Jamie Gwynn Spends 2008 Election Season at C-SPAN Internship

By: Shauna Strellish

He took a chance. Now, he’s roaming the streets of Washington D.C. He’s used to the METRO system and starting to understand big-city politics. Furthermore, he’s watching as history unfolds itself right in front of his eyes.

Jamie Gwynn, senior Communication Studies major, decided to follow in the footsteps of a few other graduates and current seniors at Wilkes and give American University’s Washington Semester Program a shot. As the November 2008 presidential election quickly approaches, Gwynn’s days interning at C-SPAN are very busy as he learns the proper protocol for such a thrilling time.

In August, when he arrived, things weren’t so thrilling. Like many others, he was intimidated. “I’ll admit it, I hated D.C. my first couple of weeks. There are so many people with big “titles” working in the city and that’s intimidating in itself,” said Gwynn.

Leaving Wilkes was difficult. “It was really tough. But there’s a sense of pride in taking a big risk and conquering it, and maybe even excelling in the situation. The people who were intimidating to me -- the ones in the business suits -- didn’t seem so

Gwynn poses in front of the office of the CEO of C-SPAN, Brian Lamb

Continued on Page 8 (C-SPAN)
Dr. Elmes-Crahall Wins Alumni Mentoring Award
By: Valerie Martinez

Earlier this semester, Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall received the Alumni Mentoring Award for the 2007-2008 academic year. As a Professor of Communication Studies, she has been working at Wilkes University for twenty-three years. According to Mr. Thomas Lavan, a 1999 graduate from Wilkes University who nominated Dr. Elmes-Crahall, “Jane is extremely dedicated to her profession and to the constant growth and development of her students’ success, both past and present.”

The annual Alumni Mentoring Award is given to a faculty member who has been nominated by an alumnus and who has submitted a personal statement on philosophy of mentoring. Dr. Andrea Frantz, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, presented Dr. Elmes-Crahall with the award during the Faculty Recognition Night. Frantz was pleased to hear that her colleague was the recipient. “Jane has a long track record of maintaining relationships with alumni and that’s what the award is about,” she stated.

In recent years, mentoring has become an integral part of Wilkes University. From student mentors to faculty mentoring, the mentoring programs are what separate Wilkes University from other institutions. Lavan said that after ten years, he and Dr. Elmes-Crahall are still close, that she is an outstanding member on Wilkes faculty who is an “inspiring mentor with a wealth of knowledge.”

Congratulations to Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall on epitomizing what a faculty member ought to be.

Come to the Communication Students Homecoming Tent!
By: Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall

On Saturday, October 4th at 4:00 P.M. the place to meet Communication Studies people of all generations will be at the 5th Quarter Tent Festival on the campus Greenway. It’s Wilkes’ 75th Celebration of Homecoming Weekend, and our Department is one of the few to have its own gathering place. The Alumni Association is asking for a $15 fee to reserve your spot for all of the festivities. It will cost you an additional $5 if you show up at the Tent without reservations. In spite of the cost, let’s make this a special time for everyone connected to the Department of Communication Studies.

If you want to catch up with your classmates, the Department faculty and meet some of our current majors—stop by. Any past members of Zebra Communications are especially welcome because we are planning Zebra’s 10th anniversary celebration in March 2009. WCLH will be providing the music so that should make it a special time, too. Hope to see you there.

Alumni Update: Kerri Fasulo ’98
By: Xiaqiao Zhang

Kerri Fasulo graduated from Wilkes University in 1998 with a degree in Communication Studies and minor in Marketing. Currently she is the Marketing Manager for Empire BlueCross BlueShield in New York City.

Right before graduation, she landed a marketing assistant job with an up and coming wireless cell phone company called Nextel Communications in White Plains, NY. Before she left Sprint Nextel, she was the Area Marketing Manager for the metropolitan New York area that made up the bulk of the company’s business nationwide.

She said the beauty of that opportunity was she really didn’t know what she was in for. Back then, cell phones weren’t very common, and when she told people that she landed a job – everyone responded with “Congratulations… but Nextel, who?”

On the job, she quickly realized she needed to catch up to succeed. Getting involved, listening, reading, learning about her customers, all helped her work her way up the chain. She found herself responsible for sales education/training, program creation and enablement, managing advertising and sponsorships. It was a great responsibility. She said about Marketing, “It’s absolutely critical to know who your customers are… from all channels. It helps you understand your purpose… enables you to think through and solve problems, proactively service your customers and in the end, come out on top of your game.” And networking is key!

When asked what she missed about Wilkes the most, she said, “Everything!” She considers her four years at Wilkes as the best days. Wilkes enabled her to learn and explore exactly which path she wanted to pursue. It challenged her to challenge herself. She misses running up the stairs to Jane’s office, and she misses all her classes, like Intercultural Communications and Nonverbal Communications. The ability to roll up her sleeves and work in the TV studio, and the radio station, etc. was a great opportunity for Kerri and other students. It was an opportunity to play, learn and practice a skill set.

She offers this advice to current Wilkes students: “Identify your passion and find the opportunity that satisfies that passion. You get up every day to do this. You might as well love it. It may not happen overnight. Be willing to read. Be a partner with those you work with. People will want to help you – let them. Never sacrifice your integrity… regardless of seniority. Smile a lot. Be yourself. And… have fun.”

Fasulo will be at the Communication Studies Reunion tent during Homecoming Weekend. Stop by and network with Kerri!
**On the Spot: Meet Professor Christine Mellon**

By: Amanda Cawley

It was the week before classes began and Christine Mellon was already feeling the pressures of her new job. She was hired as the new Director of Forensics at Wilkes University. Not only can she teach you all the ins and outs of how to be a great debater, but she can also teach you the ins and outs of every other communications profession.

