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As I reflect on the 2019-20 academic year, it’s not hyperbole to say it was among the most challenging periods we’ve faced in many decades.

In a single week in March, we had to pivot from in-residence to online instruction and adjust all of our student service operations. Our advisers met with students by phone or Zoom. Our two spring internship and career fairs, including “Success in the City” in New York City, went virtual. So did our many resume and interviewing workshops.

We had to figure out how to teach hands-on skills like photography and filmmaking in a virtual setting. And we had to deal with the logistics — working with students who had left laptop computers behind in their dorm rooms or didn’t have adequate connectivity at home to access online classes.

All of our embedded travel programs were scuttled, along with a new “Maymester in Manhattan” program we had designed for first- and second-year students. We were also forced to cancel many other marquee programs through the summer and into the fall, including plans to cover the Tokyo Olympics as well as the national political conventions.

Because of uncertain access to on-site internships, we put our Stanley E. Degler Washington Program on hiatus for the first time in a quarter century. With a curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning as much as ours, creating alternatives to face-to-face interaction wasn’t easy. But, we found our strength, and great success, in one enduring resource: our people.

Our power to innovate, motivate and contribute to the University and society isn’t in a single program, building or lab. It’s in our people. It’s in our ability to pull together, improvise and solve problems.

I witnessed this power first-hand. For instance, I attended a Zoom “launch party” in April to celebrate the spring-semester edition of Valley, a glossy lifestyle magazine produced by Bellisario College students. The students quickly pivoted and made the print product digital.

I also watched our faculty members seize the moment in the classroom, and for service. For instance, our Knight Chair, John Affleck, put together a virtual film series that featured award-winning work by faculty and students along with panel discussions open to the community.

Finally, I watched as dozens of alumni pitched in to help Assistant Dean Bob Martin match students with internships and jobs. Many other alumni reached out to Director of Alumni Relations Mike Poorman to volunteer for mentoring and virtual class visits. And our alumni continued to give our students and programs their financial support, which remains critically important in these uncertain times.

Now, we look ahead at an academic year that promises to bring new challenges. But with the power of our people, I am confident we will have another great story to tell about the Bellisario College. Our resolve is strong, and our commitment is unwavering.

Thank you for your support!

Dean Marie Hardin
Faculty across the University worked hard during the spring semester to maintain Penn State’s “We Are” spirit within their virtual classrooms during a remote-teaching period utilized because of the coronavirus pandemic.

All faculty members were forced to adapt and many thrived.

For Bellisario College faculty members Matthew McAllister, professor and chair of graduate programs, and Curt Chandler, an assistant teaching professor of journalism, being off campus from their peers and students was a significant change of pace.

Their move to the online format focused heavily on reassurance and transparency. Both McAllister and Chandler took the time to craft careful, meaningful messages to their students in an attempt to ease concerns.

In his resident courses, Chandler had been preparing students in four different storytelling classes during the spring semester to go out and gather information, conduct interviews and to produce multimedia stories.

“A big part of the college experience is the basic learning process: by going out and doing stories,” Chandler said. “This isn’t the kind of story that students were expecting to tell.”

Over the four classes he was teaching, Chandler found that students were still able to produce and edit “amazing” video stories, undeterred by the potential limitations of being home.

Although the classes were on Zoom, students still enjoyed some of Chandler’s well-known charm in the physical classroom: his humor.

For one of his courses, Chandler used a system called Top Hat to record student quiz responses via the internet. Students logged into their accounts via phones or laptops, and during the last class of each course, they got a chance to answer a simple question: “what is Chandler holding up?”

“Often, the answers seem silly, and those that attended class get an easy point. This time, Chandler went one step further to get a giggle: after removing his sweater and standing up, Chandler revealed his rainbow, Unicorn onesie.

“It gave me a chance to be goofy,” Chandler said. “I tried to make the courses as interactive as I could, like having open chats. The relationships that students make during their college experience last a lifetime.”

McAllister found it especially important to check in on his students for both their educational success and mental well-being. He explained that he was very aware of the impact his presence could make, so he made sure to smile more on video and be enthusiastic to keep students engaged with their education. Additionally, if he hadn’t heard from a student, he reached out to see how they were doing to lend a hand.

“The current discourse is uncertain, which can be scary,” McAllister said. “We live in a fortunate era where we can take full advantage of electronic means of making community. Community didn’t solely exist in geographic spaces before COVID-19. Now, we can expand community well beyond where we live. Community is simply a network of human connections based upon communication.”

Communications, connections and community

Stephanie Madden, an assistant professor of advertising/public relations, teaches research methods. Photo by Riley Herman, '22
Ad/PR program selected as national finalist

The advertising/public relations program at Penn State was selected as one of five national finalists for the designation of Outstanding Education Program by PRWeek.

