Awards Banquet Honors Communication Pioneers, Community Leaders

The UNO School of Communication honored alumni, faculty and students during its 53rd Annual Awards Banquet May 2.

The School presented its Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Bill Wakefield, the David Scott Professor in the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Since 1999, Wakefield has served as host to more than 100 journalism and broadcasting students, who traveled to London as part of Dr. Chris Allen’s international communication course.

With the assistance of Wakefield and Allen, students have visited the world headquarters of the BBC, Reuters, the Sun newspaper, the Times of London, the Daily Telegraph, Associated Press Television, Independent TV News, the London offices of McCann-Erickson and Weber-Shandwick, Seven World Wide (now known as Schawk), National Public Radio’s London bureau, the Advertising Standards Authority, and the Press Complaints Commission. Each year students have taken a walk along historic Fleet Street, birthplace of the London press.

Long-time Omaha World-Herald photographer Rudy Smith received the school’s Lifetime Achievement Award. As a student at Central High School and later at University of Omaha, Smith began his lifelong passion for photography and community service. When he turned 17, Smith found a job as a copy messenger at the Omaha World-Herald. He later became a staff photographer and has spent the last four decades documenting some of Omaha’s most historic moments. He risked his life capturing images of Omaha’s race riots during the 1960s, and his photos of Robert Kennedy’s presidential campaign stops in north Omaha one week before his assassination can be found in public displays and documentaries.

Omaha philanthropist Dick Holland received the Alumni Community Service Award. Holland majored in art at the University of Omaha and pursued a career in public relations and advertising. He took over his father’s business and grew it into Nebraska’s largest local ad agency. With money from the agency, and money contributed by his wife, Mary, Holland invested in Warren Buffett’s company in the early 1960s and became financially secure.

The couple used their new financial security to make a difference in their community. The Hollands became major supporters of the Omaha arts community and were the major donors funding construction of the Holland Performing Arts Center. They also made significant contributions to fund research at UNMC and the Peter Kiewit Institute and to the Robert T. Reilly Diamond Professorship in the School of Communication. Holland has served on many local boards and has said his primary ambition is to “get Continued on page 3...
From the Director’s Chair...
by Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz, Director, School of Communication

School Continues to Excel, Looks to Long-term Needs

As you can see in these pages, School of Communication students and faculty continue to reach new heights, alumni demonstrate program excellence and our College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media commitment to collaboration across the various communication and arts areas is very strong.

The May 2 luncheon was a great opportunity to recognize outstanding scholarship recipients and alumni. The Lifetime Achievement recipient, Omaha World-Herald photographer Rudy Smith, was in residence with us for two days – speaking at the alumni panel, the scholarship breakfast and the banquet. Each time, his message to current students was powerful. A new event this year was breakfast on commencement morning, hosted by our PRSSA chapter and its student-run firm, Mav Solutions. Graduates and their families heard from Hollywood producer Mark Allen. Additionally, we surprised Merrill Lynch Wall Street executive Paul Critchlow with the first Director’s Award. Paul’s steady support for the School of Communication allows for additional student travel, as well as providing all majors with copies of Columbia Journalism Review and American Journalism Review each year.

As I write this column in the dog days of summer, I continue to marvel at the 13th place national finish of our UNO forensics squad. Two of the orators finished in the top six nationally, including sophomore Lauren Ackerman’s third place. Likewise, PRSSA’s selection for its fourth national conference presentation and our Omaha Press Club award in the documentary category demonstrate the highest quality of student work. All of these successes reminded me of a dream that needs to become a reality.

More than two decades ago, then Department Chair Hugh Cowdin wrote in CommUNO of the need for a state-of-the-art building to house communication operations. As the UNO campus brings a new public affairs building online this fall and breaks ground for a new business building, our needs remain a dream.

Specifically, we have identified the following crucial needs to prepare students for the communication industry in the future:

- Radio and television studios remain across campus, which divides students and staff from continuous contact with our faculty when working on projects outside of class.
- Likewise, advancement of journalism is limited by the physical distance between faculty offices and the Gateway.
- Our efforts to develop a convergence newsroom are slowed by limited space in the existing buildings.
- More than 20 part-time faculty and graduate teaching assistants share a single office space in Arts and Sciences Hall.
- Our award-winning UNO forensics team does not have a designated practice space.
- Our new May Solutions PR firm and award-winning PRSSA chapter need a professional office space.

The success of our students is all the more amazing, given the long-term struggle to meet the space needs of a growing School of Communication. To meet Dr. Cowdin’s dream, we will need a combination of public and private funding – probably in excess of $20 million to do it right. Dean Gail F. Baker is working hard to identify possible funding sources for these critical needs. So, if you have ideas, please contact us. We need your help to take the next step by supporting our need for a state-of-the-art communication complex – one that will address space and technological needs of the field as it exists today and in the future.