Professor Mellon graduated with a communications degree from the University of Scranton. While she was studying there, she was on the debate team and was state champ in the College Debates on Energy during her junior and senior year.

After graduation, she took a job with the local March of Dimes. She spent two years practicing public relations, planning events, contacting media outlets, and gaining invaluable experience which would later help her in her professional life. For the next 17 years, she worked in media as promotions director of radio stations Magic 93, WARM, and STAR 104.5 in Philadelphia.

She also taught PR and Non-Profit Marketing courses at Rutgers University. Then she went back to school to earn her masters degree in education from Newman College. She has taught elementary and secondary education, and

**Dr. Estwick Presents Research at Juniata College**

By: Andrew Wolak

Born in the beautiful country of Barbados and instructor of Intercultural Communications courses at Wilkes University, Dr. Evene Estwick will be speaking at Juniata College on November 20, 2008 at the National Association for Multicultural Educators Conference.

Dr. Estwick will be presenting a research paper called “I Hear What You’re Saying: The Non-Verbs of Hair.” Co-authoring this presentation is Dr. Gina Zanolin Morrison, associate professor of education at Wilkes. Her research concentrates on cultural differences in communication about hairstyles and hair care issues. She will discuss African American, Caucasian, and international practices and perspectives on hair. Many students, faculty, and student affairs professionals will be there to share their reactions and thoughts to images of a variety of hair styles such as cornrows, dreadlocks, mohawks, perms, braids, weaves, highlights, and extensions.

For students interested in learning more about non-verbal and cross-cultural communication, Dr. Estwick will be teaching a course entitled Intercultural Communication this spring.

**Alumni Update: Cheryl Gressley ‘08**

By: Amanda Cawley

Cheryl Gressley, 2008 Wilkes University alum and former co-chair of the board of Zebra Communications has certainly made a name for herself in the professional world.

After her graduation, she accepted a job with the American Cancer Society, Southeast Pennsylvania Region, which includes Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Chester and Delaware Counties. Gressley’s primary responsibility in the American Cancer Society is managing and planning major fundraisers in Delaware County.

As a Community Income Development Specialist, her job duties include event planning and fundraising for three “Relay for Life” fundraisers as well as one third party 5-K run. She is also responsible for managing “Relay for Life” committees and the relationships between event chairs, event committees, and outside sponsors and vendors.

Cheryl credits her professional success to her experience at Wilkes and her internships. Coincidentally, one of Gressley’s internships was at the Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, which allowed her to gain invaluable experience in the health related non-profit industry.

Her degree in communications has also helped Gressley succeed interpersonally. “My communications degree came in handy to learn how to communicate with people, since I am meeting and talking with people in the community on a regular basis,” she said.

At the moment, Gressley is gaining the experience she will need to move up in the professional world. As far as her future, Gressley has big goals. “I would like to stay in the non-profit industry, maybe eventually being the Executive Director or founder of a non-profit,” she says.
Communication Studies Department Places 11 Fall Interns

By: Amy Fusco

As the fall semester begins at Wilkes University, so do internships for Communication Studies students. Although there are only eleven interns, compared to eighteen last spring, the students are hard at work taking on their various duties.

Sharon Castano, Internship Coordinator in Student Development, stated “interns get to see what a corporate atmosphere is like, so if they’re working for a company, they are responsible for deadlines and projects and actually get to see the project from start to finish.”

In order to enhance her public relations skills, Alison Woody, senior, decided to stay on campus in the Wilkes Marketing Communications office. She has been able to sit in on meetings, write press releases and media advisories, and help choose the students who will become the new Colonel mascot.

Another intern staying on campus is Kathleen Dalton, senior, who is with the Sports Information Department. Her duties include making the programs for all home sporting events, writing press releases for the athletic website, keeping statistics during games, and taking photos during games.

Heather Chulick, senior, is completing a public relations internship at the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce. She has been able to sit in on meetings, write press releases and media advisories, and help choose the students who will become the new Colonel mascot.

Another intern staying on campus is Matthew Gogas, senior, who is interning in the Communications Office at the Luzerne County Courthouse, where he will get insight into the world of political communication.

Anthony DiMarco, senior, is helping in production at WKRZ’s Jumpin’ Jeff Walker show.

Kristina Erat, senior, is a marketing intern at the Wachovia Arena, where she will be attending most of the events and learning how marketing is done differently for each show. She will work on everything from Jeff Dunham, to The Wiggles, to Elton John. Gina Bove, senior, is interning with the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Penguins. She will help write press releases, attend every game and work the press box, along with writing some backgrounders and feature stories.

Far away, in Washington D.C., Jamie Gwynn, senior, is interning with C-SPAN’s media relations department.

Senior Christa Sgobba is interning at The Independent, a local magazine, and has already begun working on her first article for the publication.

If you are thinking of interning in the spring semester, plan to attend the 3rd Annual Wilkes Internship Fair on Thursday, October 23rd from 11-1pm, on the first floor of the Student Center. It is a great opportunity to meet local businesses and network for future internships.

Christine Zavaskas Named Intern of the Month

By: Amy Fusco

Throughout the summer, Christine Zavaskas, a senior, was highly appreciated at her internship at the district office of State Senator Lisa Baker. Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall felt that Zavaskas deserved to be nominated for Intern of the Month due to her hard work and growth as an intern.

“She probably grew more in terms of her career development this summer than most interns ever do,” stated Elmes-Crahall.

From critiquing the senator’s website to meeting constituents on a regular basis, it really showed that “the office trusted her in key projects, which gave Zavaskas self-confidence in the ability to pursue a career in political communication,” Elmes-Crahall added.

Zavaskas was assigned to write short summaries of print media involving the Senator, visit various events and meetings, and even took a trip down to Harrisburg where she toured the capital, was introduced at the Senate session, and visited the Senate GOP public relations headquarters.

