FEATURED STORIES

The Man Behind the Production 4
Vince Ciammaichelli, affectionately known to students as “Chelli” can be seen working behind the scenes orchestrating WDSU-TV, video productions, and helping students.

Delaware Skills USA Competition 5
High School Students and PR Students Come together for an Exciting Competition
High School Students from the three counties in Delaware compete for state honors as their skills in radio and television are tested in a two-day competition featuring a mock press conference put on by PR students.

Mass Comm Insight: From DSU to KABC in Los Angeles David Butler lands a job in television
TV, Radio and Film major, David Butler spent a week in Los Angeles with his mind on one thing, landing his dream job. Read about his time in California and what his new job responsibilities will be at KABC.

What’s Trending? 9
This month, the Mass Communications Message looks at the iPad and provides some insight into a piece of technology that is becoming a must have.

Crowning Achievements...
Kayla Morrison-Williams Competes In the Miss Black and Gold Pageant
Preparing for this competition was no small feat for Kayla Morrison-Williams, a mass communications major who is also doing an internship at WBOC. The first-runner up shares her story of balancing beauty and academics.

Making Their Mark 11
McNair Scholar and Mass Comm Major Rashidah McCoy puts her PR prowess to work for DSU’s OSLA and USDA. She’s making her mark on campus and in the community.

ON THE COVER

Vince Chelli has been with DSU for seven years. As an instructor and Technology Manager he has worked with students to capture some of the university’s most important moments on video (tape). Now he is fully responsible for managing the broadcasting here on campus. See how Vince Ciammaichelli is helping DSU’s TV, Radio and Film majors make their mark on the world. (page 4)

NEWS AND INFORMATION

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What does Accreditation Really Mean?

Most students don’t really understand what accreditation is or the process that a university or academic department has to go through in order to become accredited, but it’s something that is of great benefit to the students and the university as a whole. Accreditation is the affirmation, normally granted by a national accreditation council, that a school provides a quality of education that the community has a right to expect and the education world endorses. Accreditation is a means of showing confidence in a school’s performance. Further, involvement in accreditation fosters excellence and an ongoing commitment to improve the quality of education.

While Delaware State is an accredited university that proudly boosts a rich history, increasing enrollment, and a strong faculty, the faculty in the Mass Communications Department has decided that it is time to pursue departmental accreditation. In order to find out more about this, I had the chance to sit down with Dr. Myna German, Chair of the Mass Communications Department and discuss this challenging but exciting endeavor.

According to Dr. German, “the Mass Communications Department doesn’t need to have accreditation because the university has accreditation, but having an accredited program with an accredited university is a bonus and a good recruiting tool. We are working very hard to gain accreditation.” Sometimes there is confusion about accreditation but one way to have a better understanding is to make sure students are involved in the process. “Students can do their part to help the department gain accreditation,” says Dr. German. “For example, they can follow the new curriculum guidelines which mean only taking one mass communications elective and all other electives outside of the department. Students can also highlight their academic and internship accomplishments as well.”

The Mass Communications Department is seeking accreditation through the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). AEJMC is a nonprofit, educational association of journalism and mass communication educators, students and media professionals. The Association’s mission is to promote the highest possible standards for journalism and mass communication education, to cultivate the widest possible range of communication research, to encourage the implementation of a multi-cultural society in the classroom and curriculum, and to defend and maintain freedom of communication in an effort to achieve better professional practice and a better informed public.

Stephanie Stith
Mr. Vince Ciammaichelli, affectionately known around the campus simply as Mr. ‘Chelli,’ has been with DSU for 6.5 years. As an instructor and Technology Manager he has worked with students to capture some of the university’s most important moments on video. Today he is fully responsible for managing the campus broadcasting in addition to a wide variety of video projects.

As the broadcast manager, Mr. Chelli manages and produces the out-of-classroom productions; much of which often is taken for granted as we pass by the televisions on campus and are able to see campus news or events on WDSU-TV, Channel 14, the Mass Comm Blog or DSU YouTube.

Mr. Chelli is in charge of the technology for the Department of Mass Communications. Since his arrival in 2005, he has been responsible for managing and updating the equipment in the television studio and technology in the computer labs. Mr. Chelli was (primarily) responsible for securing funding for the new Mac computer lab and recently updated the technology in the PC lab.