Student Organization News

UNO Ad Club

The UNO Ad Club participated in a variety of events this past semester, including a Super Bowl Party where members analyzed and graded the new ads. Ad Club members attended the Omaha Federation of Advertisers’ “Meet The Pros” in February and co-sponsored a career workshop for communication students in April.

Two club members, Anna Berlett and Nicole Bonk, won $1000 scholarships from the OFA. Four club members, Yan He, Amy Jilek, Stephanie Dotzler and Allyson Schneiderwind, were awarded a prestigious Platinum Pinnacle Award from the American Marketing Association for their work on a campaign for Ted & Wally’s Ice Cream.

Club members Nicole Bonk, Allyson Schneiderwind, Natasha Warner and Jamee Clasen had the opportunity to spend the day with the Oracle of Omaha, Warren Buffett, in March. The students were part of a group of UNO and Canadian students who toured the Nebraska Furniture Mart, participated in a question-and-answer session with Buffett, had lunch at Piccolo Pete’s and had photos taken with the world’s richest man.

Ad Club officers for the 2008-2009 school year are Nicole Bonk and Erica Hess, co-presidents; Heather Knudson, secretary; and Anna Berlett and Sean Campbell, recruiting coordinators.

Public Relations Student Society of America

Two officers from the campus chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America were part of a seven-member team that took first place in the American Democracy Think Tank Competition, sponsored by The New York Times.

Mikaela Knipe and Keegan Nierderdeepe, along with students from the University of Florida and the University of Georgia, created a campaign that would help students and other community members become aware of and prevent problems associated with credit card debt.

The students presented their campaign at a three-day conference at Snowbird, Utah. The conference offered students leadership training and team building in a competitive, yet friendly setting.
Events Bridge
Alumni, Students

The School of Communication ended its spring 2008 semester with a whirlwind of activities. The School celebrated “Communication Week” April 28 to May 2.

The School kicked the week off with presentations by students in various speech classes and by members of the Public Relations Student Society of America and the school’s student-run PR firm, Mav Solutions.

On May 1, the School held its fourth annual alumni panel, featuring Omaha World-Herald photographer Rudy Smith, World-Herald reporter Josefina Loza, ConAgra corporate communication vice president Teresa Paulsen and Clear Channel Radio imaging director Matt Tompkins.

The School capped off the week on May 2 with its 53rd Annual Communication Awards Banquet.

The School also held a recognition breakfast on May 9 for its newest alumni, the seniors who would be graduating that afternoon. Communication alumni and reality TV show producer Mark Allen spoke at the breakfast.

Alumnus Paul Critchlow was recognized with the first Director’s Award for support of the school.

Awards Banquet, continued from page 1

a whole lot of people out of poverty.”

Teresa Paulsen, vice president of corporate communication for ConAgra, received the School’s Alumni Achievement Award. Paulsen, who graduated from the UNO School of Communication with an M.A. in 1998, established an impressive professional record before joining ConAgra in 2003. As a public information officer for the State of Nebraska in the late 1980s, Paulsen wrote several of Gov. Kay Orr’s speeches focusing on economic development.

During the 1990s, she worked in marketing communications for Kirkham Michel Engineering and later for Corporate Express, a world-wide office supply distributor. At ConAgra, she is not only responsible for all aspects of internal and external communication, but also for providing overall direction for the ConAgra Foods Foundation, a charitable division of ConAgra.

The school awarded its Rising Star Alumni Achievement Award to Josefina Loza, a feature and entertainment reporter for the Omaha World-Herald. She joined the newspaper in 1999 as a newsroom messenger while she was still a UNO student. The World-Herald promoted her to a part-time general assignment reporter, and she assumed her current position in 2004, the year she graduated with her bachelor’s degree. Loza’s weekly column, “On the Town: Josie’s Take,” provides updates on Omaha’s nightlife.

Loza continues to refine and polish her reporting skills. She received an American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors Diversity Fellowship. That fellowship allowed her to attend a workshop in Fort Worth, Texas, on using multimedia to tell stories. She aspires to be an editor and have more influence on newspaper content.

In addition to honoring alumni, the School devoted a significant portion of the banquet to recognizing student awards and more than $64,000 in scholarships. Outstanding undergraduate student awards were given in each of the school’s disciplines. The students receiving those awards were as follows:

Outstanding Undergraduate Students: Broadcasting: Cynthia Kuthan; Journalism: Abby Supenski; Speech Communication: Ramon Otero; Continuing Studies: Anna Nieman.

Named as outstanding graduate student in the school was Brittney Longwell. Anthony Blue was named Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, and Mary McDermott-Jackson received the Helen Hansen Outstanding Graduate Award.

The School also recognized its 2008-2009 scholarship recipients. They were: Gunner Horn Talent Scholarships: Kevin Laurenti, Michael Fischer, Adam Hilt and Kirby Kaufman.