“One of my favorite projects was conducting an analysis of the website and making suggestions about how to make it more interesting and useful to constituents,” said Zavaskas. Her supervisor liked the redesign ideas so much, that Zavaskas will speak to the office’s web designer via phone to offer her suggestions. On most days, she also helped actual constituents who called or stopped by the office, which taught her many things about state government.

Zavaskas is currently continuing to learn about the state government, political communication, and many other practical things at the Senator’s office after being asked to remain as a part-time intern this fall. Congratulations, Christine!
Xiaqiao Zhang Presents an Insiders View of the 2008 Olympics

By: Danielle Hritzak

Junior communication studies major Xiaqiao Zhang interned at the 2008 Beijing Olympics this summer. In this Q&A interview, she shares her fondest memories of a once in a lifetime experience.

Hritzak: How did it feel to be covering the Olympics in your native country?
Zhang: I felt really proud, first of all, because it was my own country that was hosting them this year. When I was little, like 11 or 12, I wanted to be a volunteer because we knew the Olympics were coming to my country. Everyone wanted to be a part of it. It was like country pride. Now I feel honored to have actually worked and reported at the Olympics this year at home.

Hritzak: What was your job while you were there?
Zhang: I worked for the show called ‘Hall of Fame’ on CCTV-5 the official Chinese channel that covered the Olympics, and I got to meet everyone who won a gold medal for China, as well as other players from other countries.

Hritzak: What was the energy level?
Zhang: It was so exciting everyday because you never knew who you would meet. In one week I worked something like 109 hours. I wanted to stay in bed every morning and sleep in but the rest of the staff was working their butt off too, so I knew I had to get up. We stayed in a hotel right by the studio so if we were needed immediately we could get there fast.

Hritzak: Who was the most interesting person you got to interview?
Zhang: LeBron James! I didn’t know who he was because I was supposed to interview Kobe Bryant. Normally I had to go and pick up whomever I was interviewing so that I could talk to them before the show, but he had his own car plus four others! He had nine bodyguards with him. At the start of my interview he was a little bit cocky because we do the show very late at night so he was cranky and told me he needed to be out of there in 20 minutes. Then I yelled at him and said, I worked the whole day too and I’m in charge of your interview so you better listen to me mister! He just laughed and said, “Oh you’re a funny girl!” Then the interview went really well and it turns out he’s a very nice guy. He was easy to work with after that.

Hritzak: Were you star struck at all?
Zhang: I thought I was going to be at first because the first day we invited the whole [Chinese] crew from the opening ceremonies to come and hang out with us. Jackie Chen was there among other sports celebrities. I was so excited and nervous but it turns out they were normal just like any other person you normally talk with.

Hritzak: What was the hardest part of the job?
Zhang: The work hours and all the challenges we have to face because it was a live show. We never knew who was going to win a gold medal so we never knew who we were going to interview.

Hritzak: How was the overall experience?
Zhang: I learned so much from all the people I met, even the athletes. They would tell me their personal stories, like how hard they worked to get to the point they were at. Those Chinese gymnastic girls worked hard to win regardless of their age. They worked eight hours a day, seven days a week. China and America are so different. In America most kids want to play sports. In China, some kids have to play sports to get a better future and in some cases support their family.

I really enjoyed my summer. I will never forget it! They even want me to go to the 2012 Olympics in London and work for NBC!

Zhang with USA Olympian, Shawn Johnson.

Drs. Stine and Hepp Awarded $50,000 Oral History Grant

By: Patrick Zeigler

There are many ways to capture memories. One can take pictures or write in a journal. Wilkes University will be using a completely separate medium to capture the memories of the city’s most valuable residents.

Dr. Mark Stine, chair of Communication Studies and Dr. John Hepp, associate professor of History are directing a $50,000 grant-funded effort, the “Wyoming Valley Area Oral History Project.” Stine explains the goal of the project is “to examine the region’s past from a human perspective.” Students will join with Stine and Hepp in using digital technology to capture and preserve facets of the area’s history. Students will conduct the interviews and do the production work.

The value of the project is clear to Stine, who says: “This is a great opportunity for the students to engage in the preservation of the past and in presenting that past through the images and sounds of the medium of digital video.”

The reason for going digital is simple. Oral histories are typically transcribed and through these transcriptions emotions, intonations, pauses, dialects and other human characteristics are lost. Another reason for going digital is the ability to store, refine, and copy these recordings for other uses.

The project is possible because of a grant given to Wilkes University from Edward Meehan, a former local resident who is now an attorney in Washington, D.C. According to Stine, Meehan hopes to help preserve the history of the area’s textile and coal industries as well as their economic declines. The oral history will also focus on the downtown Boston Store and other retailers of Wilkes-Barre, the 1972 Agnes flood and its impact, Hillside Farms, and the educational legacies of Wilkes University and King’s College.

During spring semester 2009, Dr. Hepp will teach an Introduction to Oral History (HST 398) course. Several Wilkes students, including Communication Studies majors Anthony Carvale and Cathryn Frear, will attend the Oral History Association annual conference in Pittsburgh this fall where several workshops are being offered in the practices of oral history.
Producer Tells What’s New at Wilkes World

By: Andrew Seaman

Once again Wilkes World, the student produced news program, will air on channel 15 in and around the greater Wilkes-Barre area. The staff members are all incredibly excited about their projects for the year. The Shelburne Studio has a great set of talent. Hosts will be Brian Switay, Lindsey White, Shauna Strellish, and Brie Friedman. This year, the format will also include a correspondent, Ashley Filipek, who will act as sort of a “fifth host,” by giving local and campus news while also interacting with the hosts.

Some segments will be new and some of the more popular segments will return. The popular “4-minute Gourmet” segment will return with Dr. Mark Stine as our chef and Xiaoqiao Zhang as his co-host.

