

**VOL.
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Spring 2022

THE ROAR

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Communication Studies:
A National Leader in Student-
Faculty Engagement

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DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Faculty-Student Research Duo Uncovers Surprising Ways to Improve Public Health Messaging

By Patricia Alex

After two years of pandemic life, COVID fatigue is real. That goes for pandemic messaging, too, as people have grown weary of a barrage of statistics, shifting mandates, and guidance.

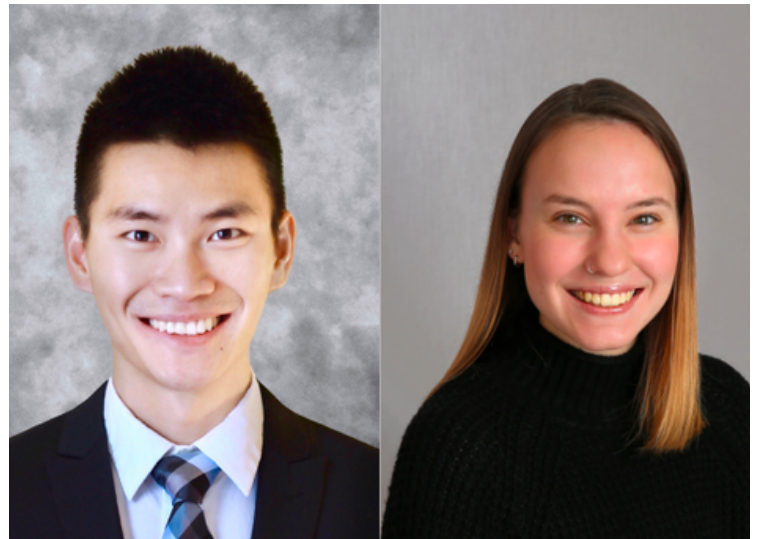
But recently published research by a TCNJ professor may hold lessons for effective public health communications going forward. Spoiler alert: it could involve TikTok dance videos.

“Forceful or controlling” messages seem less effective in communicating health messages — or motivating people to practice preventative behaviors or get vaccinated — than narratives and more entertaining content, said Yachao Li, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health.

Li worked with colleagues in Arkansas in late 2020 to survey 744 adults and found messages with a lighter touch seemed to have more traction, no matter how grave the topic. “People were tired of hearing numbers,” he said.

The researchers tracked reactions to news reports, social media posts, and interpersonal conversations.

Many reactions ranged from inattentive to overtly negative. Respondents were especially fed up with hearing about mask wearing, according to the study, published in the online journal, *Health Communication*.



Public health communication research team Li and Hammond.

Novel elements and appealing visuals helped, Li said, noting that “some COVID-19 campaigns have used animations and well-known cartoon characters to reiterate the need to follow preventive behaviors in a dynamic way.”

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Delivering messages via emerging social media, like TikTok, also proved engaging, said Li, whose students previously researched the stigmatization of COVID on Twitter. Public health agencies adapted quickly to adopt TikTok as the global rise of the new short-form video platform coincided with the bloom of the pandemic. TikTok has an estimated to have a billion active users, most under age 35.

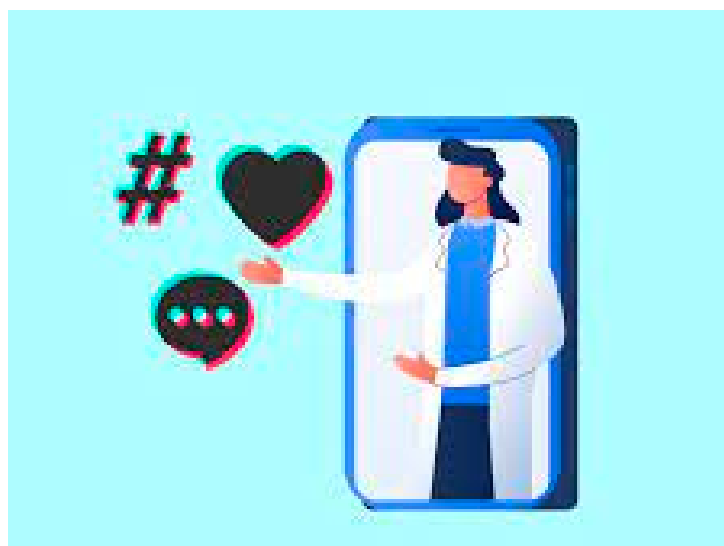
In another study that appeared in *Health Education Research*, Li, the Arkansas researchers, and TCNJ student Paige Hammond looked at 331 TikTok videos produced by non-governmental organizations like the Red Cross and World Health Organization. They tracked engagement by monitoring views, likes, comments, and shares.

Dance videos were the most popular, Li said. “The user-centered features of TikTok also encourage average people to create and disseminate health messages that may be considered more relatable and trustworthy,” he added.

A follow up study looked at how vaccine information was spread on TikTok, taking into account the role of hashtags and other tools to spread the message.

It also looked at the quality of messages, with sometimes competing or contradictory information or viewpoints, such as the pro and anti-vaccine.

“That was really interesting because we were seeing how attitudes and behaviors were influenced by social media,” said Hammond '23, a double Communications Studies and Public Health major. “We got to apply what we learned in health communication classes.”



DEPARTMENT NEWS



TCNJ Students Showcase Outstanding Papers at Spring, 2022, National Health Communication and State Communication Studies Conferences

In spring, 2022, highly selected TCNJ students in public health and communication studies were honored with seven multi-authored papers accepted for presentation at national and state professional conferences in health communication and communication studies. All papers were completed in undergraduate and graduate classes in International Communication taught in fall, 2021, by Dr. John C. Pollock, Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health.

Three student papers, mostly created by undergraduates, were accepted in refereed competition for the biannual University of Kentucky Conference on Health Communication (KCHC) held April 8-9, 2022, where papers from TCNJ students (typically the only undergraduate papers accepted nationwide) have been presented every two years over the past 16 years (since 2006). The TCNJ student papers included the following:

Mia Gomes, Danielle Nicoletti, Jai Sookram, Jessica Farrell, John C. Pollock, & Courtney Sacco. (2022, April). *Cross-national news coverage of vaccine hesitancy: Community structure theory, political instability, and privilege*. Paper presented at the biannual University of Kentucky Health Communication Conference, Lexington, KY.



From left: Gabriela Valladares '23, Brielle LoBello '23, and Mia Gomes '23 at the Kentucky Conference on Health Communication.