Hartman Memorial Talent Scholarships: Abigail Anson and Cassandra Loseke.
Virginia McIntire Scholarships: Jennifer Estep, Sara Hochstein, Eryn Wisdom, Pascha Fountain and Rebecca Whitney.
Paul and Fern Borge Scholarship: Peggy Deaver.
Joe H. Baker Scholarship: Jenna Doyle.
Sue Francke Memorial Scholarship: Kate Sypal.
Paisley Family Newspaper Scholarship: Mark Reagan.
Richard Palmquist Nebraska Broadcasters Association Scholarship: Tenia Padilla.
Fred and Mary Jo Petersen OPPD Scholarship: Pilar Perez.
Emeritus Speech Faculty Scholarship: Danielle Steen.
Al Bates Travel Scholarship: Nicole Baxley.
Graduate Thesis Scholarship: Brittney Longwell.
Bertha Clark Hughes Scholarship: Buey Ruet.
Allwine Forensics Scholarships: Cortney Griffith, James Hunt and Danielle Steen.
PRSA Nebraska Scholarship: Heather Knudson.
Omaha Federation of Advertising Scholarships: Nicole Bonk and Anna Berlett.
Omaha Press Club Scholarships: Abigail Anson, Briana Gehrken, Nicole Bonk, Cassandra Loseke, Sara Whaley and Tyler Kersting.
Dwyer Honored to Hold Reilly Professorship

School of Communication professor Dr. Karen Kangas Dwyer added another honor to her growing list of accolades. The College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media named Dwyer the Robert Reilly Diamond Professor.

She succeeds school director Jeremy Lipschultz, who has held the endowed chair for the past six years.

“The Reilly Professorship recognizes outstanding teaching, significant research and important service,” Lipschultz said. “Dr. Dwyer is clearly a leader in the School when it comes to amazing teaching and internationally recognized scholarship.”

The University of Nebraska has previously recognized Dwyer’s academic achievements. In 2006, she received the University-wide Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award, and in 1998, UNO presented her with its Excellence in Teaching Award.

Dwyer, an internationally recognized expert in overcoming the fear of public speaking, authored the textbook “Conquer Your Speech Anxiety” and a companion instructor’s manual. She coordinates UNO’s Public Speaking Fundamentals Program, serving 2,500 students each year, and helped to establish the campus’ Speech Center, which offers assistance and speech coaching for students, faculty and alumni.

“I am truly honored to be awarded the Robert T. Reilly Diamond Professorship Endowed Chair,” Dwyer said. “Professor Reilly was my professor and mentor in my master’s program, as well as a friend until his death.

“I respected him as an outstanding teacher, writer and leader in the field of communication, as well as in the entire Omaha community. I always hope to follow his example.”

The professorship is for a three year term, after which the Reilly Professor is evaluated for teaching, research and service. Pending a successful evaluation outside the school and a communication alumnus. The committee meets with the dean before the final recommendation to UNO and the University of Nebraska Foundation.

Dr. Michael Sherer, a professor in the School of Communication, was the first to receive the honor in 1990. Sherer, who teaches photojournalism and communication law, is nationally known for his advocacy of photojournalists’ rights. He was chairman of the Freedom of Information Committee of the National Press Photographers Association for 15 years.

In 1996, Dr. Bruce Johansen was named the second Reilly Professor. He currently holds the Frederick Kayser Professorship. Johansen teaches news writing and has written 27 books, and he has two more under contract. The books have ranged from studies of Native American issues and environmental concerns to histories of World War II and Latino culture.

Lipschultz, who has authored or co-authored six books and written more than 50 articles on subjects ranging from broadcast indecency to TV news, became the third recipient in 2002.

The professorship commemorates public relations legend, author and longtime UNO communication faculty member Robert Reilly. The professorship received major funding from Omaha philanthropist Richard Holland, who was a partner with Reilly in an advertising agency in the 1960s and ‘70s.
New Management Takes Helm at UNO Radio/TV

The College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media (CFAM) has appointed Dr. Robert Franklin from Arkansas State University as director of media operations and has promoted Dr. Michael Hilt to assistant dean.

Hilt is a professor in the School of Communication and served as interim general manager of KVNO-FM and UNO Television this past year. Hilt will continue to maintain general oversight of media operations, as well as other college functions, Dean Gail F. Baker announced. Hilt will assume additional duties within the College including coordinating strategic planning, outreach, community partnerships and grant writing. Dr. Hilt brings more than 20 years of administrative, academic and industry experience to this position. He has been at UNO since 1988.

Franklin will oversee the daily operations of KVNO and UNO TV and will teach courses in the School of Communication. Franklin was station manager of KASU-FM at Arkansas State University. He holds doctoral and master’s degrees in heritage studies from ASU; an M.A. degree in English/communication from Jackson State University and a B.S. degree in radio/TV from JSU. An award-winning practitioner, Franklin brings extensive media, managerial, fundraising and academic experience to UNO.

Baker said the CFAM director of media operations will report to the assistant dean. Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz, school director, said the new administrative structure allows UNO TV, KVNO Radio and CFAM to take full advantage of the talents, abilities and experiences of two outstanding professionals. “We add depth to our strategic goals—focus on students, academic excellence and community engagement.”

