

CONVERSATIONS

A publication for College of Communication alumni

DEPAUL
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION



Communication students who study abroad discover new perspectives on our global world. Read more on page 6.

Winter 2016

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THE NEXT 10 YEARS

CONVERSATIONS

We welcome your story ideas, questions and comments. Please contact Jacob Sabolo (LAS '12) at (312) 362-8820 or jsabolo@depaul.edu.

Office of Alumni Relations
alumni.depaul.edu
(800) 437-1898

College of Communication
communication.depaul.edu
communication@depaul.edu
(312) 362-8600

Editor
Jamie Sokolik

Editorial Contributors
Marilyn Ferdinand
Kelsey Schagemann

Art Director
Francis Paola Lea

Designers
Courtney Yoelin
Vimal Kachhia

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As the College of Communication approaches its 10-year anniversary, I hope you are as impressed as I am with the incredible growth we've achieved. Our community has grown and continues to expand—this fall, our freshman class was 10 percent larger than last year and graduate enrollment increased 17 percent. Our alumni saw gains in employment rates. Bachelor's degree holders experienced a 6 percent increase in career outcomes (either employed or in a continuing education program), and master's degree holders saw a 9 percent increase from the previous year. Moreover, the employment rate of our alumni was 7 percent higher than the 2015 national average. Many of our initiatives are also thriving. Leading experts continue to visit our classrooms to enhance student learning; in fact, 300 guest speakers visited last year. To kick off the academic year, Rishad Tobaccowala, chief strategist with the advertising and public relations firm Publicis Groupe, delivered a keynote address on disruption and the future of the communication landscape. The Innovation Lab sees healthy use, with more than 15 classes incorporating the resource into their course curriculum. In the fall, the Center for Journalism Integrity and Excellence held its inaugural lecture, "Confessions of a Diehard Political Reporter in an Apocalyptic Election Year," delivered by co-directors Carol Marin and Don Moseley. Plans are underway for the college to host the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies conference in summer 2018, and the college will offer certificates and workshops through the continuing and professional education division. Topics include communication apprehension, crisis communication and portfolio creation. Visit learning.depaul.edu for more information.

As alumni, you are among the reasons the college continues to thrive. I can't wait to see what the next 10 years will bring.



As director of communications and engagement at Evanston Township High School (ETHS) in Illinois, Evangeline Semark (CMN MA '14) proudly touts the equity focus of this learning community. Ranked in the top 1-2 percent of all U.S. high schools, ETHS educates more than 3,300 youth from every neighborhood in Evanston, Ill., representing many racial and ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. The high rate of student success at ETHS is attributable, in part, to the conversations between students and staff about racial equity and building an environment that affirms all perspectives and identities.

This approach suits Semark perfectly. "I lead the public relations and communication efforts to help create a more culturally responsive learning community for our students," Semark says. "My goal is to provide our students and families with the information they need to be inspired to learn."

Semark believes her role stretches beyond the typical duties of a public relations practitioner. "Whether it's to invite families to learn more about the school, facilitate workshops to discuss issues of racial equity or teach freshmen about their 'online tattoos' via media literacy programming, I position myself as an educator," she says. "I continuously create opportunities to empower others."

I was encouraged to stretch my learning, to question what was known and to imagine possibilities of resistance and change.

A former graphic designer with a passion for community-based work and social justice, Semark wanted to "understand the human factors, communication patterns and cultural contexts behind the designs. The communication field is inherently interdisciplinary and provides those who are interested with many avenues for expansion." After working in the field for several years, Semark decided to pursue a graduate degree at DePaul in organizational and multicultural communication.

"My graduate studies gave me the critical framework to interrogate ideological systems of power such as racism, classism, ableism and heterosexism," Semark says. "I was encouraged to stretch my learning, to question what was known and to imagine possibilities of resistance and change."

Semark says as a white cisgender woman working in education, she finds that one of her biggest challenges is continuously examining her role in perpetuating the systems of oppression that create the stories of who is valued and why. During her time at ETHS, she has spearheaded removing gender pronouns in communications, helped create events that expand beyond the able-bodied experience and worked to ensure that the majority of the student body—youth of color—are highly visible and accurately represented in marketing materials.

