



# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS™

## Communication Studies

# Alumni Newsletter

Edited by John Gossett  
University of North Texas

• Department of Communication Studies •

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www.com.unt.edu



Kelvin Salone, U.S. Army

## Department Alumnus Serving in Iraq

Kelvin Salone, a 2006 graduate of the Communication Studies department, serving in the armed forces and is deployed to Iraq. After serving in the army reserves, he was called to active duty. Kelvin currently supports the 168th BSB, Brigade

Support Battalion, from Ft. Sill, OK, where he serves as a Wheel Vehicle Mechanic (WVM) for the brigade, ensuring the maintenance of a fleet of trucks, tractors, tankers. He applies both his skills from his Communication Studies major and Math minor to his mission overseas in form of addressing stress levels, management styles, and production levels of his team, as well as fine tuning argumentation skills with supervisors and critical analysis of company, military, and media discourse. Kelvin noted that rhetoric has a particular role in shaping his daily discourse and interactions and is grateful to the lecturers who provided him with this rhetorical insight.

Kelvin plans on attending graduate school with a focus in rhetoric upon his return. UNT is his top choice for beginning his graduate career, but he is also looking into the rhetoric and performance programs at Northwestern, UT-Austin, and LSU. His anticipated return is late June 2008 or sooner. In the meantime, Kelvin notes his feeling on the current situation as “wishing for a speedy resolution to the Middle East engagements and the safe return of our men and women in harm's way.”

Although the military keeps Kelvin relatively comfortable and connected to friends and family, visiting with both is what he misses most, as well as sleeping more than 6 hours a night (although this is excellent graduate school preparation), riding his motorcycle, and Olive Garden's alfredo sauce. The Department of Communication Studies wishes Kelvin a safe and speedy trip home and appreciates the service he gives to our department, community, and country.

## From the Chair . . .

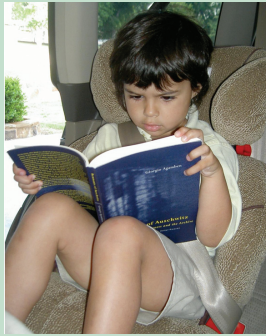
[allison@unt.edu](mailto:allison@unt.edu)

The university continues its evolution under the leadership of President Gretchen Bataille. This fall began with the announcement that Dr. Wendy Wilkins from Michigan State University had accepted the position of Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. During the interview process and since her arrival on campus, Dr. Wilkins has articulated a vision wherein UNT will develop unique programs, making our campus a destination for innovative degrees. Rather than attempting to mimic existing programs at larger institutions in the region with greater resources, Dr. Wilkins has challenged the faculty to develop forward-looking programs that will prepare students to live and work in the rapidly evolving environments of the 21st century. She has challenged us, in short, to live up to our self-selected designation as a student-centered research institution. The challenge is simultaneously to sustain the degree programs that are characteristic of our departments and to design new interdisciplinary programs that allow students to complete degrees that address their needs as well as the needs of the constituencies outside the university. To that end, the department already is engaged in

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*Chair, continued from page 1*

*In our attempts to prepare the next generation of scholars, we now require graduate students' children to read their parents' course texts. Here, Amelia Kimball, daughter of graduate student Karen Kimball, seriously studies Giorgio Agamben's After Auschwitz.*



conversations with directors of evolving degree programs. Our graduate courses may soon fulfill requirements for a new interdisciplinary graduate major in International Studies as well as a proposed degree in Professional Sciences aimed at meeting the needs of working scientists in the DFW metroplex.

These changes in the educational mission of the university also relate to UNT's identity as an emerging research institution. The interdisciplinarity and collaborative nature of degree programs must be matched with increased research—research that is also increasingly interdisciplinary and collaborative. For the past four years, the faculty has been working to create a stronger research ethic within the department. Among other things, these efforts include preparing undergraduate students to conduct research and requiring them to do so in our upper level undergraduate courses; establishing the annual “New Voices, New Perspectives” student conference to feature the research of our undergraduate and graduate students; encouraging graduate students to present their research at regional, national, and international conferences; finding financial means to help support stu-

dent participation at conferences; hiring faculty with strong research profiles; and working to create a physical infrastructure within the department to facilitate undergraduate, graduate, and faculty research.

In the last newsletter we reported that we were working to have the graduate students moved from the fifth floor to the third floor of the GAB to enhance faculty-graduate student interaction. We accomplished that goal just prior to the fall semester and currently are working on linking existing resources and creating new resources as infrastructure to support research. The third floor is now home to the Communication Library, the Communication and Social Influence Research Office, and the Black Box Performance Space. Each of these spaces has been upgraded with equipment and other resources and increasingly is being used by faculty and students for conducting foundational research, collecting data, and/or disseminating the products of research. We also are working in partnership with college administrators to acquire additional space on the third floor to house the Computer Mediated Communication Lab, a facility that Dr. Zuoming Wang negotiated during her hiring. These physical changes affect the way that we conceive our identity and our role within the college and the university.

If you are in the area, please visit. As the university changes and grows, we are working diligently to realize our potential. As alumni of our program who have gone on to various endeavors, you have valuable insights to share with us. Please contact us with your ideas as we examine all facets of our program from the undergraduate experience to community partnerships.