New Vice Chancellor Joins Communication Faculty

The School of Communication has a new tenured faculty member, and UNO has a new senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

Dr. Terry Hynes, former dean emerita and professor in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida, assumed the vice chancellor’s post in June. Hynes was also granted tenure in the UNO School of Communication after a unanimous vote by the school’s tenured faculty.

“I am honored and delighted to have been selected,” Dr. Hynes said. “I was attracted by UNO’s mission and its clear and strong student-oriented focus, in serving the greater Omaha metropolitan area, the State of Nebraska and the region.”

Hynes came to Florida as dean in 1994 and served in that role until 2006. In 2006 and 2007, she was Florida’s assistant vice president for university relations. She also served as the public outreach director for the university’s Documentary Institute.

Hynes replaces Dr. Sheri Noren Everts, who accepted the position of provost and vice president for academic affairs at Illinois State University.

Hynes earned both her master’s degree and doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

School Welcomes New Faculty

This fall the UNO School of Communication will welcome Dr. Adam Tyma and Courtney Fristoe to its faculty. Tyma has been a graduate teaching assistant at North Dakota State University. He successfully defended his doctoral dissertation this spring. He will join the UNO faculty as an assistant professor, teaching courses in visual communication.

Courtney Fristoe has been appointed as a speech communication instructor. She previously taught public speaking fundamentals as a part-time instructor. She has served as a communication consultant for several Nebraska organizations, including the state’s Department of Labor and the law firm of Kutak Rock. She received her M.A. degree from the school in 2000.
Omaha Press Club Recognizes School Project

A half-hour TV program about the 2007 Berkshire Hathaway stockholders meeting in Omaha received an Honorable Mention in the Omaha Press Club Excellence in Journalism Awards competition.

The School of Communication produced the program, which netted the award in the public affairs/documentary category of the competition and is titled “Three Days in Omaha: Inside Berkshire Hathaway.” School faculty and students collaborated with UNO TV and the College of Business Administration.

The faculty and students covered the three-day meeting and the activities of Berkshire Hathaway CEO and investor Warren Buffett. Some highlights from the program include Buffett enjoying ice cream from Dairy Queen and playing table tennis with Microsoft’s Bill Gates.

“The students, with fantastic support from UNO TV staff, competed head-to-head with projects done by professional TV producers,” School Director Jeremy Lipschultz said.

The program aired on Cox Channel 17 (The Knowledge Network). The School of Communication also produced a companion DVD. Please contact the School if you would like a copy of the DVD.

Buffett Buys Lunch

Berkshire Hathaway billionaire Warren Buffett hosted 40 School of Communication students March 31 at one of his regular sessions with undergraduates. Buffett, recently listed as the wealthiest man in the world, spent two hours answering questions.

Ten College of Business Administration Investment Club members joined UNO communication students. The UNO group was paired with business students from the University of Western Ontario, London.

The UNO group chartered a bus that took the students from a private tour of the Nebraska Furniture Mart led by Bob Batt, the grandson of founder Rose “Mrs. B.” Blumpkin, to the Cloud Room of the Kiewit Building. Buffett, 77, answered questions and shared investment advice and his opinions on life.

Two UNO students, Ryan Kronschnabel and Tenia Padilla, were selected to ride to lunch in Buffett’s car. The group ate steaks and pasta and drank root beer floats at Piccolo Pete’s in South Omaha.

School of Communication Director Jeremy Lipschultz organized the event. The opportunity arose following the student and UNO Television production of Three Days in Omaha, a TKN 17 broadcast and DVD about the annual shareholders meeting in Omaha in May 2007. Buffett liked the program, requested additional copies for friends and invited School of Communication students to join him for a day. He recently invited another group of UNO communication students to join him for lunch in October.

Albers Communications Establishes Scholarships

Albers Communications Group, a public relations firm in Omaha, has established two $750 scholarships to be awarded annually to students in the School of Communication.

To qualify for the scholarships, students must have completed or be taking an internship at a news organization.

“We are very appreciative to Albers Communications for investing in our students,” School Director Jeremy Lipschultz said. “We depend on community partners such as Albers to assist us in preparing students to tackle the challenges of developing careers.”

Journalism Education

The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication has selected School of Communication Associate Professor Teresa Lamsam as a fellow in its Leadership Institute for Diversity.

To be considered for the honor, applicants must be an associate or full professor and interested in becoming an administrator or endowed professor in journalism and mass communication education. The institute’s purpose is to support racial, gender and
Forensics Team Among Nation’s Best

The UNO Forensics Team deals in hardware—and lots of it. During the 2007-2008 academic year, the team brought home more than 200 trophies and notched 40 event championships.

The team placed 13th at the American Forensics Association-National Individual Events Tournament. Abbie Syrek, the School of Communication’s forensics director, said it was the first time in the decades-long history of UNO’s forensics program that a team placed in the top 20 nationally.