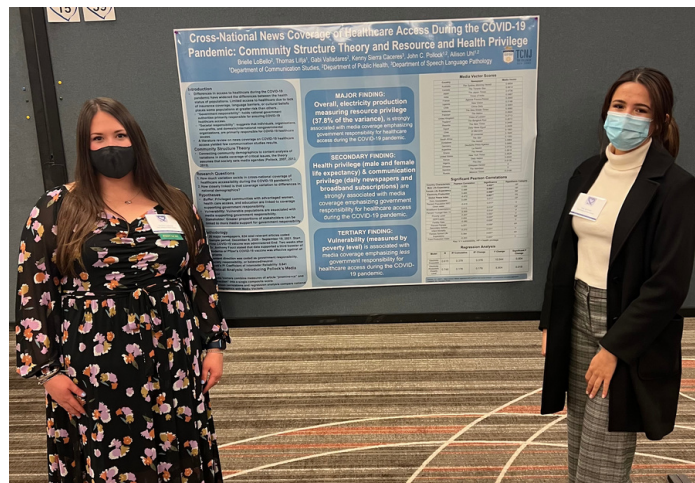
Meghna Krishnamurthy, Nicole Fenske, John C. Pollock, Allison Uhl, & Brielle LoBello. (2022, April). *Cross-national newspaper coverage of mental health during COVID-19: Community structure theory and privileged health access*. Paper presented at the biannual University of Kentucky Health Communication Conference, Lexington, KY.

Brielle LoBello, Thomas Lillja, Gabriela Valladares, Kenneth Sierra Caceres, John C. Pollock, & Allison Uhl. (2022, April). *Cross-national news coverage of access to COVID-19 healthcare: Community structure theory and health and resource privilege*. Paper presented at the biannual University of Kentucky Health Communication Conference, Lexington, KY.

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At the Kentucky Health Communication Conference, the three attending TCNJ undergraduates, Mia Gomes '23, Brielle LoBello '23, and Gabriela Valladares '23, expressed excitement at the opportunity to present their papers at the oldest health communication professional conference in the US. Mia Gomes, senior author of a paper on cross-national coverage of vaccine hesitancy, said "Thanks to the kind hospitality of everyone attending, I felt (very) comfortable giving my presentation which I believe went very well! I received many questions asking to explain the specifics of how we code articles, how my findings lead to future policy, etc. Additionally, I enjoyed helping (fellow TCNJ student) Brielle with the poster presentations, as well as the connections I was able to make with some of the professors attending. Overall, it was a very productive and insightful experience, and I am very thankful I had the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and attend! Similarly, Brielle LoBello commented, "Attending the 2022 Kentucky Conference on Health Communication was truly the highlight of my academic career. It was an honor to present my group's research alongside distinguished scholars and students from throughout the world. I am continuously grateful for the support and guidance from Dr. Pollock and TCNJ." Gabriela Valladares added, "Thank you to KCHC for giving one of my co-authors, Brielle LoBello, and me the amazing opportunity to share our research, done under the advisement of Dr. John Pollock and Alli Uhl. Congratulations to Mia Gomes and all our fellow presenters who welcomed us so kindly to our first conference experience!"



From left: Brielle LoBello '23 and Mia Gomes '23 Presenting their Poster at the Kentucky Conference on Health Communication.

In addition, two team papers written entirely by graduate students in the TCNJ Master's in Public Health program were accepted for the annual New Jersey Communication Association annual conference held online March 26, 2022.

Isabella Ciccone, Sofia Cartagena, Cristhofer Moreira, John C. Pollock, & Courtney Sacco. (2022, March). *Cross-national newspaper coverage of COVID vaccination access: Community structure theory, communication privilege, and resource privilege*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the New Jersey Communication Association, Mt. Laurel, NJ.

Denalerie Johnson-Faniel, Santiago Yacovino, Ivy Atte, John C. Pollock, & Courtney Sacco. (2022, March). *Cross-national coverage of COVID mental health access: Community structure theory and resource privilege*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the New Jersey Communication Association, Mt. Laurel, NJ.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

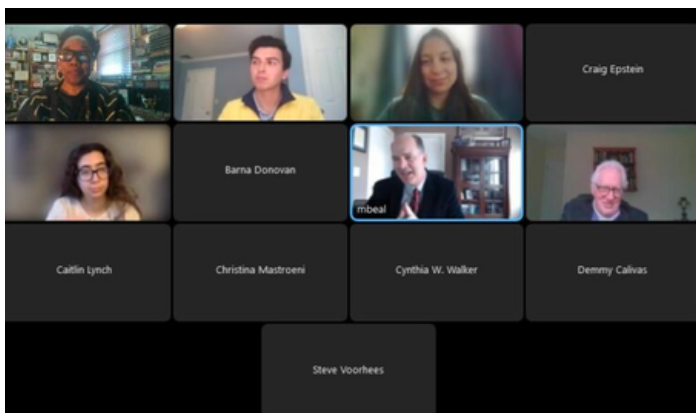


According to Isabella Ciccone, MPH candidate and senior author of a paper on cross-national coverage of COVID vaccination access, “I (was) thrilled to present on behalf of my research team at the 26th annual New Jersey Communication Association Conference on Saturday, March 26th! I want to thank my fellow co-researchers, Cristhofer Moreira, and Sofia Cartagena, for their contributions to our research paper, as well as Courtney Sacco for being the best learning assistant in guiding us through it all and Dr. John C. Pollock for the mentorship.”



Isabella Ciccone, MPH Candidate, presenting her NJCA paper at TCNJ's COSA alongside Mentor, Dr. John C. Pollock.

Summarizing his view of so many student papers accepted for presentation at state and national levels, Dr. Pollock expressed justifiable pride in the accomplishments of so many TCNJ students working in teams, praising in particular the leadership of student research assistants Courtney Sacco (MPH '22) and Allison “Alli” Uhl (BA '22).



A snapshot of senior author, Isabella Ciccone, & co-researchers, Cristhofer Moreira, and Sofia Cartagena's group presentation at the Virtual NJCA Conference.



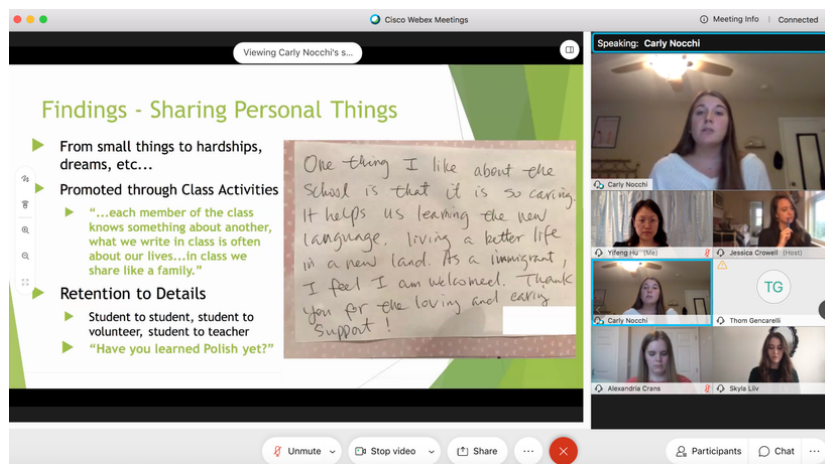
DEPARTMENT NEWS



Breaking Out of The TCNJ Bubble: A Student's Takeaways from Advanced Community Engaged Learning

