

# The Roar

Communication Studies at TCNJ: A National Leader in Student-Faculty Engagement

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## LPH HOSTS DEPARTMENT'S FIRST ALUMNI DAY

On February 28, the Communication Studies Department held its first annual Alumni Day in the Brower Student Center. The College's chapter of Lambda Pi Eta (Alpha Xi), the Communication Studies honor society, hosted the event. Approximately 40 alumni attended, representing classes from the past twenty years. The day included a networking session, which current students in the Communication Studies Department were invited to attend.

The session was helpful to many students, who were able to form lasting connections both with alumni of TCNJ Communication Studies alumni, many working in industries of interest to the students. Junior Radio/TV/Film major, **Jenna Bush** ('11), calls her experience a success, stating, "I met people both in and outside of my field and am still in touch. I might even be working with some of them in the future."

The sentiments from alumni present were very similar. 2008 graduate and independent filmmaker, Andrew Pearson, believes it was a positive step for the Communication Studies department as a whole. "It was a great way to integrate the increasing success of the Communications Department in all areas with co-professionals and a great way for undergrads to network." **Carly Reichert** ('05), a high school instructor and Outreach Media Trainer for MSG Varsity Television, noted what was on many students' minds throughout the day - that finding out first-hand about what it is like in the real world was crucial to the event. "It is one thing to read about it, but to really hear it from the horse's mouth allows students to get a feel for what a person does."

In addition to providing valuable networking opportunities for both current and former students, the de-



Students, faculty and alumni network at Alumni Day  
*Photo courtesy of Addie Stuber*

partment's Alumni Day gave alums a chance to give back to their Alma Mater, and to re-connect with friends! Content Producer and Media Trainer for MSG Varsity Network and writer/director for the web television series, "Issues: The Series," **Scott Napolitano** ('06), was eager to take part because of the connections he made while attending the College. "If I hadn't stayed in touch with certain people I bonded with at TCNJ, my march through the field would have been far more difficult. When I heard that there was to be a gathering for students, I wanted to participate and give back."

The event was organized by **Dawn (Santin) Epstein** ('05) and **Kristen Kiernicki** ('09). Said Kiernicki: "For the last few years, people in the department have been discussing ways to better connect with alumni. We thought that holding this event would be a great way to get them back on campus and talking to students."

After the networking session, alums were invited to stay for lunch and listen to Dr. John Laughton, Dean of the School of the Arts and Communication. A raffle for TCNJ apparel was held, won by **Christine (Yzaguirre) Aromando** ('04). Following the raffle, Professor Terry Byrne led a tour of the new Arts and Interactive Multimedia building. Some alums also stayed to tour the campus.

Both students and alumni considered the event to be a success. Reichert was thrilled that the day's events brought her in touch with various current and former members of the College's Communication Studies Department. "It allowed me to get back in touch with many old friends and professors, and showed me how we all used our degree!"

"Turnout for this event was great--for many people, this was their first visit to campus since graduation," said Kiernicki. "I really hope it's something that we can continue in the future."



Dr. Pollock catches up with some alums.  
*Photo courtesy of Addie Stuber*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Faculty Profile	2
Senior Spotlight	3
Department News	3-6
Club Updates	7
In Other News...	8

## FACULTY PROFILE: Professor Johnson

Professor Lorna Ann Johnson (also Lorna Johnson Frizell) has been an instructor in the Radio/TV/Film concentration of the Communication Studies department for nearly 10 years. She began teaching at The College of New Jersey in the fall of 2001. Professor Johnson currently teaches various classes in the RTF track, including, Languages of Film and Television, The Art of Editing, Documentary Production (all in conjunction with Dr. Susan Ryan), and African American Film.

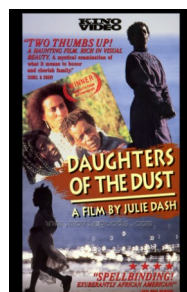


"THE CLASSROOM  
SHOULD BE AN  
EXCITING PLACE."