Penn State’s entry in the annual contest was its first ever and was entirely student driven. Advertising/public relations majors in a capstone public relations course put together the extensive nomination packet, which included an overview of the program as well as interactions with alumni and industry professionals. The real-life project provided students with an educational experience and a better understanding of both the Bellisario College and the University.

“We were able to hone in on specific stories of students, which might be different from our own, and find similarities as we told the story of the advertising/public relations program,” senior Connor Pardoe said. “It was interesting to see that no matter what someone was doing, the Bellisario College was helping them get to their next step.”

Administrators and staff, along with alumni in the professions, provided support and information. Tom Resau, senior vice president of W2 Communications, who serves on the Advertising/Public Relations Alumni Network Board, was an important contributor and helped facilitate the assistance of other alumni.

The award submission represented a thorough overview of advertising/public relations offerings on campus as well as their impact far beyond campus — all reflecting the quality of the program, which is the largest undergraduate major in the Bellisario College and one of the 15 biggest at Penn State.

8 majors thanks to growth of online majors including digital journalism and strategic communications

2,649 enrollment in 2019-20

18% of students from underrepresented groups

Members of a 400-level public relations campaigns class drove Penn State’s first entry in a national contest sponsored by PRWeek. Their effort helped Penn State get selected as one of five national finalists for the designation of Outstanding Education Program.

STUDENT MARSHALS

SUMMER 2018
Jared Kahler

FALL 2018
Olivia Catena (at left)

SPRING 2019
Talia Chianello, Overall
Anthony Colucci, Advertising/PR
Katie Gergel, Film/Video
Allison Rambler, Journalism
Leah Kochenour, Media Studies
Ethan Zerbe, Telecommunications

Vince Sadusky
Chief Executive Officer, Univision Communications Inc.

Zoë Martin
was selected as a finalist for the Outstanding Student Award from PRWeek. She is the second Penn State student in two years to become a national finalist.

David Eckert
qualified for the 60th annual Hearst Journalism Awards Program individual writing championships. He was the 20th Penn State student since 2007 to earn that distinction.

Scan this QR code to watch Tara’s interview about the project.

ACADEMIC OFFERINGS

RESIDENT INSTRUCTION
Undergraduate Majors
Advertising/Public Relations
Film-Video
Journalism
Media Studies
Telecommunications
Minors
Digital Media Trends and Analytics
Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Film Studies
Information Sciences and Technology for Telecommunications
Media Studies
Graduate Degrees
Master’s Degree, Media Studies
Ph.D., Mass Communications

ONLINE
Majors
Digital Journalism and Media
Digital Multimedia Design
Strategic Communications
Minor
Media Studies
Graduate Degree
Master of Professional Studies in Strategic Communications
MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

More than three dozen communications-related clubs and organizations offer students the chance to complement class work through networking and practical experience in the Bellisario College. From the Ad/PR Club and Student Film Organization to CommAgency (above), CommRadio and Valley Magazine, students in every major have opportunities to hone vital career-related skills outside the classroom.

38 student organizations

2020 College Television Awards
“Centre County Report in Puerto Rico,” College Emmy Nominee

SPJ Mark of Excellence Awards
National Winners:
• “Centre County Report,” Best All-Around Television Newscast
• Will Desautelle, Broadcast Sports Videography

National Finalist:
• James Leavy, Sports Photography/Large School Division
  National Finalist

CommAgency’s Student Engagement Network Video
• Silver Telly Winner
• Award of Distinction, Communicator Awards
• First Place, Broadcast Education Association Festival of Media Arts

53 episodes available of Penn State COMMversations

the Bellisario College podcast.
Find us at bellisario.psu.edu/alumni/podcasts or on Apple Podcasts.

135,000 unique viewers and
12,200 concurrent viewers of the final hour of THON on webcast by 46 Live, a Bellisario College student group during the final day of event

60+ viewers from more than 60 countries watched the THON webcast

10 Award Winners: Student Keystone Press Award, Photography
5 First-Place Winners: 2019 Mid-Atlantic Emmy Awards, College Production Awards
9 Finalists: Tri-State Golden Quill Awards

IN THREE OF THE PAST FOUR YEARS
CURLEY CENTER STUDENTS OUTSCORED OTHER SPORTS WRITING COMPETITORS IN THE HEARST JOURNALISM AWARDS PROGRAM
CommAgency: Real clients, variety of experiences

In just a few short years, students working in CommAgency have gained valuable real-world experience as the organization expands to meet the technical and artistic needs of its Penn State clients.

Housed in the Bellisario College, CommAgency began in 2017, first as a video production agency. Video was the strong suit of director Catie Grant, who was brought into the fold from WPSU to develop the production agency. Three more divisions have since been developed: photo, live streaming, and social media and analytics.

