Calendar of events

**The Bluest Eye**
by Lydia Diamond (C92)
Based on the novel by Toni Morrison
DIRECTED BY RIVES COLLINS
Josephine Louis Theater
January 27–February 5

**Spring Awakening**
Book and lyrics by Steven Sater,
music by Duncan Sheik
Based on the play by Frank Wedekind
DIRECTED BY GEOFF BUTTON
Ethel M. Barber Theater
February 10–26

**Danceworks 2012**
ARTISTIC DIRECTION BY ANNIE BESERRA (WCAS97)
Josephine Louis Theater
February 24–March 4

**National Theatre Live at Northwestern: The Comedy of Errors**
by William Shakespeare
DIRECTED BY DOMINIC COOKE
Ethel M. Barber Theater
March 27, 7 p.m.

**The Little Prince**
by Rick Cummins and John Scoullar
Based on the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
DIRECTED BY DAVID CATLIN (C88)
Josephine Louis Theater
April 13–22

**Waa-Mu 2012**
DIRECTED BY DAVID H. BELL
Cahn Auditorium
April 27–May 6

**Twelfth Night**
by William Shakespeare
DIRECTED BY MARY POOLE
(GC75, GC87)
Ethel M. Barber Theater
May 11–20

For more information about these and other school events, see www.communication.northwestern.edu

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Northwestern’s Debate Team won this year’s National Debate Tournament—the first win under Daniel Fitzmier (GC02, GC06), the school’s new director of forensics (bottom left), and the 14th in the University’s history. The Speech Team placed first in its division for the third consecutive year, and Joshua Hiew (C13) and Shira DeCovnick (C11) took home three individual national championships. At a reception celebrating the national success of both forensics teams, Speech Team members (top, from left) Hanchen Wang (WCAS14), Hiew, and Milana Duggan (J14) check out the spoils of victory. Congratulating the teams was Northwestern President Morton Schapiro, pictured at bottom right with NDT semifinalists Layne Kirshon (WCAS14) and Ryan Beiermeister (WCAS12).

On the cover: The cast of *The Verona Project*, written and directed by theatre faculty member Amanda Dehnert for California Shakespeare Theater (see page 12)
I hope you have had a chance to review Northwestern’s new strategic plan, which was unveiled in late October. You can learn more about it at www.northwestern.edu/newscenter/stories/2011/11/strategic-plan-presentation.html. Highlighting Northwestern’s ambitions for innovation and discovery, undergraduate education, building effective communities, and developing a global presence, the plan is the perfect frame for the initiatives our school has been developing in the past 10 years.

For us, one key goal has been to internationalize the school and its programs. We have been able to recruit a number of faculty who have international backgrounds and experience, and we have invested in the Center for Global Culture and Communication, which functions as a “think tank” for the increasingly transcultural future of the arts and humanities. We have also partnered with the Medill School to build a branch campus in Qatar, which has made our commitment to global education stronger and more material. We are also pushing our students to engage with global communities—and one of this month’s lead stories reports the especially exciting adventure of one lucky group of students.

Another goal has been to bring greater diversity to the School of Communication and simultaneously strengthen our sense of community and connections to groups outside the University. As you will see from the new faculty profiles in this issue, our school is making tremendous strides in recruiting an exciting and diverse faculty; this has also helped us to recruit an increasingly diverse student body. We continue to work with our alumni networks to strengthen them and help advance both their continuing education and the work of our students and faculty. Two recent collaborations have been especially important for our students: a group of alumni in Los Angeles organized a showcase of Northwestern student films last spring that was well attended and resulted in great visibility for our radio/television/film program; and Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre Company, which has many ties to our school, agreed to present the thesis productions of this year’s crop of MFA students. You’ll see a story on the Steppenwolf collaboration on page 4 of this issue.

In the spring 2011 issue of Dialogue we reported on our efforts to improve undergraduate education through a new first-year experience, a modular curriculum integrating in-class and cocurricular experiences, and expanded career development programs. These have served as a model for the rest of Northwestern, and our projects are showcased in the exposition of the strategic plan.

Finally, the University has identified 10 areas of study that epitomize Northwestern’s role as a center for innovation in research and creative activity, and School of Communication faculty and students play a crucial role in almost all of them. In the coming issues of Dialogue, we plan to provide briefings on the contributions the school is making to these 10 important and engaging topics.

Barbara J. O’Keefe
Dean, School of Communication
Start a dialogue: dialogue@northwestern.edu
Comedy is serious business

It’s often said that laughter is the best medicine—which renders good comedy writing not just entertaining but also vital. On May 6 the School of Communication hosted a panel of professionals from various areas of the comedy world to talk to students about making humor a career. Featured on the panel were (above) Academy Award–winning filmmaker Luke Matheny (J97) and Comedy Central president Michele Ganeless (C87), as well as playwright and new faculty member Thomas Bradshaw (see page 14), author of The Ashes, Mary, The Bereaved, and other plays, and Holly Laurent, a Chicago writer, actor, and improviser.

Being serious is important in comedy, noted Ganeless. “[Writers] I have seen become successful are really true to who they are,” she said, citing such artists as Stephen Colbert (C86) and Jon Stewart, both with shows on Comedy Central.

Bradshaw agreed. Known for work that pushes the envelope, he said, “If you’re only endorsing values of the audience, it’s not exactly art. It has to challenge if we’re going to call it ‘art.’”

Northwestern at the Tonys

Department of theatre faculty members Anna Shapiro and Todd Rosenthal both received 2011 awards from the National Communication Association: the Donald H. Ecroyd Award for Outstanding Teaching in Higher Education and the Mark L. Knapp Award in Interpersonal Communication.

“To be recognized for both my research programs and my teaching in the same year is amazing but also humbling,” said Roloff. “I have been fortunate to work with many excellent mentors, colleagues, and students throughout my career, including the 32 years I have been at Northwestern.”

The Ecroyd Award honors an NCA member who exemplifies superlative teaching in higher education. The Knapp Award recognizes significant scholarly contributions to the study of interaction and relational processes as well as contributions to the quality of interpersonal communication through active involvement in the discipline, significant mentoring of students, and/or public service.

Chicago’s Lookingglass Theatre Company—which began as a Northwestern student group and continues to boast a preponderance of Northwestern alumni and faculty in its ensemble—was named winner of the 2011 Tony Award for best regional theater.

Lily Rabe (C04) was nominated for best actress in a play for her performance in The Merchant of Venice.

Roloff wins multiple NCA honors

Michael E. Roloff, professor of communication studies, has received two 2011 awards from the National Communication Association: the Donald H. Ecroyd Award for Outstanding Teaching in Higher Education and the Mark L. Knapp Award in Interpersonal Communication.

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School of Communication students saw the making of a television news broadcast from the inside, courtesy of a Leadership Journey to ABC-7 Chicago on May 11. The students toured the station’s downtown Chicago studios with Diana Palomar Scott, vice president of community affairs, and met meteorologist Mike Caplan (above center) as well as producers, anchors, and members of the design department—whose director is Lisa Clingan-Cruz (C95).

