



## COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT TCNJ:

A NATIONAL LEADER IN STUDENT-FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Fall 2014 Volume 7 Issue 1



Dr. Ryan, inside Italian Peoples Bakery on Butler Street in the Chambersburg section of Trenton. (Photo credit: Michael Mancuso/The Times of Trenton)

### The Inspiration and Influence of *From the 'Burg to the Barrio*

By Ashley Attinello

When different cultures live together in a small area, it can be challenging to find common ground. This fall, Dr. Susan Ryan completed a documentary on the cultural changes experienced in Chambersburg, a small neighborhood in Trenton, NJ. The completed documentary, *From the 'Burg to the Barrio* was broadcast on NJTV, Oct. 6, 2014. Since NJTV allowed access to the film on its website this December, the film has had over 2,800 views.

Many years ago, Italian immigrants moved to Chambersburg, hoping to start a new life in the United States. The job opportunities and low cost of living was ideal for many people. As the years passed, eventually the demographic of the neighborhood began to change. Like the Italian immigrants before them, Latino immigrants viewed Chambersburg, as a perfect place to start a new life in the United States. However, the older residents were reluctant to see the neighborhood change. Nostalgic for their once predominately Italian community, the older residents of Chambersburg developed a sense of hostility towards their new neighbors.

Interested by the Chambersburg's unique history, TCNJ Department of Sociology and Anthropology professor Dr. Rachel Adler interviewed 75 Italian and 75 Latino parishioners from Saint Joachim's Church in Chambersburg. Dr. Adler soon realized that the residents' stories could be shared in a film.

**CHAMBERSBURG Continued Page 6...**

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# TCNJ Students and Faculty Present at Centennial NCA Convention

**By Stefanie Gratale**

*Alumna ('06) Contributor*

The National Communication Association (NCA) celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2014. To commemorate the occasion, the organization, a scholarly society that studies the application and effects of all forms of communication, held its 2014 Annual Convention in Chicago, Illinois. The prestigious event attracted representatives from university communication departments and graduate programs from across the country. TCNJ students and professors, both past and present, attended the convention to present their research and participate in myriad conference events. Current TCNJ seniors Kyle Bauer, James Etheridge and Christina Santiago attended, along with alumna Stefanie Gratale, professors Dr. Gary Woodward and Dr. Keli Steuber, and former professor Dr. Anntarie Sims.

During the conference, Dr. Steuber offered presentations of her research, along with several students. Bauer and Gratale presented their research examining newspaper coverage of immigration reform in over 20 domestic cities. Gratale also conducted a poster session for a paper exploring the way media assign government or societal responsibility for treatment of post-traumatic stress in veterans. Etheridge and Santiago jointly presented their paper covering international newspaper representations of HIV and AIDS. These research projects all utilized the Community Structure Approach, which studies the manner in which city or national demographic characteristics are systematically connected to newspaper coverage of vital issues. TCNJ's Dr. John Pollock is one of the foremost scholars of this approach. The research studies presented at NCA, along with several additional student papers examining media coverage of human rights issues, were recently published in a special media and human rights issue of the *Atlantic Journal of Communication*.

The NCA convention, which took place from November 19-23, offered a range of research and networking events including formal presentations, graduate school fairs, research exhibitions and nightly celebrations. Although the conference typically features graduate-level work, TCNJ Communication Studies majors have a long track record of sharing their research at NCA events. NCA will host its 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention in November 2015 in Las Vegas, Nevada. ♦



*James Etheridge, Christina Santiago, and Kyle Bauer, exploring Chicago. Below Christina Santiago and James Etheridge sharing their presentation. (Photos courtesy of Christina Santiago)*

# Harvard's Dr. K Viswanath Illuminates Health Information and Inequality

**By Theresa Soya**

On the cold, windy morning of Friday, Nov. 14, students hustled hurriedly across campus to snag a seat in Mayo Concert Hall for the guest lecture of Harvard School of Public Health's Dr. K. Viswanath.

The event, titled "Communication Technologies, Inequalities, and Health: Promises and Problems," was hosted as part of the Brown Bag Series and organized by Dr. John Pollock, esteemed professor of TCNJ's Communication Studies Department. Dr. Viswanath is a professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Harvard and in the McGraw-Patterson Center for Population Sciences at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Dr. Viswanath's work draws from literature in communication science, social epidemiology, and social and health behavior sciences, focusing on translational communication science to influence public health policy and practice. His primary research consists of documenting the relationship between communication inequalities, poverty, and health disparities. Dr. Viswanath's reputable research is supported by funding from private and public agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Marc Trotochaud, a sophomore communication studies major at TCNJ, reveled in the opportunity to hear from such a revered communication scholar. Trotochaud said, "It was a true privilege to listen to someone as accomplished and intelligent as Dr. Viswanath."

The lecture proved to be just that.

"As a society, we have to be concerned about health inequalities," Dr. Viswanath opened.

He continued to introduce his thesis with an anecdote about American smoking percentages.



*Left to right: Dr. John Pollock, Dr. K. Viswanath, and Dr. John Laughton, Dean of the School of Arts & Communication*

In 1964, the first year that the Surgeon General began publishing warnings about the negative effects of smoking on a person's health, 50% of all adults smoked cigarettes on a regular basis. Since then, Dr. Viswanath said, that percentage has taken a steady, drastic decline, resting now at just 22%. However, he clarified, not all demographics have benefitted equally from the trend.

The more educated a person is, the less likely he or she is to smoke. Dr. Viswanath explained that this also proves true for obesity as well.

"The question is, why do these inequalities exist, despite all the advancements we have made?" he asked.

From a communication-centric perspective, Dr. Viswanath suggested that communication inequalities may have a direct explanation.

Dr. Viswanath challenged the notion that the poor sector of the American population pick up unhealthy habits because they are uninformed and because they do not care to be healthy. Rather, the issue facing this demographic is that communication, especially in the growing technological world, is extremely expensive. Those who make a sustainable income can afford the multiple bills accumulated from a landline phone, cell phone plan, television, and Internet, in addition to their bills for food, electricity, water, heat, rent, and any other costs of living.

**VISWANATH Continued Page 3...**

## Viswanath Continuation...

However, those on a fixed income must make tighter decisions on where to spend their money and what bills to pay, thus, leading to difficulty in communication and contributing to communication inequality.