According to Chelli “my first priority is making sure that the students have what they need whether it is for the television station, television production, audio production, radio broadcasting station or in the classroom.” Because he is in charge of all of the technological equipment in the department, he has student workers who assist him with his tasks. Mr. Chelli is also trains and works with students to capture a variety of campus events (responsible for (all of the events that are captured on video and audio) including sporting events, lectures, commencements and entertainment shows. When asked what drew the tech-savvy educator to the media production, he simply said, “the Oscars. Once When I was very young I saw the production of the show, Oscar Awards and it got me interested in television production.” He said that after his first “Oscar” experience, As a result later in life he changed his major from accounting to television production where he studied at Temple University.

Mr. Chelli is always looking for ways to improve the department and provide students with more hands on access to state of the art equipment. He has spent the last few semesters working with a set designer who built a set for one of the presidential debates held last year at the University of Delaware, to build a new television set for DSU TV. The high-tech set features 4 flat screen television monitors, which can be used in a number of different ways, which will make DSU TV look like a flagship television network. Chelli says that he’s committed to making sure that students are being taught the production skills that are being used in today’s top production companies and television stations. “We are constantly growing technologically,” says Mr. Chelli, “and if we’re doing that then we are progressing.”

Tomilade Canty
The Delaware Skills USA Competition, hosted in February on the campus of Delaware State University, brought students from Delcastle Technical High School, PolyTech High School and Sussex Tech High School to compete in mass media, skills-based, vocational contests. Students were tasked with functioning performing as a Radio/Audio Production crew or a TV News crew to create a news report that effectively communicated a local current event situation. A mock press event was set up by DSU PR Writing students complete with a publicist and panel experts.

Contestants were judged on their ability to demonstrate effective pre-production, production and post-production procedures. The winners will be announced at the April 4th “2012 Delaware Skills USA 2012 Awards Reception and Ceremony” which is being held at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover, Delaware. The winning team will represent Delaware Skills USA at the national competitions in Kansas City, Missouri.

The Delaware Skills USA Competition is a part of the Skills USA program which provides assessment in 47 trade and technical areas. Skills USA is a workforce ready system that prepares today’s youth for a competitive job market.

Mei Mei Yang: An Exchange Student Studying Mass Comm at DSU

As one of the exchange students studying mass communication at DSU it is really an amazing and unforgettable experience. Before I took part in this exchange program I had no idea about DSU. The only thing I knew was that DSU had a long and proud history as one of America’s HBCUs. Because of my experience as a campus news anchor in Ningbo University (my home university), I chose Convergence Journalism as my major in DSU to broaden my vision and horizons.

During my first week at DSU, I did experience a bit of culture shock and I missed home. I would mechanically go to class then go back home and do nothing, but I quickly realized that I had to get involved. I started meeting people of different ages and backgrounds, taking part in different student activities and finally I began to embrace the DSU life, which is so colorful and varied.

Now I am learning news reporting, newsgathering, PR writing, and TV production and having a great deal of fun. My professors not only impart advanced theoretical knowledge but also provide me with practical experience. I even had the opportunity to participate in the Delaware Skills Competition by helping the PR Writing Class to organize a mock press conference for the competition. It was a good experience playing the role of a reporter and PR person and the entire class was able to see how a press conference is put together, how the experts and reporters and how PR practitioners work to get stories covered.

I have learned a lot from DSU and I know that I’ll be able to take my hands-on experience back to Ningbo University. Not many students get to take advantage of an exchange program like this and my experience at DSU not only helped me academically but being an exchange student is definitely an unforgettable, once in a lifetime opportunity.

Mei Mei (Mary) Yang
Blake Saunders is a producer who graduated from Delaware State University in 2005 with a Bachelors degree in Broadcast Journalism. After graduating, Blake simultaneously worked for the university and WBOC News before starting his own video production company called Front Street Video Productions. His creativity and innovation has allowed him to produce films and music videos. Blake feels that production is “a way for the mind to find its way through problems.” I had an opportunity to sit down with Blake to get some insight into how college prepared him to be an entrepreneur in the field of video production.

What does your work as a mass communications professional entail?
Blake: With my video production company, our main tag line is “Your vision our mission” and I always say that everyone has a story; they just need the right person to tell it. If it’s a wedding, you’re still telling a story. If it’s a feature story about someone who did something great or a tragedy has happened, you’re still kind of telling a story. I also use my mass communications skills as far as broadcast writing and newsgathering.

