INSIDE...

MASS COMM GRAD BRINGS STAGE PLAY TO DELAWARE
Kelle’Avent

FROM FOSTER CARE TO THE WHITE HOUSE
Meet Lucas Daniel Boyce

NEW PARADIGMS IN THE DIGITAL AGE
FEATURED STORIES

New Paradigms in the Digital Age 5

The new scenario for public communication in the Internet era, eCommunication, be considered as the opportunity to redefine the profiles, the professional challenges and the academic training of communicators, and also to rethink about the changing nature of media and mediators.

From Foster Care to the White House 6
Meet Lucas Daniel Boyce

Lucan Daniel Boyce is what some of us would call a miracle. Mr. Boyce was born premature to a drug and alcohol abusing call girl. Lucas was sent to the foster care home of Dorothy Boyce when he was just ten days old and while he faced many challenges growing up, his story is more than inspirational.

Mass Comm Grad Brings Stage Play to Delaware 7

Kelly Avent went from intern to record company representative to playwright. Her journey wasn’t easy but she has some excellent advice to share with students embarking on a challenging career path in the field of mass communications.

Senior Capstone Week: A Look Back 9

Each semester, seniors prepare for graduation by presenting their senior thesis. This year topics ranged from social media in the newsroom, sexuality in advertising to the impact of music file sharing.

Warm Coats….WDSU Radio “The Hive Making a Difference in the Community 10

WDSU Radio “The Hive” partners with Burlington Coat Factory to provide coats for those in need.

ON THE COVER

Dr. Hagos has served Delaware State University for over 17 years and has been a part of the Mass Communications Department for 10 years. His accomplishments include successfully writing and publishing several books, serving as the President of the Organization of Eritrean Americans, Chair of the Promotion and Tenure committee and Internship advisor. In January, Dr. Hagos will take a sabbatical leave to continue working on several books. (page 4)

NEWS AND INFORMATION

News from the Campus ..................... 3
What’s Trending ............................ 5
Mass Comm Insight ....................... 6
Alumni Profile .............................. 7
Making Their Mark ........................ 8
Professor’s Corner ......................... 11
NEWS FROM THE CAMPUS

DSU Becomes 1st State Entity in Obama’s Better Building Challenge*

Delaware State University’s commitment to be an institutional leader in environmental stewardship has moved to a new level as it has become the first state entity in President Barack Obama’s Better Building Challenge announced today. The Challenge is part of the Obama Administration’s Better Buildings Initiative launched earlier this year spearheaded by former President Bill Clinton and the President’s Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. The Better Buildings Initiative supports job creation by catalyzing private sector investment in commercial and industrial building energy upgrades to make America’s buildings 20% more efficient over the next decade, reducing energy costs across the country by nearly $40 billion.

The University was invited to be a part of the initiative as the result of its honor in receiving the 2011 Climate Leadership Award from the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The award recognized DSU for the work it has done as a member institution of the ACUPCC through its Go Green initiative on campus since 2009. DSU is one of 60 university, corporate, community and industrial partners in the Better Buildings Initiative. Of the 10 universities, DSU is the only HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) selected. “Higher education should play a meaningful role in modeling best practices for their states. Delaware State University is honored to join President Obama in the Challenge and also to contribute to Delaware’s becoming an environmental leader in reducing its carbon footprint,” said DSU President Harry L. Williams, in attendance at today’s announcement and gathering of participants in Washington, D.C.

Among DSU’s initiatives enabling it to be part of the President Obama’s Challenge is a Guaranteed Energy Savings Agreement in coordination with the Delaware Sustained Utility (SEU). The University entered into the agreement, allowing it to invest in energy conservation and facility improvements, after completing an investment grade energy audit. “We were looking for ways to address some needed facility improvements in a way that would save on energy costs and allow us to spend dollars on other needs to serve our students,” Dr. Williams said. The endeavor will help the University realize more than $5 million in savings over 20 years. The SEU has issued Energy Efficiency Revenue Bonds to finance upgrades and help DSU achieve a goal of 25% in greenhouse gas reductions by 2015.