Alumnus wins Pulitzer

In April theatre alumnus Bruce Norris (C82) won the Pulitzer Prize in drama for his play Clybourne Park, a reimagining of Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun. The Pulitzer jury called Norris’s drama “a powerful work whose memorable characters speak in witty and perceptive ways to America’s sometimes toxic struggle with race and class consciousness.” The play opened at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre in September.

Young wins two book awards

Embodying Black Experience: Stillness, Critical Memory, and the Black Body by Harvey Young has been awarded both the National Communication Association’s Lilla A. Heston Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Interpretation and Performance Studies and the Erroll Hill Award from the American Society for Theatre Research, given in recognition of outstanding scholarship in African American theater, drama, and/or performance studies. Young is associate professor in the Departments of Theatre, Performance Studies, Radio/Television/Film, and African American Studies.

Looking back over 200 years of American history, Young’s text blends biography, archival history, performance theory, and phenomenology to share the experiences of black men and women profoundly affected by racial violence.

Leonardi wins National Science Foundation early career award

Paul Leonardi has been awarded the prestigious Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) award from the National Science Foundation. Over the course of five years, he will receive $425,000 to conduct research into the role of computer-based simulations in managerial and policy-making decisions.

Leonardi is an assistant professor and Allen K. and Johnnie Cordell Breed Junior Chair of Design in the Departments of Communication Studies in the School of Communication, Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences in the Robert R. McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, and Management and Organizations in the Kellogg School of Management. He is also an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Industry Studies Fellow.

Radway collects multiple honors

Janice Radway, Walter Dill Scott Professor of Communication Studies, has been recognized by three organizations for her body of work and teaching. She recently received the International Communication Association’s 2011 Open Field Award and the American Studies Association’s 2011 Carl Bode–Norman Holmes Pearson Prize. On campus, she was named to the Faculty Honor Roll for American Studies in a campuswide student vote sponsored by Northwestern’s Associated Student Government.

The ICA award is given to researchers who have made important contributions to the communications field from outside the communications discipline. The ASA prize, one of the oldest and most prestigious honors in American studies, recognizes lifetime achievement and service in the field.

Seth Meyers (C96) enjoyed a warm welcome as the grand marshal of Northwestern’s 2011 Homecoming Parade. Meyers is the head writer for Saturday Night Live and anchor of SNL’s “Weekend Update.” Also on hand to attend the festivities and introduce Meyers was Garry Marshall (J56).
Theatre directing and design students dream of someday working on a show at one of Chicago's award-winning, critically acclaimed theatres. To get that opportunity while still a student is quite literally a dream come true.

This past summer saw the fruition of a project years in the making: an artistic collaboration between Northwestern's MFA directing and design program and the prestigious Steppenwolf Theatre Company. “Next Up” showcased Chicago’s next generation of artists with three plays presented in rotating repertory at the Steppenwolf Garage. The productions were cast with professional actors and featured Northwestern MFA students’ directing and design work.

The graduate students made their Steppenwolf debut under the mentorship of the company’s staff and artists, including ensemble member Anna D. Shapiro, also director of Northwestern’s MFA directing program; scenic designer Todd Rosenthal, also associate professor of theatre; Steppenwolf associate artistic director Erica Daniels (C91); and the company’s director of new play development, Polly Carl. Steppenwolf artistic director Martha Lavey (C79, GC94, H10) led the series’ selection process.

“The Steppenwolf-Northwestern collaboration for ‘Next Up’ is an exciting experiment in large institutions integrating and supporting the work of young theatre makers,” said Shapiro. “Of course, Steppenwolf has a long and storied history of doing just that—but this multiyear mentor-mentee experience is really a reimagining of the university-regional theatre partnership. I am so proud to be a part of it.”

For MFA design student Miodrag “Mekey” Guberinic (GC11), working with professional assistants in a professional costume shop for Equity actors was a tremendous hands-on learning experience. “I could just pause whatever we were doing, ask a question, and then continue working,” he said.

Daniels worked with the three MFA directing students to cast the plays with professional actors and continued to work with them through the production process. She said that for Steppenwolf the
biggest goal was to “bring in young artists, young audiences, and young designers . . . trying to find the next generation of artists.” The directors worked on plays that would not only appeal to the current Steppenwolf audience but also “entice the next generation of audiences.” For example, Suzan-Lori Parks’s *Venus*, directed by *Jessica McLeod (GC11)*, brought in a more diverse audience, a huge positive for Steppenwolf.

“A lot of these students have been in the professional world,” said Daniels. “They started finding their voice and then went back to grad school. It’s great to work with young artists who are not new—not green. We can teach them, and they can teach us.”

The other “Next Up” plays were Rajiv Joseph’s *Animals Out of Paper*, directed by *Jaclynn Jutting (GC11)*, and Lucy Thurber’s *Where We’re Born*, directed by Brad Akin (GC11). In addition to Guberinic as costume designer, the design teams included scenic designer *Scott Davis (GC11)*, scenic and costume designer *Emily Tarleton (GC11)*, and lighting designer *Nastassia Jimenez (GC11)*.

“Next Up” was supported by the Leading for the Future Initiative, a program of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

—Emily Hiser Lobdell (WCAS97, GJ01)
Tova Vance (GC10) liked her job and the culture where she worked, but she had a few ideas about where she wanted to go—up. Already in management at US Cellular in Chicago, Vance (top, second from right) wanted to contribute at a higher level: she wanted a seat at the table that decided strategy.

To get there, she needed to focus on her professional development. Within a year she’d honed her leadership skills, developed a broader view of communication and commerce, and picked up a master of science in communication (MSC) from Northwestern. She’d also picked up the pace on her career. Now, as a project manager for the company’s Enterprise Program Management Group, Vance uses what she learned in the MSC program to manage resources and develop solutions to deliver the company’s highest priorities.

“The MSC program responds to real needs in the workplace at all levels and from all sectors,” said program director Staci H. Zake. “Our students improve their competitive edge, obtain a master’s degree, and are able to work full-time while they complete the 10-month program.” Classes are offered during one full day of instruction each week on alternating Fridays and Saturdays.

If an intensive academic commitment while working full-time seems too much, consider Vance’s experience. “I was able to apply concepts I learned in the classroom immediately at work and able to solve challenges from work in the classroom,” she said. “It enhanced my performance on the job and my in-class experience.”

MSC students take courses in topics such as change management, managing information and innovation, communication ethics, communication strategy, and public speaking—classes that teach the skills needed for the global economy. Vance’s most valuable experience in the program was a project on social media. To complete it, she interviewed several US Cellular leaders and made the case for a collaborative, comprehensive, and

Maybe you’ve heard that the master’s degree is the new bachelor’s degree. In many professions a postgraduate degree is the door to higher levels of responsibility—and higher levels of reward. The School of Communication’s professional programs train students to be the next generation of communication leaders in business, health, education, and entertainment.
consistent approach to social media, which her company didn’t then have. It does now.