During the 2019-20 academic year, CommAgency grew to 45 students across the four divisions after starting with just 13 students three years ago. Its students and faculty leaders continue to serve Penn State clients, providing service and expertise that may be out of the scope or abilities for those who need high-quality communications. In exchange, students are paid for their services and gain experience under the direction of faculty mentors.

The latest addition to CommAgency — social media and analytics — had its soft launch in fall 2019 under the guidance of Grant and Bill Zimmerman, a lecturer in the Bellisario College. Its first student director was Ashley Ferrara, a senior majoring in advertising/public relations.

“The biggest lesson I learned is that each client is so different, and so my team and I have had to become super comfortable with the notion that there is no true set formula and you must make decisions and changes to accommodate each client and their goals,” she said.

Zimmerman said while social media is still a relatively young field, it’s now old enough that audiences place high expectations on social media practitioners.

Christina Chambers was the student executive director of CommAgency in the spring semester. She said Grant took a chance on her when CommAgency was a younger venture and growing, giving her the opportunity to grow her skills.

That variety of talent is needed, Grant said, because in addition to direct experience, CommAgency needs students who show drive and a desire to learn and can look at the agency’s work from a broad perspective. For these reasons, it’s not necessary that a student must be a film major to work in the video division.

“If you get in an entry-level position after graduation, and can show that you’ve got the dedication, the drive and the interest to understanding a larger platform campaign and strategy, then you’re that much more valuable,” Grant said.

Persistent student secured three summer internships

By Jeena Cadigan, ’21

Many students had the coronavirus wreck their summer plans but one Penn State student managed to find new ways to keep her original intent through these challenging times.

Rising senior Kristen Nodell started her search for a summer internship back in December. But when news started to buzz about the virus she saw many opportunities begin to be cancelled.

“I kind of gave up a little bit once I lost the one that was going to be in person,” Nodell said. “I was very proud of myself to keep going even though it was going to be virtual and it seemed like no internships were available.”

With persistence and the help of advisers in the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications she managed to hang onto not one, not two, but three internships for the summer. All three are being completed virtually.

I was very proud of myself to keep going even though it was going to be virtual and it seemed like no internships were available.

— Kristen Nodell

“Virtual is definitely a learning curve. It’s hard to sit in front of a computer all day,” the film-video major said.

But Nodell said she’s happy with what the companies have her doing. One internship is with the Penn State College of Arts and Architecture that Nodell has been involved with since her sophomore year. The other two are with North South and Part Two Pictures, separate production companies based in Brooklyn, New York. Nodell said even though the mode of the internship was switched she still has a heavy workload.

“They’re definitely giving me stuff to do. I think originally I was going to be more hands-on on the production aspect of things, which is what I’m interested in,” Nodell said. “Now I’ve had to switch my focus to research, which is fine because I didn’t really know much about that aspect of production anyway.”

Nodell spends three days a week working for the two Brooklyn production companies researching and fact checking for show topics they give her. She looks forward to being able to start pitching her own show ideas while learning how to make her ideas into confident and concise presentations to others.

However, many students don’t usually take on three internships at a time and Nodell has no doubt she will soon start feeling the pressure.

“I was hesitant taking two but then I think especially in this time it’s really important for me to just get different aspects of how companies would work,” Nodell said. “Two different companies doing the same thing but seeing how they do them differently was important to me. I think in the long run it’ll be good that I took them.”

Nodell said she owes a lot of credit for getting these opportunities to Bob Martin, the Bellisario College’s assistant dean for internships and career services, because he showed care and support through her unusual search for an internship.

“We talk to a variety of different students and some have had their internships rescinded and then they’re not pursuing other opportunities, and we’re like ‘Why aren’t you?’” Martin said. “This is such a fluid situation and you should be getting after other opportunities. Don’t give up on the summer.”

Nodell said she is happy with where she ended up and thinks she will benefit from the internships — even with the special circumstances.
A commitment to career development

Creative thinking, dedication and passion have served Bellisario College students and alumni well — thanks in large part to committed staff members who displayed those traits by launching a mentoring program in April.

The Alumni Connections Program has made more than 170 pairings to help students and recent graduates connect with alumni who are willing to offer their guidance on all things college and post-graduate life. For some, it might be job-search advice; for others, it might be about making a connection with a fellow Penn Stater and finding another supportive voice to complement the work of faculty and staff.

Pairings are made to provide mentees with a connection to their future. Many alumni — like Linsey Shea (’08), who works as a remote operations and production manager for major broadcasters and sports leagues — have participated as mentors simply because they want to give back.

“Being a mentor and connecting with my mentee has been incredibly rewarding,” Shea said. “I have been fortunate to have had many great mentors through my career, and I am thankful for the chance to share my experience. My mentee and I have discussed everything from job searching to networking, and we work to focus her career search.”