State Sen. Harris B. McDowell III, D-Wilmington North, who sponsored the legislation setting up the state’s Sustainable Energy Utility and serves as its co-chair, congratulated the University on becoming part of an important national program. “A hallmark of any great leader is his or her ability to both seize and take full advantage of the opportunities before them,” McDowell said. “President Harry Williams and DSU Executive Vice President for Finance and University Treasurer Amir Mohammad have demonstrated vision and leadership by joining the SEU Bond Program and saving the University millions of dollars in energy costs.” McDowell, long recognized as a leader in energy policy, said the program is important because it helps institutions take advantage of the “non-use of energy” which he observed is the nation’s cleanest and greatest new energy resource. “President Williams has helped to cement DSU’s position as one of our country’s most forward-thinking schools.”

Dr. John Byrne, co-chair of the SEU and the architect of the bond structure, praised DSU for embracing the distinctive role of higher education. “DSU has turned its campus into a living laboratory for how to build a sustainable future – it shines as a model of advanced thinking for the country,” he said. The SEU’s 2011 Energy Efficiency Bond is the first in the country to finance clean energy investments from the money savings created. The SEU has put Delaware in the forefront of clean energy efforts nationally, with several cities, counties and states duplicating the model, according to Dr. Byrne. “Being asked to be a member of the President’s Better Building Challenge validates that DSU is focused on what matters to our state and our nation, “ said Dr. Williams.

* Story from the DSU Website/Office of Public Relations (www.desu.edu/news), Carlos Holmes (cholmes@desu.edu)
At the start of the spring 2012 semester a familiar and beloved face will be missing from the Mass Communications Department. Dr. Asgede Hagos will be taking a semester-long sabbatical to study the impact of radio on peace-building. Dr. Hagos will be traveling to Eritrea and Burundi (Countries in Africa) where he will meet with Eritrean colleagues who are also studying this topic. This is not the first time that Dr. Hagos has studied the impact of radio on peace-building. In the past his studies have taken him to Burundi, Uganda, and Somalia. This time, however his work and research will be documented and published in his next book.

Dr. Hagos will spend a month in Eritrea, followed by two or three weeks in Burundi. To explain his passion and research interest in this area, Dr. Hagos referenced the movie *Hotel Rawanda*, which is based on a true story. In the movie, the outrageous and incendiary hate-filled statements were broadcast daily, on the national radio. According to Dr. Hagos, it is necessary to study the impact of communication and to better understand its use as a mechanism for peace-building but it is also important to understand some of the challenges that journalists face in countries other than our own.

When asked what prompted him to take this opportunity, Dr. Hagos explained that taking sabbaticals increase the value of the individual faculty member and bring recognition to the university. Dr. Hagos has made a significant contribution to the university at large and to the department with over 17 years of service at Delaware State University, so it seems only fitting that he would broaden his own portfolio and do work that is complimentary to the global mission of this university.

He also stated that he had been yearning to take some time to further his knowledge on communications and peace-building. Dr. Hagos said that after meeting certain requirements, professors at Delaware State University are entitled to a sabbatical, but this is the first time that the mass communications department has had enough staff to take on his classes in his absence. When he returns he will use his real life experiences to make connections for his students, especially his Media Research class. Dr. Hagos believes that his time away from the university will enable him to become an even more influential professor.

Dr. Hagos will miss teaching at DSU, but the work he will do while on sabbatical will be beneficial to his research, the university, and his students. Dr. Hagos is thrilled to have been granted this opportunity but would be remiss if he didn’t say how much he’s going to miss the faculty, staff and students.

Ashley Chichester
The Three Paradigms of Media in the Digital Age

The arrival of the Internet changed most of the paradigms that until now helped us to describe and understand the public communication dynamics in the traditional analogue mass media environment. The digital age arrives with a set of big communication challenges for traditional mainstream media. The blogging phenomenon represents the ultimate challenge for the old communication system because it integrates both: the new features of the digital world and a wide democratization in the access to media with a universal scope. Based on Jose Luis Orihuela PhD and MA, Professor at the School of Communication, University of Navarra, he proposes ten theses about this changing landscape. Of the ten, the most significant and summarized below:

**Paradigm I —> from audience to user:**
The communication process in the eCommunication scenario is user centered: users have the control to choose, to decide, to search, to define and configure, to subscribe or unsubscribe, and to comment and, most important: to write, talk and film. The widely used YouTube and Facebook are the platform for people to record their daily life.