That project also expanded Vance’s network at the company, which pays off every day in her new job, where she builds relationships across departments and between associates and senior executives. “Communication is critical to my role,” she said. “The program greatly enhanced my ability to guide decision making and to affect business outcomes.”

**Master of science in speech, language, and learning**

The master of arts in speech-language pathology and the master of arts in learning disabilities have merged into a single program—the master of science in speech, language, and learning (SLL). This new program in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders captures the synergy of the two long-established, respected programs and will better prepare students for the challenges in today’s workplace. “This merger also accurately reflects the vital research activity in the department, much of which involves translational interdisciplinary work that crosses traditional boundaries between speech and language pathology and disorders of learning,” said senior lecturer Paula McGuire, the director of the SLL program and the Speech, Language, and Learning Clinic.
When someone earns a PhD, the next step is often right back into academia—on the other side of the desk, as a faculty member. But just as not every “doctor” practices medicine, not everyone with a doctorate chooses the tenure track. While most School of Communication doctoral graduates move into teaching, many follow paths that lead into the professional world.

Dennis Zacek (GC65, GC70) always had his eye on the Chicago professional theatre community after finishing his doctorate—but he couldn’t find a job. Instead, he accepted a teaching job at Loyola University Chicago and then in 1974 took a one-year leave of absence to start his acting career. When his leave was over, he wanted to “split the difference,” he said, and “keep my position as a professor and work in the community.” Back then this practice was not viewed favorably by academic institutions, so his request was denied, but eventually Zacek was allowed to teach part-time while pursuing stage work. He became the artistic director of Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theatre in 1978 and retired from teaching when his duties there became too consuming.

Zacek retired from Victory Gardens in June. He calls his 34 years as artistic director his greatest career achievement. “I did it with a certain level of integrity and consistency for a long, long time and established an institution that now is still very much alive and hopefully will prosper.”

You’ve Never Heard Of, a combined cultural history of 19th-century America and biography of a clown who ran for public office from the circus ring. “Now I write on varied topics (Shakespeare, the Gettysburg Address, lithographic art, Mark Twain, physical comedy), lead history seminars and master classes on acting, and give presentations for the New York Council of the Humanities Speakers Bureau,” said Carlyon. “I also act.”

An interdisciplinary doctorate in theatre and film led Mary Anne McGarry (GC77) to teaching at Northern Illinois University for four years—and then to a versatile career as a Jill-of-all-trades. She started an MFA program at the Irvine campus of the University of California, created her own summer Shakespeare theater outside Chicago, wrote and produced a series of stage plays with music, acted and directed at California’s South Coast Repertory, started a film production company and even wrote a novel. She’s most proud of her book, which she worked on with some friends and co-authors. The book was released in early November.}

THE DOCTOR IS IN

Doctoral degrees in communication prepare our alumni for the front of the classroom—and the front of the pack.

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critical thinkers, well versed in evidence-based research and skilled at applying this information to the diverse patient populations they serve.

**Master of fine arts in writing for the screen and stage**

The MFA in writing for the screen and stage is a professional program for storytellers. The small program offers individual attention from faculty members who are also prolific and award-winning writers and a community that supports the fledgling playwrights and screenwriters long after graduation.

“I tell the MFAs, ‘Look around the table at your 11 colleagues,’” said program director David Tolchinsky, professor of radio/television/film. “These people will be your writing partners, some will be agents, some will be producers, you’ll form companies together, and as much as you can, you’ll depend on one another for creative feedback.’ We’ve designed the program so students are tracking together to create this bonding experience.”

Program alumni have won prestigious fellowships and grants, seen their work produced on stage, and had their films shown at top film festivals. Through the Professional Reads Program, recent graduates of the program can share their works-in-progress with theatre and film professionals, gaining valuable feedback that gives them a leg up in the industry.

**Master of fine arts in directing or stage design**

Two programs, one community of theatre professionals in training: under the tutelage of renowned, award-winning faculty artists, students in both the MFA in directing and the MFA in stage design work together to bring their unique visions to life on stage. The three-year program emphasizes intensive collaboration, rigorous analysis of texts, and professional artistry. (See page 4 for related article.)
Every four years, for 11 days in June, 40,000 visitors from all over the world gather for an extensive agenda of speakers, workshops, and performances in what is the largest performance design event in the world. No wonder Mary Zimmerman (C82, GC85, GC94), the Jaharis Family Professor of Performance Studies and a Looking-glass Theatre ensemble member, had dreamed about bringing Northwestern students to the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (informally called the PQ) since 2009, when she served as its US judge.

As she recalls, “From the first moments I entered the gigantic exhibition hall with its dozens of ‘pavilions’ from different countries—Korea next to Brazil next to Croatia next to South Africa next to the United Kingdom—I understood what a significant event it is.”

With thousands of professionals and students from 62 participating countries over five continents presenting work in costuming, sound, lighting, and scenic design for dance, opera, drama, site-specific art, multimedia performances, and performance art, the experience is positively mouthwatering. And this year Zimmerman’s dream came true. Thanks to her hard work plus financial support from the School of Communication, 11 undergraduates, 12 graduate students, and 3 faculty members attended the Quadrennial in June.

Costume designer and assistant professor of theatre Ana Kuzmanic (GC04) is vividly familiar with the event’s power, having visited it as an undergraduate 16 years ago. “I remember being overwhelmed by the work,” she said, “some of which really changed my perception of design.” Since then she has exhibited her design work at the Quadrennial three times, including this year, when she presented her costume design for *Desire Under the Elms* as produced by Chicago’s Goodman Theatre and subsequently on Broadway. Also presenting was Walt Spangler, visiting assistant professor of theatre and the production’s scenic designer.

Kuzmanic and Spangler weren’t the only Northwestern PQ participants. Several undergraduates in the group flew to Prague early to work on “Six Acts,” a series of performances created by college students under the guidance of professional theatre artists.
The performances were set in and around the Old Town sections of Prague and explored the location’s history.

Theatre student Joseph McManus (C12) participated in an installation work conceived and directed by a multidisciplinary artist from the United Kingdom. Based on the Czech folktale “The Twelve Iron Sandals,” the piece was presented in the underground lapidarium (exhibit hall) of the medieval Bethlehem Chapel in central Prague.

“My understanding of ‘theatre’ was that you always needed performers to guide the audience through the story,” said McManus. “This experience shattered that notion and was definitely a shift in what I consider ‘theatre’ to be.” He participated in the installation with students from Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Greece, and Estonia.

Megan Geigner (GC15), a student in the interdisciplinary PhD program in theatre and drama, hoped to observe what might separate a Russian exhibit from a Taiwanese exhibit and how each country would present itself in an international arena. She found that there was not only a diversity of international perspectives on design but even a variety of perspectives within the Northwestern group. “What I found frightening, another student found delightful,” said Geigner. “What someone found boring, another student went to see over and over.”