## ALUMNI NEWS *and Notes*

### Randy Lyons to be honored as Department's Outstanding Alumnus

Each year, as the university recognizes its alumni on Alumni Appreciation Day, colleges, schools, and departments are encouraged to select a former student, invite him or her to campus, and participate in a luncheon in the Silver Eagle Suite. The Department of Communication Studies actively supports this endeavor and looks forward to inviting former students back to campus for this recognition. The Department of Communication Studies selected Randy Lyons to be its honored alumnus for Spring 2008. Randy works as a Project Manager and Chair of Nike's GLBT and Friends Network for UberNIKE, the overarching organization that directs Nike USA, Nike UK, etc.

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**Pamela Ballow (MS, 2000)** teaches communication applications, oral interpretation, and debate at Williams High School in Plano. In addition to teaching for Plano ISD, She is a part-time instructor for Collin County Community College teaching interpersonal communication and public speaking.

**Rachael Brown (MS, 2007)** is working as the Operations Coordinator for Sorenson Communications in Lexington, KY, specifically in the area of technology for the deaf. She is also freelance writing for the United States Equestrian Federation and the Paso Fino Horse Association. Rachael lives in Richmond, KY, and she loves living in the “Bluegrass State.”

**Rebecca Suzanne Bjork (MA, 1985).** After graduating from UNT where she was an assistant debate coach, Rebecca earned her Ph.D. in Communication Arts and Sciences at the University of Southern California. She worked as a faculty member in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah from 1988-1998. While there, she teaching at Utah, she served as Director of Forensics, co-hosted the

# ALUMNI NEWS *and Notes* cont'd

NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation, and served as president of the Western Forensics Association. In 1998, she "retired" from her post at the University of Utah and attended law school at Georgetown University. She earned her J.D. in 2001 and passed the bar exam that year. Presently she is an associate at the Washington, DC office of O'Melveny & Myers LLP. Her law practice focuses on complex civil litigation, specifically in the areas of class action defense, products liability, and multidistrict litigation. She and her son, Lars Christopher Bjork, who is 3 years old, live in Washington, DC.

**Mary (Bonner) Creighton**, while not a Communication Studies (or Speech/Theatre) alumna, is listed here as a consequence of her involvement in the department during the 1960s. Bill Cherry notified the editor with information about her. Mary served as Grand Marshal of the annual Mineral Wells High School Homecoming Parade in October. She was born in Decatur but was raised in Alvord. She graduated from Alvord High School and then moved on to higher education at North Texas State University where received her Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education. She followed that degree with her Masters in Education from Tarleton State University. She holds certifications in special education, supervision and mid-management.

During the early part of her education career, she taught in various school districts, eventually becoming vice principal at Mineral Wells High School where she served many students and teachers for 19 years. Mary retired in 1999 and traveled extensively for one year before returning to serve as the Mineral Wells ISD Director of Public Relations/Public Information.

**Tommie R. Fletcher (BA, NTSU, 1972; MA, UNT, 1995)** enjoys her role as a semi-retired school teacher, having retired from Whitesboro ISD in 2001 with 27 years of teaching high school English, primarily senior English and AP Literature and Composition. Since June 2001, she has worked as a consultant for Pearson Prentice Hall and this year is working for Pearson Scott Foresman with the K-5 math textbook adoption. She still lives in Whitesboro. While her full name is *Tommie*, we will always remember her as *T. R.*

**Dixie (Waldo) Forcht (BS, 1991; MS, 1994)** married Craig Forcht in 2006, and they are now the proud parents of Ryden Christopher, born July 5, 2007. Dixie serves as a consultant to the high school forensic community and recently published a textbook on extemporaneous speaking. She and her family live in Iowa near Cedar Rapids.

**Terry Garrett (BA, 1987; MA, 1990)** debated at NT. He and his wife, before going to work and to avoid the Houston afternoon heat, get up at 2:15 each morning to train (long distance running, etc.). During the morning, Terry teaches at Cy-Fair College; during the afternoon he chases their daughter around and answers questions that always start with "Why." Consequently, he is in bed by 7:00 p.m.

**Kerry Ann (Gresl) Garrison (MS, 1990)** spent 11 years in product management and marketing for Nortel Networks and was ready to change industries. In January 2004, she took a job marketing the Neonatal Intensive Care Transport Team for St. David's Medical Center in Austin, Texas. Almost four years later, she accepted the position of Director of Physician Relations for St. David's. Actually, it is a sales position, making sure that we listen to physician needs and help them do as much business as they can at our hospital. For those who know her, Jake and Sam, her dogs of 17 and 14 years respectively, passed away, and she recently adopted a dog to spoil: an 8-year-old Springer Spaniel named Bogey.

**Jeff Giraud (MS, 1995)**. After twelve successful years as an adjunct instructor at TCC/Northeast, Jeff has transitioned to TCU and is in his second semester as an adjunct professor in Communication Studies. Also, he serves as a communication coach for the Neeley School of Business Center for Professional Communication at TCU.

**Karen Gossett (BA, 1977; MA, 1985)** just completed her 5th year at Denton Ryan High School, teaching Speech and Theatre and is in her 16<sup>th</sup> year in Denton ISD. She uses her master's in Communication Studies to direct the drama part of the speech team at Ryan. While she enjoys the luxury of teaching high school students, she misses the energy of the middle school child. She was fortunate to be a part of Ryan's UIL one-act play that performed at State last year. Her students do very well at competitive speech tournaments, winning many awards competing at the district, state, and national levels. One of her most exciting accomplishments was coaching her son, John, Jr., who placed 2nd in the state in Prose. She loves teaching and will continue until it no longer becomes a joy. Of course, she really enjoys seeing and playing with new grandson, Andrew.