By Carly Nocchi

In my view, college experience should be about pushing oneself to try new things and shoving oneself out of their comfort zone. It is one of the first and last times in one's life where you can reinvent yourself and your beliefs through the abundant resources and opportunities provided by your institution. For me, I did this by enrolling in an advanced level Intercultural Communication course as a freshman in the spring of 2019. I did not know what to expect or what would come of it, but now in the 2020 fall semester of my junior year, the takeaways from this class continue to be endless. The paper that stemmed from this class, alongside several of my peers' projects generated from this class, was presented on October 16, 2020 at the 78th Annual Conference of New York State Communication Association as part of a panel about incorporating intercultural communication and community engagement into the classroom setting. We received very positive comments from the audience. One graduate student from the University of Miami commented that she enjoyed our sharing and thought that it was such an enriching and engaging curriculum that our instructor, Dr. Yifeng Hu, created in this class.



Yifeng Hu and students presenting a panel titled "Using Ethnographic Research to Help Local Nonprofits: How an Intercultural Communication Class Engages Communities" at the 78th Annual Conference of New York State Communication Association, October 16, 2020.

"Something that more places should integrate," she said. Enrolling into Dr. Hu's COM 411 Intercultural Communication course was easily one of the best decisions of my college life thus far. When I decided to come to The College of New Jersey, the most common piece of advice I heard from friends and family was to stay as far away from Trenton as possible. All their perceptions of the city cultivated inside my head and convinced me that in my four years at TCNJ I would never step foot inside the city limits. If it weren't for Dr. Hu's class, I would have never been able to experience the true Trenton and break out of the TCNJ bubble.

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We have a beautiful campus, amazing professors, and so many other opportunities afforded to us right on our campus. What I know now is we also have a beautiful city, with amazing and diverse people, whom we can learn so much from.

The Intercultural Communication course is an Advanced Community Engaged Learning (ACEL) class. In addition to studying communication within and between cultures, and the importance of developing one's ability to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultures, students are guided to apply what they are learning in the classroom into projects designed alongside local non-profit organizations, in order to provide assistance to community-identified needs, such as delivering intercultural communication workshops for patrons of the organizations.



Students from the Intercultural Communication class delivering research-based intercultural workshops that catered to different needs of immigrants in the English School at Lawrenceville, NJ.

In the past, Dr. Hu's classes worked with community partners such as Trenton Area Soup Kitchen, Meals on Wheels, and HomeFront. The ACEL project my class took on was to complete mini ethnographic studies of two English as a second language school, one named The Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund in Trenton, and the other the English School in Lawrenceville, and create intercultural guides for their volunteers respectively.

Before we could do that, Dr. Hu knew it was important for us to assess the preconceived notions we all had of Trenton and the surrounding areas. Through TCNJ's Center for Community Engagement, we got to meet Samuel Kanig, the TCNJ Community Fellow in Residence 2018-2019. He gave us a cultural tour of Trenton and introduced us to some of the community members. Through this tour, we learned all the strides the city was making towards becoming a better place to live. What was surprising to us was that community members were the ones who started many of these movements. They weren't leaving their city's fate in the hands of anyone else, but themselves. Their diversity is their strength; they see that Trenton can become a cultural hub. This cultural tour helped to break down so many stereotypes we had about the city and this allowed us to be prepared for Sam's next visit to our class.

The next time we saw Sam was when he came into our class to introduce us to someone he mentored since he first immigrated to America, Carlos Salinas. Carlos is a remarkable person who in such a short period of time has accomplished so much.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Samuel Kanig (right) leading Hu's class on a cultural tour of Trenton, stopping by a Spanish bakery and enjoying some traditional foods.

When he got to Trenton, he spoke minimal English, but as he sat before us you would never be able to tell he hadn't been speaking the language for years. For many of the students in the class, this was our first time meeting a first generation immigrant. We all mostly came from predominantly white towns and hadn't experienced diversity until we got to TCNJ. The only stories of immigrants we got to hear were those the media highlighted. That is one of the reasons Carlos' and his story had such an impact on us as a class. He was simultaneously becoming a community leader and activist, while also working to get his YouTube channel off the ground. For someone who has had struggles beyond the realm of what I could ever fathom, he was so optimistic about the future. This solidified even more the kind of people the surrounding community had to offer and the experiences I could learn about and ultimately from.

Meeting both Sam and Carlos prepared us well for our mini ethnographic studies. We were able to go in more conscious of implicit biases we may have had and other people's opinions clouding our head. My group visited The English School a total of three times. That may not seem like enough, but honestly one would only have to spend ten minutes in one of their classrooms to have a clear picture of the school's culture. It is one of the most accepting, compassionate, and supportive places I have ever had the privilege of going. This school is a family. The students come from all over the world and attend the school for various end goals, but one thing seemed to be similar for them all: they all wanted to feel connected to their communities. I hadn't realized how isolating it could be for an immigrant when they first arrive in America. Even when they have their family here with them, they are ostracized from the larger community due to language barriers and the contentious debate on immigration. It is easy for them to feel unwanted here. That is why in my opinion, the most important thing The English School provides for their students is a tie to the community. The teachers and volunteers form genuine bonds with the students that many times become friendships that extend and last beyond the classroom.



Carlos Salinas (left), a first generation immigrant living in Trenton, talking to Hu's class about his experience in the US.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



The reason the bonds formed there are so strong stem from the most important lesson I learned from my time observing the school. The teachers and volunteers cannot go into this type of environment with a super hero complex. That cannot be where your desire for getting involved in volunteer work lies. These immigrants are intelligent and brave individuals; they do not need to be saved by us. In fact, all of the teachers and volunteers I spoke with wanted to emphasize how much they learn from the students. Many said they learn just as much, if not more. People choose to work at the school because they realize they can help their fellow community members. They realize the privilege that comes with being a native English speaker and with this recognition see how they can help people who are by all other means their equal.

The College of New Jersey's location offers a unique opportunity for students to break out of their comfort zone and embrace new things. We are minutes away from a city which is being revitalized both by people who were born and raised in Trenton and by immigrants. We can leave the campus and immerse ourselves in the various cultures of Trenton and its surrounding communities, whether it be by viewing multicultural art or eating gourmet food or interacting with amazing people. Even more than that, as students, we can become part of this change.