- PROFESSOR  
LORNA ANN  
JOHNSON

Before becoming known as "Professor," Johnson attended Northwestern University for her undergraduate degree, and later graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, with a M.F.A. in Film Production. Interesting to note, Professor Johnson also graduated from the same high school as Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor: Cardinal Spellman High School in the Bronx, NY!

Prior to starting at TCNJ, Johnson cemented her place as a break-through voice in the film industry. Working in all areas of filmmaking – from Production Assistant to Line Producer – she took part in the creation of many ground-breaking films, including *Daughters of the Dust*, the first feature length film by an African American woman, Julie Dash.



It was during the shooting of this film that Johnson fell in love with filmmaking. Recounting the experience, Johnson said, "It was so rigorous, and I completely loved it. Every single second."

Professor Johnson's other works have been screened at film festivals both internationally and throughout the US, including the New Orleans Film Festival, the Women in the Director's Chair, and the Mill Valley Film Festival in California, where her film *My Wolverine* won the Jury Award at the 5@5 Program in 1998. This same film also won Best Experimental Film from the National Black Programming Consortium.

Additional works include her documentary, *Freedom Road* (2004), which profiles female prisoners in a memoir writing workshop and has been broadcast on national television and screened internationally, and *Just Another War*, a film that chronicles the impact of the Iraq war on three women and that has been screened at the 2008 Athens Film Festival in Ohio and the 2009 Montreal

Internal Human Rights Film Festival. In 2006, Johnson was invited to present her body of work at the Whitney Humanities Center at Yale University.

With all of the hard work and success outside of the classroom, what continues to motivate Professor Johnson as an instructor? According to her, it is the students. Inspired students, to be exact. "That's it. [Teaching] is this exchange of ideas. When that exchange of ideas generates energy — a spark — that's exciting. The classroom should be an exciting place." With this in mind, keep an eye out for some of Professor Johnson's fascinating and exciting classes in the 2010-2011 school year!



A scene from *Freedom Road*

## SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Robert Liedtka

Robert Liedtka is a senior Communication Studies major in the Radio/TV/Film track. As a native of Hamilton, N.J., prior to attending The College of New Jersey, he took part in the New Jersey Stars scholarship program and graduated from Mercer County Community College, where he received his Associates degree in Liberal Arts with a focus on Film.

Robert has completed ten short films and currently has three on the festival circuit. He has worked on films that have won Telly Awards, and is currently writing a feature-length thriller that he hopes to complete in the near future. During his time as a student, Robert has produced multiple award-winning projects, including his most recent documentary, *Giving Green*, which he wrote and directed with partner Nick Donnoli. *Giving Green* is a documentary about The College of New Jersey's ongoing initiative to create a "greener" campus. The film, according to Robert, "set out to see how TCNJ was approaching environmentally friendly practices." The film also explored the state of New Jersey's stance on the Green Movement as a whole.

Unbeknownst to many, Rob is not only a well-known local filmmaker, but a serious contender in the Martial Arts as well! "I love Mixed Martial Arts and have trained and competed for the last four years."

After graduation from The College, Robert plans to move to Florida and set up an Internet base company. He also plans to continue his career as a filmmaker. Persistence and creativity have allowed this Communication Studies student to achieve a level of success that will inevitably give him an advantage in this difficult economy. Look for Robert to continue in the film industry on his way toward becoming a highly successful producer!



Above: Liedtka strikes a pose.

Below: Liedtka (on left) and co-writer/producer/director Nick Donnoli discuss *Giving Green* at the Princeton Environmental Film Festival.



"WTSR IS  
IMPORTANT TO  
ENOUGH PEOPLE,  
THAT WE'LL BE ABLE  
TO FUND IT."

-KEVIN POTUCEK,  
WTSR GENERAL  
MANAGER, ON THE  
STATION'S MOVE  
TOWARD SELF-  
FUNDING.