Dr. Viswanath continued his thesis, citing a study conducted measuring the types of information people seek when they find out they are seriously injured or ill. The study found that three out of 10 patients do not seek further information about their condition or treatment outside of their medical encounter. Those with high incomes are more likely to seek medical information. Further study clarified that pre-treatment information, treatment logistics, and self-care management are directly correlated to income. The study found that those working lower income jobs do not intentionally avoid the task of seeking further treatment information. Instead, they spend their time seeking ways to *afford* the treatment they need, and how to make ends meet while they will be out of work.

Dr. Viswanath said that in order to reach the poor, we must simply make the effort to do so. We must know where they are and learn how to reach them, be it through community centers, community partners, or different organizations.

“As a society, we have to be concerned about health inequalities.”

Dr. Viswanath

If we keep using policy-making methods we used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we will continue to fail this sector of the population. We must follow the path created by the FDA’s Project Impact and try to change media and public discourse about the subject. Blaming communication inequalities on personal attributes of those who suffer from them must end. We must work to cultivate a better understanding of the severity of the situation and in order to change it.

“We do not make these efforts because it is difficult to do so,” Dr. Viswanath said. “But we must. We cannot afford to make these mistakes again with this 21<sup>st</sup> century issue.” ♦



**Regina Yorkgitis**  
Editor-In-Chief

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Faculty Advisor

*Do you have an idea for an article?  
Would you like to write for us?*

Contact Regina [yorkgir1@tcnj.edu](mailto:yorkgir1@tcnj.edu)

The Roar is the student newsletter for the Department of Communication Studies at The College of New Jersey.

Its goal is to foster a sense of connection among all those involved with the department and to celebrate our solid record of accomplishments at the local, state, regional, national, and international levels.

*The Roar logo was designed by Lambda Pi Eta member Brittany Sangastiano.*

**Read past issues of The Roar**

<http://issuu.com/theroartcnj>



OR



<http://communicationstudies.pages.tcnj.edu/vibrant/roar/>

# Department Welcomes Dr. Keli Ryan Steuber

**By Nicole Ferrito**

Dr. Keli Ryan Steuber, a 2003 alumna of The College of New Jersey, returned to her alma mater this year as a member of the Communication Studies Department faculty. Dr. Steuber, who received her master's degree at the University of Delaware and her doctorate at Pennsylvania State University in 2009, has focused her research and teaching in interpersonal and family communication.

After teaching for five years at the University of Iowa, Dr. Steuber explained why she chose to come back: "There is something about being back in Kendall, where I started falling in love with this profession, this discipline and this field." She added that the students' work ethic at TCNJ resonates with her.

Dr. Steuber's interest in communication studies began as a student at TCNJ, in the class of a former TCNJ Communication Studies Department faculty member. In Dr. Anntarie Sim's interpersonal communication class, Dr. Steuber's interest in the field was sparked while studying communication dynamics between people and the benefit that it could bring to their lives.

As a graduate student, she narrowed her interpersonal communication focus after learning about the many stressors that can be placed on a marriage, such as one of the first major transitions a couple faces: parenthood.

"Sometimes things do not go as expected," she explained. Through her research, Dr. Steuber has explored the important role identity plays in parenthood.

One of Dr. Steuber's favorite studies related to marriage stressors, was focused on infertility. The study was published in *The Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* (2008). "I looked at online support groups and read through the posts for themes of marital stressors and how those stressors contributed to relational uncertainty in marriage," she said. Her study led her to explore the marital stressors that do not just occur internally, but that are also prevalent outside of the marriage.

Dr. Steuber said that her interest in discovering ways to effectively support and communicate with couples and families facing challenges drives her research and teaching: "Family members and friends have potential making an experience more positive, but could also accidentally create negative reactions."

Dr. Steuber's research has been published in other journals such as, the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *Journal of Family Issues*, and *Communication Monographs*.



*Dr. Keli Ryan Steuber, alumna and new professor  
(Photo credit: tcnj.edu)*

Her most recent work focuses on offering social support to those in stressful situations related to infertility, post-partum depression, and perinatal loss.

Dr. Steuber's research is published in several journals, including: *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *Journal of Family Issues*, and *Communication Monographs*. Her most recent work focuses on offering social support to those in stressful situations related to infertility, postpartum depression, and perinatal loss.

Professor Steuber will be teaching an Advanced Topics: Lifespan Communications course during the winter term and an advanced interpersonal communications course, in addition to the preliminary Interpersonal Communications course next semester.

She explained that her identity as a scholar has shifted to a research focus.

**NEW PROFESSOR Continued Page 6...**

## New Professor Continuation...

Her teaching, she noticed, is often strengthened as a result of her research and she incorporates examples of her studies in her lectures. When she references her research, she believes that students are more excited about the interpersonal communication topics discussed.

She looks forward to her future at the school that ignited her interest in interpersonal communication: “TCNJ launched me into one of the most incredible experiences of my life. I was able to do everything I can and more, and I want to do my part in giving back and helping [students] have their own experiences.” ♦

## Chambersburg Documentary Continuation...

Dr. Ryan has always had a passion for studying diverse cultures. While in graduate school, she studied Latin American cinema. She has traveled to places such as Costa Rica and Egypt, where she used her talents to produce films related to human rights and lifestyles. After Dr. Adler approached Dr. Ryan, and shared the responses from the interviews, the production of a Chambersburg documentary began.

Seven years later, *From the 'Burg to the Barrio* was completed. There were several reasons why the film took seven years to complete. When students who worked on the film with Dr. Ryan graduated or changed classes, she was responsible for training new students, so that they could continue working from where other students had left off. Together, Dr. Ryan and her students accumulated over 60 hours of footage, so it took time to edit the film to an acceptable length. Finding old photographs of the neighborhood was unexpectedly difficult.

