha and Estes Park. Once I even substituted for him in the faculty bowling league.

We both write regularly and admire each other’s work. I was flattered that he used some of my articles in his writing classes—especially because I knew this wasn’t out of friendship but because the writing met his high standards.

Warren and I disagree on a variety of topics—from high tech to low church, from scholarship to cinema. But you always felt he ingested your information, even when arguing against it. While he is still talking, his is sort of listening, and you learn later that he understood and acknowledged some of your points.

One of my eccentric habits is listing underrated people—actors, for example, like Robert Mitchum. Mitchum was an actor that never seemed to be acting. Warren is a teacher that doesn’t seem to be teaching, just presenting.

Those who took his classes won’t forget him. Neither will his friends who were privileged to serve with him. I hope that, in retirement, he gets to do that other thing he does so well—write.

In my Jesuit school days, we used to wish retirees “ad multos annos” many years to enjoy their retirement. I wish that now.
And, hey, Warren—thanks!
By Warren Francke

The farewell to Gunnar Horn last summer inspired a World-Herald editorial that praised a "Teacher Extraordinaire," a mentor remembered and thanked by journalism students he taught for 42 years at Benson High School.

But his ties to this university reach back even further in time and continued to his death at age 89. He studied journalism at Omaha University and graduated with an English degree in 1934, then earned his master's degree in 1936 before starting at Benson.

Both degrees came before the campus moved to its present Dodge Street site.

Born in Denmark, an immigrant at 3, he also graduated from Central High School. He guided many of his Benson students to UNO where they often became leaders in student publications, government and other activities.

Retirement didn't end his support for education and his alma mater. He became a leading contributor to the Communication Department, providing four talent scholarships to incoming freshmen. Three more full tuition awards and the Gunnar Horn Communication Scholarships were given in his honor by John Madden, one of his Benson students. Gunnar had in mind when he penned an essay that began, "I have a thousand children, more or less."

He received university and department recognition, winning both alumni and lifetime service awards. He shared his wisdom with UNO faculty in both the old Journalism Department and the current Communication Department, and participated in advisers' dinners, high school journalism conferences and annual awards luncheons.

In the years after his retirement from teaching, he continued writing mystery novels and magazine features. Horn, who remained single, also gardened and traveled.

(Continued from page 7)

courses such as organizational communication, communication theory, and speaking for business and the professions; involved with new course development and assessment.


Steven Walker—joined the department in Fall 2000 as an instructor teaching broadcast production courses; developing a new course in video magazine.

Karen Weber—very active as the PRSSA-UNO chapter advisor; teaching writing courses and advising. She serves on assessment, curriculum and scholarship committees.

Sherrie Wilson—advising active SPJ student chapter, teaching public affairs reporting, news editing, and communication law, selected for Poynter Institute seminar on computer-assisted reporting.

Part-time faculty:
A great group of faculty teaching on a part-time basis includes:


Roger Hamer, alumnus and recent Edward R. Murrow Award recipient, continues teaching television news video.

Mike Kohler, alumnus and Cox Communication vice-president, teaches Electronic Media Management each spring.

Scott Blankenship, alumnus and KVNO morning air personality, teaching radio production beginning Fall 2001.

Lorraine Boyd continues her long time association with the department, teaching magazine editing in Spring 2002.

Dalhai Cavazos, extensive design and advertising agency experience, joined department in Fall 2001 teaching publication design and graphics

Mike Krainak, long-time North High School journalism teacher and Buffet Award winner, continues teaching film appreciation and film history and criticism

Ken Pfister, vice president with Great Plains Communication, began teaching newswriting and reporting in Fall 2000.

Kevin Warneke, alumnus and director of the Ronald McDonald House and officer in PRSA-Nebraska chapter, continues teaching newswriting and reporting.

Tim Winters, Omaha World Herald editor, continues teaching news editing each semester.

Kathy Tewhill, former reporter for the Sun Newspaper and long-time telecommunications and public relations professional teaching public relations writing in fall, 2001.
Communication Award Winners

2001

Alumni Achievement Award
Roger Catlin
The 1977 graduate served as an entertainment writer and correspondent for the Omaha World-Herald and then joined the Hartford Courant as a music and entertainment critic. His stories have appeared in the LA Times, Japan Times, Rolling Stone and other national and international publications.

Communication Achievement Award
Julia McCord
After a 27-year career in music, McCord went back to school to major in journalism. She graduated from UNL in 1989 with a 3.97 grade point average. She spent some time at the Hastings Tribune before joining the Omaha World Herald in 1990. Religion became her primary beat, and she has been recognized for her year-long series on challenges facing faith groups in Nebraska and Iowa.

Distinguished Service Award
Dr. John Flocken
In his 30 years at UNO, Flocken served in numerous capacities, including chair of the Department of Physics and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He supported and encouraged original research by students and its presentation at national meetings. Campus chapters of professional organizations grew stronger under his leadership. As a faculty member, Flocken became known for his teaching and research, receiving UNO’s Distinguished Research or Creative Activity Award.

Rising Star Alumni Achievement Award
Michael Messerly
Messerly launched his career as a UNO student working as a producer for two radio stations and as a reporter for a Council Bluffs cable franchise. He was news director for Cox Communications’ cable news operation, and has been involved with Benedek Interactive Media, managing a network of 22 television station Websites across the country.