**Paradigm II —> from media to content:**
The focus shift from the industrial production constrains (press, radio, television) to content authority in order to define media. National Geographic and CNN, for example, are not a particular kind of media, but brands which represents authority over an area of content (natural life) or expertise in current affairs content management (journalism).

**Paradigm III —> from monomedia to multimedia:**
One of the strongest issues about digitalization is that text, audio, video, graphics, photos and animation could be arranged together and interactively on a single media for this first time in history. This multimedia identity of the eCommunication environment allowed all media industries to converge on the Net (press, broadcast, movies) and this is the reason why media distinctions related to use of single language (textual, audio, visual) tend to be erased. Online media are multimedia, and multimedia is a new language.

The new scenario for public communication in the Internet era should be considered as an opportunity to redefine the profiles, the professional challenges and the academic training of communicators, and also to think about the changing nature of media.

For more on the paradigms visit: http://revcom.portcom.intercom.org.br/index.php/cs_um/article/viewFile/4676/4395

Jiahui Wan*

---

*Jiahui Wan is from China. Her hometown is in Shenyang, Liaoning Province. She came to DSU because The university in China has a project that allows students to study in America. Her major is China at the university is Translation and Interpretation and she is studying English while here at DSU. Jiahui says that studying in abroad is going to be beneficial for her future career. Jiahui says that she has made new friends and gained new perspectives; all of which would not have happened if she had not applied for the exchange program.
From Foster Care to the White House: Meet Lucas Daniel Boyce

Some men see things as they are and ask why? Others dream things that can be and ask why not? ” a quote from Nobel Laureate, George Bernard Shaw; one in which Mr. Lucas Daniel Boyce used to fulfill his dream. Mr. Boyce is what some of us would call a miracle. Mr. Boyce was born premature to a drug and alcohol abusing call girl. Born as illegitimate orphan, Lucas was sent to the foster home of Dorothy Boyce when he was just ten days old. He flunked Kindergarten because he was not use to it and because he still had drugs in his system. That became his first failure and also his first lesson from his foster mother. She told him two things, “Lucas remember who you are and who you represent and remember you can do anything you put your mind to.”

Lucas carried those words of inspiration with him and took the world by storm. Graduating valedictorian of his class, Lucas had three life goals. He wanted to work in the White House, fly aboard Air Force One, and work for an NBA team. At the age of 29, Lucas accomplished all three of his life goals and is surely a trailblazer. The White House takes 1,500 to 25,000 intern applications every year, and about 100 applicants get in, “…so getting an internship at the White House is very dim,” Boyce explains. Upon graduating Lucas applied for a White House internship position and was given the opportunity of a lifetime. As a result of his hard work, he was offered a position in the White House. He worked in the Office of Political Affairs and was in charge of monitoring political activity and tracking key races across the Plains-Southwest region of the United States. He also coordinated pro-active communication, public relations and education outreach across diverse communities, constituencies and issues on behalf of the President.

Lucas described a time in his life where he had to walk away from his dream. He explained that although it was tough resigning from the White House, he knew that it was time for him to embark on another career journey. However, before leaving the White House post, he fulfilled goal number two of flying on Air Force One. Looking back, Lucas can joke about how nervous he was planning a trip for President Bush and boarding Air Force One for the first time.

It took Lucas several years before he realized his final goal of working for an NBA team, but it did come to fruition. Lucas joined the Orlando Magic in July 2008 and is now in his third season of being director of Multicultural Insights, Cause Marketing and Government Affairs for the Magic. “There is more to basketball then what you see on TV,” Lucas comments. In 2010, Lucas was given the responsibility of overseeing the organization’s Community Relations department.