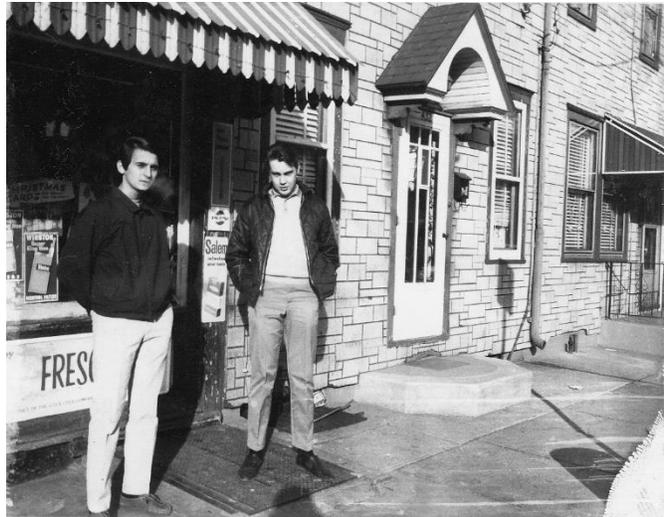
Luckily, after several years of searching, Dr. Ryan was finally given access to a collection of photographs from the Trenton Public Library.

However, the lengthy shooting period, turned out to be an advantage. One goal of the documentary was to highlight the gradual change of a primarily Italian neighborhood to a Latino neighborhood. Dr. Ryan and her student assistants were able to capture the changes that occurred over time in certain locations; for example, they witnessed an Italian restaurant shut down and become converted into a Latino restaurant.

The inspiration and vision for this film was mainly shaped by Dr. Ryan and several students that assisted her throughout the years. Monica Fajardo, main editor and co-producer, was a student of Dr. Ryan's for years and continued to work on the film even after she graduated. Associate producers, Mary Michalopolous and Nick Donnoli, helped Dr. Ryan during their Mentored Undergraduate Summer Program (MUSE). Several other students made notable contributions to the documentary, including: Suha Gur, Mike Roberts, Andrew Sigwart, Andrew Pearson, Alec Zucovich, Matt Owen, Kristen Caldwell, Danielle Yanotti, Jessica Virga, Kristen Gerbehy, and Matt Lawrence.

The documentary has certainly succeeded in creating a discussion about the topics that were addressed since its first viewing for Trenton Film Society at Mill Hill Playhouse in 2014. Dr. Ryan has discussed the film's themes regarding immigration during other viewings at public libraries, churches, schools, and film festivals. Many of these discussions have elicited negative feelings from older residents towards Latino immigrants, who are the most recent immigrants in the Chambersburg area. Dr. Ryan finds this interesting, considering the fact that many objecting Italians and Germans were once the newcomers to the town.

Dr. Ryan is pleased with the success of *From the 'Burg to the Barrio* and plans to focus on future projects related to the Trenton area. She looks forward to working with more students and will continue to study immigrant populations. Yet, Dr. Ryan remains open to new ideas and said that she is “very interested in how the arts are being used to help young people.” Visit <http://burgtothebarrio.blogspot.com> to learn more. ♦



Italian immigrants pose for a photograph in Chambersburg.  
(Photo courtesy of <http://burgtothebarrio.blogspot.com>)

# From a Professor's Blog: "The Necessity of Acknowledgement"

By Gary Woodward, Ph.D.

Courtesy of *The Perfect Response*



*A woman checks her cellphone. (Source: Cindy Chew, S.F. Examiner)*

The Important Person has just turned the corner at the far end of the hall. She's with an associate, walking in my direction. We will pass each other in the middle of this long narrow space in another 15 steps. Will the Important Person notice me? Will her glances to her associate give way to a glance in my direction? In the Important Person's world do I even exist?

The essential ritual of acknowledging another is a cornerstone of our sociality. "Communication" can mean transferring the most complex of ideas or feelings. But stripped to its essential core, it usually includes a gesture that confirms another person's worth. This can be in real time, or communicated electronically. As with the example of the pending encounter with the Important Person, it's most interesting to observe in the flesh. The body language is so clear. We are in constant search of facial cues from others that we matter to them, that we have status, that we are an agent of potential influence.

This ritual has its cultural rules that vary somewhat from society to society. In American culture most of the work of affirming or denying recognition is done with the eyes, where looking in the direction of another is the signature act of recognition. The establishment of this plane of mutual eye contact is essential. Saying something to another simply doesn't work very well if we can't catch that person's glimpse.

Imagine another common but more complex scene. With another person I am eating dinner in a crowded city restaurant.

Its layout is a typical arrangement: a continuous banquette along one wall faces a series of small individual tables, each with a chair to complete a setting for one pair.

Spaces between the tables amount to little more than a few inches. In this series of "table for two" arrangements I am in the chair and my partner is seated on the banquette against the wall.

Here's the challenge. This arrangement poses a problem for waitstaff. The server's mandate for good service means she can't fully engage people on my side without establishing a plane of direct eye contact. But she will need to perform the physically uncomfortable task of specifically addressing us by leaning in to our sides so her face can be seen. As a customer I can make the task easier by turning my head in her direction, or next to impossible if I don't. And I'm impressed, because doing this wrenching twist of the body to show deference must leave a server with at least a sore neck.

In a crowded place like Manhattan direct eye contact provides the opportunity for more "communication" than most people want. It's too much work and perhaps risky to try to acknowledge everyone whose personal space you invade, like those facing each other on a subway.

**NECESSITY Continued Page 8...**

"We are in  
constant search of  
facial cues from  
others that we  
matter to them..."

Dr. Gary Woodward

## Necessity Continuation...

In such circumstances we *do* look at people and their faces, but this gaze is usually stolen: timed to be more or less unseen by the other. This kind of averted gaze preserves our isolation until we are again among people where there is an expectation of reciprocity.

If you are in an environment that might be broadly considered a community—for example, an office, a college campus, a faith community, a school—the averted gaze in another’s presence is increasingly common and usually off-putting. With those we know we expect an offer of acknowledgement through eye contact. This is the source of anxiety in the first example of encountering the Important Person. But communities must now also contend with competition for an individual’s attention from many sources, one of which is what I call “screen thrall:” the increasingly ubiquitous habit of community members of looking away to their cell-phones as they approach another person. It’s endemic in most settings, even when individuals are known to each other. My impression is that for some people it has turned into an automatic response: the equivalent of Bill Murray trying to avoid *Groundhog Day*’s insurance-selling Ned.