One of the new segments is called “What’s New in Wilkes-Barre.” This segment will give all students an idea of what they can do in and around Wilkes-Barre. Some special corresponding segments will be developed that will change from week to week with different topics like the election and campus events.

What most viewers of Wilkes World will see immediately is a new set. The aim is to make it look as professional as possible while maintaining a relaxed atmosphere. Overall, the staff wants Wilkes students to learn as much as they can while having fun, which is the true mission of Wilkes World. Shelburne students are really lucky to be supervised by Carl Brigido, Shelburne Director and Dr. Mark Stine, associate professor in the Department. They both bring a level of expertise to the show that most campus television studios cannot boast.

Carl has really worked on upgrading the studio. We now have a live-audience participation studio, “Studio C,” right down the hall from our main area. He has also purchased a few professional high-definition cameras that any local television station would be envious of.

This season all of our episodes will go onto YouTube, so parents, alumni and anyone else who wants can watch. We hope everyone can take some time to catch an episode or two on channel 15 or online!

Alumni Update: Lindsey Wotanis ‘05

By: Michele Flannery

Lindsey Wotanis, a 2005 Communication Studies graduate, is keeping busy in her 3rd year of study for her Ph.D. in Journalism Studies at the University of Maryland’s Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

While at Wilkes, Lindsey had a dual concentration in journalism and public relations topped off with a minor in business administration. But Lindsey does admit that looking back, if she had the chance to do her four years at Wilkes over again, she would rather have pursued all four concentrations in Communications instead of focusing on her minor.

“Any one interested in journalism today needs to know it all,” Wotanis said. “Being a skilled ‘print person’ is no longer good enough. You need to be skilled in broadcast media, as well as integrative, online media.”

Many groups and activities helped shape Wotanis as a student at Wilkes, but her favorite and most influential club was the student newspaper, The Beacon. She recounts some of the best times she had at Wilkes been related to The Beacon and she would return if the chance presented itself.

Another experience that Wotanis had at Wilkes that continues to assist her in graduate school was her involvement in the University Student Affairs Cabinet and serving on the search committee for the new Provost.

“Grad school is rife with bureaucracy...having an understanding of how a university functions was really helpful, and will continue to be helpful, as I am planning on a career in higher education,” she said.

There was no doubt in her mind that Wotanis wanted to pursue higher education, but the fears of leaving home were ripe in her mind as her plans for graduate school began to solidify the end of her junior year. She credits professor and friend, Dr. Andrea Frantz, with giving her the push needed to leave NEPA and fulfill her dreams.

“Put plainly, I was scared to death to move to a strange city by myself where I wouldn’t know anyone!” Wotanis said. “But Andrea really helped me conquer those fears… I stuck it out, hard as it was, and I was glad I had done it.”

Now in her third year of doctoral study Wotanis is keeping busy with her studies, duties as a teaching assistant, and traveling to conferences. Recently she won top student paper for the community journalism division at the AEJMC Conference in Chicago.

As Wotanis finishes her doctorate, she is looking forward to coming home and securing a faculty position in a college/university by next fall.

“I don’t dream of being famous or even teaching at an R1 [Research 1] institution. I just want to be a teacher at a place like Wilkes, where I can get to know my students and feel like a part of something important.” She said, “I want to spend my career helping others to find their way, as so many of my teachers helped me to do.”
Grads Advise Current Students That Internships Lead to Jobs

By: Yohanna de los Santos Maria
Lauren Salem

Five Wilkes Communication Studies alumni have a very clear message for current students: internships lead to jobs and help students discover their own interests.

Stephanie Yachim, a recent May 2008 graduate is now a staff consultant/recruiter for Accounting Principals in Kansas City, MO. While at Wilkes she had three different internships that helped her determine the environment she’d like to work in. First, she interned in promotions at Fox 56. During the next semester, in Boston, she worked with other interns to totally organize a non-profit program called Dolls4Girls. To gain marketing and public relations experience, she also interned and later worked for a year and a half at Pepperjam. Yes, they hired her as a result of her internship work.

“This job made me realize that I loved marketing and PR [but] what I really wanted to do was human resources,” Yachim said. “I kind of realized that I really didn’t want to work with TV because the environment wasn’t really there for me.”

Rebecca Bria, a 2007 graduate, now works for The Dallas Post as a reporter where she writes articles, designs the page layout, and updates the website. She interned at The Weekender, The Times Leader, and the Blue Cross of NEPA in public relations.

“As an intern I was able to experience real interviews and situations, interact with people in the newsroom [and] see what goes on in the newspaper,” Bria said. “In this major you need to go out there and take part in it, because when you graduate you have the degree, but the employer wants to see what you really want to do with it.”

Cheryl Gressley, another May 2008 graduate, completed three internships while at Wilkes and feels they all contributed to her getting her current job as a communications coordinator for the West Chester chapter of the American Cancer Society. She did a public relations internship with the NEPA Regional Cancer Resource Center. Then, she spent a summer in Nashville in the development division of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Finally, in her senior year she worked at Entercom Communications for WKRZ, Froggy 101, and The Mountain in the promotions department.

“An internship is really good because it lets you network,” Gressley said. “I did three different kinds of internships [which] let me decide what kind of job I wanted to look for. It also helps you with people skills and the professional work involved.”

Candice Davis, who graduated in 2007, interned at the Wachovia Arena and said that “the impression that I left on people and the impression that they left on me [is] priceless.” Davis is currently the Entertainment Coordinator for the Harrah’s casinos in Atlantic City, a job she got immediately after getting her diploma from Wilkes.

“I interned at an arena that deals with all the radio and TV stations in NEPA. I had to talk to many people from the area,” Davis said. “It definitely made me feel more secure because until you go to a professional setting you do not know how things work,” she added.