**Tim Herron (BFA, 1974; MS, 1975)** a former NT debater, earned his law degree in 1980 and owns/operates (with bank permission) two beer joints: The Hill in Waller, Texas and Barons in Magnolia, Texas. Two of his daughters are getting married in the next 8 months and another was married in October 2006. His fourth daughter is a sophomore at Wheaton College, in Norton, MA. His wife taught law school this summer at UALR in Little Rock, AR, and he is a grandfather for the first time.

**William M. Helixon (BA, 1988)**. Now a major in the U.S. Army, after finishing at NT where he was a member of the debate team, Helixon earned his JD in 1993 and his LLM in 2006. Currently, he serves as the brigade judge advocate for the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team deployed for a 15-month (May 2007 to August 2008) rotation to Jalalabad, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom VIII. As the brigade judge, Helixon performs a list of duties far too lengthy to list here. This is Major Helixon's fourth deployment since joining the U.S. Army in 1996, including 6-months in Honduras, 6-months in Hungary, Bosnia and Croatia, and a month in Baghdad, Iraq. His current home duty station is in Vicenza, Italy. Previously he was assigned to the following home stations: Fort Knox, KY; Fort Polk, LA;

# ALUMNI NEWS cont'd *and Notes*

Charlottesville, VA; Bamberg, Germany; and Hanau, Germany. He is married to the former Natasa Gacpar of Novska, Croatia, and they have a 5-year-old son Nikola Mikhail. Major Helixon also has a 20-year-old daughter, Lauren Renee, who is a junior at the University of North Texas.

**Todd Hollenshead (BS, MS, Accounting, 1991).** Although Todd is a debate alumnus—not a department alumnus—he’s been the CEO at id Software (the Quake and DOOM guys) since 1996. He lives and works in Dallas.

**Holly M. Hutchins (BA, 1992; MA, 1994)** earned her PhD in 2004 in the College of Education and is an assistant professor of human resource development at the University of Houston. Her research areas include transfer of learning, organizational crisis management, and e-learning design and facilitation. Holly has published in *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, and will serve as co-editor to an upcoming special issue on crisis management published in the *Advances in Developing Human Resources*.

**Renee Sanders Johnson** writes that she completed her second year of teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Lively Elementary School in Irving. She is anxious to begin her master’s degree in education administration. She surprised her husband, Chance, on his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday by flying them to Austin in a private plane for dinner.

**Tom Klutz (BS, 1992)** lives in Vancouver, Washington. He is married (16 years) with two girls (10 & 8) and works for the City of Portland for the Water Bureau as the Property Manager.

**Jeff Nicodemus (BA, 1995)** was recently named shareholder in the law firm of Cowles & Thompson. He is married to Elizabeth Nicodemus and has one son, Russell (age 3). He was recognized by *Texas Lawyer* as a “Rising Star” in the legal profession. He and his wife are active supporters of the Dallas Wind Symphony.

**Joel David Rollins (BA, 1984 (NTSU); MA, 1989 (UNT))** earned his PhD from UT-Austin in 1996. Joel is a senior lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies at UT, and *On Campus* magazine reported in June 2007 that he was one of four faculty members selected to hold the Dads’ Association Centennial Teaching Fellowship during the fall 2007 semester.

**Brent Saindon (MS, 2006)** lives in Pittsburgh, PA, is working on his PhD at the University of Pittsburgh. His participation with the William Pitt Debate Union kept him busy this fall traveling to tournaments in Lexington, KY, Towson MD, and Clarion, PA. His personal goal this fall is to visit Niagara Falls before winter arrives!

**Libby Eddleman Spears (MA 1998)** teaches at TCU in the communication studies department. She has also extended

her area of expertise with her company, Bravo CC. which provides corporate communications programs for companies that need help with public speaking, conflict resolution, interpersonal communication, and other areas of interest. Her third full time endeavor is mom to Madeline, 8 years old, and Trinity, 6 years old. Collectively they are the “paying for your raising” her mother promised would come one day. Finally, she is finishing her PhD program in information sciences at UNT and is in the early stages of writing a dissertation. She occasionally finds time for her hobby: sleeping.

**Todd A. Steinberg (BA, 1998; MA, 2000)** reports that during the last four years he’s been an entrepreneur in the wholesale teddy bear trade. In his spare time, he has worked to create a TV sitcom cartoon and it has advanced steadily in the past year.

**Diana Steinmeyer (BA, 2005)** just completed working a year and a half for a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and since January 2007 she has worked for the National Research Initiative at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. In December 2007, Diana will marry Jesse Davis (also a North Texas alumnus) and will be moving back to Texas, where Jesse will attend Baylor Law School.

**Swann (Royer) Van Delden (MS, 1994)** completed her M.D. in 2004 and is a “chief” this year, the last year of her residency. She will finish in September 2008 and plans to take some time off after residency to spend time/travel with her son and husband. Also she is considering a clinical professor position with the hospital. She continues to think that everyone—especially those in the medical field—could benefit from a communication degree. Swann’s son is 16 months old, and he and her husband are the lights of her life. She is having a lot of fun with her family.