2000

Alumni Achievement Award
Mike Kohler
Kohler began his career in corporate communications with Godfather’s Pizza. He joined Cox Communications in 1982. As vice president of public affairs for Cox, he handles community, government and media relations. He has served on numerous boards for various organizations, including the Omaha Children’s Museum and the Omaha Parks and Recreation Department. His other credentials include several cable TV industry awards for his public relations efforts and serving as vice president of the Nebraska Cable Association.

Communication Achievement Award
Kyle MacMillan
MacMillan’s road to Denver, where he is art critic for the Denver Post, started in Omaha. Before his move west, he was an entertainment reporter for the Omaha World Herald.

Lifetime Achievement Award
Dale Munson
Meteorology and music sum up Munson’s career. He came to Omaha in 1963 to work at WOW radio and TV. In 1971 he became the full-time weathercaster for WOW-TV, a position he held until 1991. Munson has also been active in the Omaha music scene. He performed with the Nebraska Choral Arts Society and the Omaha Symphonic Chorus, for which he and his wife, Kay, still sing. He also remains active in the music program at Omaha’s Lutheran Church of the Master. Munson can still be heard on KVNO-FM, where he is a part-time announcer.

Rising Star Achievement Award
Tom Elser
Elser enrolled at UNO while stationed at Offutt Air Force Base and juggling his studies with his military work served his broadcasting career. At one point, he worked as an announcer and producer for a radio station, while serving as a weekend anchor for a TV sta-
Alumni Award Winners—continued

(Continued from page 10)

tion. His first full-time broadcasting job was at KOLN/KGIN in Lincoln. He later joined KMTV as a reporter and then moved to KETV as a promotion producer. He gravitated back to news at KETV and has made his mark covering breaking stories.

Rising Star Achievement Award
Lisa Prue

Prue has fulfilled many roles for the Omaha World-Herald, from compiling public records to reviving the Metro Guide to general-assignment feature reporting. Some of her finest work has been covering Native American issues, such as her five-part series, entitled “Broken Promise: The Failures of Indian Education” and which ran in February 2000. Prue also worked for the Council Bluffs Nonpareil covering education and the police beat.

Distinguished Service Award
Dave Kline

Keeping UNO’s production and on-air radio studios operating is a daunting task, and one that Kline has managed for more than 25 years. He has overseen several moves of the Communication Department’s radio lab, at times having to accommodate the relocation literally overnight. As chief engineer of Maverick Radio, he was instrumental in getting KBUL’s audio on the World Wide Web.

1999

Alumni Achievement Award
Pam Carter

Carter’s long and distinguished career in public relations began before she was a student at UNO. She was a public affairs specialist for the U.S. Marine Corps and worked in print and broadcast news. After graduation she was a media relations specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She also worked in public relations for the Corps of Engineers Pacific Ocean Division. Her work for the government led to her appointment as Pentagon chief of policy and programs for Army Public Information.

Alumni Achievement Award
Melanie Morrissey Clark

Today’s Omaha Woman is the latest success in the publishing career of Clark. She launched the magazine in 1996 and its circulation has grown to 25,000. Her earlier venture, Drug Free Athletes, became a national magazine. She also served as editor of Kidz Magazine and PC Guide Magazine. She has also authored two books on women’s health, The Fertility Handbook: A Guide to Getting Pregnant and Straight Talk About Breast Cancer (in its 9th printing).

Distinguished Service Award
Joan Bell

Assisting hundreds of students and faculty in using the latest in instructional technology is just one of Bell’s many responsibilities as technology manager for the College of Arts and Sciences. She consults on purchases of equipment, maintains existing equipment and helps administrators and faculty forecast technological needs. Bell previously served as a coordinator in the English Department.

Lifetime Achievement Award
Gary Kerr

From the Vietnam War to Omaha’s growth during the 1990’s, Kerr covered some of the nation’s and city’s most historic moments. Kerr began his broadcasting career in 1962 at KSJ radio and KTIV-TV in Sioux City. Two years later he was hired by WOW radio and TV as the assistant farm director. For the next 34 years, Kerr reported and anchored the news on WOWT.

Rising Star Alumni Award
Paul Bellus

When Bellus took over the debate program at Samford University in Alabama, there were two student debaters. When he left two years later, there were 20. Meanwhile, he coached the team to a third-place finish at the Novice National Debate Tournament. Bellus left Samford to become debate coach at the University of Iowa. His teams there have also fared well in national competitions. Bellus has also been instrumental in the success of several community service projects, such as a debate program for inner-city Chicago children and state forensic leagues.
We’re on the Web!
www.communication.unomaha.edu

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? CommUNO wants to know!

Please answer and mail back the following questions.

First Name  Last Name

When did you graduate from UNO?  Where are you living (City, State)?
(Graduate and/or Undergraduate)

Whom are you working for? (Company)

Brief update of what you have been doing since graduating from UNO.

If you are going to be in the area or already are and would like to share some of your experiences and expertise with the students, the Communication Department would love to have you as a guest in its classrooms! If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Dave Ogden at: (402)-554-3132 or email him at: dogden@mail.unomaha.edu

Please Respond. Thank you.