Tim Millard graduated in 2003 from Wilkes and later earned his Masters in Broadcast Journalism from Syracuse University. While at Wilkes, he interned at WVIA-TV and radio and at WBRE. While in graduate school he was able to do some freelance reporting for WVIA FM from the 2004 New Hampshire presidential primary. He was also recommended by the former news director at WBRE for a television producing job. Currently he does TV production for a station in Elmira, NY and some part-time reporting for CBS News Radio.

“An internship gives you contacts that pay off down the road,” Millard said. “I highly recommend that anyone who is in any kind of communications get at least one internship because having a college degree is not enough to get a job” in television.

The message from our graduates is clear—intern. It could be the bridge to your first full-time job. Be sure to speak with your Communication Studies faculty advisor or Sharon Castano in the Co-op Education Office if you are thinking about interning in the next semester.

Alumni Update: Jackie Manzolillo Blais ‘05

By: Danielle Hritzak

When it comes to the importance of internships, Jackie Manzolillo Blais, a 2005 Communication Studies graduate with concentrations in telecommunications and public relations, says they are the most important thing to have on your resume.

While at Wilkes, she was a Zebra Board member and co-hosted her own segment on “Wilkes World.” She completed two internships, first, she did PR at the Luzerne Intermediate Unit in Kingston. Then, during her last semester she interned at ABC’s “The View,” an experience that shaped her career path.

It wasn’t easy. Jackie worked in NYC at “The View” three days a week and returned to Wilkes for classes the other two days. But, it was worth it in the end. After graduating from Wilkes, Blais worked in audience production for the MARTHA show, a position she held for two and a half years. She then made a job change and worked as a stage reporter for Blue Ridge Cable 11 TV in Lancaster County, PA.

Recently, Blais was offered a job as audience supervisor back with Martha Stewart’s show. The best part of her new job is “being able to interact with all types of people from all over the world.” She points out she wouldn’t have this job if she did not keep in contact will all those she met along the way. Her advice to current Communication Studies students: “Network, network, and network.” Especially in telecommunications, “networking is everything, fortunately and unfortunately,” said Blais. “In this business it’s important to make a good impression and stay in contact with all the people you come across because you’ll see those people time and time again,” she added.
C-SPAN (continued from page 1)

from numerous speakers, was inspired by Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), and walked past politicians while in the U.S. Senate Press Gallery. Gwynn is also learning the importance of pursuing one’s passion in life. As his professor, Iris Krasnow, would say, “Get into a career that makes the vein in your neck throb.”

He is learning about national politics, broadcasting, and public relations on his internship, and in his seminars. More importantly, Gwynn is realizing the value of opportunity.

“Washington is showing me just how real life is and how much we really don’t know about the world,” said Gwynn.

Gwynn, who loves to get in the last word, added: “Wilkes students are just as smart as students from colleges across the country and all over the world. In my class we have students from eight different countries and five different states, and we all have trouble writing a story, have plenty of questions and don’t like 8 a.m. classes.”

Gwynn will return to Wilkes for the spring Semester and graduate in May of 2009.

WCLH 90.7 Plans Hip-Hop Dance Fundraiser

By: Alyssa Benner

Wilkes University’s student-run radio station, WCLH 90.7, is planning a major fundraiser for later this semester—a hip-hop dance.

The tentative date for the fundraiser, which will be held at downtown Genetti’s Hotel, is November 21. The goal of the fundraiser is to raise money to re-build the antennae signal strength to its previous power and to help with other studio costs. Carlton Holmes, hip-hop director at WCLH, is a driving force in planning the event. “WCLH didn’t do a fundraiser last year so it’s imperative we make this hip-hop dance profitable,” said Holmes.

The dance, which will cost students five dollars, will include a night of dancing to a DJ from our own WCLH. The idea caught fire within the E-Staff because there are no other primarily hip-hop dance parties in the area.

Members of the 2008-09 E-Staff are busy meeting with prospective DJ’s and administering station tests. They are also in charge of keeping on-air music automated and new by tracking and charting record labels across the country.

Members of this year’s E-Staff include Carlton Holmes, hip-hop director; Brian Switay, promotional director; Paul Moran, assistant hip-hop director; AJ Wallace, production director; Alyssa Benner, alternative music director, and Mike Cignoli, sports director. Along with station manager, Renee Loftus, they are working hard to keep WC:H 90.7 northeastern Pennsylvania’s number one college radio station. New members are always welcome.

Alumni Update: Kyla Campbell ‘03

By: Rachel Borgna

After graduating from Wilkes in 2003 with her degree in Communications Studies, Kyla Campbell went on to graduate school for Broadcast Journalism at Syracuse University’s Newhouse School of Public Communications. Since earning her Masters degree from Syracuse in 2005, Kyla has worked as a reporter/anchor for WJAC-TV in Johnstown, PA and is about to start the next phase of her reporting career at WBRE-TV in Wilkes-Barre, where she will become a weekend anchor/reporter.

With such a rich professional career, you might wonder why Campbell decided to go to graduate school before entering the competitive job market in broadcasting. While at Syracuse, Kyla worked intensively for 13 months starting with radio classes and eventually putting together 30 minute newscasts daily. The group progressed professionally enough to the point where the local stations were coming to the graduate students for stories that they had missed.

“I wouldn’t trade my experiences at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications for anything. The professors I had there were top-notch and true experts of the broadcast journalism field,” Campbell stated.

While she was attending Wilkes she concentrated in organizational communications/public relations and rhetoric, with a minor in English. She also earned her Pennsylvania secondary education certification. Kyla also was co-chair of the Zebra Board in 2002-03, wrote for The Beacon and sports information department, along with freelance sports writing for The Citizen’s Voice. She interned with WBRE and during graduate school participated in a six-week internship in Washington, D.C., interviewing Congressman Paul Kanjorski, Former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum, and U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, among many more.