This convergence of perspectives seems to have been Zimmerman’s goal in introducing Northwestern to the PQ in the first place. “It is reassuring to see that there are passionate theatre practitioners the world over,” said Zimmerman. “That students are not alone in this bizarre passion for slaving over detailed, exacting environments that are built to be torn down and replaced. And that all designers face the same challenge every day—how to create a living world in a box.”
Joseph Appelt (MA, University of Michigan) is the new chair of the Department of Theatre.

Pablo J. Boczkowski (PhD, Cornell University) received the 2011 Best Book Award from the Communication and Information Technology Section of the American Sociological Association for News at Work: Imitation in an Age of Information Abundance (University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Amanda Dehnert (BFA, Illinois Wesleyan University) wrote and directed California Shakespeare Theater’s The Verona Project (below), a gay coming-of-age musical based on Shakespeare’s Two Gentleman of Verona that featured actor Nate Trinrud (GC11), costume design by Melissa Torchia (GC11), and scenic design by Daniel Ostling (MFA, Northwestern). Dehnert also directed Julius Caesar for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where Michael Rohd (MFA, Virginia Tech) devised and directed WillFul, Todd Rosenthal (MFA, Yale University) was scenic designer for Ghost Light, and Linda Roethke (MFA, University of Iowa) was costume designer for Julius Caesar.

Sumitrajit Dhar (PhD, Purdue University) is now associate chair of the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

The play Rehoming by Zayd Dohrn (MFA, New York University) premiered in May at the San Francisco Playhouse. His piece Public Space is featured in the traveling multidisciplinary art show America: Now and Here, which uses art to talk about what it’s like to be an American today; the program launched a cross-country tour in May. Dohrn’s short play The Legerdemain was produced at Theater for One in New York’s Times Square in June.

Rip Tide, the latest novel by Kat Falls (MFA, Northwestern), was released in August by Scholastic Press. Rip Tide is the sequel to Dark Life (Scholastic Press, 2010). Falls is currently working on a dystopian young-adult trilogy, The Fetch, for Scholastic Press.

Nice Shirt, a short directed by Erik Gernand (MFA, Northwestern) and written and produced by Jenny Hagel (GC09), premiered at Chicago’s Just for Laughs Comedy Festival in June. Nice Shirt received the second-place Christopher Wetzel Award for independent film comedy and is shortlisted for the Iris Prize, the most prestigious GLBT short-film award.

The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter, a stage adaptation by Rebecca Gilman (MFA, University of Iowa) of the novel by Carson McCullers, was recently produced in Chicago’s Steppenwolf Upstairs Theatre. Her play Blue Surge was seen at London’s Finborough Theatre.

The short film Fourplay: Tampa by Kyle Henry (MFA, University of Texas at Austin) was one of 14 shorts and 21 features chosen to debut in May at the Cannes Directors’ Fortnight, part of the Cannes Film Festival. Also in May, Henry taught at ShortsLab: Chicago, a workshop sponsored by the Sundance Institute. Henry’s short film Fourplay: San Francisco won the award for best narrative short at Newfest and New York City’s GLBT film festival and has been shortlisted for the 2011 Iris Prize, the most prestigious award for a GLBT short film.

Weiko Lin (MFA, UCLA) was the featured speaker at Taiwan Centennial Cinema, held in Chicago in April. Lin is also a cofounder of the Unison Company, which is teaming with Beijing Shengshi Huarui to produce the $30-million epic action movie Song of Justice for the Chinese market.

D. Soyini Madison (PhD, Northwestern) is now chair of the Department of Performance Studies.

Viorica Marian (PhD, Cornell University) is now chair of the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Hamid Naficy (PhD, UCLA), Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor in Communication, curated a program of classics of the Iranian cinema for the 20th-anniversary celebration of UCLA’s Iranian film festival, which Naficy started in 1990 as a graduate student. He hosted a symposium on contemporary Iranian cinema and served as a judge in Qatar’s Aljazeera International Documentary Film Festival. Recently Duke University Press issued two volumes of his A Social History of Iranian Cinema: The Artisanal Era, 1897–1941, and The Industrializing Years, 1941–1978.

A film by Spencer Parsons (MFA, University of Texas at Austin), Chainsaw Found Jesus, screened at the Chicago Underground Film Festival in June.

Faculty focus
Every year School of Communication students nominate instructors for the school’s teaching awards. The Galbut Outstanding Faculty Award, supported by gifts from the Galbut family, honors a faculty member who has been outstanding in teaching and in efforts to engage students both inside and outside the classroom. The Clarence Simon Awards for Outstanding Teaching and Mentoring recognize up to three faculty members across the school. The award honors Clarence Simon, who served the school as professor and administrator for more than four decades.

The 2011 Galbut Outstanding Faculty Award recipient is Mary Zimmerman, the Jaharis Family Professor of Performance Studies. A member of the Lookingglass Theatre Company and an artistic associate of the Goodman Theatre, she has earned numerous national and international awards, including a Tony Award for directing Metamorphoses, which she developed at Northwestern. In nominating Zimmerman for the award, one student said Zimmerman’s “wealth of knowledge and stories from her work at various theatre companies adds a valuable layer to her instruction, while her sense of humor in class makes for an enjoyable learning environment, such that a three-hour class period does not seem long.”

The Clarence Simon Award recipients are Cindy Gold, Irving Rein, and Charles Larson.

Cindy Gold is an associate professor of theatre and head of the acting program. Gold has worked off-Broadway in New York and regionally in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Arizona, as well as with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Boston Shakespeare Company, and several professional improvisation groups. One senior said Gold “taught him life.” Another senior called Gold the “rare kind of teacher who not only leads, challenges, and encourages you but who also makes discoveries with you.”

Irving Rein is a professor of communication studies. His primary research and teaching interests are popular culture, crisis management, and place marketing. A fellow faculty member wrote that Rein’s courses prove “enormously useful in students’ careers and civic lives.” One junior wrote, “His knowledge of the subject is incredible in and of itself, but it is his commitment to actively engaging his students that sets him apart from the many knowledgeable teachers I’ve had at Northwestern.”