Semark encourages others to use their talents to disrupt all forms of bias. "As public relations professionals, we are uniquely positioned to help shape how someone or something is viewed in the public realm," she says. "We have the opportunity to recenter the communities we serve professionally through a social justice framework."

Tips on Community Building from Evangeline Semark

It's not about you. It's about creating the story of "us" by lifting up the shared values of your organization and the various peoples who live in the communities you serve.

Communication strategies should build partnerships. I use tactics to position students and parents as key communicators.

Create plans that disseminate audience-centered messaging through approaches that build brand advocacy and meet people where they already are.

Allow all voices to be heard via surveys, focus groups, feedback sessions and voting, if appropriate. Pushback from those who feel unheard might lead to project failure.

never in DISTRESS

How one DePaul alumna went from your average damsel to the Damsel in Dior

I think you have to be obsessed and completely passionate if you're going to start a business and do it well. ”



Jacey Duprie (CMN '06) is not in Iraq, as she thought she would be after graduating from DePaul. Instead, Duprie is in Los Angeles, the perfect spot to write her blog, *Damsel in Dior*, which covers everything from fashion to travel to beauty and good reads.

Duprie and the blog have been featured in *Huffington Post*, *Vanity Fair* and *WhoWhatWear*, among other publications, and her readership has skyrocketed. In fact, Duprie is the 2016 social media ambassador for Cotton Inc., a direct result of their social media team perusing her blog. Here, Duprie discusses her road to blogging success.

Tell us a little about yourself and why you chose DePaul.

I grew up in a very small town in South Texas. My dad was a cotton farmer, but my aunt had a boutique on Armitage Avenue in Lincoln Park. My mom and I went to visit her—I think it was my junior year of high school—and we just fell in love with the adorable street that is Armitage and decided to explore more of the neighborhood. We literally stumbled across DePaul. I was in college-search mode, and I said to my mom, “Oh my gosh, look at this beautiful school.” I immediately wanted to go to college there, and it completely lived up to all of my expectations.

How did you go from College of Communication student to big-time LA blogger?

It wasn't an easy path. While at DePaul, I did a couple of internships with different TV stations. I thought I wanted to be a reporter in Iraq, but I quickly learned the politics that go into creating the news, and I realized broadcast wasn't for me. I've always had a creative side, and I decided to explore entertainment journalism instead. I saw that “The Oprah Winfrey Show” was looking for a public relations assistant intern, so I applied and got hired there. After the internship ended and I graduated, I was craving heat. I love Chicago, but growing up in Texas, I just was not made for winter. One vacation to LA, and the city won me over. I got a job with E! News and started the blog at that time, just as a hobby. I posted whatever I was interested in—things I was buying online, articles I'd read, places I wanted to travel to, things like that. But I started to spend more time on it, and, eventually, it paid the bills. Now, I'm fully invested.

Was there a turning point for *Damsel in Dior* when it really started to take off?

The first time things truly started taking shape was when I was posting photos while on my honeymoon. WordPress, the blog platform I was using at the time, used to do something called “Freshly Pressed,” where they would feature quality blogs with good images, and one of my photos was posted. When I woke up the next day and checked the site, I had 30,000 views, which was unheard of for me at the time. Up until then, I had only been getting basically three views—my mom, my dad and my dog. Some people get motivation and validation from their bosses or their paychecks. At that moment, I started to get validation from checking my numbers every day to see if they were going up, going down and if people were clicking. I read every single comment—which we still do—and responded to every single email and tweet. I became very strategic in building and growing an audience.

What tactics did you use to increase your readership?

I set up an editorial calendar, strategized my posts for the week and was consistent with the content. People knew what they were getting and when to get it. I posted at the same time every day, in the morning, when people were having their coffee. Same for social media. We still strive to post at 8 a.m., noon and 3 p.m. We study the analytics to find out when our viewers are reading, what was most popular, what pages they navigate to—everything. I also continued my own education. I did tons of online research, went to classes and listened to webinars. I was literally obsessed with my blog, which became my business. I think you have to be obsessed and completely passionate if you're going to start a business and do it well.

Fashion Tips from the Damsel

- When shopping, if you wouldn't put it on and wear it out of the store right then, don't buy it. It doesn't matter if it's on sale—if you're not going to wear it now, you're not going to wear it.
- Similarly, if there is something in your closet that you haven't worn in a year or longer, it's time to give it away.
- Any time someone asks my husband for a surprising fact about me, his answer is always, “Her closet isn't what you would expect.” I keep things minimalistic. I wear gray, black and white, jeans and t-shirts, mostly cotton. It's simple dressing, which keeps things easy, and that makes it fun.