Kyla said, “It was my co-curricular activities that really built up my confidence to consider broadcast journalism, working on the Zebra staff and realizing I was a professional, not just a student. It’s a great move to do co-curricular activities, which don’t cost you any money, just a little time and effort.”

Welcome home, Kyla. The Department looks forward to seeing you on Channel 28!
Pharmacy-Zebra Students Collaborate on PSA Campaign

By: Kathy Dalton

During September, Zebra members and Pharmacy students teamed up to produce a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to educate the public about smoking cessation and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), the 4th leading cause of death in the United States.

The Zebra members, Alyssa Benner, Kathy Dalton, Danielle Hritzak, Maureen Iskra, Alyssa Shilinski, AJ Wallace, and Shauna Strellish completed this project in Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall’s public relations class along with seventy pharmacy students in Dr. Daniel Longyhore and Dr. Dan McCune’s Pharmacotherapy of Pulmonary Diseases class.

When asked about the importance of such interdisciplinary learning, pharmacy professors, Dr. Dan McCune and Dr. Dan Longyhore, said, “By bringing two seemingly different disciplines together under one project, we hope to show how each groups’ training complements the others and help students better adapt to collaborating outside their profession.”

Dr. Elmes-Crahall agrees there is value in interdisciplinary learning. She says, “The collaboration between Zebra students and pharmacy students makes everyone see the same important public health messages, like “stop smoking”, from someone else’s point of view. Certainly the pharmacy students are gaining new insights into the creativity and technology involved in public service campaigns. Also, the Zebra students gain new appreciation for all pharmacy students became the voices of the spots. The PSAs are designed to air during November, which is COPD Awareness Month and on The Great American Smokeout Day, which is November 20th. The Great American Smokeout is sponsored by The American Cancer Society to help smokers quit cigarettes for at least one day, in hopes they will quit forever.

When asked about the experience of writing and producing PSAs with the Zeba members, Sarah Miller, a P3 student, says, “Working with the Zebra members on our public service announcements provided a great opportunity to educate the community about COPD, asthma and tobacco cessation. The Zebra members offered great advice about broadcasting on radio and guided us through this process.”

Pharmacy student Adam Motsney agrees and adds that the Zebra members and Pharmacy students gain much from the collaboration. He says, “This exercise provided the opportunity for groups of students from two very different educational backgrounds to basically “join forces” in an effort to educate the society in which we live.”

Does Graduate School Fit Into Your Future?

By: Angela Croop

Shanita Quarles

For some students the thought of several more years of schooling after graduation seems tedious. For others, the reality of even more intense studying is feasible because the reward is worth the effort. Whether knowledge, entitlement or a bigger paycheck is the reason behind some students’ decisions to go further with their education, the same question lurs over everyone’s head at some point. Is graduate school a practical decision?

According to the Princeton Review, students across America flood the halls of over 12,000 graduate campuses annually, to take another step in their journey for an education. Some of these students have jumped from one course of study into the next while others have established a career, perhaps had a child or even tied the knot.

When asked if she recommended that students attend graduate school after college Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall said, “That depends on the student. Many of our graduates eventually earn graduate degrees, but not all immediately after leaving Wilkes. A Ph.D. is expected in some fields, such as teaching college. For many in public relations and journalism, a Master’s degree is seen as proof of professional development,” explained Elmes-Crahall.

Though some people argue that it is better to approach graduate studies directly after obtaining a Bachelors’ degree, others would disagree. In some Communications fields, such as broadcasting, an advanced degree is probably not necessary. The truth is when and if an individual chooses to attend graduate school depends solely on that individual.

Communication Studies professor Dr. Evene Estwick recommends taking the plunge right after finishing undergraduate work. She also warns that any graduate program is hard work, and should be completed when an individual can devote his or her time generously to their education.

On the other hand, Wilkes alumna, Dr. Kalen Churcher, ’97, feels that it was more beneficial to work full-time for a while before going on to graduate school. “Working provides you with experience and life lessons you can’t get in a classroom,” Dr. Churcher said. Like Dr. Estwick, she also warns that it is hard work. While obtaining her Ph.D., she had to give up a full-time reporting position because she no longer had the time.

From her perspective, working directly after college better prepared her for graduate school. Another beneficial factor is that the company may send their workers to graduate school to better equip them for their position and pay a portion or all of the graduate tuition.

Graduate school or full-time job right after graduation? The answer rests with each individual.
Society of Professional Journalism Opens Chapter at Wilkes

By: Alison Woody
Andrew Seaman

The university’s Communication Studies department recently added another co-curricular activity to its already impressive lineup. The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) has made a decision that will allow Wilkes to begin the process for a student chapter.

SPJ, a national organization that represents about 9,500 journalists who share a passion for improving and protecting journalism, is highly regarded in the professional arena and is seen as an important tool for students.

Andrew Seaman, junior, has been working to get a student chapter at Wilkes for almost two years. After an editor at a previous internship described his membership to the society as “the right thing to do,” he decided to try again.

“SPJ is like the voice of the press. They push for the absolute right to the First Amendment and fight for justice. It is a wonderful organization and I think it is an honor to have a chapter at Wilkes,” said Seaman.

Dr. Evene Estwick will serve as the society advisor. Seaman added, “I know under Dr. Estwick’s leadership this organization will be incredible and more than just something for students to put on their resumes.”

To get the process started, a group of ten communication studies students from a variety of concentrations, not just journalism, initially signed up to be founding members. As a member, students will be provided both internship and fellowship information from around the country, as well as an opportunity to go to the national convention. Students will also have access to a variety of resources, scholarships, job banks and networking opportunities.

While it may be a journalism society, Dr. Andrea Frantz explained that their reach goes far beyond just that realm of the media.