**Christi Wells (MA, 2007)** is teaching “Culture and the Media” at Washington & Jefferson College in Washington, PA, while preparing an online “Organizational Communication” course for the University of Pittsburgh. Her favorite summer memory in Pittsburgh was taking her mother for a trip up the Duquesne Inclines in Pittsburgh to see the evening view of the city lights.

**Keith Landis Woods (BA, 1988)**, a former NT debater, is a partner in the law firm of Meyer, Knight & Williams, L.L.P. in Houston, Texas. He is a trial lawyer with a special emphasis in complex commercial litigation. Keith has first chair trial experience in a wide range of legal matters including but not limited to real estate and business ownership disputes. Keith received his Juris Doctorate degree from South Texas College of Law in 1993 and is a member of the Texas State Bar, American Trial Lawyers Association, Houston Bar Association and is admitted to practice before all Texas State courts, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, and the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Along with practicing law, Keith enjoys his family time with his wife, Soni Dean Fritchie (BA, 1989) and their two children, Grayson (age 12) and Caitlin (age 10). Keith and his family reside in Katy, Texas and he works in Houston.

# FACULTY NEWS *and Notes*

## Department welcomes new faculty and staff

In Fall 2007, the department was authorized to hire three assistant professors to replace departing faculty members. We were fortunate to attract three first-rate teachers and researchers for these positions. In addition, we were authorized to upgrade our administrative assistant position and hire a new AA. We welcome them to our faculty/staff family and look forward to having them as colleagues for many years.



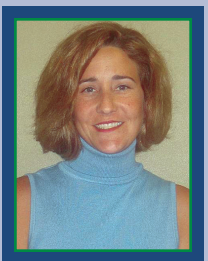
**Zuoming Wang** [wangz@unt.edu](mailto:wangz@unt.edu)

Dr. Zuoming Wang joined the Communication Studies this fall with a bright smile and a passion for quantitative research. Nothing excites Dr. Wang more than “a complex data set.” After completing her undergraduate degree in Xiamen, China, Dr. Wang moved to the United

States for her graduate study. She received her MA from the Ohio State University and recently her Ph.D. in communication from Cornell University. Growing up in the semi-tropical region in southeast China, she feels that north Texas is more of a home compared to the snowy and icy upper state New York where she lived in the past four years.

Dr. Wang focuses her research on Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). She is most fascinated by relational development in CMC contexts and the effect of new technology on social interactions. Specifically, she examines the impression formation and interpersonal perceptions in virtual environment and decision making in online communities. One of her papers in this area received the Top Three Papers Award in Group Communication at the 2007 National Communication Association convention. Dr. Wang teaches interpersonal communication at both introductory level and advanced level and will be teaching a computer mediated communication seminar for graduate students in Spring 2008.

Dr. Wang is thrilled to be at the University of North Texas and appreciates the collegiality of the Communication Studies department. Currently, Dr. Wang is working on creating the first CMC lab at UNT. This lab will be a workspace for research where graduate students will be able to observe and research CMC firsthand.



**Elaine Wittenberg-Lyles** [lyles@unt.edu](mailto:lyles@unt.edu)

Dr. Elaine Wittenberg-Lyles earned her PhD at the University of Oklahoma in 2004, and now serves on the Communication Studies faculty at UNT. Her research program entails an examination of the interpersonal processes occurring in the context of death and dying. Prior to arriv-

ing at UNT she served as faculty member at UNLV, the University of Texas-San Antonio, and was a visiting faculty member at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center in the Department of Medicine where she was involved actively

with the Geriatric Palliative Care Consultation Service. In 2006, Dr. Wittenberg-Lyles was one of 35 applicants selected to participate in an institute on aging research and the development of grant writing skills by the *National Institute on Aging Summer Institute on Aging Research*. At UNT, she will teach courses in the health communication area.



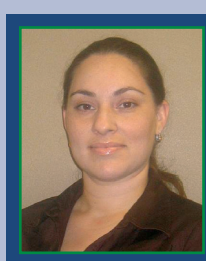
**Dr. Shaun Treat** [shauntreat@unt.edu](mailto:shauntreat@unt.edu)

Dr. Shaun Treat earned his doctorate at Louisiana State University in 2004 and joined the UNT faculty as a visiting lecturer in Fall 2006. He was reared on an Arkansas farm amidst the cool streams and soothing shade of Ozark Mountain

foothills. After receiving his B.A. (1991) and M.A. (1994) from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and serving briefly in positions with both city government and in the corporate sector, Shaun journeyed to the sweltering Louisiana bayou to hone his fascination with Rhetoric and Critical/Cultural Studies at LSU. While earning his doctorate, Shaun's interests gravitated around mythic culture types and fantasy rhetoric in popular culture, more specifically how these archetypal forms are narratively deployed to shape the consciousness, identity, and cultural politics of group memberships. His dissertation explored the mythic culture types and fantasy rhetoric of charismatic leadership within the discourses of populist business gurus like Stephen Covey and Jim Collins, finding their anti-charismatic models actually conformed to a mythic fantasy script constitutive of charisma-prone memberships awaiting the empowering rescue of a uniquely “gifted” superheroic leader.