## WTSR MOVING TOWARDS SELF-FUNDING

Due to recent budget cuts across the state and the College, WTSR, the campus radio station, is in the process of trying to become self-funded.

The station plans to do this with the help of listeners and alumni, who feel a strong connection with the station. Says WTSR advisor and general manager, Kevin Potucek, "I'm confident

that TSR is important to enough people that we'll be able to fund it."

The station now humbly accepts donations. Those interested in giving or learning more should contact the Development Office, "not only to see how to donate, but to let them know how important it [the station] was to you."



Students at work in the WTSR studios



## WTSR AND THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY GET THE LAST LAUGH

With the help of Kel Mitchell, the actor/comedian best known for his roles on Nickelodeon's "All That" and "Kenan and Kel," 91.3FM WTSR, the College's radio station, brought happiness and hope not only to members of the campus community, but also to the millions of Americans diagnosed with cancer every year.



Members of WTSR hold the check with the amount of money they raised for the American Cancer Society

On Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, the station hosted "Laugh in the Face of Cancer," a benefit show for the American Cancer Society. The show was a smashing success, filling the Kendall Hall Main Stage and raising over \$2,600 for cancer research and prevention. Ten comedians took part in the fun, including current TCNJ students and alums. Gordon Baker-Bone, **Jason Cantor ('10)**, **Rick Cohen**, Brandon Gulya, **Garrett Hoffman**, Noah Houlihan, Boris Khaykin, **Adam Mamawala ('09)**, **Shelley Snyder** and **Drew Toresco** shared the stage with emcee, Kel, for the night's events. Acts included musical comedy in the form of two acoustic guitarists and even a short rap in honor of the evening's host, in addition to traditional (and hilarious) stand-up routines.

WTSR put together the show largely due to the station's '09-'10 Director of Grants and Funding, and stand-up comedian, Jason Cantor. Cantor's mother was diagnosed with breast cancer at the start of the 2009-2010 school year. "After talking to other people, it became quite apparent that nearly

everyone knows someone who has been affected by cancer. I realized that the comedy show would be a great way to get people together and have a good time for a really good cause." In addition to being a stand-up comedian himself (He modestly claims his freshman year floor-mates thought he was funny "for whatever reason," and urged him to enter a campus competition. The rest is history!), Cantor has worked with Kel Mitchell on various events in the past. "I perform only as a hobby, but I enjoy organizing and promoting shows even more than being in them. This was the third show I've done with Kel."

Cantor describes Mitchell as very "high-energy" and "an extremely giving and charitable person." WTSR Station Manager, **Melissa Virzi ('11)**, agrees, stating, "Kel was great to work with. He went above and beyond what you expect from a performer." This became evident to anyone at The College on the day of the event, as Kel walked through campus promoting the show, signing tickets and countless orange soda bottles.

With "Laugh in the Face of Cancer," the radio station truly proved itself to be a valuable, if not intrinsic, part of both the outside and campus communities. Says Virzi, "In recent years WTSR has sat second chair on most events around campus, so as the leaders of Laugh in the Face of Cancer, we really wanted to prove to ourselves and to the campus that we're capable of successfully handling an event of this magnitude." And successful they were! As Cantor notes, "It is very rare that you bring ten comedians in and they all do well, but this show was awesome to be a part of."



Kel Mitchell pumps up the audience at WTSR's "Laugh in the Face of Cancer"

\*WTSR is a student-run, non-commercial station broadcasting out of Kendall Hall to all of Mercer and Bucks counties, as well as parts of others and over the Internet at [wtsr.org](http://wtsr.org). It accepts donations (email [stationmgr@wtsr.org](mailto:stationmgr@wtsr.org)).