“While students at Wilkes may not declare journalism as an area of specialization, the skills they garner in all other tracks could indeed prepare them for positions they might not anticipate. I also think that students who opt to become members of SPJ will naturally enhance the professional depth in their resume. SPJ is internationally known and could be an important link to a would-be mentor or employer down the line,” she said.

Beacon Award (continued from page 1)

is the news editor on this year’s staff.

Marissa Phillips and Andee Scarantino were both Beacon editors last year and graduated in May.

“We’re in with the big dogs,” said Dr. Andrea Frantz when asked about how she feels about their odds of winning. The final decision for the contest will be made on October 29th at the ACP convention in Kansas City.

The staff is excited. “I think because of the depth of research, we have a good chance of winning. The downside is, we don’t know the content published by other school newspapers. But at the same time, I’m confident in our squad. Win, lose or draw, from a local angle, we unraveled a sticky issue and that’s most important,” said Holmes.

Good luck in Kansas City!

Alumni Update: Kalen Churcher, Ph.D. ‘97

By: Angela Croop

Wilkes University Alumni, Kalen Churcher, ’97, received her PhD from Pennsylvania State University in August 2008, where she concentrated in Cultural Studies and how it pertains to the media.

Upon completion of her PhD, Churcher obtained a full-time teaching position with Niagara University where she teaches courses in both Politics and Media, and Stereotyping in Media.

Churcher graduated from Wilkes with a Bachelor’s in Communication Studies and concentrations in all four areas including; Organizational Communication, Journalism, Rhetoric and Telecommunications.

Before and during her completion of her Master’s degree in Human Resources with a concentration in Organizational Leadership from the University of Scranton, Churcher worked full-time in public relations and journalism throughout the community.

While working full-time at the Times Leader as a reporter, Churcher started teaching Public Speaking, Mass Media and Feature Writing here at Wilkes as an adjunct. Regarding her classroom experience at Wilkes, Churcher said, “That was when I knew I wanted to teach.”

Eventually, Churcher went to Pennsylvania State University for her doctorate and continued to mature in the classroom as a “teaching fellow.”

For her dissertation, Churcher spent time at the Louisiana State Penitentiary studying inmate-produced media. The maximum-security men’s prison is home to 5,108 men who are serving life or life-equivalent sentences. Interestingly enough, the Penitentiary has it’s own magazine, The Angolite, radio station and television station that are inmate run.

In her dissertation titled, “Self Governance, Normalcy and Control: Inmate-Produced Media and the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola”, Churcher examined how the inmate-produced media are used by the prison administration to control the inmate population and how they are simultaneously used by the inmates as a way to help shape how other inmates act.

As for teaching, Churcher has adapted well to increased classroom responsibilities. At Niagara University, she teaches full time and advises all freshman Communication Studies majors. Her favorite part of teaching is when she gets to open students up to things they have never heard of before or when they look at things from a different perspective or angle. “I encourage them to form their own opinions and challenge mine,” she said.
This spring will mark the first time the Department is stretching the global learning curve all the way to Istanbul, Turkey. The study-trip is entitled “East Meets West”, and it was named for the fact that Istanbul has both Eastern and Western cultural influences.

“It’s not quite European, but it’s not quite Islamic,” stated Dr. Dennis Hupchick, associate history professor and one of the teachers of the course.

Dr. Hupchick, Dr. Mark Stine, and Dr. Evene Estwick will lead the group of fourteen students from both the Communication Studies and History departments. The trip will consist of six days and five nights discovering and discussing historically significant aspects of Istanbul and its rich culture.

“Dr. Stine and I talk a lot about Istanbul, and I have shared lots of stories with him about the country. So, over the past two years essentially, we pieced together the trip and one day just decided to do it,” said Dr. Hupchick.

“This trip is two-fold for me. While I can teach about mass media and communications, I will also be able to work in aspects of intercultural [communications], as well,” said Dr. Estwick.

The group will meet several times before they embark on their twelve-hour airplane ride across the world. The pre-meetings will outline costs, packing concerns, and extra knowledge of the area.

“Our first meeting is in December, and I will cover more of what students should keep in mind when traveling to another country, especially an area like Istanbul,” stated Dr. Hupchick.

Each professor will lecture separately on different aspects of history, telecommunications, and mass media and the area’s influence on it. While each professor is covering material on the pre-planned syllabus, Dr. Hupchick will take over as “tour guide” for the trip seeing as this is his fourth trip to Istanbul.

“When I first went, I was a graduate student. The next two times I went with my wife and kids and took mini-vacations to Istanbul,” said Dr. Hupchick.

Dr. Hupchick’s professional specialty of the Byzantine era led him to Istanbul several times over the course of his professional career. He alluded to the fact that Istanbul is one of his favorite large cities in the world.

The trip to Istanbul will be filled with more than just museums and mosques, it is also an opportunity to see people from many cultures and how they interact on a daily basis.

“Istanbul is a great place to go because of the historic nature of the country. Also, we will be able to see how it has adapted to new media,” said Dr. Estwick.

With such expertise, Dr. Hupchick advises students to be culturally-minded when traveling to such an area of the world. It is the hopes of the faculty that the students attending will be able to not only take away knowledge about history and communications, but to also become more culturally respectful and gain a better knowledge of a people and area of the world that has been the target of much criticism.

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Excitement Grows Over Study Tour to Istanbul
By: LeeAnn Searfoss

Student President Sees Debate Team Grow in Numbers, Goals
By: Jeffrey Niemic

Few things in life are more rewarding then seeing something you love and enjoy grow into something much bigger than itself. Well that’s exactly what I experienced when the Wilkes University Speech and Debate Team began its preparations for the Fall 2008 competition season. As President, I had the privilege of seeing a small, 4-person squad evolve and grow into a much more formidable 14-person team. Being someone who was used to traveling to George Mason University in Virginia with two students, or to Montreal Canada with a total of 3 people, I am counting the days until we can return to those places with a larger array of competitors and really hold our own against other schools from an overall team standpoint.