In addition to mentor-mentee pairings, the Alumni Connections Program also has more than 90 alumni who volunteered to be guest speakers in classes by Zoom this past semester. Some of these speakers included Don Roy King (’69), the director of “Saturday Night Live,” and Jerry Schwartz (’77), an editor for the Associated Press. The program also has more than 50 alumni who volunteered to be a recruiting resource for the Bellisario College.

The program was put together by Jose Lugaro, director of development; Bob Martin, assistant dean for internships and career placement; and Mike Poorman, director of alumni relations.

To sign up for the program each participant fills out a form and is later paired based on factors such as geographic location, degree and career interest.

Students interested in becoming a mentee may fill out the form at bellisario.psu.edu/alumni-mentoring-program and alumni interested in becoming a mentor may fill out the form at bellisario.psu.edu/alumni/alumni-connections.

The coronavirus pandemic did not slow options or support for Bellisario College students during the 2019-20 academic year. Internship and job fairs continued virtually as career development efforts continued with proven and updated approaches.

Along with hundreds of individual virtual meetings with students, the Office of Internships and Career Services hosted a series of regular meetings with professionals and recruiters about specific communications-related industries throughout the spring and summer.

The Office of Internships and Career Services includes (from left): Stephanie Girouard, Assistant Dean Bob Martin and Julie Miller.

From the moment students step on campus, our internships and career services team helps prepare them for a career. With a database of more than 4,000 internship sites, three communications-specific job fairs, resume review sessions and workshops, mock interviews, an annual etiquette dinner and more, their support of students is unrivaled.

**PREPARATION**

The first of a series of online professional development sessions, Covid Career Hacks, featured alumni Rob Boulware and Mike Esse.

**For-credit internships completed**

**Careers in first two months of mentoring program**

**Companies at three communications-specific internship and job fairs, two of which were conducted virtually**

**Programs specifically focused on career support and COVID-19 featuring alumni, recruiters and professionals from specific industries**

**Madison Lysek, who graduated in May, was one of the initial participants — and early success stories — in the Alumni Connections Program launched this spring. She connected with a fellow alum and found a job.**

**The Office of Internships and Career Services includes (from left): Stephanie Girouard, Assistant Dean Bob Martin and Julie Miller.**
Professor’s latest book tells story of illegal operation after WWII

In his new book, published by Rowman & Littlefield, Boaz Dvir, an assistant professor of journalism in the Bellisario College, tells the story of “Operation Zebra,” a secret and illegal operation by American aviators to save the Jewish state following World War II.

The book, “Saving Israel: The Unknown Story of Smuggling Weapons and Winning a Nation’s Independence,” begins in 1947, as the burgeoning Jewish state, lacking the weapons to defend itself, prepares to ward off an invasion by five well-equipped neighboring armies. Fearing a repeat of the Holocaust, American World War II veteran Al Schwimmer intervened. He created fictitious airlines, bought decommissioned transport airplanes from the U.S. War Asset Administration and fixed them in California and New Jersey. He then sent his pilots — Jews and non-Jews — to pick up rifles, bullets and fighter planes from the only country willing to break the international arms embargo: communist Czechoslovakia.

An award-winning journalist and filmmaker who produced and directed the PBS documentary “A Wing and a Prayer,” which tells part of the Operation Zebra story, Dvir researched this story after his grandfather mentioned he fought with a German rifle during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.

Research: Presidential eating habits and food choices

From physicals to sudden health scares, the health of the commander in chief garners a lot of media attention in the United States. A study by a Penn State researcher examined how President Donald Trump’s reported fondness for fast food may affect the public’s perception of fast food and the likelihood, based on their media habits, one might purchase some.

The study, published in the journal Appetite, found that people who pay more attention to media coverage about Trump’s diet are more likely to view fast food as a socially acceptable meal option. They also are more likely to eat fast food in the near future, according to the study’s author Jessica Myrick, associate professor of media studies in the Bellisario College.

While Trump’s 2018 physical examination reported the president to be in “excellent health,” Myrick was curious what effect his widely reported diet of fast food — which previous research has tied to poor health — could have on the general public.

“One person can make a huge difference.”

— Boaz Dvir, Assistant Professor

Scan this QR code to watch Boaz Dvir’s interview about “Cojot,” his feature documentary.

“...these data suggest there could be harm caused to public health by encouraging many Americans to eat fast food,” Myrick said.

Trump is not the first president whose eating habits have made headlines but Myrick said major advances in digital communication, including Trump’s use of Twitter, make his case particularly unique.