A practical and ironic effect of using a mobile device is that it now works as a tool not just for connection, but also isolation. The stance characterized by screen thrall says “I’m not here,” “I’m not available.” It’s another case where we sometimes seem to prefer the electronic facsimile of another person over the one we know directly in front of us. The result can be its own small wound of rejection. ♦



*Creating eye contact is difficult for waiters in crowded city restaurants. (Photo source: SHED-5-restaurant, Melbourne, Australia)*

Read more from  
Dr. Woodward:

### **The Perfect Response**

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN A DISTRACTED AGE

<http://thepfectresponse.com>

<http://thepfectresponse.com>

## DC Health Communication Conference



TCNJ Communication Studies Department representatives, Dr. John C. Pollock, Dr. Rowena Briones, and several TCNJ students will present papers at the DC Health Communication Conference.

**What:** DC Health Communication Conference

**When:** April 17, 2015

**Where:** George Mason University

# Deep Discoveries' Tours are top rated, TCNJ experiences the Real Africa

**By John C. Pollock, Ph.D.**

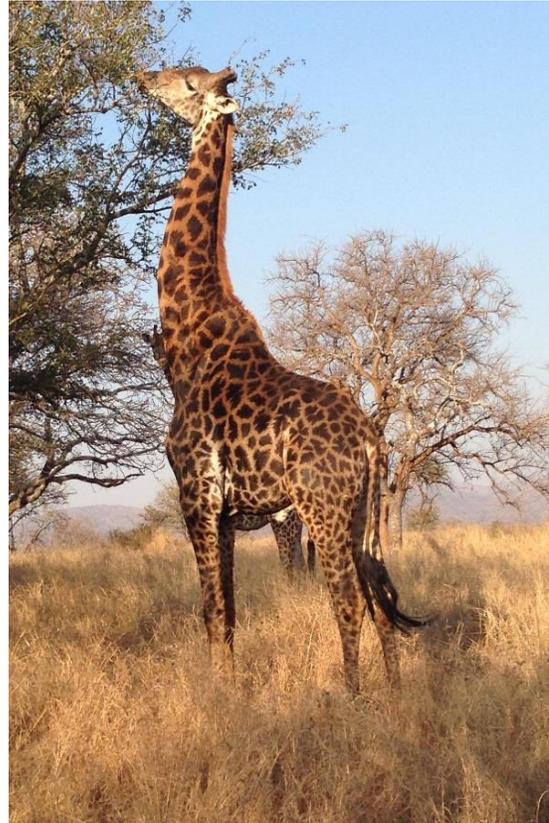
*Courtesy of artscomm.tcnj.edu*

What do Nelson Mandela, Clint Eastwood, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, and The College of New Jersey all have in common? To offer themselves, their clients and friends the exploration of a lifetime, they all found the best guide in South Africa: Barry Fuller. Nelson Mandela asked Barry to guide visiting dignitaries in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Clint Eastwood requested Barry's services to escort Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon during the filming of "Invictus", a movie about South Africa's world championship rugby team. Arun Gandhi acquired Barry's expertise to create a South African tour: "In the Footsteps of Mahatma Gandhi". Communication studies professor John Pollock of The College of New Jersey enlisted Barry to guide ten TCNJ students this past summer in a health communication internship in Durban, East Africa's largest port, on the Indian Ocean. Pollock's students flew to Durban to learn about ways South Africans use "Entertainment Education" (TV, radio, song, dance, drama) to fight gender-based violence and AIDS.

Arriving in Durban, apprehensive TCNJ students encountered an unexpected delight. The family team of Barry and wife Elizabeth Fuller warmly immersed the new travelers into their "deep discoveries" explorations. Whether showing visitors the sweeping sandy beaches of Durban's coastline or the nearby precarious squatter settlements, Barry Fuller shines in narrating neighborhood and regional histories at multiple levels, illuminating social, political, and economic inequalities. Wherever he shows visitors, he maintains an attractive generosity of spirit toward people from every social condition.

"Deep Discoveries" tours cover a wide variety of cross-cultural encounters, but quality is never sacrificed. The options range from visiting the Dragon Mountains near Durban, crossing the high Sani Pass into the Kingdom of Lesotho to treks in tawny-colored hills and bluffs at Giant's Castle to visit Bushman cave paintings. Personalized tours help visitors meet elephants, giraffes, impalas, zebras, hippos, rhinoceroses, Cape buffalo, and lions. Convinced that every client deserves a customized experience, Barry even cooks memorable barbecues! A traveling concierge, he transforms every client into a personal friend.

Barry is no stranger to accolades. The son of a guide who started the family business in the 1970s, he has been a popular vice chairman of Durban's tourist guides association, and in 2005 he was runner-up for the title of South Africa's "Emerging Businessman of the Year". As a family team, Barry and Elizabeth boast five fluent languages between them, including, in addition to English, Afrikaans, Italian, French, and Zulu.



*Giraffe in Hluhluwe, South Africa (Photo courtesy of artscomm.tcnj.edu)*

First exposed to the Barry Fuller "deep discoveries" experience in July, 2012 (and then returning with TCNJ students in 2013 and 2014) Professor Pollock was extravagant in his praise: "I have visited China, Korea, Singapore, Germany, Spain, France, England, Greece, and Italy. I spent a year in India in the US Foreign Service, ten months in Bogota, Colombia, for doctoral dissertation research, and almost three months in Buenos Aires, Argentina, as a Fulbright Scholar. In all of those visits, I have engaged several guides. I have never, ever, encountered a more intelligent, engaging, well-informed storyteller than Barry Fuller. He deserves a special award as one of South Africa's national treasures."

**AFRICA Continued Page 10...**

## Africa Continuation...



*TCNJ Students at Hluhluwe Game Reserve in Northeast KwaZulu-Natal. (Photo courtesy of artscomm.tcnj.edu)*

Elaborating Professor Pollock's evaluation, several TCNJ students participating in this summer's 2014 health communication internship agreed.