Shaun's research interests include rhetorical theory and criticism, political communication, cultural and media studies, psychoanalysis, free speech issues, and constitutive rhetorics of postmodern civic identities. His publications have appeared in *The Louisiana Communication Journal* and twice in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, with chapters forthcoming in two books. Currently, Shaun is working to turn his dissertation into a critical-cultural study of charisma within the contemporary Monomyth of the American Superhero. He has presented several convention papers exploring connections between leadership rhetoric, mythic narrative, political consciousness, and hegemonies of personal identity. He also has received recognition and awards for his engaging teaching pedagogy.

In addition to his research and teaching interests, Shaun enjoyed spending time traveling, camping, fishing, searching out live music, and exploring the Denton area for cultural and culinary adventure with his two children, Kaitie and Austin.



**Carmen Brown** [cabrown@unt.edu](mailto:cabrown@unt.edu)

Carmen is the new administrative assistant, and she came to us from the University of California Riverside where she served in a similar position as an Office Manager for the Performing Arts Administration office. She also received her B.A. degree in Sociology from the University of California Riverside. Having moved to Texas just under a year ago, she is enjoying spending her spare time traveling and exploring Texas and its neighbors. She and her husband, Daniel, live in McKinney, TX.

## Faculty & Staff News & Notes

### **Carmen Brown** [cabrown@unt.edu](mailto:cabrown@unt.edu)

As you've noticed elsewhere in this newsletter, Carmen Brown is the new Administrative Assistant for our department. While in California, her position involved working for three academic departments and two non-academic programs. In the short time that she has been with the department, Carmen has instituted a number of policies and procedures that make our lives easier and more productive. She was instrumental in analyzing our financial situation and acquiring a new staff position for the department and, because of her efforts, we will be able to hire a student worker to staff a student resource center in the Communication Studies Library. She has even caught the attention of the college, which already recommends Carmen as an information source to new staff members. Most importantly, the faculty and graduate students in the department know that before they do anything, they have to clear it with Carmen.



### **Karen Anderson** [kanders@unt.edu](mailto:kanders@unt.edu)

Dr. Karen Anderson, in her fourth year UNT, continues to serve as the Basic Course Director (COMM 1010: Introduction to Communication) and coordinates training for the graduate student teaching assistants. Karen and her partner, George, have two young children.

### **Ted Colson** (emeritus) [tedcolson@webtv.net](mailto:tedcolson@webtv.net)

Dr. Colson experienced some significant health problems in the past few years (he went to hospital for a spinal epidural and in the process developed bacterial meningitis). In Spring 2007, he moved to Oklahoma City to be closer to his niece. We still tell stories about him as well as repeat ones he told. Please send him an e-mail.



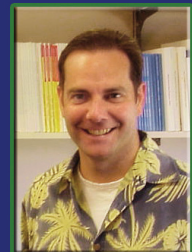
### **John Gossett** [gossett@unt.edu](mailto:gossett@unt.edu)

It has now been over a year since Gossett stepped aside as chair. Health problems continue as he is in need of a liver transplant. In addition, he started a political communication study on similarities in values of the Mexican and Texan voters in the 2008 elections. His wife, Karen,

was active in speech and drama at Ryan High School, and John, Jr., a sophomore at the University of Arkansas, worked in sports broadcasting by taping and editing varsity football practices and games and basketball games. Of course, Dr. Gossett and Karen were thrilled to have their first grandchild, Andrew, son of Taylor and his wife Yesinia, born July 12, 2006. Yesi is fluent in Spanish, so Andrew (Andres) is being reared in English and Spanish. Dr. Gossett is unable to visit Andrew though, since Methodist Hospital-Dallas will not allow him to travel more than three hours away from the transplant facility.

### **Brian Lain** [blain@unt.edu](mailto:blain@unt.edu)

Brian Lain, director of debate at UNT, started a new line of research inquiry in both forensics practice and continued his research into the rhetoric of American detention. Much of 2005-2006 Lain spent traveling with the debate team as it competed across the nation to eventually finish in the top 50 programs in the country and one of the best teams in NDT District III. In the summer of 2005, Dr. Lain presented an essay on the future of the tenure track director of forensics, a product of his three-year stint on the American Forensics Association's Committee on Professional Development. In November, he was asked to serve on a special task force in order to review the AFA's suggestions to Departments and Colleges on the standards for tenure among directors of Forensics. Dr. Lain is currently working with Dr. David Hingstman of the University of Iowa to provide suggestions for standards for research contributions among forensics directors. Dr. Lain has continued research from his award winning dissertation on the memory of Japanese American internment by turning his attention to more recent detentions.



### **Brian Richardson** [richardson@unt.edu](mailto:richardson@unt.edu)

Dr. Richardson is now in his sixth year at UNT and is still teaching courses such as Organizational Communication, Small Group Communication, and Conflict Management. Last year was very busy for Brian and his clan. They

vacated in Estes Park, Colorado, in July, where Brian did some whitewater rafting. In May, Brian and Cheryl visited San Francisco where they enjoyed crab cake sandwiches at AT&T baseball park while booing Barry Bonds. In August, they had a dual-birthday party for the kids as Ella turned three and Keith turned five. Finally, Brian had a successful fantasy football season in his on-going league, as his team *Organizational Dissonance* finished as runner-up.