I am not naïve, I do understand that Trenton isn't the safest city. However, I also understand that if we continue to just focus on all the bad and try to distance ourselves and our affiliation with Trenton, the city won't prosper. Through this class and the ethnographic study, I got to see the best our surrounding community has to offer and push myself to evaluate my privilege, views of the world, and implicit biases I had. After experiencing Trenton and meeting people who live there, I know it is a community I would fight with to evolve and flourish into what it can and should be, which is a supported and respected part of our state.



Volunteer Guide Hu's students prepared for Trenton Area Soup Kitchen based on their research.



Volunteer Guide Hu's students prepared for Meals on Wheels based on their research.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Hosts Professional Development Talks Led by Department Students

On Monday, April 18, 2022, students from Dr. Keli Fazio's COM 487 course "Corporate Consulting: Leadership Strategies For Organizational Success" hosted talks sharing insight on how to successfully develop in the COM professional world.

These 10-minute talks were on a variety of topics ranging from communicating confidently in interviews to LinkedIn Branding to leading through client conflict, and more!

Thank you to Dr. Fazio and her COM 487 for taking the time to share tips on how COM college students can grow into their best, professional selves!

Our LINE UP

- JACK CAPERNA**
How To Professionalize Your Online Presence As a College Student
- HANNAH QUINN**
Making the Scariest Thing in the World your Superpower
- MARCOS OCHOA**
Confidence in Communication: Mastering and Embracing the Art of Communication
- RICHARD MILLER**
LEADing Your Way Through Client Conflict
- KAITLIN DWYER & MEGAN CONSTUBLE**
The Three S's to Success: Navigating Life in College
- HANNAH COOKE & BELLA WALZ**
How to make your goals the focal point of your life
- ANDREW DEMBOWSKI & AARON RIPPIN**
How to make your goals the focal point of your life

MONDAY
APRIL 18TH @ 1PM / KENDALL 233

THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION STUDIES

You're Invited.

GET HIRED. (AND THRIVE).

Short talks, big impact! Enjoy a series of 10-minute professional development talks. Topics include stress & time management, improving your LinkedIn image, and mastering your internship and job-related communication.

WE MAKE IT HAPPEN

JOIN US!

1 PM TO 3 PM
Monday,
April 18 2022
233 Kendall Hall

PRESENTED BY STUDENTS IN COM487 / CORPORATE CONSULTING: LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Contact Person:
Prof. Keli Fazio

More Information:
keli.fazio@tcnj.edu



Dr. Fazio's COM 487 Class. **Back row from left:** Hannah Quinn, Marcos Ochoa, Richard Miller, Aaron Rippin, Andrew Demboski, Jack Caperna. **Front row from left:** Megan Constuble, Kaitlin Dwyer, Bella Walz, and Hannah Cooke.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Students & Faculty/Staff Advisors Celebrate Student Achievement at TCNJ's COSA Event

On April 26, 2022, the Department of Communication Studies had many students presenting work at TCNJ's 25th annual Celebration of Student Achievement (COSA) which features research, scholarship, and creative activity of TCNJ students from all disciplines.

The day consisted of the students presenting their excellent work in the form of papers, posters, videos, panels, performing arts presentations & exhibitions, and other forms of scholarly or creative activity.

COM Faculty & Staff Advisors sponsoring student projects included Dr. John C. Pollock, Dr. Yifeng Hu, Dr. Judi Cook, Dr. Keli Fazio, Dr. Susan Ryan, Dr. Eugene Cho, and Dr. Yachao Li. A celebration of student filmmaking was also held in Kendall Hall for student filmmakers and faculty & staff.



Kyra Hill '23 Presenting the Poster, "Oversharing on Social Media: A look at the behaviors of adolescents and teenagers." (Instagram: @tcnjcommstudies, @tcnj_artscomm)



Celebrating student films with COM Assistant Professor, Matthew Lawrence. (Instagram @tcnjcommstudies, @tcnj_artscomm)



**Access the full list of COM'S
COSA Presentations!**

DEPARTMENT NEWS



TCNJ COM Alum Receives Emmy Nomination

Congratulations to Radio/Television/Film 2016 graduate, Folake Ayiloge, on her 2022 Emmy nomination!

Folake is an Associate Producer at The Daily Show with Trevor Noah. We wish Folake continued success in her future endeavors!



DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Students and Faculty at Lions Day!

COM Student Advisory Board members with COM Chair, Dr. Keli Fazio at the recent TCNJ Lions Day Open House– giving tours, saying hello & getting it done!



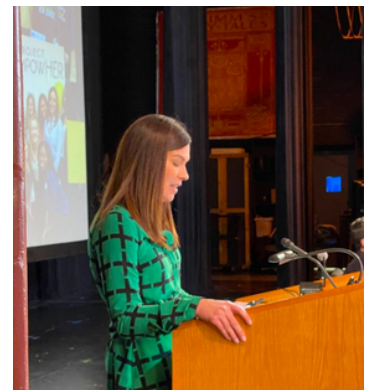
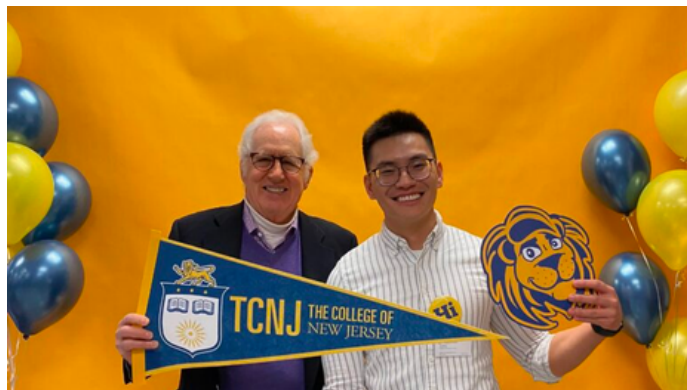
DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Welcomes Accepted Students with Open Arms and Smiling Faces

On Saturday, April 2nd, 2022, The College held its annual Accepted Students Day.

Our department was eager to welcome all accepted students and host the incoming Communication Studies majors for the day. The day was filled with freshly popped popcorn, a selfie station, student and faculty presentations, video screenings, and more! It was a successful day and we cannot wait to see many of their faces in our Kendall Hall classrooms next year.



Department Chair & Associate Professor, Dr. Keli Fazio, greeted one and all during our Department Welcome session in Kendall Hall Mainstage Theater.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Retirement Celebration Held for Beloved COM Faculty, Associate Professor Terry Byrne and Professor Dr. Gary Woodward!

The COM Department was excited to hold a retirement celebration honoring former faculty, Terry Byrne, MFA, and Dr. Gary Woodward. On April 30, 2022, the Department of Communication Studies hosted a small retirement celebration for these two beloved COM professors. Held as part of Alumni Weekend, the event brought out many stories of past years, funny tales from classes, and multiple memories all around. It was wonderful to see so many faces from the past, as we shared our good wishes for both Gary and Terry in their retirement.