Myrick surveyed more than 1,000 Americans in a nationally representative survey. It compared the respondents’ attention to media — including news stories about Trump’s eating habits — with respondents’ “parasocial relationship” with the president. Parasocial relationships are between two people who don’t know each other. After analyzing the data, Myrick found that attention to media about Trump’s reported diet was a stronger predictor of intentions to eat fast food than any demographic factor, including education level, race, age, gender or income.
FACULTY ACCOLADES

Patrick Plaisance
Teaching Excellence Award

Christofer Skurka
ComSHER Article of the Year (Book Title: “Environmental Media Coverage in Latin America and the Caribbean”)

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION
Virtual | May 20-26, 2020

11 graduate students
11 faculty members
16 graduate students
17 faculty researchers

FACULTY PRODUCTIVITY

S. Shyam Sundar
Frederick Williams Prize for Contribution to the Study of Communication Technology

Advertising/Public Relations
Lee Aham, Associate Professor
Michelle Baker, Assistant Teaching Professor, Director of Online Programs in Strategic Communications
Mark Birschbach, Lecturer
Deno Bortake, Assistant Teaching Professor
Colleen Connolly-Ahern, Associate Professor
Frank Dardik, Associate Professor
Stephanie Maddin, Assistant Professor
Ann Major, Associate Professor
Steve Manuell, Assistant Teaching Professor
Renee Nicholi, Assistant Teaching Professor
Fuyuan Shen, Professor and Department Head
Haether Shonzarberge, Assistant Professor
Ronald Smith, Assistant Teaching Professor
Dave Wozniak, Assistant Teaching Professor
Tara Wyckoff, Assistant Teaching Professor
Ken Yednock, Assistant Teaching Professor
Bill Zimmerman, Lecturer

Journalism
Gary Abdullah, Assistant Dean of Diversity and Inclusion
John Affleck, Knight Chair
John Beale, Assistant Teaching Professor
Curtis Chandler, Assistant Teaching Professor
Boaz Dvir, Assistant Professor
Russ Eshelman, Assistant Teaching Professor and Department Head
Russell Frank, Associate Professor
Mary Hardin, Associate Professor and Dean
Shannon Kennan, Associate Teaching Professor

FULL-TIME FACULTY

Marketing/Public Relations
Steve Kozlowski, Assistant Teaching Professor
Ann Kozlowski, Assistant Teaching Professor
Marea Mairini, Assistant Teaching Professor
Pamela Molok, Assistant Teaching Professor
Kathleen O'Toole, Lecturer
Shalhoun Pasha, Assistant Teaching Professor
Juliet Pinto, Assistant Professor
Patrick Plaisance, Don W. Davis Professor in Ethics
Jamey Partin, Assistant Dean of Academic Services
Robert D. Richards, John and Ann Curley Professor of First Amendment Studies
Ford Risley, Professor and Associate Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
Christopher Ritchie, Assistant Teaching Professor
John Sanchez, Associate Professor
Cynthia Simmons, Associate Teaching Professor
Will Yurman, Norman Eberly Professor of Practice
B. Zhong, Associate Professor

Film-Video and Media Studies
Rod Bragman, Assistant Teaching Professor
Martin Camden, Assistant Teaching Professor
Jo Dumas, Associate Teaching Professor
Pavel Glick, Assistant Professor
Kevin Haggopian, Associate Teaching Professor
Matthew Jordan, Associate Professor
Matthew McAllister, Professor
Wunpini Fatimata Mohammed, Lecturer
Jessica Myrick, Associate Professor
Mary Beth Oliver, Distinguished Professor

UNIVERSITY-WIDE AWARD WINNERS

The Bellisario College’s six University-wide award winners were the most of any unit in 2019-20.

2020 Milton S. Eisenhower Award for Distinguished Teaching: Dennis Butterworth
Undergraduate Program Leadership Award: Steve Kozlowski
McKee Donkin Award: Matt McAllister

Staff Excellence Award: Janet Klinefelter
Community Engagement & Scholarship Award: Dave Driz
Barash Award for Human Service: Dr. Dumas

S. Shyam Sundar, Distinguished Professor

Anthony Olomunsiola, Professor and Department Head
Michelle Rodino-Colosimo, Associate Professor
Michael Schmierbach, Associate Professor
Maura Shea, Assistant Teaching Professor and Associate Department Head
Richard Sherman, Associate Professor
Christoffer Skurka, Assistant Professor
S. Shyam Sundar, Distinguished Professor
Timka Tousell, Assistant Professor
Verena West, Assistant Teaching Professor

Telecommunications
Benjamin Crumley, Associate Teaching Professor
Anne Doris, Assistant Teaching Professor
Linda Faillini, Lecturer
Bob Frieden, Pioneers Chair
Catie Grant, Lecturer
Bill Hallman, Lecturers
Anna Hoag, Associate Professor
Matthew Jackson, Associate Professor and Department Head
Krishna Jayakar, Professor
Scott Myrick, Lecturer
David Norloff, Assistant Teaching Professor
Patrick Parsons, Professor
Yael Warthel, Assistant Professor

DONALD P. BELLISARIO COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS
As much as any group, Bellisario College staff members exemplify the commitment and passion that makes Penn State special. They are dedicated to supporting students and helping them succeed.