Charles Larson is a professor of communication sciences and disorders. He and his lab study the neural mechanisms controlling the voice and the larynx. In nominating him for the award, one senior wrote, “My experiences in Professor Larson’s classes were instrumental not only in providing some background in the subject matter of the course but also . . . in creating in me a strong desire to learn more, to be tenacious in my approach, and to always seek excellence in all my endeavors.”
New scholars join the School of Communication faculty

TENURE-TRACK PROFESSORS

**Thomas Bradshaw** joins the Department of Radio/Television/Film from New York’s Medgar Evars College. Recipient of a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship and the 2010 Prince Charitable Trust Prize, Bradshaw is a playwright whose works include *Burning*, which recently opened off-Broadway; *The Ashes; Mary*, which premiered at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre in 2010; *The Bereaved*, named one of the best plays of 2009 by *Time Out New York* and a *New York Times* critics pick; and *Southern Promises* and *Dawn*, both listed among 2008’s best performances of stage and screen by *New Yorker* critic Hinton Als. His other plays include *Prophet, Strom Thurmond is Not a Racist, Cleansed, Purity,* and *Job*. Bradshaw has been cited as one of 10 playwrights to watch by *Time Out New York* and as best provocative playwright by the *Village Voice.*

**Joshua Takano Chambers-Letson** comes to the Department of Performance Studies from the University of Cincinnati, where he taught in the department of English and comparative literature. He was an Andrew Mellon postdoctoral fellow at Wesleyan University’s Center for the Humanities for a year after completing his PhD in performance studies at New York University. His book manuscript *A Race So Different: The Making of Asian Americans in Performance and Law* studies the relationship of law and performance to the production of modern and contemporary Asian American subjectivity. Areas of teaching interest include performance studies, Asian American diasporic and ethnic American performance, contemporary dramatic literature, critical race studies, legal theory, and Marxist, queer of color, and feminist theory.

**Jasmine Nichole Cobb** comes to the Department of Communication Studies following a postdoctoral fellowship at Pennsylvania State University’s Africana Research Center and Department of Communication. She earned her PhD in communication from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Her publication credits include works on sexuality in popular music, black filmmaking, and race on television; her research focuses on both historical and contemporary representations of race, class, gender, and sexuality in visual cultures. In her book manuscript *Picturing Freedom: Black Visuality in the TransAtlantic Home, 1780–1850,* she explores interracial and intraracial visual cultures as transformed by African American emancipation during the era of slavery.

**Miriam Petty** joins the Department of Radio/Television/Film from Rutgers University–Newark, where she taught media studies. Petty received her PhD in American studies from Emory University’s Institute of the Liberal Arts. A 2006–2009 fellow of Princeton University’s Society of Fellows, Petty recently curated the documentary film festival Race.Place.Space. in Trenton, New Jersey, on behalf of Princeton’s Center for African American Studies. As a Geraldine R. Dodge Fellow at Rutgers–Newark’s Institute on Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience, she developed and implemented “Watching Carefully,” a two-year city initiative geared

**Dassia N. Posner** comes to the Department of Theatre from the University of Connecticut, where she was assistant professor in residence in the department of dramatic arts as well as dramaturg for Connecticut Repertory Theatre. Posner completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard’s Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies in 2009 after earning her MA and PhD in drama at Tufts University. Her interests include dramaturgy, history of directing, women in theatre, Russian and European avant-garde theatre, popular entertainment, and world puppetry history and performance.

**Ozge Samanci** comes to the Department of Radio/Television/Film from an Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in the art practice department of the University of California, Berkeley. A published comics artist, Samanci has an extensive background in comics and media arts. Her interactive digital media installations and other collaborative works have been exhibited in numerous venues, and her digital video work has been screened in international film festivals and the Sonic Generator Concert series. Samanci earned her PhD in digital media from the School of Literature, Communication, and Culture at the Georgia Institute of Technology. She is also a licensed speech-language pathologist, having provided clinical support to and augmenting the training of graduate student clinicians in speech and language pathology. She is also a licensed speech-language pathologist, having provided evaluations and developed and implemented therapy plans for young children with developmental delays, cerebral palsy, autism, apraxia, submucous cleft palate, and fluency differences within a program setting and through outpatient services. Banks-Stewart received her master of science in speech-language pathology from Syracuse University.

**C. Riley Snorton** comes to the Department of Communication Studies following an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in the media studies department at California’s Pomona College. He earned a PhD in communication from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. His academic and teaching interests include transgender and queer theory, media anthropology, Africana studies, cultural studies, performance studies, and popular culture. Snorton has published numerous book chapters in addition to articles in the *International Journal of Communication*, *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, and *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society*.

**LECTURERS**

**Angela Banks-Stewart** is a lecturer in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. She was most recently a clinical assistant professor at the Robert L. Milsen Speech and Hearing Clinic at Indiana University Bloomington, where she was responsible for providing clinical support to and augmenting the training of graduate student clinicians in speech and language pathology. She is also a licensed speech-language pathologist, having developed and implemented therapy plans for young children with developmental delays, cerebral palsy, autism, apraxia, submucous cleft palate, and fluency differences within a program setting and through outpatient services. Banks-Stewart received her master of science in speech-language pathology from Syracuse University.

**Charles Harmon** is a lecturer and academic adviser in the Department of Theatre. He earned an MFA in creative writing from Ohio State University and a PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Harmon has published articles on Theodore Dreiser, Jean Toomer, Henry James, and other writers and has taught American literature, literary theory, and creative writing.

**Carla Waddles** (J92) is a lecturer in the Department of Radio/Television/Film. A native Detroiter, she studied journalism at Northwestern and advertising at Michigan State University before attending the University of Southern California, where she earned an MFA in screenwriting and served as executive producer for the USC School of Cinematic Arts’ first sitcom pilot, *Common Ground*. Waddles got her start at the Warner Bros. Writing Workshop, which led to a staff writing position on the WB’s *For Your Love*. She has written for the Disney Channel’s *That’s So Raven*, produced UPN’s *Half & Half*, and served as supervising producer for TBS’s *The Bill Engvall Show*. Currently developing the half-hour comedy *One Love* for the TV One network, she also writes for Nickelodeon’s *The Fresh Beat Band* and BET’s *Let’s Stay Together*. **PROMOTION AND TENURE**

**David H. Bell**, theatre, promoted to professor

**Darren Gogle**, communication studies, promoted to associate professor and granted tenure

**David Tolchinsky**, radio/television/film, promoted to professor
Alumni achievements

Class notes are selected from alumni submissions to Northwestern magazine at www.northwestern.edu/magazine, stories of alumni featured in the media as identified by the University’s Office of Alumni Relations and Development, and updates sent to Dialogue by mail or by e-mail at dialogue@northwestern.edu.

Marsha K. Hoover (C77) joined the law firm Marshall Gerstein & Borun LLP as senior counsel.

1980s

Gregg Edelman (C80) played the title role in Sweeney Todd at the Chicago area’s Drury Lane Theatre.

Thomas Heymann (C80) was named president and executive director of Young Audiences New York, a nonprofit arts education organization.

Eric Fingerhut (C81), currently a senior fellow with the Boston-based nonprofit Jobs for the Future, gave the 2011 commencement address at Bexley High School in Bexley, Ohio.

Julia Louis-Dreyfus (C82) will star in the new HBO series Veep, premiering in 2012.

John Logan (C83), Tony Award–winning playwright, will work with National Book Award–winning author and rock star Patti Smith on an adaptation of her memoir Just Kids.

Thomas Erffmeyer (GC85) was elected to the board of directors of Chicago’s Union League Club.

Stephen Lambright (C85) was named senior vice president of marketing and business development for XOJET, a private aviation company.