What is your typical day at work like?
Blake: Since I recently started doing video production full-time, no day is the same. Depending on what’s on the schedule, if I have to edit a project or since I’m self-employed, I may have to reach out and promote myself and the services I can provide. Me getting out there right now is basically me planting a seed and watching it grow. A lot of what I do is self promotion of my company, so I guess a typical workday is just not typical.

How do you go about putting together a film or photography layout for major events, assignments, etc?
Blake: One thing about video production is that every assignment is going to be different. Say for instance a music video, putting that together; I like putting music videos together because it’s a short film. The first thing we do is discuss the contract with the client, and then I ask them do you want me to come up with a concept or do you have a concept? If they want me to come up with a concept, which I like to do, I listen to the song; try to get the feel of the message and of what they’re trying to say. And try to put a story to it and once I have an idea in mind, I go head and hash out a storyline in my head and write it down on paper. Then I kind of brainstorm with my partner and see what he thinks, then after that we set the shots up, where we’re going to shoot at, what type of angles we are going to want, any movement shots, things of that nature.

What difficulties do you face in your job?
Blake: I don’t have a steady paycheck. I have to go out and get it. The harder I work, the more money I’m going to make. The less I work means less money and in some cases, no money at all. One thing about it is I’m going to get out of this what I put in. So, if I work hard and really give it a hundred percent, then I’m going to get a great reward from it. There’s no secret to success. It takes hard work and hard work pays off. The truth is that everybody has the ability to put in the work, but many people just aren’t disciplined. You know, so I’m learning each day to be more and more focused and I always put my best foot forward with the hopes of getting better every day.

What advice would you offer to current TV, Radio and Film students?
Blake: The number one piece of advice I would say is, first of all just don’t be afraid of failure, because failure can only lead to success. Learn from it but don’t be afraid to fail, because when you’re afraid to fail, you will fail. Also, I would say put a plan in place and be ready to change, because nothing really goes according to plan. Think outside the box. Don’t think realistically think outside of everybody else. Anything is possible even the impossible.

Rashidah McCoy
Radio, TV and Film major David Butler landed a dream job in Los Angeles at KABC as a production assistant, but he’s no stranger to hard work and the pursuit of opportunities in the field. David has invested a great deal of time preparing for a career in television. He has worked at WABC in New York as well as Hot 97 Kiss FM and 101.9 RXP.

In preparing for the interview at KABC, David said that he let his resume speak for itself. “I actually got the interview because I was recommended from a previous networking contact at WABC, so I went down there with all of the confidence in the world.” David said that he kept telling himself that he was going to get this job and that nothing was going to stop him.

David said that during the interview he talked about the work and experience he gained while at WABC in New York. “It was definitely a sacrifice [working that job] …I didn’t do anything but work all day, but in the long run it was worth it.”

When David interviewed for the job in L.A., he said he demanded the job. He told the producers that he wouldn’t settle for an internship and that his experience made him the perfect candidate for the job. After the interview, he was offered a production assistant position with the afternoon news team at KABC. While David has the security of a job after graduation, he’s still keeping his options open. “I definitely would like to have a job that is closer to home…New York City,” he says but right now he’s willing to go anywhere.

David’s ideal job would be to work for MTV and he says that he wouldn’t rule out working for a production company like paramount or with a director/producer like Tyler Perry.

Tierra Smith
DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

Delaware Tech Students Visit DSU to learn more about the Connect Program and the Mass Comm Department

In February, students from the Georgetown Campus of Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC) came to visit Delaware State University and the Mass Communications Departments, to learn more about the department and the possibility of transferring here to complete their four-year degree. Delaware State University, in collaboration with Delaware Technical & Community College, offers the opportunity for DTCC students who have earned an Associate Degree to complete their Bachelors Degree at DSU through the Connected Degree programs. The Connected Degree programs offer a clear economical pathway to high quality educational attainment.

The DTCC students were given a tour by Mass Comm Major Johanna Blunt, they had lunch on campus, and spent the remainder of the day touring the ETV building and meeting the faculty. Students had the opportunity to talk with concentration leads and had the opportunity to hear first hand from other Mass Comm majors including Sydney Pearsal, Justin Tixi, Steven Cooper, and Zach Exume. Hopefully the department will be welcoming some new Hornets in the near future.

Chanel Cole

Ripping the Runway: My Weekend at New York Fashion Week

Attending New York Fashion Week has always been my dream. A dream that I didn’t think would come true, at least not before completing my studies as an undergrad student. I am currently an intern at Kittybradshaw.com, an up and coming New York City lifestyle blog. Before Fashion Week I had done about five blogs. I was on my way home from class, when I got a text from Kitty asking me to come to New York for fashion week. I couldn’t believe what I was reading. My chance to be front and center at one of the premiere fashion events of the year.