Doug Benscoter, financial assistant
Amanda Brown, administrative assistant
Jeff Brown, general manager of CommRadio
Leah Carraway-Justice, administrative assistant
Yu Tai Chung, director of information technology
Emily Cleveringa, undergraduate recruiter
Christine Cooper, coordinator of graduate education
Nikki DiOrio, academic adviser
James Dugan, TV studio lab coordinator
Tammy Falls, administrative assistant
Elaine Files, research administrator
Stephanie Girouard, staff assistant
Dorie Glunt, financial coordinator
Isabelle Helmich, associate director of development
Drew Heo, assistant equipment manager
Brenda Johnson, administrative assistant
Whitney Justice, part-time graphic designer
Kristen Kegerize, academic adviser
Katie Kennedy, administrative assistant
Janet Kleinfolter, alumni relations and stewardship officer
Jeremy Krebs, administrative assistant
Sherry Kyler, administrative assistant
Lee Lovelace, coordinator, Stanley E. Diegner Washington Program
José Lugario, director of development
Lynn Maggs, assistant to the financial officer
Karina Martinez, administrative assistant
Christopher Maurer, systems administrator
Jonathan McVerry, communications strategist
Julie Miller, manager of internships
Lacy Miller, administrative assistant
Karen Moreley Bryan, manager of facilities
BB Muré, academic adviser
Paris Palmér, strategic communications coordinator
Michael Poorman, director of alumni relations
Stephen Raighard, broadcast technical instructor
Curtis Richner, IT support specialist
Sandi Rockwell, director of finance and administration
Collette Rodger, development assistant
Steve Sampsell, director of strategic communications
Dell Schwab, academic adviser
Mary Sergeant, lead academic adviser
Brian Shainfelt, multimedia production specialist
Zachary Shourds, media consultant and Finestra Lab coordinator
Chad Simpson, human resources strategic partner
Tasha Smith, executive assistant
Megan Warefield, human resources consultant
Olivia Werner, academic adviser
Christian Young, IT support specialist
Michael Zieliński, equipment room and lab coordinator

Our team is committed to helping students accomplish everything they want.

– Assistant Dean
Jamey Perry
alumni SUPPORT

The power of the Penn State network cannot be overlooked, and the commitment of Bellisario College alumni to supporting one another and students provides an example of that support on a daily basis. Our alumni enjoy interacting with one another, mentoring students and facilitating the success of fellow Penn Staters.
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**CURRENT BELLISARIO COLLEGE ALUMNI BY COUNTRY**

**ALUMNI BOARD AWARD WINNERS**

- **Alumni Society Board Award Winners**
  - **Alumni Achievement** – Diane Salvatore ’81
  - **Anderson Communications Contributor** – Michael Greenwald ’63
  - **Emerging Professional** – Andrew McGill ’10
  - **Excellence in Teaching** – Steve Manuel ’84, ’92 MA
  - **Outstanding Alumna** – Lynne Getz ’98

- **Alumni Association Distinguished Alumna**
  - Tanya R. Kennedy ’89
  - Linda Yaccarino ’85

**ALUMNI CONNECTIONS PROGRAM**

Designed to allow alumni to engage with students and young alumni. Volunteers (460 so far) signed up as mentors, class/virtual visitors, or to assist with recruiting.

Sign up to participate at: bellisario.psu.edu/alumni/alumni-connections
Despite a brief delay because of the coronavirus pandemic, construction on the Donald P. Bellisario Media Center continued during the 2019-20 academic year. The facility, which will revitalize the oldest part of Willard Building while attracting students and encouraging collaboration across disciplines, will be completed in the fall and ready for classes in early 2021.

63,131 sq/ft  
*total project*

35,000 sq/ft  
*Bellisario Media Center*

1949  
*Willard Building First Constructed*

As media center progresses, time capsule discovery reveals similarities in campus life

As construction of the Bellisario Media Center continued in the heart of campus during the 2019-20 academic year, the discovery of a time capsule in the building revealed how Penn State has changed (and stayed the same) through the decades.

The time capsule was found in the oldest part of Willard Building on the University Park campus. Just months from now that building will be opened as a state-of-the-art media center supporting students in all majors in the Bellisario College.

When the building was constructed, it was home of the Bursar’s office, the Registrar’s office and graduate program offices. Paperwork inside the time capsule included a variety of forms from those offices as a sampling of University operation at the time.

Also included was a copy of The Daily Collegian, as well as course guides for undergraduate and graduate students, rate sheets for student fees, a copy of the form used by faculty members to record their academic and research activity, a copy of the speech from the day the building was first dedicated and a variety of photographs.

Scan this QR code to see the latest about the Bellisario Media Center.