At 29, Boyce’s story is one of true inspiration. He is a living example of hard work, dedication and grace. To learn more about Boyce’s journey, buy his book Living Proof, (available on Amazon). Follow him on Facebook (Lucas Daniel Boyce) and Twitter (@Lucas Daniel Boyce) or visit his website LucasDanielBoyce.com

Scheniqua Earle
ALUMNAE PROFILES

Mass Comm Grad Brings State Play to Delaware

Kelle’ Avent graduated from Delaware State University with a BA in Mass Communications and Marketing. Upon graduation from Delaware State, she relocated to Los Angeles. Although her story begins as one wrought with hardship (Avent was raised by her grandparents as a result of her parents’ addiction to drugs) she didn’t let these circumstances handicap her. She was the program director and station manager for the campus radio station and as a freshman she landed a paid internship at WRBS in Baltimore. “Did I hit some bumps in the road? Sure,” says Avent, but having taste of the real world is what made the transition from college to the real world easier for her.

Avent’s latest venture is the stage play "The Big Payback". I asked Kelle’ to talk to me about the inspiration for this play. “I was living in California with my sister and she [my sister] called and told me that our grandmother passed away. She told me that our grandmother won the Mega Jackpot at a casino and had a heart attack and died.” Kelly said that her grandmother was an avid gambler and often frequented the casinos. In a sense, she died doing what she loved. The play is loosely based around her grandmother’s death but also on the teachings of both grandparents who raised her. The stage play featured actress Charnele Brown from A Different World. “Kelle is a pioneer, when she asked me to do the play I couldn’t say no. Ever since I met her, she was a go-getter and wouldn't let anything stop her,” Brown told students at a DSU Symposium.

When asked what advice she would give to current students, Kelle’ said know exactly what you want to do, plan it out go for it. She says there are going to be times when it looks gray, but consistency and perseverance is key. Avent wrapped up our conversation by sharing one of her favorite scriptures, Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For Kelle’ this means having your vision written out and be ready to act on it because you never know what God is going to send your way.

Adrian Sutton

From DSU To High Fashion

Tamika Toler was known on campus as a entertainer and a trend setter, recently launched Meka Mo, a wardrobe styling and image consulting firm. Her unique style and sense of fashion causes heads to turn; a mixture of eloquent, trendy, and slightly risqué combinations is her business trademark. At Meka Mo, the PR skills she learned at DSU are at work every day. In November, Toler hosted a release party to celebrate the launch of her firm. “This has always been something I had a strong passion for. I love putting together looks that stand out for all the right reasons,” says Toler.

Toler does everything from wardrobe styling and consulting to the public relations and marketing of her company and uses Twitter and Facebook to promote her business. Tamika’s work can be seen in music videos and on YouTube. Visit her website at www.themikamo.com.

Ebony Harris
At the beginning of the semester I was offered an exciting opportunity and had to act on it quickly. I was offered the internship of a lifetime at NBC 10 in Philadelphia. With a concentration in TV, Radio and Film, I couldn’t pass up an opportunity to work in a newsroom, but it meant adjusting my course schedule, commuting and doing many of my classes online.

I worked in the NBC 10 Consumer Department with anchor Tracy Davison. Ms. Davidson does the consumer report each week, bringing viewers valuable information about sales, ways to save money and important financial information that can help consumers during the recession. The staff was made up of producer, Alexis Leonard and one other intern from Widener University who is also Broadcast Journalism major.

As the assistant to the anchor and producer, my day-to-day responsibilities included making calls, assisting the consumer team with daily stories, researching, setting up interviews and appointments with consumer experts, posting articles on the social networking site and on the NBC 10 website.

I have been trained to use Dalet, which is NBC10’s program where everything as far as news, videos and pictures are store. With this program, a producer (or even an intern) can edit and put together and entire broadcast. I also assisted the staff with putting together stories for on air, like compiling information so that everything was ready to be written. Probably the most exciting part of my job was going out on shoots and watching the live broadcast in the studio.

One thing that I’ve realized in the last 15 weeks is that there are so many things that you can’t learn in the classroom. You have to secure a great internship in order to get the experience you need to be a good journalist. Each day that I was able to intern at NBC 10 proved to be more exciting than the previous one. There were so many people there just as eager as I was and willing to help the interns, regardless of what department you worked in.