I departed for New York, the Friday of Mercedes Benz Fashion Week. I attended five shows; Katya Leonovich, Academy of Art University, Son Jung Wang, Mara Hoffman, and Venexiana and I was responsible for blogging about those shows within 48 hours of viewing. To my surprise, I had tickets to sit in the front row at the Son Jung Wang show, and for those of you who know fashion this was a big deal!

From experiencing the elite atmosphere of fashion week to rubbing elbows with famed runway coach Ms. Jay Alexander from America’s Next Top Model, celebrity stylist June Ambrose, celebrity photographer Nigel Barker and reality stars Alex McCord and Simon van Kempen made my first experience at fashion week a memorable one. I am grateful for the experience and hope to have the opportunity to use more of my public relations skills in the field.

Chanel Cole
WHAT’S TRENDING?

The Invasion of the iPad [and other tablets]

One of the more interesting aspects of a product such as the iPad, is the marketing “buzz” that sells the product without any ‘real’ marketing at all. And this is not just the case for the iPad. Tablets are becoming a household necessity.

Techies probably have done their tablet research, but if you are one of the people who is intrigued by the world of the tablet or if you’re in the market for your own here’s some food for thought.

Using a tablet is the best way to quickly solve the problem of unfamiliarity with this device. Essentially, tablets are notebook computers minus a keyboard. Instead the keyboard is part of the screen where you can tap and navigate with your fingers just like a standard keyboard. Tablets are small, portable, and most of them are no thicker than a folio folder with 20 or so sheets of paper in it.

Interested in managing your media? Want to surf the web? Then you might consider the 16GB or the 32GB if you desire to do more file storing and game playing. The 64GB is for anyone that is looking for a lap top replacement.

Most tablets have hundreds if not thousands of applications and features. DSU junior Valprecious Hamm says “my iPad is resourceful when it comes to my personal and educational use.” The busy DSU student has a full academic load and runs a cupcake business and she says she wouldn’t be able to stay on top of things if she didn’t have a device like the iPad. The iPad has thousands of applications like mail, calendar, notes, and Safari. Tablets also offer video and camera options and there are secure integrations for business environments and personal recreation are at your fingertips, meaning that your tablet is ready to work and play when you are.

Tablets stimulate creativity and hands-on learning with qualities you won’t find in any other learning tool—a device that students actually WANT to use. In an academic environment this can be a plus and it allows student to be interactive, find and retrieve information in an instant and it can even help with time management and study skills.

Tablets are taking learning, entertainment and connectivity to a whole new level.

Zaire Maignan

Valprecious Ham (DSU Junior) uses her iPad to check email and to manager her daily life.
Participating in the Miss Black and Gold competition for the Gamma Sigma Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. was one of the most rewarding experiences of my college career. I chose to participate in the pageant so that I would be able to experience a different side of Greek life and was fortunate to meet many lovely young women. Having a great pageant consultant and supportive friends was the first step of preparation and made the experience so much more exciting. I learned to truly embrace the entire experience and will probably do more pageants in the future!

The process started with a formal interview days after the orientation. There were 40 contestants to begin with, but after the interviews there were only nine finalists chosen to compete for the title of Miss Black and Gold. I know that my oral communication skills helped me to master that interview and from that point on, I was focused on winning the crown. When pageant practice officially began the competition was reduced to six contestants. Practices were tense and long because everyone was focused on winning, but we were all winners and over time had become a true pageant family. When I wasn’t practicing on campus, I worked with my own personal ‘glam’ squad to prep for the pageant—my mother, a licensed beautician and cosmetologist and my aunt, a former pageant queen and model, who were dedicated to making sure that I was every woman

The day finally came. My family and friends were in the audience and it was simply time to be fierce. I was ready. I was excited and felt humbled to have made it all the way. Much care and attention was given to wardrobe and accessories and my talent. My hair was done, and my face was flawless. Throughout the entire evening, I was focused on making my mother proud.

At the end of the night, I received two titles: Miss Egypt and Miss Congeniality. Although I did not win the title of Miss Black and Gold, I was sure I did my best and had my family and friends to thank for their endless support. I had gotten on stage and showed my family, friends, and fellow Hornets that I was not afraid to shine. It was truly a blessed experience.