Dean Marie Hardin (upper left), Penn State President Eric Barron and his wife Molly, and the men who found the time capsule, Duane Waite and Greg Johnson, were part of its opening. Photos by Patrick Mansell
Stories of Support

Of Support

Donors at every level make the success of Bellisario College students and faculty possible. In addition, many opportunities exist to ensure the continued success of our people and programs.

“Sometimes all you need is someone to believe in you”

For Carolyn Xu, the support of friends made all the difference in helping her return to Penn State after a family tragedy, earning her degree and building a successful career. Now Xu, the founding partner of Media Fortitude Partners, hopes to provide that same support for future generations.

With a gift of $30,000, Xu has created the Carolyn Xu Scholarship in the Bellisario College. The scholarship will provide awards to students who need financial assistance to complete their education at Penn State.

“I lost my mother in my sophomore year, and things just kind of spiraled down,” explained Xu. “I knew an education was the key to everything, so I tried to come back that next semester. I wanted to push through, but my grades suffered horribly. When that happens, you don’t qualify for certain grants and scholarships. Things just kept piling up.”

Xu eventually left Penn State, but thanks to the support of friends who co-signed for loans, she was able to return after an 18-month hiatus and earn her telecommunications degree in 2008.

Today, Xu leads an award-winning media buying agency with clients across the United States. She has executed general and political campaigns in more than 200 U.S. markets and helped develop media campaigns for General Motors, Warner Bros. Entertainment, U.S. Rep. John Lewis, the New Jersey Department of Health’s anti-opioid campaign, and many others.

“I know, firsthand, that a good education provides life-changing opportunities for those hoping to escape poverty and improve their lives,” Xu said. “But the finances can become a burden. I graduated with over $100,000 in student debt and committed to pay it off in 10 years. I know that was a lofty goal. I got lucky.”

Xu promised herself that if she was ever in a position to give back, she would. “Having people who believed in me was invaluable,” Xu explained. “That’s the kind of support I hope to provide as well. Penn State was a lonely place for me, but people helped — having people who believed in me helped. I hope this gift makes that difference for others.”

Xu has also volunteered her time with the college, currently serving as a member of the Bellisario College’s Advancement Council.

“It’s family for me,” Xu said.
The growth and success of our embedded programs and international opportunities have benefited many of our students

After creating an international reporting course at Penn State that has become a model for programs across the country, a retired faculty member has made a commitment to support it and endeavors like it for years to come.

Tony Barbieri, professor emeritus of journalism, made a $100,000 gift to endow the Tony Barbieri Fund for International Reporting, which will enrich the Department of Journalism in the Bellisario College with funds for initiatives and programs related to international reporting.

Barbieri was the Larry and Ellen Foster Professor of Writing and Editing until his retirement in June 2018. As Foster Professor he taught courses on American journalism values, newsroom ethics and advanced reporting.

He also initiated the international reporting course in 2009. The embedded program combined classroom instruction on the University Park campus with a spring break working trip abroad. In recent years, students have covered stories at a variety of international destinations, including Brazil, China, Cuba, Greece, Israel, Mexico, Panama and South Africa. Their work from those trips — a mix of broadcast, longform and multimedia journalism efforts — often earned awards in national competitions.

For Barbieri, providing undergraduate journalism students access to international opportunities was the goal of the course from the beginning.

“The growth and success of our embedded programs and international opportunities have benefited many of our students across the Bellisario College,” Dean Marie Hardin said. “Tony Barbieri’s work with international reporting provided a firm foundation for that growth. We’re deeply appreciative of his commitment to the Bellisario College and our students.”

Barbieri was himself a foreign correspondent for close to 10 years, first in Moscow and then in Tokyo, while working at The Baltimore Sun. When he retired from The Baltimore Sun in 2004, he was the paper’s managing editor. He spent two years teaching at the University of Maryland before joining the Penn State faculty in 2007.

The international reporting endeavor was the first embedded course in the Bellisario College. In the years since its inception, each of the other departments has launched its own embedded course — which combines a semester of work around a working trip during spring break.

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— Dean Marie Hardin

WE ARE... GOING DIGITAL!

WHAT YOUR GIVING CAN SUPPORT

$5,000

$1,500

$2,500

$1,000

equipment for CommAgency, our on-campus, student-run media production agency

an opportunity for 15 students to visit Success in the City internship fair in NYC

an immersive experience in the international reporting class for one student

emergency grant for a student whose finances changed because of COVID-19

Scan the QR code to view The Communicator.

communicator.bellisario.psu.edu/
A successful career and a connection with others leads to opportunity for students

The best stories are about people — something Penn State alumnus Rick Starr knew well, and practiced regularly, during his career.

From Penn State to Pittsburgh and beyond, the award-winning sports journalist’s work focused less on the games themselves and more on the communal, human and social aspect of athletic competitions.