INTERESTED IN STARTING A BUSINESS?

DePaul can help! The university has partnered with Chicago entrepreneurial technology hub 1871. This collaboration allows all alumni to take advantage of 1871's programming, special events, workshops, lectures and networking opportunities.



A trip abroad is a treat for anyone, but studying abroad is unforgettable. Here we explore the study abroad summer courses led by College of Communication faculty that allow students to experience a whole new way to learn.

“Doctor Who” Study Away Trip in London and Cardiff, England, with Paul Booth, associate professor of media and cinema studies

Program basics: The “Doctor Who” trip to England is offered as part of the First Year Abroad program; students take a class with Booth during the school year and then travel to England for two weeks during the following summer.

Booth is a die-hard fan of the show and says that the long-running series is a manifestation of the changing media culture. In his class, students study the show through historical, cultural, aesthetic and critical lenses.

What they did: The students were immersed in the “Doctor Who” culture thanks to a private tour of the “Doctor Who” shop and museum in London, “Doctor Who” walking tours in London and Cardiff, visits to some of the show’s filming locations and other outings. The group also got a good dose of broader British culture. For example, they saw “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” at Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre and went to the British Library and several museums.

“Because the students are in class together before the abroad portion, by the time we travel, they’ve had a quarter to get to know each other,” Booth says. “That actually made the trip really nice because we were able to get right into the learning aspect, which was great.”

Spain: Cinema and the City with Luisela Alvaray and Daniel Makagon, associate professors of media and cinema studies and communication studies

Program basics: As a Venezuelan native and member of the College of Communication internationalization committee, Alvaray has a natural desire to instill international learning and perspectives throughout the college. When she realized how many of her students had an interest in learning more about Hispanic culture, she created a study abroad option for them. Upon finishing the spring-quarter class Spanish Cinema and Urban Communication, students are enrolled in the summer class, Spain: Cinema and the City, held in Barcelona and Madrid. “We help the students to understand different

cultures by combining the lens of my area, cinema, with that of Daniel’s, which is urban communication,” Alvaray explains. “When the students arrive in Spain, they have frameworks they can use to understand fully what they are experiencing.”

What they did: The group talked with Spanish filmmakers, visited the National Film Archive in Madrid and stopped at a local TV station, which gave them a sense of the role that visual culture plays in Spanish society. They also met a formerly homeless man living in Barcelona, who offered his unique perspective on living in the city and on the people and government. While in Barcelona, they also explored street art and graffiti, which are a large part of the city’s culture.

“For many students, this was their first experience of being an ‘other,’” Alvaray says. “It’s a chance to broaden their view of the world. Our goal is to leave a sense of curiosity in the students to continue investigating different cultures and to promote understanding between different peoples.”



Advertising and Social Media in China with Kelly Chu, associate professor of public relations and advertising

Program basics: Media in China is completely different than it is in the United States. In a theory similar to the idea that you can become fluent only if you live in a country that primarily speaks that language, Chu believes that to truly understand the diverse media culture in China, you have to experience it firsthand. After taking a course on the subject during the spring quarter, the group heads to Shanghai for seven weeks to study at Fudan University. “For some of the students, this was their first time outside of the Midwest, and it was for seven weeks in a very different country,” Chu says. “Some of them were overwhelmed the first few days, but everyone was excited. They all adjusted very well.”

What they did: Popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are banned in China, but the country does have its own versions of the sites. The students set up accounts on these social media sites during the spring-quarter course. During the following summer, they traveled to China, where they not only took daily Chinese language classes, but also further explored how the Chinese use social media in everyday life. They visited advertising agencies and multinational companies, learned about Chinese pastimes, such as karaoke, explored Nanjing and hiked the Yellow Mountain.



Spaces of Cinema in Rome with Michael DeAngelis, associate professor of media and cinema studies

Program basics: Italy has a strong history of cinematic excellence, and the film industry continues to thrive there today. Many Hollywood greats have chosen Rome as the backdrop for their movies because the unique aesthetic changes the camera angles and the way filmmakers use space. In this class, students explored that relationship. “A lot of people don’t know about contemporary Italian cinema because it doesn’t make it to the U.S.,” DeAngelis says. “Italy has a really rich and strong cinematic history. It’s very beneficial for our students to see it firsthand and to have the opportunity to interact with many acclaimed Italian filmmakers in a way that just isn’t possible here.”