“It was a tremendous year for UNO forensics,” said Syrek.

Five UNO students advanced to elimination rounds at the NIET. Sophomore Lauren Ackerman won third place overall in the program of oral interpretation. Senior Teresa Oberdorfer finished fifth place overall in poetry interpretation. Junior Matt Eledge and freshman Cameron Logsdon also placed in the top 24 nationally in poetry interpretation. Junior Buey Ruet advanced to semifinal rounds in persuasion, placing in the top 12 in the nation.

Earlier this spring, two UNO competitors brought home state championship titles. Matt Eledge was the Nebraska state champion in prose interpretation and Buey Ruet won championship honors in oratory. This is the oldest speaking competition in the United States. This was the third consecutive year that Ruet earned one of two spots to compete among the top persuasive speakers in the nation.

Syrek said that when the students are not competing, they are sharing their talents with the community and prospective students. Within the past year, forensic students collaborated with the UNO Service Learning Academy to coordinate and implement UNO’s celebration of Constitution Day. The team also traveled to Decatur, Neb., where members showcased their performances for the community.

“Our forensic students volunteer considerable time in many local high schools as speech coaches and judges,” Syrek said. “It’s all in an effort to connect with the youth and celebrate the art of performance.”

Syrek said the UNO forensics program is already gearing up for the next academic year by recruiting students and conducting fundraising activities. Forensics students are selling UNO School of Communication polo shirts. For more information, please call 554-2600.

Faculty Receive UNO Awards

The College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media named Karen Weber as the recipient of its 2008 Outstanding Teaching Award. Weber, a lecturer in the School of Communication, teaches news writing and public relations courses. She is faculty adviser for the school’s nationally award-winning chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America and its student-run PR firm, Mav Solutions.

UNO’s Student Programming and Leadership Board presented Dr. Chris Allen with an award for his involvement with Maverick Radio. Allen, an associate professor in the school, advises Mav Radio, which is streamed online. Allen is also executive producer of The Omaha News, a live half-hour weekly newscast on The Knowledge Network, Cox Channel 17.

Nation Group Lauds Lamsam

Dr. Teresa Lamsam

Throughout the next academic year, Dr. Lamsam will attend four workshops focusing on a variety of administrative issues, including fundraising, leadership skills and budgeting. The institute also will assign a journalism education administrator to serve as a mentor to Dr. Lamsam and to provide her with first-hand experiences in managing a journalism education program.

The Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication co-sponsors the program with AEJMC.
The Gateway Alumni Association, consisting of former UNO student newspaper editors, reporters and staff, honored the work of their successors with its 2008 Best of Gateway Awards.

The following are the individual winners by category.

Best Feature Story--First place: “Coming together for Katrina” by Jason Sibson; second place: “Christensen: I couldn’t be happier about past, future of UNO campus” by Scott Stewart; third place: “Anthony’s brings comfort foods, poor service” by Cassy Loseke.

Best News Story--First place: “Bomb threat found in Arts and Sciences Hall” by Scott Stewart; second place: “Campus Security tries to continue to meet needs of growing campus” by Charley Reed; third place: “Edwards given 100 years to life for killing O’Grady” by Taylor Muller.

Best Layout--First place: Front page PDF (Malcolm X); second place: Football PDF (Mavs move to MIAA); third place: Shootings (all entries by Elizabeth Dam).

Best Sports Story--First place: “Maverick women eye road win, redemption” by Brett Ostronic; second place: “Hockey exhibition raises money” by Charley Reed; third place: “Michael Jenkins road from the cage to the Sapp” by Brett Ostronic.

Best Entertainment Story--First place: “How I rocked out and got ‘lucky’ at 13th outing of Vans Warped Tour” by Charley Reed; second place: “Deathly Hallows lives up to fans’ expectations” by Scott Stewart; third place: “R.E.M.’s Accelerate: A welcome return to the band’s classic sound, passion” by Charley Reed.

Best Column--First place: “Student government is broken: Enforce the rules, stop wasting our money” by Scott Stewart; second place: “Easy-E, the Penguin and Mr. T: The characters that made Super Bowl XLII Oscar-worthy” by Jason Sibson; third place: “Shield law important for safeguarding U.S. journalistic freedom, integrity” by Cassy Loseke.

Best Editorial--First place: “O! You’ve certainly come a long way, Omaha” by Charley Reed; second place: “Cookies have rights, too: Chiming in about bake sale prohibitions, closed-door decisions” by Scott Stewart; third place: “Endorsement not indictment of newspaper” by Scott Stewart.

Best News Photo--First place: Von Maur Memorial by Michelle Bishop; second place: Valentine’s Day bomb threat by Bill Wendt.

Best Feature Photo--First place: Goose crossing the road by Patrick Doty; second place: Goth ball fishnets by Bill Wendt; third place: New Orleans by Jason Sibson.

Best Sports Photo--First place: hockey; second place: soccer; third place: football (all entries by Michelle Bishop).