Today, I am still receiving compliments and have even been asked to coach for the upcoming Miss Delaware State University pageant. I have gladly accepted and look forward to working with the young women. I learned so much about myself and my hidden abilities that I feel I have grown from the experience and have much to share.

*When Kayla isn’t on stage, she is interning at WBOC and has aspirations of pursuing a career in television.*

Kayla Morrison-Williams
MAKING THEIR MARK

Rashidah McCoy Uses Her PR Skills on Campus and in the Community

As a mass communications scholar it is imperative to have field experience; not only to put in action what you’ve learned in class but to make sure you are in the field making contacts and gaining valuable experience. When I was given the option to intern with the DSU Office of Student Leadership and Activities (OSLA) I seized the opportunity. But that’s not the only internship opportunity that I’ve taken advantage of! I’m also Earth Team Volunteer and Intern for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) which allows me to gain first-hand experience in the field of Public Relations and Marketing.

Working in the OSLA office, allows me to give voice to the students of the campus. I work closely with Dr. Robin Roberts and Christopher McGuire to plan events, promote student activities, and bring together the student body. As an intern to the directors of the department, my responsibilities include heading the marketing/PR team for the Campus Activities Board (C.A.B), making calls to campus organization presidents, assisting with the Go Green Initiative, and assuring that all students are informed about campus happenings through WDSU Radio “The Hive”, WDSU TV, and The Hornet newspaper. One of the most exciting things that I’ve done with OSLA was to work with the student organizations on campus to plan the 2012 Black History Month Week of events.

My experience at U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service offers a different set of day-to-day challenges. As a part of the public affairs department, I had to be trained by Mrs. Dastina Wallace, NRCS Public Affairs Specialist, to prepare government news advisories and press releases. Under her leadership, I developed a news advisory on the Black History Month luncheon that was released to all NRCS employees statewide. I also assisted with editing and writing articles for NRCS. I had the opportunity to staff their table at this year’s Delaware Agriculture Week, where I took photos and spoke to local farmers about natural resource conservation.

These internship experiences have opened so many doors for me, but the greatest reward for me is the fact that I’ve been able to use my public relations experience on campus and in the community. The two very different organizations utilize similar public relations and marketing tactics, but the level of creativity and campaign designs were different and challenging. I know that my classroom experience prepared me for my internship, but being in the field as an intern, is preparing me for my career as an aspiring international public relations practitioner. My long-term goal is to be a liaison between a foreign and American corporation that will help better the educational systems in urban communities. Hopefully the knowledge that I have gained from interning with DSU and the USDA will help me to make my mark on the world after I graduate.

Rashidah McCoy
A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Holding Your Academic Advisor Accountable...

As an academic advisor, our primary job is to help students select the courses that will give them the best education possible and to approve the student’s semester-by-semester course enrollment and all applications to change (by dropping and/or adding a course) the program for which she or he initially enrolled.

Advising means more than just signing the request for courses form each semester. Ideally, the role of advisor goes beyond formal approval of enrollment selections. In addition to helping students select courses, we should be taking time to develop relationships with our advisees that will allow for easy discussions on issues such as setting goals, time management, balancing academics with other parts of life, adjusting to the academic rigors of DSU, and more. In short, a discussion on how to achieve and maintain academic success at Del State and beyond.

The flip side of the aforementioned statement is that students have to hold their academic advisors accountable. Students shouldn’t settle for a signature every semester. Demand that you are advised correctly; that your transcript is reviewed, questions about your career aspirations are asked and that your are engaging in a dialogue that is aimed at keeping you on track and getting you to the finish line in four years.

It is your right and our obligation to advise students. When academic advising isn’t done effectively students suffer and the university suffers.

Food for thought,

Dr. Francine Edwards
Associate Professor

The Mass Communications Message focuses on trends in the media, features stories on faculty, student and alumnae profiles and provides theoretical and scholarly insight relative to the field of mass communication and education in general. It is our hope that students will see this as an opportunity to strengthen their writing skills, develop creative approaches to delivering the news, and most importantly highlighting the successes and accomplishments of this academic department. Any student interested in writing for future issues can submit stories (and story ideas) to Dr. Edwards at fedwards@desu.edu.

MARCH ISSUE CONTRIBUTORS

Kierra Beano
Tomilade Canty
Ziare Maignan
Tierra Smith
Mei Mei Yang

Christy Cale
Chanel Cole
Rashidah McCoy
Stephanie Stith