Alumnus addresses class of 2011

Joseph Staten (C94) addressed new alumni and their families at the 2011 School of Communication convocation ceremonies in June.

A communication studies alumnus, Staten also studied acting because he hoped to become a CIA operative. Instead, he found a home for himself in the video game industry as the director of cinematics for Bungie, creator of the widely popular Halo game series. In 2007 Staten was tapped to write the fifth Halo novelization, which became a New York Times bestseller. Staten also drew on his acting training to provide the voices for several popular Halo characters.

Staten urged graduates to create more than they consumed. “You live in an on-demand world where everything is yours to consume,” he said. “In the future, the distractions—the draws on your time—will only get more sophisticated and subtle. And you must resist.”

He was introduced by Kruti Parikh (C11) and Thomas Casserly (C11). Both convocations featured a vocal performance by Liz Olanoff (C11).

1970s

Mike Adamle (C71) is a full-time sports anchor for Chicago television station WMAQ.

Jeff Ravitz (C72) received the Pacific Southwest Region Emmy Award for lighting design for the awards show A Salute to Teachers 2010.

Rocky Wirtz (C75), owner of the Chicago Blackhawks, was named to the newly formed board of advisers for the Chicago Innovation Awards.

1990s

Brian d’Arcy James (C90) was cast in the Steven Spielberg NBC pilot Smash.

Jody Rudman (C90) joined the business and commercial litigation practice of the Dallas law firm Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP as a partner.

Jenny Bacon (C91) starred in Stage Kiss, directed by theatre faculty member Jessica Thebus (GC91, GC97), at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre last summer.

Amy Gilman (C91) was named associate director of the Toledo Museum of Art.

Kathy Kampfhoener (GC91) is the new nongovernmental secretariat coordinator with the NGO Forum of the new African state of South Sudan. She facilitates information exchange and coordination among more than 300 international and national nongovernmental organizations, donors, United Nations agencies, and embassies.

1980s

Kristin Kunhardt (C87) recently released Listen to the Wind, a CD of original material. It can be sampled at kristinflagg.net.

Dexter Bullard (C88) was named Chicago’s best stage director in Chicago magazine’s 2011 “best of Chicago” issue.

J. Scott Maberry (C88) joined the Washington, DC, office of Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP as a partner.

Shannon Mayers (C88) is the director of the Redfern Arts Center on Brickyard Pond at New Hampshire’s Keene State College.

Laura Eason (C89) wrote and directed a stage adaption of Edith Wharton’s novel Ethan Frome at Chicago’s Lookingglass Theatre. The cast included Louise Lamson (C96), Erik Lochtelfeld (C96), Philip R. Smith (C88), and Andrew White (C87). She also produced Sex with Strangers, which ran at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre from late January through May. The play was directed by theatre faculty member Jessica Thebus (GC91, GC97) and starred Sally Murphy (GBSM84).

Illyse Robbins (C89) directed and choreographed 42nd Street at Boston’s Stoneham Theatre. She teaches at Brandeis University and Wheelock College.

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Stephen Lambright (C85) was named senior vice president of marketing and business development for XOJET, a private aviation company.

Elaine A. King (C86) was invited to be a member of the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

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Mia McCullough (C92) has written two short plays seen recently in Chicago: *Sharp Objects*, performed in March at American Theatre Company’s 10x10 event, and a comedy as part of Chicago Dramatists’ 10-minute play workshop.

Brent Adams (C94, GC94) was reappointed by Illinois Governor Pat Quinn (L80) as secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

Bobby Jackson (C94) launched Bobby Jackson’s Cookie, a mail-order cookie business. He is also a personal trainer and life coach who has been featured on BET and Comcast Cable.

Grace Y. Poe (C94) was named partner in the real estate and finance practice group of Locke Lord Bissell & Liddell LLP.

Kathryn Hahn (C95) can be seen in two upcoming movies, *Our Idiot Brother* and *Wanderlust*.

Michael McNamara (GC95) was the associate lighting designer for the Dallas Opera production of *Boris Godunov*.

David Raphael (C95) is the director of national advertising sales and sponsorships for New York’s WNET.

Kurt Ahlm (C96) was named associate dean of student recruitment and admissions for the University of Chicago Booth School of Business’s full-time MBA program.

Zach Braff (C97) wrote the new play *All New People*, which premiered this summer at New York’s Second Stage Theatre.

Heather Headley (C97) performed in the NBC television special *All Together Now—A Celebration of Service*.

Sarmad Hussain (GC97) is professor and head of the Center for Language Engineering at the Al-Khawarizmi Institute of Computer Sciences in Pakistan.

Chelsea Kalberloh Jackson (C97) and her husband, Art Jackson, opened the Pleasant House Bakery and Cafe in Chicago’s Bridgeport neighborhood.

Matthew Brumlow (GC98), a Chicago actor, was named one of the “50 most beautiful Chicagoans” by *Chicago* magazine.

Cari Bucci (C98) is senior vice president and director of client services at DraftFCB.


Bissell & Liddell LLP. is the director of the in-between at the Cleveland International Film Festival.

Gerardo Guzman (GC99) is vice president of project management in the New York and Barrington, Illinois, offices of Scarborough Research.

Courtney Waite Miller (C00, GC03, GC05) of Oak Park, Illinois, was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor of communication studies at Elmhurst College.

Christopher Slavik (C00) is executive associate at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey.

Ben Leszynski (C03) is a psychology resident on active duty at the Madigan Army Medical Center in Fort Lewis, Washington. In 2000s

2000s

NUEA-East

NUEA-East is hosting a new programming series: Member Mondays, a monthly panel featuring distinguished alumni from a wide variety of entertainment careers in intimate dialogue with NUEA members. Past Member Monday presentations have included “Producing and Developing Musicals and Movies” with Peter Duchan (C05); “Directing on Broadway” with Danny Goldstein (C97); “Getting to Broadway: Broadway Actors Talkback” with Jeff Cuttler (C07), Raymond Lee (C04), and Amber Owens (C02); and “From Big Ten to Small Screen: NU in TV” (above) with Erica Ottenberg (C00), Chris Meador (C02), Lindsay Schuster (C07), and Jen Moon (C00). All panels are free and open to members and take place in Midtown.

NUEA-West

The recent NUEA-West presentation “Staffing Season Panel” offered help to writers for navigating the staffing season and tips on how to get hired on a TV show. Panelists included David Zucker (C86), Mara Brock Akil (J82), Erica Shelton (C95), Maria Ferrari (C01), and Jordan Cerf (C05). NUEA’s “Actor Marketing Panel” was moderated by Jennefer Ludwigsen (C99) and featured marketing and branding expert Kevin Seldon (C00), actor-producer Kate VanDevender (C99), and other industry experts.