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-JASON CANTOR,  
WTSR GRANTS AND  
FUNDING DIRECTOR,  
ON ORGANIZING  
"LAUGH IN THE FACE  
OF CANCER"

## MINOR DETAILS EQUALS MAJOR WIN AT GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL

At this year's Garden State Film Festival in Asbury Park, NJ, a fresh new face was present to accept the "Home Grown Student Documentary Short" Award. That face was TCNJ junior and Communication Studies major, **Jenna Bush** ('11). Bush's film, *Minor Details*, about a soldier's experiences serving in the war in Afghanistan and his return home, received the award. **James Henderson** ('09), a TCNJ alumnus who graduated in 2009 after returning from a 15-month tour, was the focus of the film.



Winners Jenna Bush and James Henderson at the Garden State Film Festival.

Photo by Tim Lee, *The Signal*

As part of the department's Documentary Production class, Bush began researching topics for a short film. "Originally I wanted to make a film about students' relationships with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After much searching, we found James. He was a soldier AND a student. We decided to go with a profile documentary of him." With the help of Professor Terry Byrne, Bush continued working on the film after her class had come to a close last spring, and finished what she had titled *Minor Details* over that summer.

Why *Minor Details*? In the film, James refers to a leaky roof of a soldier's tent as a "minor detail," but Bush notes that there is much more behind the title. "The message of the film is to be the opposite of a minor detail and to appreciate the small things - minor details - in life." To Bush, the title also speaks of all of the troops who are stationed overseas or who have since returned home. "It

refers to the fact that James may be one in millions of troops who have fought overseas, a minor detail. Yet no single person is a minor detail."

The short film features footage captured overseas by Henderson himself, on a small, handheld camera, combined with footage shot by Bush and her team during Henderson's last semester on campus. What stands out is the film's coverage of the emotional transition endured by Henderson as he moves from a soldier's life in Afghanistan back to civilian life in the US.

Over 100 films are screened in over 30 categories at Garden State annually, so for Bush, it was an honor for her very first film to be recognized. "It was reaffirming that the film was recognized by the outside world," she says. With the success of this film under her belt, she feels encouraged to continue her work in the film industry. "This film is about how

one individual can be involved in something so much bigger than himself. It's about taking a risk, immersing oneself in the world around them, and expanding one's own small world. It's about being who you are, doing what you think is right, and forgetting about any outsiders who may judge you." And that's exactly what this aspiring filmmaker plans on doing.

\*Jenna Bush is currently a production assistant for the documentary feature *Demon on Wheels*, directed by Christina Eliopoulos. She is also working on a script for a short narrative she plans on shooting this fall with fellow Communication Studies student Dan Quinn. Check out more of her work at [www.jennaashley.net](http://www.jennaashley.net).

"NO SINGLE

PERSON IS A MINOR

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- JENNA BUSH,

JUNIOR

COMMUNICATION

STUDIES MAJOR,

ON HER FILM,

*MINOR DETAILS*.

## STUDENT PRESENTS WORK AT 101ST ANNUAL ECA CONFERENCE



Eastern Communication Association

This year's Eastern Communication Association Conference was held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> in Baltimore, MD. The 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention took place at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore at Inner Harbor, overlooking the scenic Inner Harbor of Baltimore, an ideal location considering the convention's theme this year, "Charting a Course: Meeting New Horizons." Senior Communication Studies major, **Jaime Riccio** ('10), attended the conference on behalf of the department and her peers to present three papers in the Association's Health Communication and Undergraduate Poster Session programs.

The research papers - "Internet Health Search and the Physician-Patient Relationship;" a study involving students' usage of health websites like WebMD and how it affects their perceptions of physicians, "Cross-National Newspaper Coverage of Human Trafficking: A Community Structure Approach;" a content analysis of coverage of human trafficking in newspapers in countries across the world, and "Cross-National Coverage of Females' Right to Education: A Community Structure Approach;" another content analysis of newspapers in countries around the world - were written by students in Dr. Yifeng Hu's Health Communication class and Dr. John C. Pollock's Communication Research Methods class.

Though she did not write the papers, Riccio was requested

to present at the convention when the authors could not attend. "I felt honored to be asked to represent the College and the department at such a large and well-respected event," she said of the request.