Brian also did some work this past year. He continued research on a number of topics including whistle-blowing, stress/burnout and communication, and crisis communication, and presented academic papers at both the ICA and NCA conferences. Also, Dr. Richardson supervised the Internship program at UNT and was the faculty advisor for the NCA Future Pros organization. NCA Future Pros hosts guest speakers from various Communication-related careers to inform students about opportunities in their fields. If

your organization is in need of Communication Studies interns or if you would be interested in serving as a guest speaker for NCA Future Pros, please email Dr. Richardson.



### **Kelly Taylor** [ktaylor@unt.edu](mailto:ktaylor@unt.edu)

With the assistance of graduate student Esra Guleyupoglu, Dr. Taylor began a

new research project. Hacivat and Karagoz are trickster characters from Turkish folklore. Guleyupoglu and Taylor examined these multilayered and frequently subversive characters and the ways in which individuals' memories of their childhood exposure to the stories about them has continued to guide their values as adults.

Dr. Taylor also will be involved in a performance project this spring. The title of the script is "Frida Kahlo in Love," and the performance text will be a collection of excerpts from poems, essays, and letters by this famous Mexican artist centering on the primary passions of Kahlo's life. In connection to this script, Dr. Taylor is contemplating the nature of the literary phenomenon known as *ekphrasis* which occurs when a visual stimulus (usually a painting) prompts the creation of a literary work (usually a poem). Reproducing Kahlo's art via staging, masks, puppets, and costumes, Dr. Taylor hopes to create a performance that embodies and interrogates the potentially symbiotic relationship between literary and visual creations.

On a sad personal note, Dr. Taylor's beloved dog, Propst, died on September 20, 2006. He had been battling illnesses caused by a tumor growing on his liver for almost a year. Dr. Taylor would like to thank all of you who sent cards and messages of sympathy and support during this difficult time.

When not teaching, writing, or directing, Dr. Taylor stayed busy with her duties as faculty advisor for the Performance Interest Group and Lambda Pi Eta (the national organization for students in Communication Studies). Additionally, she maintained the department's website (<http://www.comm.unt.edu/index.htm>). If you have questions or comments about these organizations or the website, please contact her.



**Justin Trudeau**  
[jtrudeau@unt.edu](mailto:jtrudeau@unt.edu)

Justin Trudeau, a second year faculty member in performance studies, received his Ph.D. from Louisiana State University. His research interests include the performance of literature, historiography, and performance art. In January of 2008 he will adapt and

direct a literary adaptation of Tom Robbins' *Wild Ducks Flying Backward* for the Pace Performance Festival in Baton Rouge. He and his wife Jessica welcomed their first child (and native Texan!), a daughter named Jolie Elise Trudeau, in December 2006.

## Organizations

### Department committed to advising

For over a decade, the Communication Studies department has worked with students to ensure accuracy in undergraduate advising. While Dr. Gossett is the main department adviser, he is assisted by a teaching assistant who earned a B.A. degree in COMM at UNT and is now working on a master's degree. Last year and this year, Gossett is assisted by Gessella "Gigi" Perez (B.A., 2005). Undergraduate advising, Gigi says, is like any position; there are both happy students and unhappy students. She tries to ease the students into the field of Communication Studies with a friendly and familial atmosphere. In Fall 2007, she increased her advising hours over previous semesters because she felt as if students would get more one-on-one time with an advisor. Gigi enjoys her new office in the Rhetoric Power Suite (the new unofficial name for GAB 320) because it puts her closer to professors on whom she relies for planning her thesis and coursework.

### QEP Rolls On...

In 2004, UNT began the process of re-designing large-enrollment courses in an attempt to transform the student-learning experience by applying innovative instructional techniques allowing students a blended learning experience. Dr. Karen Anderson was awarded a \$10,000 Blended Learning Project Grant to examine the

role of online and blended learning in COMM 1010. The initial phase of the program resulted in the transformation of nine university courses, including COMM 1010, from a traditional lecture format to a blended format. Instead of attending a weekly large lecture, students enrolled in COMM 1010 blended classes attend twice weekly recitation sessions and access lecture content using Web CT.

Currently in its third plan year, the QEP advisory board continues to work to improve student-learning outcomes specifically in a blended environment. This fall, Dr. Anderson received a grant for \$12,000 to further her research in this area and is in the process of completely re-designing the COMM 1010 course in the anticipation that all COMM 1010 classes will follow the blended format beginning in Fall 2008. In addition, two graduate students, Kristan Smeaton and Cindy Gordon, were chosen as Research Assistants for the project.

In Fall 2007 the Communication Studies department filled 17 blended sections of COMM 1010. As higher education continues to turn to technology in an attempt to reach a larger population and make learning more accessible, additional research will continue to evolve in the field of instructional development and COMM 1010 will be on the cutting edge.

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### **Petit Jean National Performance Festival**

Now in its 28th year, the Petit Jean festival is still going strong. Our guest lecturer this spring will be Jonathan Grey. Dr. Grey is an associate professor in the Communication Studies department of Southern Illinois at Carbondale. As scholar/artist, Dr. Grey specializes in the areas of: Rhetorical Theory and Criticism, Environmental Communication and Justice, Popular Culture, Folklore, and Communication Pedagogy.

Grey has chosen "Environmental Performance" as this year's festival theme, and we look forward to seeing what he and our attendees will do with this very apt topic for our "festival in the woods!"