The year’s largest event was the LANU Showcase in May. Hosted by Harry J. Lennix (C86) and Aimee Garcia (J00), this highly anticipated two-night event featured alumni actors performing original work by alumni writers for an audience of friends, family, and industry professionals. The pieces were previously workshopped with the help of industry experts Heath Corson (WCAS95), Bryan Holdman (C94), and Richie Keen (C96).

NUEA-West also launched the YouTube channel NUTube (www.youtube.com/user/NUEAwest) to showcase members’ work.
February he completed his doctorate in clinical psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology in San Diego.

Chrissy Rawak (GC03) was named senior associate athletic director for development at the University of Michigan.

Michael Mahler (C04) and Alan Schmuckler (C05) cowrote the family musical How Can You Run with a Shell on Your Back?, recently produced at the Chicago area’s Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire.

Robert D. Shirley (C04) joined the dental practice of Mark F. Sills in Oolitic, Indiana.

Rachel Elizabeth Kaufman (C05) joined the law firm Lash & Goldberg as an associate.

Mark Kerins (GC05) was awarded tenure and promotion at Southern Methodist University, where he teaches production and critical studies classes. His dissertation, Beyond Dolby (Stereo): Cinema in the Digital Sound Age, was published by Indiana University Press (2010).

Hugo Perez (GC06) was named vice president and account director of Hispanic marketing at Zocalo Group, a social media marketing agency.

Alley Pezanoski-Browne (C06) worked on the web series 9INE, which was nominated for a People’s Telly Award.

Jane Valadka (C06) was promoted from account executive to senior account executive at AbelsonTaylor.


Sarah Gubbins (GC08) wrote fml: how Carson McCullers saved my life, staged at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Downstairs Theatre. She also wrote The Kid Thing, which was featured at Chicago Dramatists.

Carrie Barrett (GC09) has joined Gotham Stage Company.

Alex Hugh Brown (C09) was called one of the “hot new faces of Chicago theatre” by the Chicago Tribune while appearing in As You Like It in Evanston.

Toby Herman (GC09) was an associate producer for the 2011 Emmy Awards.

Caitlin Kunkel (GC09) cowrote and produced Dopium of the Masses at Donny’s Skybox in Chicago.

Kate Schultz (C09) was named front-of-house manager for Fox Valley Repertory.

Gabrielle Fulton (GC10) was chosen as a 2011–12 National New Play Network playwright in residence at Atlanta’s Horizon Theatre.

Zachary Johnson (C10) is founder of the start-up business Syndio Social, which applies business analytics to social network traffic to help identify the key people of influence within organizations.

Stephanie Kornick (GC10) is the show runner’s assistant on the new NBC Chelsea Handler sitcom based on her memoirs, Are You There, Vodka? It’s Me, Chelsea.

Award-winning fun

Is the future of film funny? Recent radio/television/film graduates Daniel Siegel (C10) and Patrick Bishop (C10) think so. Both have found first jobs after graduation in the world of online sketch comedy. Siegel works for www.collegehumor.com. Bishop’s work can be seen at www.funnyordie.com.

The pair’s training ground was Northwestern Sketch TV (NSTV), which won a first-prize College Television Award this spring from the Television Academy Foundation. The winning segments, in the narrative series category, were created while Siegel and Bishop led NSTV.

“We won based on two episodes, which contained sketches written by a handful of writers, directed by Dan and me, and produced by everyone in NSTV,” said Bishop.

Siegel calls his involvement with NSTV “life changing. When I came to Northwestern I had no experience in comedy writing or producing, but thanks to NSTV, I graduated with a passion to do this for a living. For that I am forever grateful.”

Siegel, far left, and Bishop, second from right, with NSTV peers Hannah VanderPoel (C10), Rachael Field (C10), Christopher Poole (C10), and Cameron Gibson (C10) at the College Television Awards ceremony

Farhan Arshad (GC10) joined Sony Pictures’ half-hour comedy development team as a development assistant for the vice president of original programming at Comedy Central.

George Cederquist (C10) was awarded the prestigious German Chancellor Fellowship through the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Meridith Friedman (GC10) is a visiting assistant professor of drama at Kenyon College.

Alvaro Saar Rios (GC10) toured his one-man show One Hot Texican Summer over the summer. He teaches playwriting at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.
The following death notices were compiled by Northwestern's Office of Alumni Relations and Development and from updates sent to Dialogue by staff or by alumni by mail or by e-mail at dialogue@northwestern.edu.

Zylpha Mercedes Kilbride Clinton (WCAS27), a generous donor to the School of Communication, March 9 at age 105 in Miami, Florida.

Grace Welch (C32), August 10 at age 102 in Lebanon, Virginia.

Eleanor Jane Clark (C36, GC41), May 30 at age 94 in Evanston, Illinois.

Frances Owen (C37), June 9 at age 96 in Bedford, Virginia.

Leona Arnold (C39), February 24 at age 93 in Newville, Pennsylvania.

Virginia T. Brier (C39), June 13 at age 93 in Melbourne, Florida.

E. Melba Johnson Kirkpatrick (GC39), January 27 at age 105 in Bloomington, Illinois.

Margaret S. Herp (C40), February 28 at age 92 in Sarasota, Florida.

Faye K. Carey (GC42), August 9 at age 94 in Louisville, Colorado.

Rachel Loisel (C44), July 24 at age 89 in Dallas, Texas.

Amy MacMullan (C44), July 17 at age 91 in Reno, Nevada.

Jeanne Parker (C44), February 8 at age 88 in Washington, DC.

Frances A. Altman (C46), August 9 at age 86 in Vernon Hills, Illinois.


Julia C. Piquette (C48, GC52, GC63), April 30 at age 84 in Buffalo, New York.

Jack C. Rang (C48, GC72), February 7 at age 87 in Dayton, Ohio.

Faye S. Roberts (GC49), July 21 at age 86 in Pensacola, Florida.

Lois Scott (GC49), February 11 at age 86 in Aurora, Illinois.

John C. Trindl Jr. (C49), July 1 in Winnetka, Illinois.

Charles K. Dargan (GC50), June 22 at age 83 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Clara Jeanne Bright (GC51), February 21 at age 92 in Evanston, Illinois.

Jean H. Miculka (GC51), April 27 at age 90 in El Paso, Texas.

Richard L. Hoffman (GC53), May 6 at age 81.

Douglas K. Murphy (GC53), February 16 at age 83 in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Dorothy Benningsten Pryor (C53), February 17 at age 80 in Evanston, Illinois.

Milton J. Brown (C54), May 16 at age 78 in West Des Moines, Iowa.

The Rev. William D. Thompson (GC55, GC60), March 28 at age 82 in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania.

Russel Windes (GC59), March 25 at age 84 in San Francisco, California.