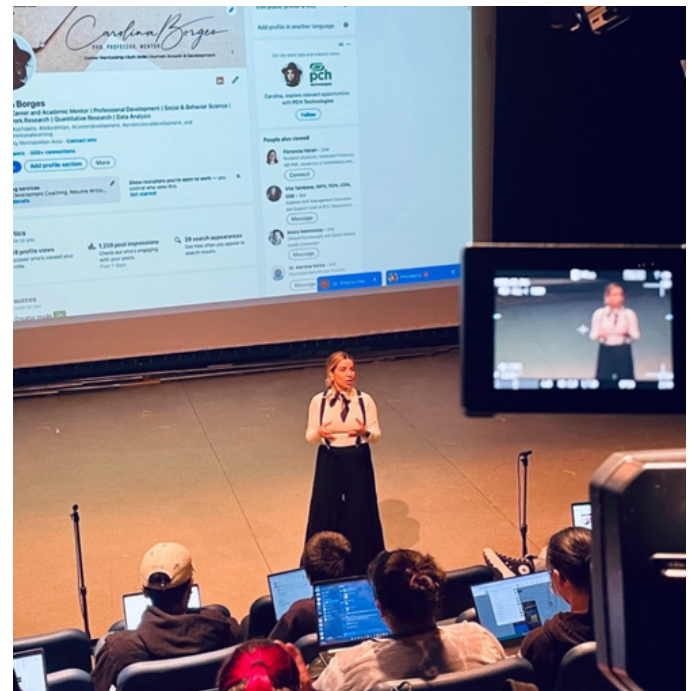
DEPARTMENT NEWS



COM Hires Nationally Certified LinkedIn Profile Expert for Exclusive Workshop on Professional Development

The Department of Communication Studies hired a nationally certified LinkedIn Profile expert, Associate Professor of Public Health, Dr. Carolina Borges. Dr. Borges gave an exclusive workshop to 30 of the department's students about how to create a dynamic online profile that will increase their chances of getting internships and job opportunities.

Department Chair Dr. Keli Fazio said, "[Dr. Borges's] approachable style and deep expertise made for a dynamic Q&A session that showed just how motivated students are for these professional development resources. Thanks for spending the morning with the TCNJ Department of Communication Studies today, Carolina!"



Dr. Carolina Borges hosting the professional workshop.

AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT



AAPI Advocacy Campaign Team Presents a Series of Interactive and Engaging Activities

Associate Professor of Communication Studies Yifeng Hu worked with a group of students on an Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Advocacy Campaign that aimed to inform the campus about AAPI history and contributions, promote AAPI representation and visibility, and combat Asian hate and stereotypes. The campaign included a series of interactive and engaging activities that led up to May's AAPI Heritage Month.

The campaign kicked off with a fast-paced street interview that tested TCNJ students' knowledge of AAPIs entitled, **"Can you name one famous Asian American?" TCNJ Street Interview**. The video is also dedicated to Vincent Chin, who was brutally killed in Detroit, Michigan, 40 years ago in a racially motivated hate crime. This campaign is also timely as it marks the first anniversary of the Atlanta spa shooting.

The team also had the opportunity to present their AAPI Advocacy Campaign at TCNJ's Celebration of Student Achievements (COSA)!



Watch [Street Interview: Can you name one famous Asian American? || 40 Years Since Vincent Chin's Murder](#)

"I am..." #NotYourStereotype: TCNJ Asian/Asian American Pacific Islander Photo Exhibit. From April 18th through April 27th, the team held a photo exhibit in the AIMM Gallery 118 proudly displaying images of Asian and Asian American students, faculty, and staff across the campus on the idea of stereotypes. (Page 20 for more information and pictures on the photo exhibit)



Students enjoying and reflecting on the photographs at the exhibit.

AAPI Showcase: Outdoor Gallery & Solidarity Pledge. This showcase ran from May 4 to May 5 under the library arcade and on Green Lawn to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month - the first ever on TCNJ's Campus! President Foster delivered a short speech and cut the ribbon at 12 pm on May 4th. (Pages 21 & 22 for more on the Showcase)



The team presenting at COSA. From left back: Dr. Yifeng Hu, Jaime Hennig, Nick Textores. From left front: Nicole Carberry, Stephanie Shen, Kelly Jung, Gabbi Son, Fox Parks, & Bella Trucco.



AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT

Meet the AAPI Advocacy Campaign Team!

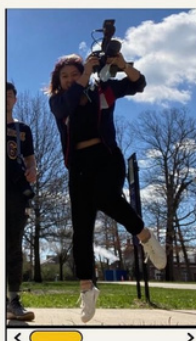
MEET THE TEAM



NICK TEXTORES

"I'm apart of this campaign because I feel that I can contribute to a great cause that is associated with my culture. As an adopted Asian American, I always want to explore more about my heritage and support the AAPI community in terms of the recent events"

MEET THE TEAM



STEPHANIE SHEN

"Living as an Asian American, or any marginalized BIPOC, can be exhausting on a day to day basis when people around you aren't even aware of the history of your peoples' dehumanization and erasure. If there's any effort I can be a part of to help educate the public about the Asian/Asian American diaspora, I will do so without hesitancy to make my community live happier and safer. And this TCNJ AAPI Campaign is one major step towards this goal."

MEET THE TEAM



GABBI SON

"Not all AAPI feel proud of their identity because of the America we live in today. Similarly, not all AAPI have access to the education needed to fight the issues our community faces. I am fortunate to be someone with both experiences because of those before me, so it's my duty to be a part of this campaign."

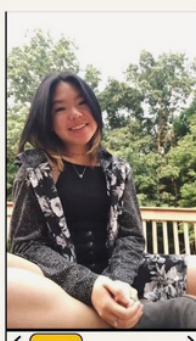
MEET THE TEAM



JAIME HENNIG

"I chose to be apart of this campaign to become more culturally aware of others' experiences and to raise awareness about the acts of violence against the AAPI community across the country"

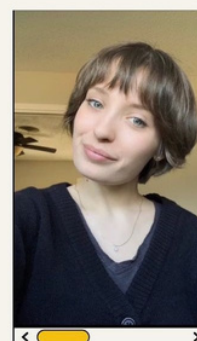
MEET THE TEAM



KELLY JUNG

"As an Asian American at a predominantly white college, I cannot help but to notice the lack of knowledge and exposure among my peers. I feel compelled that it is our responsibility as AAPI's and allies to present our history and our culture, and to make as much noise as we can. Because AAPI's were always taught to keep a low profile and to assimilate with the masses, I constantly find myself in a place between speaking up and shutting up. I've been quiet for too long; we've been in the shadows for too long. I've never been more proud of my heritage and to be able to identify with the AAPI community, but sadly younger me would not feel the same. I never want any young or old person to feel the way I did, and with this team I want to do all that I can to accomplish this. Not only do I want to increase AAPI visibility on TCNJ's campus, but to the surrounding communities, and to anyone who may learn something created by the hard work and dedication from this team!"