### **NT Debate Team brings prestige to the department**

*UNT debate team places second at Baylor tournament, reaches top 16 in Harvard University tournament*

A team from North Texas won second place at the Baylor University Glenn R. Capp Debates, held Oct. 20-22. John Elson, UNT sophomore economics science major from Round Rock, and Cameron Vaziri, UNT freshman political science major from Hebron posted wins against teams from the University of Texas at Austin, Trinity University in San Antonio, the University of Nevada at Las Vegas and Missouri State University. They were defeated in the final round to a team from Wichita State University. The Baylor tournament attracted more than 20 teams from 10 colleges and universities, and Elson was recognized as the fourth best speaker in the tournament.

At Harvard, Elson and another partner, Kuntal Cholera, senior economics major from Clear Lake, defeated six other teams to reach the octafinals, which placed them among the top 16 teams. Elson and Cholera also reached the top 16 at the Georgia State National College Tournament in September.

Both the Baylor and Harvard tournaments were sanctioned by the National Debate Tournament (NDT) and the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA). The NDT is both an organization and an annual championship for college debate, and its national tournament is scheduled for March 28-31 at California State University-Fullerton. The CEDA national championship tournament will be held March 21-24 at Wichita State University in Wichita, KS. The topic for all CEDA/NDT-sanctioned tournaments for this year focuses on U.S. foreign policy. Students are debating whether or not the U.S. federal government should increase its constructive engagement with the governments of Afghanistan, Iran, Lebanon, the Palestinian Liberation Authority and Syria, making the arguments for or against offering one or more of these nations security guarantees, a substantial increase in foreign assistance, or both. Students must prepare both sides of the arguments.

Brian Lain, UNT director of debate and assistant professor of communication studies, said the UNT students' showings at the Baylor, Harvard and Georgia State tournaments indicate "that we are in the race to be ranked in the top 16 teams in the country this year."

"Our debaters have really made the most of the fall semester so far. I am hoping we will continue to have success as we approach next semester and the run into the National Debate Tournament," Lain said.

UNT has qualified at least one team to participate in the National Debate Tournament 24 times during the past 25 years. Last year, Elson and Cholera represented North Texas at the NDT after qualifying at the District III Qualifying Tournament. District III includes debate programs at colleges and universities in Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. Elson and Cholera also qualified for participation in the CEDA national tournament, where they advanced to the octafinal round of the competition as one of the top 16 teams before being defeated.

### **Celebration at Joe T's**

In early June, UNT alumnus and former debater, Josh Hoe, planned an evening celebration at Joe T. Garcia's in Forth Worth, recognizing John Gossett's ten years as UNT director of debate and 17 years as department chair. Generally speaking, it was supposed to be a surprise, but logistics forced the need for some disclosure.

Approximately 40 friends and former debaters attended, including some of Gossett's old Houston buddies who he had not seen together in almost 35 years. While liver problems prevented Gossett from having a frozen beverage, the food was good, and the company was fantastic. Josh is the debate coach at University of Michigan but keeps in touch with his Texas friends.

### **Performance Interest Group**

In addition to hosting the Petit Jean Performance Festival in Arkansas in March, the Performance Interest group has stayed busy planning and performing our weekly Texts in Performance Series. This series spotlights work from the Performance Studies emphasis within the Department of Communication Studies, as well as other creative projects that fall within the "performance" genre.

Already this fall we have seen group performances directed by Gigi Perez (graduate), Nkechi Chibueze (graduate), Kris Noteboom (graduate), and Alyssa Stevenson. (undergraduate). Very soon, PIG will feature auditions for Dr. Justin Trudeau's directing project, Dr. Taylor's "Ghosts of UNT" Halloween presentation, and special performance hours directed by graduate students and officers. Feel free to drop by GAB 321 any Tuesday from 5-6 pm and join in the fun!

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*Organizations, continued from page 1*

PIG is also kicking off a brand new event called "UNT's Got Talent." The Performance Studies graduate students are sponsoring, judging, and underwriting this contest. In it, groups sign up to create and perform five minute scripts that adhere to a chosen theme, use a chosen technique, and incorporate three provided items. This year's theme is reality television. The technique contestants must use is parody. The chosen items are a red trash can, a blue dog bowl, and a green flute. The first place winners will receive a prize of \$200. For more information on this contest, see the UNT's Got Talent website at: <http://untsgottalent.com/home>

This year's Performance Interest Group officers are Alyssa Stevenson, (president) and Tomomi Hyodo (vice president).

**Lambda Pi Eta**

The UNT's department's chapter of NCA's honor society for Communication Studies majors has sent out invitations to qualified students and inducted new members in November.

In order to qualify for membership a student must:

- have completed at least 60 semester hours
- have completed at least 12 semester hours in Communication Studies

- have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0
- have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 in Communication Studies courses
- be in good standing at the university display commitment to the field of Communication Studies

This year's new officers are Cindy Truitt, president, Jill Graham, vice president, and Meg Davis, secretary.

LPE has planned several fund raising events for the fall semester. Members have already conducted a sale of Communication Studies T-shirts. LPE also has several service events scheduled, including conducting a welcoming troops arriving in DFW, conducting a food drive, and adopting a block for the campus clean-up.