D. Ray Heisey (GC64), May 20 at age 79 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Robert (Bob) J. Banner (GC48, H81) died June 15 at age 89 in Los Angeles, California. A former Northwestern faculty member, Banner won an Emmy for directing The Dinah Shore Chevy Show in 1958 and was executive producer of the successful television programs Candid Camera, Solid Gold, and Star Search. He is credited with launching the career of Carol Burnett, who was a regular on Dinah Shore’s show. Banner was also executive producer for That’s What Friends Are For, the 1988 AIDS benefit concert at the Kennedy Center; The Way We Were, a show featuring Northwestern performers; and most recently the 1997 television series Real Kids, Real Adventures. After serving in the US Navy during World War II, Banner earned his graduate degree in theatre from Northwestern, where he became an instructor in speech and drama. While there he began his television career as a production assistant on Kukla, Fran & Ollie, a puppet show for children. Banner received an honorary doctorate from Northwestern in 1981. He is survived by his wife, Alice; his sons Baird, Robert, and Chuck; and two grandchildren.

Jean E. Schick (C64), April 1 at age 68 in Washington, DC.

Karen Cronin (C68), of Elliston, Virginia, February 20 at age 64 in Hawaii.

Curtis L. Katz (C75), April 9 at age 57 in Chicago, Illinois.

Peggie Anne Gardner Key (C76), in April in Chicago, Illinois.

Jackman S. Draper (C85), May 11 at age 47 in New York, New York.

Mary Siewert Scruggs (C86), January 12 at age 46 in Chicago, Illinois.
Communicating gratitude

Lambert Family Communication Conferences support innovation

This summer, a shocking statistic hit headlines around the country: minority children in America consume an average of thirteen hours of media content a day—more than four hours more than their white counterparts.

The source of this surprising information: the School of Communication’s Ellen Wartella, the Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor in Communication in the Department of Communication Studies and director of the school's Center on Media and Human Development. Wartella announced her findings at the June 2011 Lambert Family Communication Conference, “Children, Media, and Race.”

Supporting the work of School of Communication researchers with annual conference development funding, the Lambert Foundation is the family foundation of Bill and Sheila Lambert. The Lamberts are highly involved members of the Northwestern community: Bill is a member of the Northwestern University Board of Trustees, and Sheila is a member of the School of Communication National Advisory Council. They are also the parents of Phineas Lambert (CO4), who majored in communication studies.

The opportunity to direct a Lambert Family Communication Conference made a big difference in Wartella’s plans. “This meeting served as a wake-up call to the community to examine the potential implications of such high media use on children’s health and well-being,” she said, noting that the Lamberts’ funding helped bring in academics, Washington policymakers, media professionals, and leaders from ethnic organizations to participate in the discussion. “Our conference wouldn't have been possible without the Lamberts’ support. It was wonderful to have Mr. and Mrs. Lambert attend the conference, since their support was instrumental to my being able to hold this conference in Washington, where policymakers are working.”

Wartella’s first “Children, Media, and Race” conference was the fourth Lambert Family Communication Conference. Prior conferences have covered topics such as political theory (with the school’s Center for Global Culture and Communication as cohost) and the science of team science.

“This meeting served as a wake-up call to the community to examine the potential implications of such high media use on children’s health and well-being.” Ellen Wartella

“Innovation, Organizations, and Society,” the fifth Lambert Family Conference and the second on that subject, was held this fall in downtown Chicago, cohosted by communication studies professor Pablo Boczkowski and a colleague from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. The event is an interdisciplinary meeting about the many factors that shape the dynamics of innovation and its larger societal consequences. Speakers from fields such as sociology, organization studies, communication studies, economics, science and technology studies, marketing, and strategy turned out in force to participate.

“This is a great interdisciplinary conversation,” said Boczkowski. “My sense is that this conference will help Chicago become a center for innovation, and the school to be a keynote in the conversation.”

Whether the subject is children’s media, innovation, or other communication issues, becoming a keynote in the conversation is exactly what the Lamberts had in mind.
Investitures celebrate named professorships

A series of ceremonies this spring gave newly appointed named professors an opportunity to share their inspirations. Molly Losh, the inaugural Jane Steiner Hoffman and Michael Hoffman Assistant Professor in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, spoke to a crowd that included the donor family. Anna Shapiro, the inaugural Marjorie Hoffman Hagan, Class of 1934, Chair in Theatre, told a touching story about making a difference in a student’s life. At the same ceremony, David H. Bell accepted the medallion for his position as Donald G. Robertson Director of Music Theatre with thoughts on how much he’d learned from teaching. In a separate ceremony, Cynthia K. Thompson, communication sciences and disorders, received the medallion for the Ralph and Jean Sundin Professorship in Communication Science; Ellen Wartella, communication studies, was invested as the Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor in Communication; and Daniel J. O’Keefe, communication studies, spoke as the Owen L. Coon Professor of Argumentation and Debate.

Pepper Lecture features faculty researcher

James R. Booth, the JoAnn and Peter Dolle Professor in Learning Disabilities in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, spoke as the 2011 Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Lecturer this spring. The lead investigator of the Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory, Booth discussed his lab’s attempts to uncover the mechanisms underlying the development of human ability to read and calculate figures and the implications of research on typical brain development for studying learning disabilities and battling illiteracy.

Tony-winning alumnus returns as Abelson artist

Tony Award–winning playwright and Academy Award–nominated screenwriter John Logan (C83) returned to campus in October as the 2011 Hope Abelson Artist in Residence. Logan spoke to a standing-room-only crowd of students, faculty, and visitors and participated in a talkback after the opening night of the Theatre and Interpretation Center production of Never the Sinner, a play he wrote as a Northwestern student. Also featured in the talkback were the show’s director, Dennis Zacek (GC65, GC70), former artistic director of Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theatre and one of Logan’s early career mentors, and assistant professor of theatre Laura Schellhardt (C97) (below with Logan), a playwright who studied under Logan when he taught in the Department of Theatre.

Logan’s other plays include Riverview, Hauptmann, and Red, the 2010 Tony winner for best play. Among his screenplays are The Time Machine, Any Given Sunday, The Last Samurai, Sweeney Todd, and Rango as well as Gladiator and The Aviator, both of which garnered Oscar nominations for best screenplay. Logan also received an Emmy nomination and a Writers Guild of America Award for the HBO-distributed film RKO 281, about the production of the film Citizen Kane.

Logan advised students to be “furiously open to other peoples’ ideas” and to use their time at Northwestern well: “Meet people here who can be your colleagues forever.”

The Abelson Artist in Residence program was funded by the late Hope Altman Abelson (CB30), who studied theatre at Northwestern and became a theatre producer and patron. With her husband, Lester Abelson, she supported such major Chicago companies as the Goodman Theatre, Court Theatre, and Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Dialogue is published for the alumni of the School of Communication. Comments and suggestions may be mailed to Dialogue, Northwestern University School of Communication, Evanston, Illinois 60208-3580, or sent via e-mail to dialogue@northwestern.edu. Please e-mail all address changes to address-change@northwestern.edu.

Editors: Lori Rader-Day, Kingsley Day
Publications Writer: Emily Hiser Lobdell
Contributing Writers: Lori Rader-Day, Hannah Greene (C12)
Designer: Heather Cosgrove
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