This experience was priceless and as a result I know I’m getting closer to my dream. My long-term goal is to become a news anchor and this was the most rewarding place for me to be. I was able to get hands on experience and some practice in front of the camera. Hopefully this experience will open many doors after graduation and who knows...you may see me on NBC 10 in the near future!
Students Reflect on Their Senior Capstone Presentations

Senior Capstone week comes with a great level of stress but there is also a sense of relief when it’s over. As a senior, many of use have been waiting and preparing for this moment for four years and once Capstone Week arrives we have to ask ourselves “are we ready?” Meaning after this final step, are we ready to go out and make our mark on the real world!

The Senior Capstone experience is a way to bring together four years of classroom learning, internship experiences and other knowledge and apply all of their skills in a final research-oriented evaluation. For many Mass Comm students, the semester began with several library meetings to go over research methods and from there, each week students met with their advisors and worked in small learning communities to complete their projects.

The days leading up to Senior Capstone Week were challenging but the most successful students were the ones who prepared and worked closely with their advisors. “The biggest challenge for me in completing my Capstone was getting research from the library database, but I was able to do different keyword searches and using other sources to find good research,” explains Turquoise Fitzgerald Convergence Journalism major. On top of writing a 15-page research paper, students had to complete a product related to their concentration. Students used their creativity to produce everything from campus events, to lectures, to documentaries and radio programs.

Topics for the fall 2011 Capstones included Crisis Communication, The Use of Stereotypes of African American Women in Advertising, The Effects of Television on Six Year Olds, and Social Media in the Newsroom to name a few.

“This Senior Capstone means that all of the work I’ve done has counted for something. I’m happy to have completed all of the requirements,” Says Deborah Miller Convergence Journalism major and 2012 graduate. Many of the students will be able to use their Capstone work as a part of their portfolios as they begin to look for jobs in the field or as a part of their applications for graduate school.

Assita Briscoe
COMPETITION FOR A CAUSE

DSU Students Collect Coats as a Part of the Burlington Coat Factory/One Warm Coat Partnership

WDSU radio “The Hive” partnered with several student organizations on campus including, SGA, Iota Phi Theta, and PRSSA to compete against several universities located in the tri-state area in the first ever “Warm Coats & Warm Hearts” college edition coat drive.

Developed by Burlington Coat Factory and One Warm Coat in partnership with ABC’s Good Morning America, Warm Coats & Warm Hearts provides gently used winter attire for anyone who expresses the need for such items. Through this initiative, WDSU radio and its partners were able to collect over 240 coats for those in need and were able to gain national recognition for their service by being highlighted on a variety of national platforms. “This was more than a coat-drive for our students,” said WDSU Radio “The Hive” advisor, Ava Perrine. “This was a way for our students to use their television and radio production skills and their PR and marketing knowledge [from the classroom] to galvanize support for a major national campaign and competition.”

All of the coats collected by Delaware State were donated to The Shepherd Place, a non-profit agency located in the heart of downtown Dover. Intended to reduce the degree of homelessness in Kent County, the Shepherd Place provides short term shelter for those in need. WDSU radio will continue collecting coats through January, 2012.

Valprecious Hamm & Rashidah McCoy

Mass Comm Students Host Open House

Each semester DSU hosts an open house for perspective students. Perspective students can learn about the admissions planning and selection process, discover financing options through scholarships and financial aid and explore our many academic offerings. The students also get to meet with the various deans, chairpersons and faculty members and tour the beautiful campus, including residence halls and dining facilities.

This October a number of Mass Comm students worked with Dr. Raythatha to welcome perspective Mass Comm majors. “It’s important to have students talk to the perspectives so they can hear first-hand about the great things happening in our department,” said Jasmine Duncan. Dr. Raythatha has coordinated the Mass Comm open house for the last two years.

Dr. Divyesh Raythatha
I’ve been thinking about critical thinking. I just finished reading Stephen Brookfield’s new book on the topic, *Teaching for Critical Thinking*. (Side note: Stephen is a prolific author, writing on a variety of teaching-learning topics and his work has generated a number of classics including *The Skillful Teacher*, *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*, co-authored with Stephen Preskill, and *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. If you don’t know his work, by all means add it to your reading list). My recent journal reading contained a couple of interesting articles on critical thinking as well.