The chapter is still working towards establishing a scholarship for LPE members. If you or your organization would be interesting in contributing to such a scholarship, please contact Dr. Taylor ([ktaylor@unt.edu](mailto:ktaylor@unt.edu)) or one of the LPE officers.

For more information about UNT's Mu Alpha chapter of Lambda Pi Eta, visit the LPE website: <http://www.comm.unt.edu/LPE/index.htm>

***In Memoriam***

Dr. Ben A. Chappell (BA 1955, MA 1956) Doc Chappell was an assistant professor of speech at North Texas from 1957-1961 and director of forensics from 1970-1975. He earned his doctorate from OU. Doc passed away on May 1 in Fort Worth. In 1975, he received the 'Fessor Graham Award, the highest honor bestowed by the student body. Doc also taught at Southern Mississippi, TCU, and Southeastern (Okla) State.

# We Need to Hear From You!

The Communication Studies newsletter is published each year by the Department of Communication Studies at the University of North Texas.

## Are we meeting your interests? Let us know

Please keep us informed on what you are doing and offer suggestions for future issues!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ if different from when at UNT: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, state, zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Is spouse an alum?    Y    N    If so, name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_ Circle one:    B.A.    B.S.    M.A.

Your current business and position: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Work? \_\_\_\_\_

Professional and personal news of interest to share with classmates: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address referral: Do you know any alumni who are not on our mailing list but should be? Are any of your classmates living in another state or abroad? Help them keep in touch by sending us their names:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: the Department of Communication Studies, UNT, P.O. Box 305268, Denton, TX 76201-5268. Thank You!

## Save your memories. . .

Thanks to those alumni who submitted items for this newsletter. Everyone should start a file to save items for next year's newsletter. My goal is to collect info in September and October so we can go to the printer on the first week in November 2008.

## Search for newsletter name

Starting with this issue, we are in search of a name for the department newsletter. Texas State University-San Marcos calls its newsletter the *Communique*, so that one is out, but we should be able to discover a name that encompasses what we do in the department as well as being descriptive to those outside the discipline. Win a free subscription if your suggestion is chosen (they're free even if your's isn't chosen). Send your suggestion to: [gossett@unt.edu](mailto:gossett@unt.edu)

# Opportunities for Alumni Giving

I invite each of you to pledge your support for the activities of the Department of Communication Studies at the University of North Texas. We are fortunate to have a few donors who make an annual contribution to our scholarship funds. Will you commit to joining that group?

**Here's how:** Send your contribution (payable to: UNT Department of Communication Studies. Be sure to indicate in the "memo" line which fund(s) you want to support.

## Pledge Level:

\_\_\_ \$1,000/year    \_\_\_ \$500/year    \_\_\_ \$250/year    \_\_\_ \$100/year    \_\_\_ other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** For contributions to the Curtis Loveless Fund and the Louis Stricklin Fund, please make your check payable to: **UNT Foundation.** Please note "Loveless Fund" or "Stricklin Fund" on the check memo line.

### ***Debate Alumni/William DeMougeot Scholarship***

This scholarship fund was created by a group of Dr. DeMougeot's former debaters after his death in the mid-1980s. Recipients must be regularly enrolled undergraduate students who participate on the UNT Debate Team.

### ***Olive M. Johnson Scholarship***

Olive Johnson was the first chair of the speech department at NT in 1931, and in 1933, she established a debate team. She served as department chair until the early 1950s. This fund was established by her son and daughter-in-law in 1986. Recipients must be U.S. citizens who compete as undergraduates on the UNT Debate Team and major in Communication Studies. Freshman applicants should be in the top quarter of the high school graduating class and should have an S.A.T. score of at least 1,000.

### ***Curtis M. Loveless Scholarship (UNT Foundation)***

The award was created in 1997 by Mr. Loveless, a Denton attorney who debated for Dr. DeMougeot in the 1960s. Recipients must maintain full-time enrollment at the university, major in and meet the academic standards of the Communication Studies department, and participate in the activities of the UNT Debate Team.

### ***Louis Stricklin Scholarship (UNT Foundation)***

The award was created by Cathy Krendl, an attorney in Denver and former NT debater for Dr. DeMougeot in the 1960s, in her father's memory. Recipients must maintain full-time enrollment at the university, major in and meet the

academic standards of the Communication Studies department, and participate in the activities of the UNT Debate Team.

### ***Lesla Woody Memorial Scholarship in Oral Interpretation and Performance Studies***

Lesla Woody, who passed away in the late 1970s, was an undergraduate oral interpretation studies student of Dr. Ted Colson. Ms. Woody's mother and stepfather created and funded this award. The scholarship is awarded on a competitive basis to undergraduate students who participate in curricular performance studies classes and extracurricular performance studies intercollegiate festivals and other activities.

### ***Performance Studies Development Fund***

This fund is designed to support the on-going activities of the Performance Studies program at UNT, and it helps to purchase furnishings and technical accessories (e.g., lighting and sound equipment) to equip the Performance Studies black box in GAB and for mounting individual faculty productions. The fund also provides financial support for students representing UNT at festivals and conventions.

### ***Communication Studies Unrestricted Gift Fund***

This fund is an excellent way for alumni to support on-going activities in the department. Administered by the chair, contributions are used for student activities, travel, capital expenditures. Because of its flexibility, it is an extremely important fund for the department.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

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