### **Everyone Wants the Best**

"Through both his candid demeanor and intellectual knowledge about contemporary politics and sociology in South Africa, Barry Fuller has provided an incredible experience." - Jack Werner

"Barry has the ability to turn his van into a classroom; his breadth of knowledge concerning South African culture, history, and current events is nothing short of captivating." -Jim Etheridge

"Traveling with Barry is like accompanying an informal, street-level sociologist or cultural anthropologist." -Kyle Bauer

### **A Second Family Is Waiting**

"From their knowledge of the past and current events, the family team invites curiosity and excitement." -Isabelle Tan

"Both Barry and Elizabeth are very caring and responsive to client needs and worries...They offer 'culture' without the 'shock.'" -Hope Peraria

"The friendliness of Barry and Elizabeth is matched by that of their business associates, who are equally friendly and gracious. When I return to South Africa, I will call Elizabeth and Barry before anyone else." -Edward Bannister-Holmes

### **Affordable Adventure**

"Barry picks experiences that are extraordinarily entertaining and life-changing at a reasonable price. At the game reserve, we saw more exotic animals than are held in some zoos." -Chris Davis

"The way they conduct their tours is unusual and affordable. Their knowledge of culture and history is both highly informative and fun." -Leah Greif

"When Barry's your tour guide, you don't feel as though he is wearing a name tag. He is also street-smart. He pulls back the curtain on culture shock. What a bargain!" -Tom Nordquist ♦

## Contact

### "Deep Discoveries"

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## Humility and Hardship: TCNJ Students Have Tea with Ela Gandhi

By Lauren Longo & Stephanie Agresti

Courtesy of *The Signal*, Oct. 29 2014



*Pollock listens as Gandhi recalls her life of advocating for peace and the memories of her grandfather. (Photo courtesy of Lauren Longo)*

Ela Gandhi, peace activist and granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, invited 10 TCNJ students to her apartment in South Africa for tea while they interned this past summer.

The interior of her home was humble, which students say complimented her countenance: A small piano stood among the beige walls and decor of her one-bathroom home. According to Dr. John C. Pollock, a professor in College's Communication Studies Department, Gandhi was "very modest, but quite elegant." He said she downplayed her family's suffering, which ranged from her nine years of house arrest to the assassination of several of her friends and loved ones.

Gandhi, who has lived in South Africa her entire life, has always been heavily involved in South Africa's fight for liberation. Her role with the then-banned African National Congress (ANC) resulted in a nine-year house arrest. Gandhi steadily told students stories of her non-violent activism, only to pause before sharing her most intimate struggle. Her eyes clouded over before telling the audience that her eldest son was assassinated by the apartheid regime.

Once majority rule was gained and the ANC was liberated, Gandhi was elected to the first parliament, where she was a leader in writing two key provisions to the South African Constitution, focusing on religious freedom and women's rights. As a result of her activism, Gandhi received the most prestigious civilian awards in both South Africa and India.

Gandhi also spoke warmly of her grandfather, who was assassinated when she was seven years old. Mahatma Gandhi was known for being a self-disciplined man, and he made sure to allocate one hour of his daily routine to spend with his grandchildren.

She recalled him teaching her how to spin cotton to yarn, which was another task he practiced daily.

Students were honored when Ela Gandhi asked them to stay longer than their original meeting time had called for, saying she'd put on another pot of tea. She let them know that she had been eager to meet them, and sent them a thank you note before they had the chance to send her one.

The tea with Gandhi served as a time of reflection and inspiration for students.

"Ela Gandhi is an incredibly inspiring woman," self-designed public health major and internship participant Isabelle Tan said. "Throughout her life, she constantly fought for her beliefs. Even as a young girl, she would walk to school every single day because her parents were against formal education. She is so passionate about change and equality. Meeting her gave me so much hope and ambition to challenge public health issues and social inequality."

**"(Ela Gandhi) showed throughout her life that, no matter how difficult it is, you have to hold on to what you're fighting for."**

Jim Etheridge

During their time in South Africa, students also shadowed DramAidE, a non-profit organization out of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, learning how entertainment education can be utilized in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS. Organizations like DramAidE implement entertainment education techniques, such as allowing students to participate in theatre performances, integrating public health communication campaigns into societies suffering from large-scale public health issues.

**ELA GANDHI Continued Page 12...**

## Ela Gandhi Continuation...

Meeting with Gandhi's granddaughter helped students connect entertainment education strategies with a public need.

"South Africa needs help from other people, but we cannot be instilling our ideas in South Africa," communication studies and biology double major James Etheridge said.



*Ela and a picture of her grandfather, Mahatma Gandhi (Photo courtesy of arungandhi.net)*

"We have to help people help themselves. (Gandhi) showed throughout her life that, no matter how difficult it is, you have to hold on to what you're fighting for, or else, what are you fighting for?"

Etheridge also stressed the importance of spending time abroad.

"I chose to go to South Africa because I wanted to study abroad, but I also really wanted to experience what it was like to engage in public health," he said. "I wanted to go somewhere very different from what I was used to. I got to go out there and experience all that I've read about and see what the people of these countries are going through."

The internship abroad afforded students the opportunity to connect with scholars and interact with individuals at institutions such as the Valley of 1,000 Hills HIV/AIDS Orphanage and Hospice and the Esizibeni Sivananda Vaswani Comprehensive High School. Students from the College were fully immersed in public health initiatives in the field, providing them with a thorough understanding that no classroom could provide.

"South Africa is a country that needs people to visit it in order to understand what (its people) are going through," Etheridge said. ♦

## Upcoming TCNJ Film Screening...

**Film:** When The Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts by Spike Lee [Acts 1 & 2]

**When:** March 2, 2015  
7-9:30 p.m.

**Where:** Kendall Hall, Room 125 (Film Screening Room)



# Social Media in Public Health Emergencies

## Alumnus Tom Hipper ('07) Visits Dr. Hu's Class

**By Meghan Coppinger**

In October, when a patient died from Ebola in a Dallas hospital, paranoia and uncertainty about Ebola spread quickly in America. Many Americans have taken to social media to vent, find validation, and look for the truth on this international health crisis. Unfortunately, the vast amount of information on social media makes it difficult to find trustworthy sources about the issue.

Communication Studies Department's alum Tom Hipper ('07) shared how to effectively communicate during times of health crises to students of Dr. Yifeng Hu's New Media and Health Communication course on Nov. 13. The students had spent the semester exploring how emerging information technologies can improve communication and engagement regarding health-related issues. Hipper, who received his MSPH from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and an MA in Health Communication from Penn State, is currently Program Manager at the Center for Public Health Readiness and Communication at Drexel University School of Public Health.