MEET THE TEAM



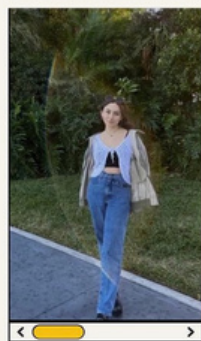
FOX PARKS

"The goal I have for this advocacy campaign is to help enlighten people of what being an ally is truly about. It's more than being a friend, it's understanding your position, leveraging it, and putting marginalized voices ahead of yours. It's striving to be supportive, validating and in some cases a helping hand. Being an ally is devoting your time to understanding the lives of others and realizing that some issues you will never have to face, but that you can do something to help just by believing in their truth. Allyship is knowing when to use your power to benefit those that hardly ever benefit from the predominant white culture we live in.

Standing up for justice in your own way, striving for change and fiercely defending those that are consistently pushed to the side. If you have privilege remember:

- A- Always center the impacted and Amplify their voices
- L- Listen & Learn from the marginalized
- L- Leverage your privileges
- Y- Yield the floor to those in need of vocalizing their experience"

MEET THE TEAM



BELLA TRUCCO

"As an intersectional feminist, I have always been interested in racial justice, social reform, and working toward undoing the systemic, pervasive nature of oppression through mutual aid. Because of this, I believe that, as college students, one of the best ways we can give back to our community is through the redistribution of education. I am part of this campaign team because I want to do all I can as an ally to the AAPI community and help in educating the TCNJ community."

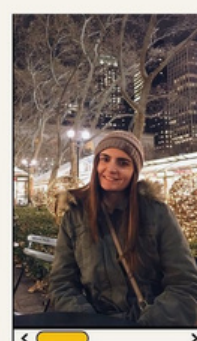
MEET THE TEAM



DR. YIFENG HU

"Ever since I hosted a #StopAsianHate listening session on campus, I have had this goal of working with dedicated students on an Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) commemoration and awareness campaign, especially because 2022 marks a series of anniversaries of injustices on AAPIs. After successfully advocating for the inclusion of AAPI history in NJ K-12 curriculum, I felt my mission is to keep going, to further raise awareness of AAPI contributions, to increase AAPI visibility, voice and vitality, and to combat ubiquitous and draining stereotypes against AAPIs. So here we are, all pumped. Are you ready for the ride?"

MEET THE TEAM



NICOLE CARBERRY

"I am apart of the campaign to be an ally to the AAPI community and spread awareness about injustices and inequalities in our country"



Follow @tcnjaapiadvocacy

AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT



Dr. Yifeng Hu and Student Advocacy Team Present the "I am..." #NotYourStereotype: TCNJ Asian/Asian American Pacific Islander Photo Exhibit

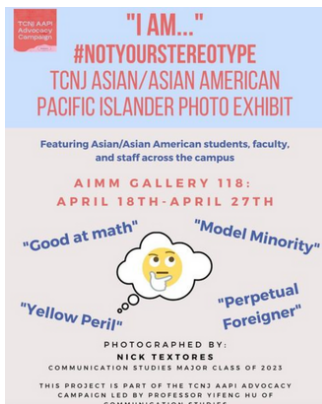
The TCNJ AAPI Advocacy Campaign Team, led by Dr. Yifeng Hu, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, proudly displayed images of Asian and Asian American students, faculty, and staff across the campus on the idea of stereotypes from April 18th through April 27th. This photo exhibit highlighted examples of stereotypes that your TCNJ AAPI friends have been constantly subject to in their day-to-day communication and reveals the importance of dismantling stereotypes and seeing people for who they are. The AAPI Advocacy Campaign team has collectively won the Alan Dawley Social Justice Prize this year for their work on the "I am... #NotYourStereotype" TCNJ AAPI Photo Exhibit.



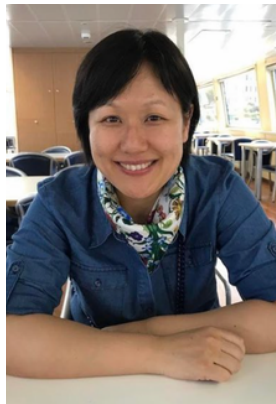
A picture from the photo exhibit with Communication Studies majors, Jodi Maloney (left) and Melissa Smith (right). Writing on paper: "Just because we're Asian doesn't mean we're smart. (But we are VERY smart)."



Another photograph from the exhibit with English & Secondary Education Major, Avina Sharma. Writing on paper: "I am also Asian!"



Flyer from the photo exhibit.



AAPI Advocacy Team Leader,
Dr. Yifeng Hu.



COM Assistant Professor, Dr. Yachao Li with his image in the exhibit. Writing on paper: "NO, I'm NOT a STEM Professor."

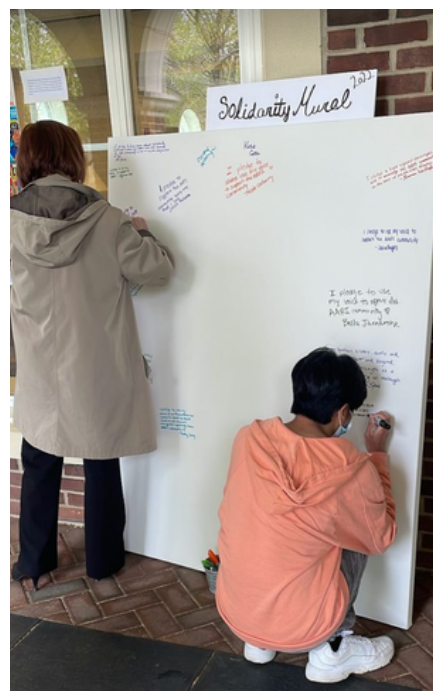
The "I am..." #NotYourStereotype: TCNJ AAPI Photo Exhibit was photographed by student team member, Nick Textores '23 and was housed in the Art and Interactive Multimedia Building. Other key members of the team include Stephanie Shen, Gabbi Son, Jaime Hennig, Kelly Jung, Fox Parks, Bella Trucco, and Nicole Carberry.

AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT



AAPI Showcase: Reflecting on the Outdoor Gallery & Solidarity Pledge Through Photographs

These photographs reflect on the two-day (May 4 & May 5) Outdoor Showcase prepared for the campus community by Dr. Hu and the entire AAPI Advocacy Campaign Team. This showcase featured artwork by students, faculty & alumni, creative writing, photo narratives, advocacy resources, giveaways, and an interactive solidarity pledge mural!



Students signing the solidarity mural.

President Foster and the AAPI Advocacy Team at the first day of the Showcase.