Along with the change in team size, our goals have also evolved. In the previous school year, we succeeded in qualifying three orators in three events to the best school year, we succeeded in qualifying goals have also evolved. In the previous overall team standpoint.

Dr. Estwick

This trip is two-fold for me. While I can teach about mass media and communications, but to also become more culturally respectful and gain a better knowledge of a people and area of the world that has been the target of much criticism.

The American Forensic Association national tournament that was held in Austin, Texas. The team as a whole once again performed better than the previous year, but this year the goals have altered. We plan not only to improve on the record from 2008, but also to break at least one event to a Quarterfinal round (doing so means that the competitor is among the top 24 collegiate speakers in that event in the nation). Accomplishing this feat would solidify Wilkes’ standing as a Speech Powerhouse.

Preparations have also begun for the annual Wilkes University Invitational Tournament, to be held on November 1st, where we host local high schools in an effort to propagate the Speech and Debate tradition starting from the high school level. Interest in the event has continued to grow and is being fueled by the enthusiasm and vigor of our new Director of Forensics, Christine Mellon. If the upcoming contest goes as well as I know it can, more Speech and Debate competitors will hopefully apply to Wilkes as their first choice college, and add to the Wilkes University Speech and Debate winning tradition. Anyone interested in joining the Speech/Debate Team should contact Professor Christine Mellon in Capin Hall.

Members of the 2008-2009 debate team.
Communication Students and Faculty Collaborate on Research

By: Andrew Wolak

Showing that mentoring really defines how our Department approaches learning, two Communication Studies students have been working with their professors on specific primary research papers.

Amy Fusco, junior, and Dr. Evene Estwick worked together on a research paper on product placement in media which was presented for the Association of Educators of Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) national conference held in Chicago in August.

Come November, senior Christine Zavaskas and Dr. Jane Elmas-Crahall will be co-authoring and splitting presentation time on their research at the National Communication Association Convention in San Diego, California. They will be discussing the strategies Zebra Communication uses when dealing with difficult clients.

Fusco and Dr. Estwick focused on product placement in the media on specific reality television shows such as “Biggest Loser” and “Survivor.” Fusco did some of the research as well as putting together an outline for Dr. Estwick. They also looked at the history of product placement and the FDA rules. Dr. Estwick presented the paper, titled: “Deal or No Deal” at the AEJMC conference.

About the collaborative experience, Fusco says, “Researching with Dr. Estwick gave me experience in projects that graduate students typically complete. I’m looking into graduate schools currently, so working with her helped me learn about what my future education might be like.”

Christine Zavaskas and Dr. Jane Elmas-Crahall will both deliver their research at NCA. Zavaskas will present a student account manager’s point of view on strategies for dealing with 2 “challenging” Zebra clients, including a 81 year old retired lawyer whose passion was to restore an old train and Volunteers in Medicine, a start-up non-profit medical clinic that had no staff, no location, and no one to make the final decisions on designs. Dr. Jane Elmas-Crahall will discuss the over-all strategic approach to operating Zebra and how it is linked to teaching PR at Wilkes.

Elmas-Crahall’s and Zavaskas’ project is one of ten featured presentations on a panel dealing with innovations in public relations education. Zavaskas says, “I’ve never done anything like this before, so it is immensely beneficial to have Dr. Elmes-Crahall’s experience and help to draw from.”

These students feel that being a communication studies student at Wilkes is really unique because they get to work with their professors and get to know them. As Dr. Estwick says, “mentoring is our mission at Wilkes University.”

Zebra Begins Preparations for 10th Anniversary Bash

By: Amanda Cawley

Put on your party hats! To honor Zebra Communications’ 10th year of service, team members are planning a Zebra Communications anniversary bash!

The party will be held on March 28, 2009 at 7:00 in the Henry Student Center Ballroom. Former board members of Zebra Communications will be invited in addition to the communications department of Wilkes University and past and present clients of Zebra Communications.

Any pictures or memorabilia, please tact the Communications office at (570)408-4158 or by email at zebra.communica@wilkes.edu.

Mark your calendars and plan on attending this milestone for the unique Wilkes University student-run public relations agency. All the party plans are still in the works, but we wanted to give you enough time to break in your dancing shoes!

Spring Semester Course Offerings Announced

By: Dr. Jane Elmes-Crahall

When you sit down with your advisor to pre-register for spring 2009, keep in mind the Department is offering several new courses. For the first time, COM 398A: International Media and COM 398B: East Meets West: Culture and Communications, will be offered.

COM 398 A: International Media as an elective within the broadcast media concentration. The course, taught by Dr. Evene Estwick, is an exploration of media systems around the world. It will focus on cultural imperialism and how it controls information flow. Suggested prerequisite: COM 124.

COM 398 B: East meets West-Cultural and Communication (3 credits). This course includes the study tour to Istanbul, Turkey during Spring Break and will be team-taught by Dr. Mark Stine, Dr. Evene Estwick and Dr. Dennis Hupchick of the History program. Enrollment is limited to 14. See Dr. Stine for information. The credits can count in any of the Department’s concentration.

Three courses are scheduled that have not been taught in several years.

COM 203: Small Group Communication, taught by Dr. Kinney, will focus on leadership and how decisions are made in small groups. The course counts as an elective within both the Rhetoric and Organizational/PR concentrations. Prerequisite: COM 102.

COM 320: Media Management, an elective in both Broadcast Media and Journalism deals with the functions and methods of media management in both print and non-print media. Prerequisite: COM 220.

COM 372: Managing a PR Agency will be taught by Dr. Elmes-Crahall. The course focuses on differences between in-house PR and the agency operations. Students will manage multiple clients. The course counts as an elective in the Organizational/PR concentration. Prerequisite: COM 302.