Crisis communication focuses on managing an audience's emotions (i.e. fear, anxiety, dread, and uncertainty) and providing tools and steps for action, and avoiding hopelessness. "These are things that move people toward action, and you manage these emotions. You're scared, you got our attention, and coupled with the right message and the right time, we could take action," Hipper said.

Hipper used Ebola to explain the concept of American society's "expectation for immediate communication" in today's technological world. Health officials need to connect with their audience to give and receive the best information in times of emergency.

"What we are dealing with is actual risk versus perceived risk," Hipper said.

Perceived risk should not force a credible source to overreach its ability, Hipper explained. "People think you don't know what the hell you're doing," Hipper said if the information turns out not to be correct or plays out unexpectedly.

Today, a large component of crisis communication is the social media use. Hipper shared a few statistics on the use of social media: In 2013, about 90% of 18-29-year-olds use social media platforms. Even about half of the elderly population have social media accounts.

Hipper noted that "80% of Americans expect emergency response agencies to monitor and respond on social media platforms."

In times of emergencies, one third of Americans expect help to arrive within the hour they posted for assistance.

These statistics show the public's hunger for information, particularly with issues of health crises. Hurricane Sandy is a recent and relevant example for many of TCNJ's population. According to Hipper, there were 20 million tweets using the terms "hurricane" and "sandy" right after the storm, and approximately 10 storm photos were posted on Instagram per second.

"You're scared, you got our attention, and coupled with the right message and the right time, we could take action."

Tom Hipper

Hipper discussed how social media is now a recognized key tool to effective communication during a disaster: the ability to be first, to be right, and to be credible. Social media is creating a meaningful conversation between health and public officials with their audiences, instead of disseminating information with little feedback.

"If you want to be first, you better be on social media," Hipper said.

The class and Hipper also discussed some new, innovative tools using social media and technology that could be useful for crisis communication in the future. He mentioned Twitter Alerts, Facebook Safety Check, mobile health, crisis mapping, and geo-localized tweets—many ideas which Dr. Hu's class spent part of the semester researching.

Specifically for geo-localized tweets, coverage of crisis and help can arrive within minutes of the event. Geo-localized tweets "could speed up response time by minutes," Hipper said.

It is important for health officials to recognize new media and technology as valuable tools for effective crisis communication. Moving forward, Hipper said, we can consider the possibilities of technology simplifying and quickening more credible and reliable plans of action for the American public, and eventually, the world.♦

# US to give \$350 million to Africa to curb Ebola outbreak

By Annabel Lau

*Courtesy of The Signal*

*On Oct. 8 2014 The Department of Communication Studies sponsored a lecture at The College of New Jersey from Ambassador Jimmy Kolker, assistant secretary for global affairs at the Department of Health and Human Services, in the wake of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.*

The United States has pledged \$350 million and 3,000 troops to fight the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, according to a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services official who spoke at the College on Wednesday, Oct. 8.

“There are about 350 military people already on the ground,” said Ambassador Jimmy Kolker, assistant secretary for global affairs at the Department of Health and Human Services. “We’ve just about completed a 25-bed facility which will be staffed by the U.S. public health service.”

Congressman Rush Holt (D–12th District), who attended the lecture, asked about the military’s plan for fighting the outbreak.

“Does this suggest an ongoing goal for a very special division of our military that deals with international disaster and crises?” Holt asked.

“You’re much more likely to be in a traffic accident than to be a victim of Ebola.”

Ambassador Jimmy Kolker

Responding, Kolker said “they’ve been very careful about trying to define the goal with an exit strategy.”

“The military said they will not be in patient care,” Kolker said. “After constructing these facilities, they need to be turned over to someone else ... They don’t want to see this as a new mission (where) boots on the ground will be required for this to be sustained.”

Senior international studies and linguistics double major Nicolas Dolce had conflicting views about the mobilization of Americans troops in West Africa.

“I was very interested to hear that we’re going to send 3,000 troops there,” Dolce said. “I think it’s the right thing to do ... (But) there’s a gray line, because after a certain point, are we violating the state’s sovereignty? Did we get invited to help, or are we just going in there and saying we’re helping?”

In addition to military and monetary aid, an important part of curbing the Ebola outbreak is educating governments and communities about disease prevention, especially in the three hardest-hit countries

of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, Kolker said.

“The cause of this was the health facilities that were not taking precautions in terms of healthcare workers,” Kolker said. “Twenty percent of infections are among healthcare workers.”

Referencing the case of Thomas Eric Duncan — an Ebola victim who was allegedly released from a Dallas hospital with a 103-degree fever and became the first person to die of the virus on American soil — Kolker also addressed the recurring problem of mistaking symptoms of Ebola for other diseases.

“The symptoms for Ebola originally are similar to those for malaria, for typhoid and other things,” Kolker said. “The diagnosis was often wrong. They’d be sent home like the Dallas patient originally was.”

According to Kolker, many people in West Africa believe in “nonscientific causes” of Ebola, such as curses and ancestor revenge, and many engage in traditional practices that increase the risk of contracting the virus, such as touching or embracing corpses during burial practices.

“There’s a responsibility among all of us to be sure the governments are aware and then to have that message spread to healthcare providers and communities,” Kolker said. “There was a breakdown in all of those areas.”

In response to audience concerns, Kolker also mentioned new precautions that the U.S. government is taking to prevent Ebola from entering the country.

“Just this afternoon (Wednesday, Oct. 8), President Obama announced what we are doing domestically in a dozen or more airports here to intensify screenings,” Kolker said. “So there would be mandatory screenings of anyone who has come from these three countries.”

However, according to Kolker, the risk of contracting Ebola for the vast majority of Americans is low, even for students traveling to Africa.

“You’re much more likely to be in a traffic accident than to be a victim of Ebola,” Kolker said. “Your greatest threat is traffic safety, not Ebola or terrorism or another infectious disease.” ♦

# “Reviving Healthcare Terms” in Dr. Hu’s Class Innovative Initiative of Industry-Academic Integration

By Yifeng Hu, Ph.D. & Claire Whiteman



*Ms. Tyeshia Pichardo, Dr. Yifeng Hu, and Mr. Eddie Stewart and students in Dr. Hu’s New Media and Health Communication class. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Yifeng Hu)*

Myth or Fact: Coinsurance is a form of back up insurance in case your primary insurance will not cover medical expenses.