COM Professor & Interim Dean, Lorna Johnson-Frizell at the opening ceremony. (Instagram @tcnj_artscomm)

AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT



AAPI Campaign Takeaways & Impact

Excerpt from Kelley Freund's article, "TCNJ celebrates AAPI Heritage Month with on-campus advocacy campaign"



Can't name a prominent AAPI figure off the top of your head? They've got you covered — and bet you know more than you think you do.

"It was important for us to really involve people with this campaign," Hu says. "We wanted to create events and activities that were engaging, and we wanted to interact with the community."

Each student had the opportunity to lead a project for the campaign. For **Nick Textores '23**, a key takeaway was realizing the transformative power of listening.

"To have my own photo exhibit as a photographer is one thing, but to make an impact in the community in raising awareness and combating stereotypes made the project that much more rewarding," he said. "To listen to so many amazing and interesting stories that the participants of my project shared really touched me, and I could understand why and how certain stereotypes affected their way of living."

Jaime Hennig '22 hopes that those who interacted with the AAPI activities have come away more educated.

"I hope they were surprised to learn about notable AAPI figures and contributions and some of the injustices they have faced," she says. "But what I truly hope is that these individuals will start to seek out this information on their own and become self-educated on important topics such as this."

With some of the campaign's students set to graduate, many say their involvement was a highlight of their time at TCNJ. As for Hu, she's already making plans for next year: she has received some grant opportunities and hopes to invite guest speakers for the 2023 event.

"I hope this campaign not only amplified AAPI voices on campus, but empowered AAPI members to speak up and speak out," says Hu. "If a part of your community feels excluded or not seen, that doesn't make for a strong community. This made TCNJ stronger."

AAPI ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT



The AAPI Advocacy Campaign's Profound Mark on the Community

"TCNJ's 'AAPI Photo Exhibit' is a profoundly subtle exposé on the pervasive nature of microaggressions and the arduous task of dismantling stereotypes that our students face every day. Through this showcase, Textores lifts the voices of Asian and Asian American students and community members and reminds us that our role as the audience is to actively and consistently amplify this message."

-Dr. Brian K. Bridges, NJ Secretary of Higher Education, on the AAPI Photo Exhibit

"The showcase was both a powerful, moving document of the racism endured by the AAPI community and a call for our community to unite in the fight to end it. I am grateful for the opportunity to have experienced the exhibits and congratulate all who worked so hard to put them together. I stand with you in this fight!"

-Dave Muha, Associate Vice President for College Advancement and Chief Communications and Marketing Officer, on the AAPI Outdoor Showcase

"TCNJ has not seen this level of energy and sophistication around AAPI issues, certainly not during my time here and perhaps never. On behalf of all at TCNJ, we are truly grateful that you are bringing AAPI Heritage Month to the community. We stand to learn a lot and have our consciousness raised."

-TCNJ President Kathryn Foster on the whole campaign

"I was incredibly moved by the depth of imagery and insight presented in the showcase and throughout the campaign. By shining a light on a diverse population, frequently referred to as the "invisible minority", the exhibition highlighted a wide array of important stories that I hope will continue to break down the stereotypes surrounding the AAPI community. As a TCNJ alumnus and staff member, I was immensely grateful for the work of the AAPI Advocacy Campaign Team and all that they accomplished this semester."

-Raj Manimaran '17, TCNJ Director of Community Relations, on the AAPI Outdoor Showcase and the whole campaign

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT



Dr. Yifeng Hu's Presentation at the 2022 Faculty Sh4re Event Highlights the Danger of Racial Stereotypes in the Age of COVID-19

Associate Professor of Communication Studies, Dr. Yifeng Hu, was among the presenters at the Inaugural Faculty Sh4re event on March 10. As part of the Faculty Sh4re series, presented by the Office of Academic Affairs and Faculty Senate, four faculty from across the campus give 10-minute presentations on their research.

During her presentation, “Dirty Work: Communicating Stereotypes in Professional Settings,” Dr. Hu briefly described a recent book project for which she was awarded a Sabbatical Leave in Fall 2022. This book explores the complexity of communicated stereotype processes within distinct professions and the role that each individual plays in perpetuating stereotypes. Specifically, Dr. Hu highlighted a timely study that she will present at the 72nd Annual International Communication Association Conference in Paris, France, May 26-30, 2022. This study explores different types of communicated racial stereotypes that Asian and Asian American health care providers experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and their responses to these stereotypes. At the end of her speech, Dr. Hu called for professionals to be mindful when we communicate and check if we participate in stereotyping, because there can be real consequences that cost human lives, and explore what each of us can do to make this world a safer, more civil, equitable, inclusive, and just place.



Dr. Yifeng Hu Presenting at the Podium on March 10th at the Inaugural Faculty Sh4re Event.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT



COM Hosts Film Screening of Assistant COM Professor, Matthew Lawrence's, Award-Winning Horror Film, *Uncle Peckerhead*

On April 18th, the COM department hosted a film screening of Assistant COM Professor Matthew Lawrence's award-winning horror film, *Uncle Peckerhead*.

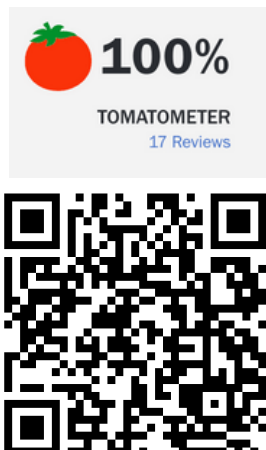
Members of the production team including the filmmaker, actors, the film's score composer, and the producer/production designer were there for a Q&A and meet and greet after the screening.

Uncle Peckerhead remains "100% Fresh" on RottenTomatoes.com with positive reviews still rolling in each month and has recently been written up in articles for popular media magazine, Loudwire ("10 Must-Watch Horror Movies That Are Totally Metal" from 2/8/22) and movie blog, Film School Rejects ("12 Movies to Watch if You Like 'The Texas Chainsaw Massacre' from 2/17/22).



The face behind the film,
Matthew Lawrence, MFA.

Since its release last August, the film has been internationally distributed to over 20 foreign markets, covering most of North America and Europe, as well as parts of South America (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay) and Asia (Japan, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam). In the first year of its release, the film was written about in Entertainment Weekly and AV Club, among many others. The production has received the following awards and nominations: BEST OF FEST - 2020 Panic Film Festival; SPECIAL JURY AWARD - 2020 Calgary Underground Film Festival; AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD - 2020 Portland Horror Film Festival; and NOMINEE: BEST INDIE HORROR - Film Threat's 2021 Award This!



[Click or Scan to watch the trailer for Uncle Peckerhead.](#)

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT



Incorporating Virtual Reality in the Classroom: A Communication Professor's Journey

Dr. Yifeng Hu held a workshop at TCNJ's Inaugural Excellence in Teaching & Learning Summit on February 17, 2022.