Jaime presented papers on Thursday and Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Dr. Hu assisted in the preparation for the event. "She really helped me fine-tune the presentations and the Powerpoints - even though I ended up not being able to use those." As all Communication students know, preparedness is key, but sometimes, one cannot plan for all outcomes. Despite the creation of two computer presentations, Jaime discovered shortly before presenting that the convention hotel lacked computer-capable conference rooms. "Luckily, I had prepared notecards and was really familiar with the material, but I was freaked out for a minute!"

Overall, the conference was a success for both the Communication Studies department and TCNJ as a whole. Riccio was one of the few undergraduates presenting at the conference, which tends to cater to graduate students and professors, but felt right at home. "Everyone seemed to be impressed with the research I presented and what I had to say. I received a lot of compliments and questions. It was exciting to know that I had sparked interest and created discussion."

This is not her first time at a conference, as Riccio also attended the National Communication Association convention in Chicago this past fall, but it is the first time she has presented at such an event. Will this student continue on the conference circuit after her trip to ECA? Absolutely. "This was a wonderful experience for me. I actually plan on attending NCA in California once I'm in grad school next year!"



Scenic view of the waterfront from ECA's 101st annual convention at the Hyatt

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-JAIME RICCIO,  
( '10), ON HER  
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## CLUB UPDATES



### WTSR

With the huge success of its comedy show, "Laugh in the Face of Cancer," hosted by Kel Mitchell (see article), WTSR plans to carry-over this winning streak to the next semester. The station continues to grow, with over 100 student and community volunteers bringing Mercer and Bucks counties (and the world, via wtsr.org) a great variety of music. 91.3FM also continues to bring some of the best indie and alternative artists to TCNJ through monthly concerts and musical events at The Rat, co-sponsored with CUB. Says WTSR Station Manager, Melissa Virzi, "Make sure to look out for many more TSR sponsored events coming up next semester!"

WTSR is always looking for further involvement, so those who are interested in being a part of the station should e-mail wtsr@tcnj.edu.

### Communication Studies Club

This semester, the Communication Studies Club continued to grow. The club held its first event, a resume-writing workshop! Students were invited to bring copies of their resumes and share them with the group for peer critiquing, with various sample resumes being circulated. Next semester, CSC hopes to continue growing and has many more activities and events planned. Says current CSC advisor, Jaime Riccio, "Because this group is still in its early stages, so to speak, we are looking forward

to a lot more growth over the next year, and to host a lot more fun events!" CSC is always looking for new members, so watch for notices about meetings and events next semester. Those interested in joining CSC should send an e-mail to riccio2@tcnj.edu.

### Lambda Pi Eta

Lambda Pi Eta continues to host many Communication Studies events on campus. This semester, the extremely successful Alumni Day in February brought together alumni spanning the past twenty years and provided a valuable networking opportunity for current students. It also re-connected old friends, professors and former students. Spring inductions were also held this semester, with Dr. Anntarie Sims as guest speaker. Next semester, LPH, led by new president, **Kellyn Klapko** ('11) will hold its regularly scheduled events such as the Career and Internship Panel and fall induction ceremony.

### Public Health Communication Club

The Public Health Communication Club just elected its new executive board for next year. They are: **Angela Pineiro** ('11), **Katie Ward** ('11) and **Jackie Webb** ('10). For next semester, the group plans on working with Health Services to design a campaign for avoiding and preventing the spread of the flu



(especially with the recent development of H1N1), and is currently looking for a speaker to host an event on campus. PHCC is

open to any interested students, both inside and outside of the Communication Studies department, so be on the lookout for upcoming e-mails about meetings next semester!