Myth or Fact: Coinsurance and copayment and are the same thing.

Yes or No: You should seek treatment from an emergency care center when you have an earache.

These are just a few examples of how commonly used healthcare terms greatly confuse consumers. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, the students in Dr. Hu’s New Media and Health Communication class demystified the eight most misunderstood healthcare terms by using innovative communication strategies for stronger comprehension from the public. Specifically, the class created context-based scenarios to illustrate the terms and utilized new ways of communication to deliver the messages such as [infographics](#), [cartoon videos](#), and fun trivia [quizzes](#). It is important that people of different levels of health literacy understand the definition of a healthcare term. Therefore, user testing was required in order to put each student’s theory and ideas into practice.

This team project was designed to join Digital Strategy Yoga LLC, a local startup company specializing in strategy consulting for healthcare and life sciences industry. The Managing Principal, Mr. Kalyan Narayanan, praised the students for taking on the challenge of clarifying complex healthcare terms and finding their way into the healthcare system. “The final presentation amplified their effort in doing research on healthcare terminology, audience analysis, new media and communication techniques, and younger generational views on healthcare,” Mr. Narayanan said. **HEALTHCARE TERMS Continued Page 16...**

## Healthcare Terms Continuation...

The class was fortunate to have two healthcare industry professionals visiting on the final presentation day, Mr. Eddie Stewart, the Director of Talent Acquisitions at Johnson & Johnson, and Ms. Tyesha Pichardo, the Community Health Marketing and Communications Manager at Horizon. After the group presentations, Mr. Stewart and Ms. Pichardo shared their feedback with the class.

Ms. Pichardo was captivated by each group's ability to touch upon all of the challenges and barriers of healthcare literacy in their presentations. As a professional, she personally goes out into the community so that she can see what people are physically experiencing and to act as the eyes and ears for the common citizen. Ms. Pichardo reiterated the importance of health literacy because many people do not realize what wide disparities exist among health literacies.

Anything Horizon writes about healthcare is on a 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading level and she admits some people only have a 1<sup>st</sup> grade reading level. Overall, she applauds Dr. Hu's ability to get students involved in healthcare, which is a main goal for Horizon. She ended by stating, "If I could, I would have all of you working on my team."

Mr. Stewart loved the fact that the project required user testing because it really matters how you put things together, depending on what audience you want to reach. He believed that targeting messages via proper technologies to a particular audience is a skill Communication Studies Majors must master, especially in projects like these. In the end, Mr. Stewart expressed how impressed he was with the class' ability to use innovative communication strategies to reach audiences ranging from children to the elderly.

"If I could I would have all of you working on my team."

Tyesha Pichardo



*Ms. Pichardo shares her feedback with the class. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Yifeng Hu)*

Health communication is a flourishing field, and interest in the usage of technology in health and healthcare delivery continues to increase. Dr. Hu's New Media and Health Communication class read and critiqued cutting-edge research and analyzing case studies regarding new media and emerging technologies in a wide variety of health communication contexts. In addition, the class gained hands-on experience by tackling real-world healthcare problems through this industry-academic integration program during the fall semester. Similar initiatives will be explored in the future. ♦

### Student Work Samples

1. Quiz on Deductible by Devon Flarity:  
<http://www.buzzfeed.com/devonflarity/what-type-of-healthcare-deductible-is-right-for-yo-15idr>
2. Cartoon Video on Formulary by Marc Trotochaud:  
<https://plotagon.com/19253>
3. Infographic on Urgent Care Center by Cara Gregorio:  
<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/3694861-untitled-infographic-copy>

# Students Attend New York Women in Communications Inc. Student Career Conference

**By Stephanie Agresti**

On Saturday, Nov. 21, 15 students from TCNJ attended the annual New York Women in Communications Inc. (NYWICI) Student Career Conference hosted at New York University. Throughout the day, students were given the opportunity to network with peers and professionals across the field of communications including public relations, journalism, broadcast journalism, marketing, advertising and graphic design.

Keynote speakers included Rachel Sklar, writer, editor and Founder of Change The Ratio and The List, and Anne Fulenwider, Editor-in-Chief of *Marie Claire*. Speakers discussed how they got to where they are today while providing career advice and encouragement.

Students also attended a series of panel discussions with topics ranging from public relations and marketing, creating content for print, web and social media and secrets to a successful job search.

NYWICI is a New York-based organization for communications professionals which supports women through every stage of their careers. NYWICI has honored several TCNJ students in the past by providing them with scholarships towards their undergraduate education as well as providing them with internship and networking opportunities in New York City and beyond.

Each year, NYWICI awards about 18 scholarships to female students in the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut/Pennsylvania area. Many scholarships are paired with internship opportunities and membership to the NYWICI organization. ♦



**Congratulations!!**  
Left: Stephanie Agresti (TCNJ '15) winner of the \$10,000 Judy Coreman Memorial Scholarship sponsored by Scholastic from NYWICI.



*Above: The view of Washington Square Park from NYWICI Student Career Conference. Below: TCNJ Students gather for a picture at the event. (Photos courtesy of Stephanie Agresti)*



**Apply for NYWICI scholarships!**

<http://www.nywici.org/foundation/scholarships>

# TCNJ Film Screening: "The Trenaissance"

**By Emily Melendez**

Since the 1970s, Trenton has faced rising crime and drug use rates, reports, and constant negative media attention. "The Trenaissance: A Better Way for the Capitol," a film created by TCNJ students from Dr. Susan Ryan's spring 2013 documentary production class, offers a new perspective of Trenton. The film, which was featured in the 2014 Trenton Film Festival this past June, spreads awareness about, A Better Life, a program that recognizes Trenton as a city capable of great change.

"I'm very pleased with what the students accomplished in producing the documentary. They persevered, shot a lot of footage, and learned a lot about the city of Trenton and the programs that the organization 'A Better Way' sponsored. It's a great example of community-engaged learning," Dr. Ryan said.

On Friday, Oct. 17, the Communication Studies Department presented Brown Bag Series: Film Screening and Discussion featuring The Trenaissance: A Better Way for the Capitol. Dean Laughton, introduced the session and spoke of how Trenton, a once thriving and industrious city has suffered serious degradation.