In the workshop, Hu showcased evolving examples of incorporating immersive technologies in various communication courses. The workshop highlighted recent student engagement with Virtual Reality (VR), including hands-on experiences and projects designed to have social/cultural/health impact. Participants of the workshop also learned how VR is revolutionizing teaching and learning in higher education, and explored ideas on leveraging it to innovate within their own field.

Dr. Hu's COM 487 Student-Faculty Advanced Research: "Virtual Reality for Social/Cultural/Health Issues," in collaboration with a computer science class, created various Virtual Reality games that have a social impact.

Links to Examples of the VR Games:

[A VR Experience of Teens of Color Living in Urban Communities](#)

[A VR Experience of Life with ADHD](#)

[Treating Generalized Anxiety Disorder with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in VR](#)



Participants playing the VR games at the workshop.



STUDENT AWARDS



COM Award Ceremony and LPH Induction 2022

On Monday, May 9th, 2022 the Department of Communication Studies proudly celebrated student achievements. Highlights of the evening included announcing recipients of our Department Awards, and the induction of over 35 promising students into our local honor society chapter of Lambda Pi Eta (LPH).

Department Chair, Dr. Keli Fazio hosted the event, and fellow faculty and staff Dr. Eugene Cho, Dr. Yifeng Hu, Professor Matt Lawrence, Dr. Yachao (Bruce) Li, Mr. Kevin Potucek, and Dr. Susan Ryan all presented awards of achievement to students in our program. We celebrate and congratulate all of our students!



The Department of Communication Studies
2022 Award Ceremony
Monday, May 9, 2022, at The College of New Jersey, Kendall Hall Theater

Order of the Evening

Welcome

Dr. Keli Fazio, Chair

Presentation of Student Awards

Award	Student(s)	Presenter(s)
Promise of Achievement Award	Evan Scarduffo (H/W), Kelly Jung (P/M), Bella Trucco (I/O), Braden Drake (RTF)	Dr. Eugene Cho
Community Engagement Award	Nicole Carberry, Jaime Hennig, Kelly Tucker	Dr. Yifeng Hu
Leadership & Advocacy Award	Ana Gutierrez, Carly Nocchi, Stephanie Shen	Dr. Susan Ryan
M. Wasser Internship Award	Jaclyn Ilcyn, Marcos Ochoa, Wandally Vargas	Drs. Hu, Cho, Fazio, Li
John Leustek Scholarship	Paige Hammonds	Dr. Yachao Li
John C. Pollock Health Communication Award	Alli Uhl	Dr. Yachao Li
David C. Rogosky Award	Elizabeth (Bess) Jones	Mr. Kevin Potucek
Department Specialization Awards	Kaitlyn Cirigliano (PM), Richard Miller (IO) Stacey Gussak (HW), Jodi Maloney (RTF)	Drs. Hu, Fazio, Li, Professor Matt Lawrence
Faculty Award	Abby Auger	Dr. Yifeng Hu

Lambda Pi Eta Honor Society Induction Closing Remarks

Drs. Fazio and Li
Dr. Keli Fazio, Chair

Lambda Pi Eta Honor Society Inductees

Abby Auger
Erin Buquicchio
Kayla Cichlar
Michael Condiracci
Hannah Cooke
Emily Croes
Rachel Dambrot
Ava De Croce
Melanie Dowling
Braden Drake
Natalia Escobar
Amanda Feldman
Emily Gellis
Jennifer Goldstein
Jack Hanstein
Maria Ibanez
Casey Lopez
Jillian Lynch
Isabella Mashanski
Richard Miller
Shannon Alexandria Neary
Kristopher Nelson
Marcos John Ochoa
Nicolette Padilla
Caleb Parilla

Madison Potash
Elizabeth Ann Richardson
Katherine Rodriguez
Ilyssa Siegel
Natalie Paige Smith
Bella Trucco
Wandally Vargas
Kuyili Velagapudi
Kathryn Wavrek
Nicole Woods



Wandally Vargas, recipient of the Matthew Wasser Internship Award.



Excited to receive their awards! From left: Jaime Hennig, Carly Nocchi, and Nicole Carberry.



Jodi Maloney, RTF Award winner, and Professor Matt Lawrence sharing an embrace.



The new LPH inductees reciting the honor society pledge.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT



Name: Patrick Coyle

Major: Communication Studies

Track: Public/Mass

Graduation Year: 2021



On-Campus Involvement: Club Ice Hockey and Phi Alpha Delta

When and where did you intern: Bristol Myers Squibb 6/7/2021-8/12/2021

Describe your internship and your role: I was a Corporate Affairs Intern for the U.S. Immunology Communications team. Here I assisted my colleagues with content creation for company campaigns. I also conducted a market analysis and social media report for the company's multiple sclerosis drug and its competitors in the same market.

What is one skill that you improved upon while at your internship?

I learned how to communicate concisely when working with colleagues and vendors. I also learned how to better manage my time when working on multiple projects and having to be present for important meetings.

What drew you into Communication Studies?

There are so many different career paths you can take as a communications major. You can work in many different industries and hold a position that's best for you.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT



Name: Jordyn Sava

Major: Communication Studies

Track: Public/Mass

Graduation Year: 2021



On-Campus Involvement: The Signal, Alpha Xi Delta, ACT

When and where did you intern: February - May 2021 at Dana Quinn PR

Describe your internship and your role: I assisted with drafting pitches, researching, and creating media lists (via Cision). I also distributed client pitches, responded to media responses, and tracked detailed feedback for client reports.

What is one skill that you improved upon while at your internship?

I really improved my writing and research skills.

What drew you into Communication Studies?

The chance to build relationships and help others.

MEET THE EDITOR



ABBY AUGER '22



Abby is a Communication Studies Major in the Public and Mass Communication specialization with a double minor in Deaf Studies and Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology. On campus, she is a member of Alpha Xi Delta and the former Internal Philanthropy Director of the chapter. She is also a member of Lambda Pi Eta (Communication Studies Honor Society), as well as a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Order of Omega Honor Society, and the National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association. Abby is also the 2022 recipient of the COM department's Faculty Award.

Thank you to Dr. John C. Pollock for the opportunity to edit this wonderful newsletter & I can't wait to see the future issues new COM students produce!

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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Match your message to your medium at TCNJ. Choose from multiple specializations—health and wellness communication, interpersonal and organizational communication, public communication and mass media, or radio/television/film—and earn an outstanding education. Our program integrates deep conceptual knowledge with strong practical experience, through close collaboration with faculty mentors whose influence stretches from scholarly research to creative media production. The result? Students do more than master the technical skills of the discipline—they learn to think critically about the way messages are created, conveyed, and consumed in modern society.

Keep up with the latest COM Happenings at
<https://communicationstudies.tcnj.edu/>