Critical thinking seems like such an abstract, even elusive, concept to me. I know, there are all sorts of concrete definitions for it, but the way it influences our pedagogical thinking and classroom practice is not very precise. Part of the problem may be all those different definitions. As the authors of one of the articles note, “critical thinking can include the thinker’s dispositions and orientations; a range of specific analytical, evaluative, and problem-solving skills, contextual influences; use of multiple perspectives; awareness of one’s own assumptions, capacities for metacognition; or a specific set of thinking processes or tasks.” (Stassen, Herrington, and Henderson, p. 127)

The second article points out that many political science faculty (I think this could be said of most faculty in general) offer pretty generic advice on assignments where students are expected to show evidence of critical thinking. “Most suggestions for critical thinking assignments offer vague advice: allow students to discuss matters, tell students they need to think critically, ask them to rewrite.” (Fitzgerald and Baird, p. 624) The article then proposes a variety of assignment designs that promote the development of critical thinking skills related to evidence assessment. Most of the designs are pretty discipline-specific, but I thought several points in the article were excellent. We aren’t as purposeful as we should be in designing assignments that promote critical thinking, however we define it, and if we have come up with creative activities and assignments that are effective (meaning we have assessed how well they work), we don’t share those much beyond a few favorite colleagues.

Brookfield offers something useful in his book that I hadn’t seen before—a list of times in a course when critical thinking (defined as “clarifying and checking assumptions by viewing material from different perspectives” p. 79) is particularly important.

- When skills and knowledge have to be applied in the real world
- When independent judgment is needed
- When alternative interpretations and perspectives are possible
- When actions and decisions need to be informed
- When rapid judgments are called for
- When students are encouraged to see themselves as knowledge generators

The various points made in these articles and by Brookfield reminded me of a metaphor offered by Tim van Gelder in highly useful article that offers six cognitive science lessons for teaching critical thinking. His first lesson is that critical thinking is hard. “Humans are not naturally critical. Indeed, like ballet, critical thinking is a highly contrived activity … ballet is something people can only do well with many years of painful, expensive, dedicated training. Evolution did not intend us to walk on the ends of our toes, and whatever Aristotle might have said, we were not designed to be all that critical either.” (p. 42)

Despite being hard, critical thinking is terribly important. The political science authors wonder if it isn’t even so more today in “an information environment characterized by a fragmented media establishment, blurbd-driven news coverage, and an increasingly polarized political system.” (p. 619) We can’t leave the development of critical thinking skills to chance, hoping students will pick them up by virtue of being around folks who are good thinkers and who assign them logically coherent things to read. We must be clear about what we mean by critical thinking and purposeful in the activities and assignments we use to promote its development

Read more from Dr. Weimer at http://www.facultyfocus.com
The Mass Communications Message is a student-initiated publication that will afford Mass Communications majors from the three concentrations an opportunity to write for a departmental publication. Some of the articles are written as a part of class assignments or written by student members of PRSSA, the Mass Comm Society, NABJ or WDSU Radio “The Hive”.

It is important for our students to be engaged in a converged media environment and learn both traditional and new ways of story-telling as newsmakers. While journalism as we know it is changing dramatically, one thing that remains a staple in this industry is the ability to investigate, research, explain and write strong news stories.

As faculty of this department, we are committed to creating venues for our students to hone their ability and work hand in hand with journalism experts so they can be prepared for the challenges ahead as they graduate and move beyond this great university and into their respective career fields. We want our students to have diverse portfolios and a lasting influence on the future of journalism and the news media. To this end, cultivating the spirit to be the media pioneers of the future begins right here in our department.

The publication 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 the March or May issues can submit stories (and story ideas) to Dr. Edwards at fedwards@desu.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Francine Edwards
Associate Professor

Dr. Francine Edwards
Editor

DECEMBER ISSUE CONTRIBUTORS

Assita Briscoe
Scheniqua Earle
Ebony Harris
Dr. Divyesh Raythatha
Adrian Sutton

Ashley Chichester
Valpresious Ham
Rashidah McCoy
Raven Taylor
Jiahui Wan