The documentary, created by students Jeffrey Skomsky, David Shin, Daniel Jurcisin, and Nicole Di Saria, begins with series of shots depicting boarded up houses, cracked windows, and other signs of troubling poverty.

The film features an interview with Perry Shaw III, founder of A Better Life, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Trentonians and putting them on track towards a better future.

Membership to A Better Life is open to anyone who has the drive to change the community. This program offers support groups for men, women, and youth in Trenton. Partnerships with organizations such as SAGE Coalition and other local authorities have helped the non-profit help Trentonians become success stories. For instance, through A Better Life, former convict and drug dealer Shamika Leary, started her own interior design company.

A Better Way has started to revitalize a city with an already thriving arts and long standing history, enabling a Trentonian Renaissance, in other words: A Trenaissance.♦

# LPH Welcomes New Members

**By Jenna Fleck**

The Department of Communication Studies at The College of New Jersey is known for producing some of the most accomplished and intelligent students. This semester was no exception. On Sunday, Nov. 2, the Alpha Xi chapter of Lambda Pi Eta (LPH), the national communication studies honor society, initiated its newest members during its fall induction ceremony.

LPH President, James Etheridge, welcomed proud family members and friends who gathered in the library auditorium to support the inductees. Etheridge began the ceremony by congratulating all of the students on their hard work and dedication that led them to this incredible achievement. He explained how the communication studies program here is unique, for it presents us with an education that simply cannot be found in textbooks, leading to life changing opportunities.

One of the many reasons the Communication Studies Department is so highly respected is because of the compassionate professors who are a part of it. Communication studies professor Dr. John Pollock was the featured speaker of the ceremony.

**LPH Continued Page 19...**

Lambda Pi Eta is the official national honor society of The National Communication Association.

For more information contact:  
[lphtcnj@gmail.com](mailto:lphtcnj@gmail.com)

## LAMBDA PI ETA E-BOARD 2014-2015

**James Etheridge**

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**Regina Yorkgitis**  
*The Roar Editor*

## LPH Continuation...



*Newly inducted members of Lambda Pi Eta post with the E-Board and Dr. Pollock. (Photo courtesy of Jenna Fleck)*

Dr. Pollock, the LPH advisor since 1994, shared how this department has been recognized as one of the best undergraduate communication studies department in the country, a designation given to the department when it was awarded the National Communication Studies Association (NCA) 2013 Rex Mix Program of Excellence Award.

The LPH ceremony continued with the candle lighting ceremony. Each executive board member explained to the audience the foundation of Lambda Pi Eta and what it stands for. Three candles were lit to represent the three modes of persuasion; logos meaning logic, pathos meaning emotion, and ethos meaning ethics. In addition, LPH members exhibit excellence in scholarship, service, programs, and governance.

Each inductee was then called up to accept his/her certificate, receiving congratulations from the executive board and applause from the audience along the way. President Etheridge led the new members in reciting the LPH oath. The Fall 2014 inductees include Folake Ayiloge, Kyle Bauer, Mariagrazia Buttitta, Katherine Caratenuto, Rebecca Celestina, Meghan Chrobock, Elizabeth Farrell, Jamie Levin, Lauren Longo, Christina Luchkiw, Brandon Magown, Renee Menzel, Christopher Minatelli, Thomas Moore, Stephanie Orfanakos, Joseph Passantino, Krystin Peitz, Jillian Santacroce, Carly Sobel, Jared Sokoloff, Veronica Steele, Haley Sulcer, Isabelle Tan, Alyson Wardell, Elizabeth Weiner, Jenifer Wong

New inductee Rene Menzel is a junior communication studies major here at TCNJ. When asked why she applied to become a member of LPH, Menzel stated, "I have worked hard each semester, and I wanted that hard work represented through one of the most distinguished honor societies in the nation. I plan on working in public relations for a finance company, and being a member of LPH will allow me to network with professionals in that particular field."

Similarly, junior communication studies major Katherine Caratenuto shared, "I am so happy to become a part of a great group of communication studies students. Being accepted into LPH is a great accomplishment, and I hope to join the ranks of other excellent students."

Lambda Pi Eta has gained another group of impressive communication studies students. Together, The College of New Jersey and LPH are transforming students into accomplished adults, equipped to achieve anything they set their minds to. ♦

### **The 19<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Communication Association Conference**

**What:** Annual New Jersey Communication Association (NJCA) Conference

**When:** April 11, 2015

**Where:** St. Peter's College, Jersey City, NJ

**Keynote Speaker:** Douglas Rushkoff, Ph.D.



# WHY MAJOR IN COMM STUDIES?



I had no intention of pursuing a major in communication studies before starting college. I always knew that I wanted to work in New York City and have a career that allowed me to write, speak and travel. After taking Intro to Media Communication as an elective, I was instantly hooked on communication studies.

The communication studies program requires enough courses to provide students with a solid core in the field, while also allowing time for students to pursue minors and concentrations. Because of course flexibility, I was able to pursue minors in professional writing and art history. I have also been co-editor-in-chief of Her Campus TCNJ (TCNJ's online magazine for college-age women) for about two years.

As a communication studies major, I have done things I never would have imagined possible four years ago. Through the advisement of TCNJ peers, I became a member of a New York-based organization called New York Women in Communications Inc. (NYWICI), which supports women across all areas of communications throughout every stage of their careers.

Last spring, I was awarded the Judy Corman Memorial Scholarship sponsored by Scholastic from NYWICI which came with a scholarship for \$10,000 towards my undergraduate degree and the opportunity to intern in the Corporate Communications department at Scholastic's headquarters in New York City. I continue to participate in NYWICI, networking with professionals across the field of communications, attending career-related events in the city and getting many of my TCNJ peers involved. As a member of NYWICI and a communication studies student at TCNJ, I have made friends I know will support me throughout my career in public relations and my life.

I love being a communication studies student because every class is filled with talented students of varying interests who offer fascinating perspectives and world views to class discussions. I cannot imagine a more collaborative, encouraging environment among peers and faculty. This has made all the difference for me.

Communication studies is a field of study in which students do not have to give anything up. Career options are broad and limitless. People in communication-related careers are allowed to be creative while being strategic. They are powerful, respected and have the ability to make critical decisions. With a degree in communication studies, you don't have to give up any of your other interests, because you can do it all.

*- Stephanie Agresti, Class of 2015, public/mass track*