In addition, Michelle Bishop was awarded the 2008 Gateway Alumni Association Scholarship.

Paul Critchlow, Merrill Lynch’s senior vice president for communications and public affairs, received the School of Communication’s first Director’s Award in May.

The school established the award to recognize individuals for their ongoing service to and support of the school.

Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz, the school’s director, said Critchlow has enriched the School of Communication and its students in numerous ways. Critchlow established a fund to support professional development and school activities. He also has supplied all students in the school with subscriptions to the American Journalism Review and the Columbia Journalism Review.

He has hosted receptions for School of Communication students who travel to New York City for conferences, and he frequently comes to Omaha to participate in School of Communication activities and events.

Critchlow received his bachelor’s degree in journalism from UNO in 1971. He is also a recipient of the school’s Alumni Achievement Award.
Becker Finds Sound Career in Hollywood

by Karina Becker

Editors Note: Karina graduated from the UNO School of Communication in 2005 with a bachelor of science degree. She was the first graduate in the school’s broadcasting/new media course sequence. She headed to Hollywood in May 2007 to do freelance editing on short films and demo reels. That work led to what Karina calls an improbable direction—a career as a Foley artist for a company called Seismic FX. Below she tells her story to CommUNO.

It’s always interesting when people ask me, “So what do you do for a living?” It usually goes like this: I say I’m a Foley artist. They either look confused and ask what in the world a “Foley” is or nod vaguely and try to act like they know. I explain Foley is the art of recording sounds of footsteps and prop noises for movies. “Ohhh cool!” The light bulb goes on.

Often the next question is, “What’s the most interesting noise you’ve had to record?” It changes with each new film, but my favorite is probably somewhere between brain surgery and limbs being fed to a monster. Smashing things around is always fun, too, whenever there’s a fight scene or a character tears a room.

Foley is often mistaken for sound design or effects. Effects are typically noises like explosions and door slams that can be found “canned” or prerecorded in libraries, although on projects with bigger budgets, they might be custom-recorded as well. Foley, on the other hand, generally deals with all sounds created by human movement—sounds that are so specific to the action that they have to be performed and recorded in sync with the picture. Footsteps are a large part of that, along with hand touches, dishes, clothing movement, and even mouth noises like eating and kisses. It’s tougher than it seems; not only is precise microphone placement crucial, but subtle movements, especially hands, can be so particular, I might need several takes to get them right.

Most viewers of a movie might assume the majority of the sound was originally recorded on set. But a surprising percentage of film sound has to be recreated in post-production. Anything from camera noise to airplanes can make production sound unusable. In addition, Foley is often used to enhance the existing sound and make it more dramatic. Ever since Jack Foley invented these techniques in the 1920s, Foley has become a staple of the filmmaking process. It’s one of those invisible arts that you don’t notice when it’s done right, but you would miss if it was gone.

Many times when I need to record a sound, using the prop from the picture just doesn’t have the right kind of cinematic impact. So the creative part is something—anything—that can produce the sound I’m looking for. With a good collection, finding the right prop is like a treasure hunt. I might rattle an old doorknob to get the sound of a gun being carried; an old wooden chair can become a squeaky hinge or creaky floorboard. For most sounds, I have to layer several recordings of different props to get the right texture and impact.

Once I find a gadget with the right material, weight and sound qualities, recording a performance is like playing some kind of bizarre instrument. You’ve probably seen Foley artists on behind-the-scenes DVD segments stomping around in dirt pits filled with “grass” (quarter-inch magnetic tape) or spastically clanking together random props and pieces of metal. It’s pretty funny to watch!

It’s ironic what happens to a lot of people in Hollywood… everyone comes with a plan and yet most people end up changing course or just reaching their goals differently than they imagined. If you had asked me what I wanted to do when I graduated from UNO, I would never have mentioned film sound. Foley always intrigued me, but it’s such a competitive field that I never gave it much serious thought. Besides, having been a video editor for several years, I’d always considered myself a visual artist. The thought of giant audio boards and those mystical EQ settings made my head spin. Now, I’m realizing more and more that the combination of editing and 13 years as a dancer gave me just the skill set I need to enjoy and excel at being a Foley artist. Sometimes I have to stop and pinch myself to believe that I make a living goofing off with pieces of junk and tromping around in men’s wingtips!
Betty Davis’ public relations career has a lot in common with the Gen. Crook House in north Omaha. The Gen. Crook House, which Davis manages as part of her job with the Douglas County Historical Society, represents some of the area’s rich history. So does Davis’ career. The house’s design is intricate and reflects the hard work and dedication it took to build the home. Such work and dedication are also a part of Davis’ career. The house is a tribute to the preservation of artistic beauty and heritage, as is Davis’ career.

Davis has been an influential figure in public relations. An alumna of UNO, she graduated with a bachelor of science in journalism in 1956. Whether it has been her full-time job or volunteer work, she has stayed within the public relations field most of her life. With her hard work and dedication, she has become an important resource for the Omaha community. Davis is currently executive director of the Douglas County Historical Society.