### Lions Television

Lions Television continues to bring The College of New Jersey a diverse array of television programs made by, and for, TCNJ students. LTV just finished wrap-



ping up a great season to one of the campus community's favorite late-night shows,

*The Early Late Show*. Says the show's host, Jaime Riccio, "Despite not too many episodes getting to air this semester, we are keeping up with them in the editing rooms, so keep an eye out for episodes from this spring coming out next semester!" In addition to the Early Late show, Lions Now, the campus TV news source, will also be airing new episodes and interviews with some of the College's favorite bands, such as Matt & Kim. With the election of its new executive board (listed below), look out for fresh, new programming in Fall 2010!

As always, LTV invites students to come and be a part of the fun, either for crew or talent. E-mail your interests to ltv@tcnj.edu.

"LOOK OUT FOR  
MANY MORE TSR  
SPONSORED  
EVENTS NEXT  
SEMESTER!"

-MELISSA VIRZI,  
STATION MANAGER  
FOR WTSR



## WHERE THEY'RE HEADING NOW

In this special June edition of The Roar, we look at the graduating class of 2010 and where they will be going in their lives after TCNJ and Kendall Hall:

**Kristen Kiernicki** (Fall '09) – Kristen is attending the University of Kentucky in the fall, where she will pursue her M.A. in Health Communications.

**Elaine White** – Elaine is currently working as a freelance film and video editor. She plans on moving to New York to pursue a career in the film industry.

**Danny Giovenco** – Danny will be attending the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) in the fall to pursue his Master's degree in Public Health.

**Maddie Patrick** – In the fall, Maddie will be attending Rutgers Law School in

New Brunswick.

**Jessica Leeds** – Jessica is attending Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication to pursue her Master's degree in Public Relations.

**Melissa Koerner** – Melissa will be attending Kean University in the fall, where she will pursue her Master's degree in Speech Pathology.

**Catherine Consentino** – Cat is currently in charge of booking A-Listers for the TV show, "Let's Talk," on the Verizon Fios 1 Network (with host and TCNJ alum, Gary Gellman). She is also pursuing her musical career, playing throughout the Tri-state area.

**Jaime Riccio** – Jaime is attending Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication in the fall, where she

will be pursuing her M.A. in Media Studies.

The Communication Studies department's graduates have a very diverse background and have been involved in numerous activities throughout their time at TCNJ. Therefore, they are going into various and unique fields! Some other examples of where our grads are heading:

- Master's program at TCNJ for Ed.M. in Elementary Education
- Pharmaceutical Sales
- The Institute of Culinary Education in New York City
- Acting school at the New York Film Academy
- Entrepreneur – starting an Internet company

## IN OTHER NEWS...

TCNJ and Communication Studies alum, **Rowena Briones** ('08), graduated this May from the University of Maryland's M.A. program in Public Relations. She will now go on to earn her Ph.D. in Communication from the University.

2009 graduate, **Amanda Burd**, completed her M.P.A. at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Administration this May. She was recently hired by the United States Health and Human Services Department in Washington, DC. We wish her our congratulations!

Professor and Department Chair, Dr. John C. Pollock, spent the Spring 2010



*Image courtesy of ica2010.sg*

semester in Argentina, on a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship. He returned June 1<sup>st</sup> to prepare for his upcoming trip to Singapore for the International Communication Association conference from June 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>. At the conference, Dr. Pollock presented research on cross-national

coverage of human trafficking, climate change and models of press-state relations in African newspaper coverage of AIDS.

The Honorable Judge Bruce Campbell, longtime professor and friend of the Communication Studies Department, retired from the College this May. During his time here, Judge Campbell taught COM210 – Mass Media and the First Amendment (along with Dr. Woodward). "He is a wonderful teacher and mentor," said one of the students in his last class at TCNJ. His presence in the department will be greatly missed, but we wish him luck in his journeys!

The College of New Jersey



Communication Studies

**"A National Leader in Student-Faculty Engagement"**

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter or have any suggestions, please contact Lambda Pi Eta at:

[lbmbdapi.tcnj@gmail.com](mailto:lbmbdapi.tcnj@gmail.com).