Starr, who earned his journalism degree in 1975, worked in western Pennsylvania and was the longtime editor of the Valley News Dispatch in Tarentum. He covered the Pittsburgh Steelers for 19 years, chronicling the eras of two Hall of Fame coaches, Chuck Noll and Bill Cowher. Along with Super Bowls and high-profile pros, the multitalented Starr also focused on local and high school sports.

At Penn State, Starr was sports editor of The Daily Collegian and drew praise for his coverage of John Cappelletti’s 1973 Heisman Trophy speech when Cappelletti dedicated the award to his brother, Joey.

Starr died in May 2017 at age 64. In his honor, Starr’s friends and fellow alumni, Cathy and Bob Buday, recently established the Rick Starr Award for Human-Centered Sports Journalism in the Bellisario College. Cathy graduated with her journalism degree from the University in 1976. Bob earned his communications studies degree in 1977.

Starr introduced the Budays as undergraduates, and they all became part of a large, tight-knit group of student journalists whose friendship has continued to this day. Cathy and Bob eventually married — albeit 24 years after they were introduced. They started dating in 1996 and were married two years later. They have six children, five from their first marriages and one together, all of whom had the opportunity to meet Starr before he died.

With the Rick Starr Award for Human-Centered Sports Journalism, the Budays hope to encourage Penn State students majoring in communications to follow Starr’s example.

The inaugural winners of the award were Shane Connelly (’21) and Hannah Mears (’20).
Our alumni and friends made 954 gifts totaling $1,440,856 during the fiscal year from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, to support the Bellisario College and its students. The Honor Roll recognizes alumni and friends who made gifts of at least $100 during the fiscal year.
OUTREACH

including the inaugural Centre Film Festival (above) — was bolstered by a virtual and Zoom explosion a service to the community as well. During the 2019-20 academic year, regular programming — speakers, scheduled lectures and special events provide resources for our students and represent

Experts, events, people and programs. During a typical year dozens of classroom and guest speakers, scheduled lectures and special events provide resources for our students and represent a service to the community as well. During the 2019-20 academic year, regular programming — including the inaugural Centre Film Festival (above) — was bolstered by a virtual and Zoom explosion of connectivity that collectively featured more than 220 visitors to the Bellisario College.
Ron Hall, Vietnam Vet, actor, ‘Stray Dog’
*Jessica Handler (’10), marketing consultant, Madison Square Garden
Tracy Harlow, vice president, Digital Brand Strategy, Walmart
Kaitlyn Harrison, senior customer success manager, Shareable
*Dan Hartman (’85), media consultant, Hartman Media
*Jessica Hartshorn (’93), entertainment editors/senior editor, Parents Magazine/People and Culture, Tierney
*Ali Izzo, freelance journalist, WPSU
Quara Alegría Hudes, author

*Rocco Impreveduto (’99) head of marketing and operations, Wolters Kluwer Legal and Regulatory US
*Alli Ingersoll (’12), data journalist, Investigative Post
Ali Izzo, founder/co-CEO, The Purpose Therapy Box

*Jon Jackson (’90), deputy athletic director, Duke University
*Jayme Jamison (’78), retired, senior vice president, O Magazine/Hearst Publications
*Antonia Jaramillo (’18), reporter, Florida Today
*Peter Jensen (’10), sr fantasy editor, NHL.com
Jorge Jabot, owner, Black Sheep Media

Jay Bilas, college basketball analyst, ESPN

*Jorge Jobel, *Pete Jensen (’10), *Jayne Jamison (’78), *Jon Jackson (’90),
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Alyse Horn-Pyatt, *Jack Horner (’89), *Jessica Hartshorn (’93),
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*Strategy, Walmart

Investigative Post
*Florida Today

*Alyse Horn-Pyatt, *Jack Horner (’89), *Jessica Hartshorn (’93),
*Dan Hartman (’85), Kaitlyn Harrison,
*Ron Hall, Jay Bilas,
*Strategy, Walmart

Anna Lingerins,
*Mark Lima (’87),
Susan Lechtanski,
*Samantha Lassen (’18),
*Adriana Lacy (’18),
Jennifer Kuntch,
*Cait Kramer (’16),
Brian Klingensmith,
*Michelle Kinsman (’92),
*Don Roy King (’69),
*Jessica Kartalija (’01),
Austin Karp,
associate, Golin
president, Digitas Health
senior customer success
freelance journalist
co-founder, StudioME
operations, Discovery
co-founder, Graduation Media
specialist, University of Pittsburgh
co-founder, My Grads Get Jobs
founder, Nine Stories
Pennsylvania State Education Association
consumer and Ad/PR Alumni Network 

Several members of our current Alumni Society Board and Ad/PR Alumni Network Board visited classrooms as well. For a list of those board members, see page 25.

Jay Bilas, college basketball analyst, ESPN

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