After graduating from college, Davis was offered a job at UNO in the printing and information office, where she worked for three years before becoming the director of the alumni association and shortly thereafter assistant dean of women. She met her husband, who was in the Army ROTC program, on campus, and they were soon married. After she had worked at UNO for seven years, they moved to Turkey where Davis’ husband was stationed. During the four years they lived there, Davis had two daughters.

Once the family got back to the United States, Davis began volunteering for businesses and organizations that needed public relations work. Through of Soda Jerks. Davis served as director of public relations for the Omaha Community Playhouse and for Durham Western Heritage Museum before she opened her own public relations firm in 1988.

At the Omaha Community Playhouse, Davis helped to produce a tribute to legendary actor and former Omaha resident Henry Fonda. Davis had heard that Fonda had once gone on a blind date with the famous movie star Bette Davis and kissed her. Bette Davis was from Boston where a kiss meant engagement. Bette told Fonda they were engaged.

Davis thought this was a great story and was looking forward to working with Fonda and introducing herself as the other Betty Davis. After the first opening performance, Davis ran into Fonda backstage and he asked, “How was the performance?”

Taken aback that Fonda asked her a question, Davis walked over to him and said, “You were wonderful, Mr. Fonda. Do you mind if I kiss you?”

Fonda turned his head, offering his cheek, and she kissed him. “After that, I always tell people that both Bette Davis and I were engaged to Henry Fonda,” Davis said.

With such a busy life, Davis shows no signs of slowing down. “I am beyond retirement age and I will probably work another year in the business and then be with my grandchildren,” said Davis.
Alumna Makes a Splash in PR/Marketing

**UNO** School of Communication alumna Julia McConahay is making a splash in sports marketing and public relations. So it is appropriate she was involved in helping with media relations and promotional events for the 2008 U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Swimming this summer at Qwest Center Omaha.

McConahay, a 2005 graduate, is a public relations project manager at Bailey Lauerman, a nationally recognized marketing communications firm with offices in Lincoln and Omaha. She and other agency staff worked with the communications director of USA Swimming and the estimated 200 journalists and reporters who covered the event.

McConahay likes being up to her neck in sports marketing, and she is well suited for it. McConahay was co-captain of the UNO volleyball team and was named to the NCAA Division II Academic All-Conference Team in 2002, 2003 and 2004. One of the accounts she handles for Bailey Lauerman is with Agile Sports Technologies, a Lincoln-based company that provides video-sharing technology for professional and collegiate football teams. The company just recently added the New York Jets of the National Football League to its client roster. Another account is with the Dressage Foundation, also based in Lincoln. The Foundation helps fund programs and promotes the sport of dressage. Dressage is a major component of a type of equestrian sports in the United States, as well as internationally.

But sports marketing is not her only area of expertise. She has worked with a variety of clients, not only at Bailey Lauerman, but also at her previous positions as an account coordinator and later as an account executive for Envoy Inc., an Omaha advertising firm. One of her recent contributions as a staff member at Bailey Lauerman involved helping Cargill Corn Milling to launch a new corn protein concentrate, called Empyreal™ 75, that can be used as a replacement for animal proteins in pet food.

“The project included a photo shoot in Los Angeles and an entire brand research project and campaign rollout,” she said. “It was intense, to say the least.”

She is also heading a project to help Lutheran Family Services promote its maternal health program in Lexington, Neb. With the influx of Africans and Hispanics into the Lexington area, the goal of the campaign is to encourage healthy pregnancies and two-parent families among those populations and others. McConahay said the project is challenging, considering that, for some in those groups, “polygamy is the accepted cultural norm.”

“But our agency is excited about the opportunity to make a difference,” she said.

McConahay said during the summer she will move from her current position into the account management department, where she will help clients plan strategically for their integrated marketing communications efforts. She will be overseeing a couple of major branding projects for the agency. Such new demands, she said, often steepen the learning curve, but she is up to the challenge.

“I love to continue learning,” she said. “It is an absolute necessity in this industry, and Bailey Lauerman does a great job of encouraging our team members to learn new skills so that we can put innovative thinking to work for our clients.”

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Communication Donors’ List Grows

The Founders’ Club hopes to add you to its membership this year. The School of Communication created the Founders’ Club in 2007 to provide external support to assist communication students who travel to regional and national conferences to give presentations or learn about their professions.

Alumni who gave at least $11 last year were recognized as members. The school asks members annually to increase their previous year’s donation by $1.

Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz, school director, said alumni and friends may become a member of the Founders’ Club by donating at least $12 to the school’s Communication Excellence Fund during 2008/2009.

The School of Communication Development Committee has established a needs list and goals that include establishment of an endowment to fund activities of excellence, a building to house the School of Communication, UNO Television and KVNO-FM, and support for faculty development.

Lipschultz said those wishing to donate can do so online. To donate to the School of Communication, log onto http://communication.unomaha.edu and click on “Alumni Giving.”

Those individuals and organizations that have donated to the School of Communication and/or the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media through the University Foundation during 2007-2008 are: Albers Communications Group, Dr. Chris Allen, Jason Axsom, Bridget Weide Brooks, Elizabeth Cajka, Roger Catlin, Rockwell Collins, Paul Critchlow, Paige Dilla, Sharon Dowell, the late Richard Fletcher, Karen Furbush, Jeremy and Sandy Lipschultz, Patricia Matson, Nebraska Broadcasters Association, Don Noel, Omaha Community Foundation, Hugh Reilly, Kathryn Schwartz and The New York Community Trust.
Alumni Updates

1970s

Dirk Olson (BS, ’79)—“When I Hear Thunder,” a 90-minute documentary directed and produced by Dirk, was nominated for a Heartland Emmy Award. Dirk wrote that the documentary is about four Native American families whose common link is amateur boxing and who “fight to hold onto identity, dignity and traditional native values in a changing world.”

1980s

Mike Kohler (BS, ’81)—Mike and wife Deborah moved from Kansas City to Des Moines where Mike is vice president of government relations and community affairs for the North Central Division of Mediacom Communications. Mediacom is the eighth largest cable operator in the country.

Mark Dail (MA, ’89)—Mark is on the staff of UNO-TV and was part of the production team that produced the Emmy Award-winning documentary “Madagascar: Conservation vs. Survival.” The documentary focuses on the efforts by Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo to save lemurs in that country. Dail also freelances for ESPN and been instrumental in getting UNO students involved in productions (like coverage of the College World Series) by the network.

1990s

Barbara Chandler (BA, ’90; MA, ’95)—Barb is director of project development at Nachshon Press, Skokie, Ill. She has produced and marketed an award-winning graphic novel, “Homeland: The Illustrated History of the State of Israel.” Barb said she “used all the skills and knowledge from my UNO education” to develop the project. For more on the project, visit www.homelandisrael.com.

Christopher Cooke (BS, ’92)—Christopher works at KIOS-FM in Omaha. He is host of the programs, “Jazz in the Afternoon” and “Last Call.” Christopher said that May 2008 marked “the 20th anniversary of the year I first worked behind the microphone, starting my radio broadcasting career at UNO.”

Kelly Murphy (BS, ’92)—Kelly is co-owner of Omaha-based Triage Staffing. The company works with healthcare companies nationwide in filling temporary and permanent staff positions.

Mary Kenny (MA, ’93)—After 15 years in San Diego, Mary returned to Omaha and is director of public relations and development at the Nebraska AIDS Project.

Joan Lukas McLaughlin (MA, ’93)—Joan’s Omaha-based public relations and fundraising firm, Leslie Kline Lukas & Associates, consulted with the School of Communication’s student PR firm, Mov Solutions. Joan said the student firm is “an impressive group of PR practitioners.”

Karen Jenkins (MA, ’97)—Karen is an assistant professor at Creighton University’s Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution. She received her Ph.D. in conflict analysis and resolution from Nova Southeastern University in Florida. Karen has done training and facilitation for such organizations as the Federal Reserve Bank, IBM, Goodwill Industries and the Salvation Army.

2000s

Glacia Steckelberg (BA, ’03; MA, ’07)—Glacia is an account manager for the Omaha public relations firm, Albers Communications.

Mary Ann Danielson (MA, ’03)—In 2007 Creighton University named Mary as the associate vice president for academic affairs. Previously she taught communication studies at Creighton. Mary received her Ph.D. from UNL in 1997.

Deborah Derrick (MA, ’03)—After 14 years with the University of Nebraska College of Engineering and the UNO Office of Sponsored Projects, Deborah joined the College of Information Science and Technology as a grant writer/manager. She works with faculty on identifying grant opportunities and developing proposals. Deborah is also on the editorial board for Plains Song Review and continues her writing on environmental issues.

Kindra Krueger (BA, ’95)—Kindra spent part of her spring and summer conducting public relations and fundraising activities for Veterans Administration and the Veterans’ Wheelchair Games held in Omaha in July.

Khaoula Toubi (BA, ’06)—Khaoula is working on her master’s degree in political communication at the University of Leeds in England. She plans to do her master’s thesis on cyberactivism and democracy in North African countries.

Andres Translavina (BS, ’07)—Andres is using a manual he developed in a speech class to bridge into his career as a trainer for Talent Plus Inc. in Lincoln. Talent Plus works with companies around the world on improving employee recruitment, selection, development and retention. Andres said his class, taught by Dr. Karen Dwyer, was the springboard to a new career that I did not know existed right here in Nebraska.

In Memoriam

Dick Fletcher (BS, ’64) died February 26, 2008. An Omaha native, Fletcher was chief meteorologist for WTSP-TV, Tampa Bay/St. Petersburg, Fla. Fletcher received the UNO School of Communication’s Alumni Achievement Award.

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