What they did: In addition to watching and analyzing films, the students also had plenty of opportunities to hear from current Italian filmmakers in person. The students lived in apartments throughout the city, which allowed them to experience the lifestyle of the local people. They attended international film festivals and stayed at a Tuscan *agriturismo*, a resort of sorts, that is self-sustaining and gives visitors a view of daily life. “The students on this trip experienced the city in a completely different way than if they were staying in a dorm or hotel or coming as a true tourist,” DeAngelis says. “There’s an authenticity in these experiences that they aren’t likely to get any other way.”



AROUND THE COLLEGE

1 Launched in May 2016, 14 East is a topical online magazine that is student produced. The staff covers topics of interest to young adults, such as politics, literature and culture, with an emphasis on humanizing issues in the social atmosphere. For more, visit fourteeneastmag.com.



2 Six DePaul students in the College of Communication and Driehaus College of Business were chosen to participate in the Chicago Network Future Leaders Program. The program provides the opportunity for outstanding women who are sophomores and juniors in college to explore a multitude of potential career paths in the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. The College of Communication students worked at Kohl Children's Museum and the corporate office of McDonald's.

3 Dean Salma Ghanem traveled to Rome May 29-June 4 to participate in the Rome Seminar with the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. The seminar is a



delegation of 20 academic leaders from Catholic universities across the nation. They travel to Rome "to explore the intellectual and spiritual legacy of the Catholic Church in order to strengthen and promote the mission of Catholic higher education in the United States."

4 DePaul journalism faculty and staff hosted 12 journalists from the country of Georgia June 13-21. The professors led training sessions, developed educational materials and scheduled media visits so that the journalists could get a firsthand look at journalism and media in the United States.

5 The College of Communication welcomes three new faculty members, who started in fall 2016:



Michael Blight is an instructor in the organizational communication program. He studies changes in social media with particular interest in the growing research on new streaming technologies.



Vincent Cicchirillo is an assistant professor of advertising. His research focuses on the social-science perspective of quantitative research and the influence of new media technologies on human interaction.



Bree McEwan is an assistant professor of communication studies. She focuses her research on the intersection of interpersonal and communication technology and is particularly interested in communication in friendships and networked relationships.

6 Radio DePaul's program "La Hora Picante" was extended from one hour to two. They now broadcast on Saturday mornings, 7-9 a.m.



"La Hora Picante" is hosted and produced by DePaul student "billennials," or bilingual millennials, on WRTO.

ACCOLADES

Several College of Communication professors received tenure and promotions in 2015-16:

Jay Baglia, associate professor with tenure, health communication

Carolyn Bronstein, professor, public relations and advertising

Kelly Chu, associate professor with tenure, public relations and advertising

Elissa Foster, associate professor with tenure, health communication

Jason Martin, associate professor, journalism

Matt Ragas, associate professor with tenure, public relations and advertising

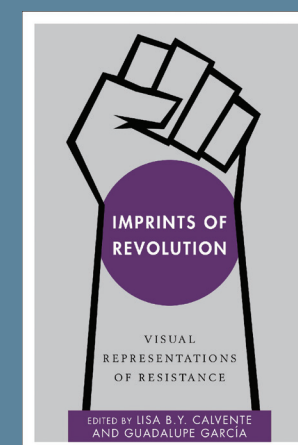
Hai Tran, associate professor with tenure, journalism



Journalism faculty members **Carol Marin** and **Don Moseley** were honored with a Peabody Award for their serial coverage of Laquan McDonald, a black teenager who was shot and killed by Jason Van Dyke, a white Chicago police officer. The coverage aired on WMAQ-TV NBC 5 Chicago.



Madeline Buchel's (CMN '16) paper "Native Advertising: Ethical Implications and Guidelines for Effective Utilization" was awarded the Alfred J. Seaman Award for Best Undergraduate Essay on Advertising and Society by the Advertising Educational Foundation. In addition to a trip to New York City for the awards ceremony, Buchel received a \$1,000 award.



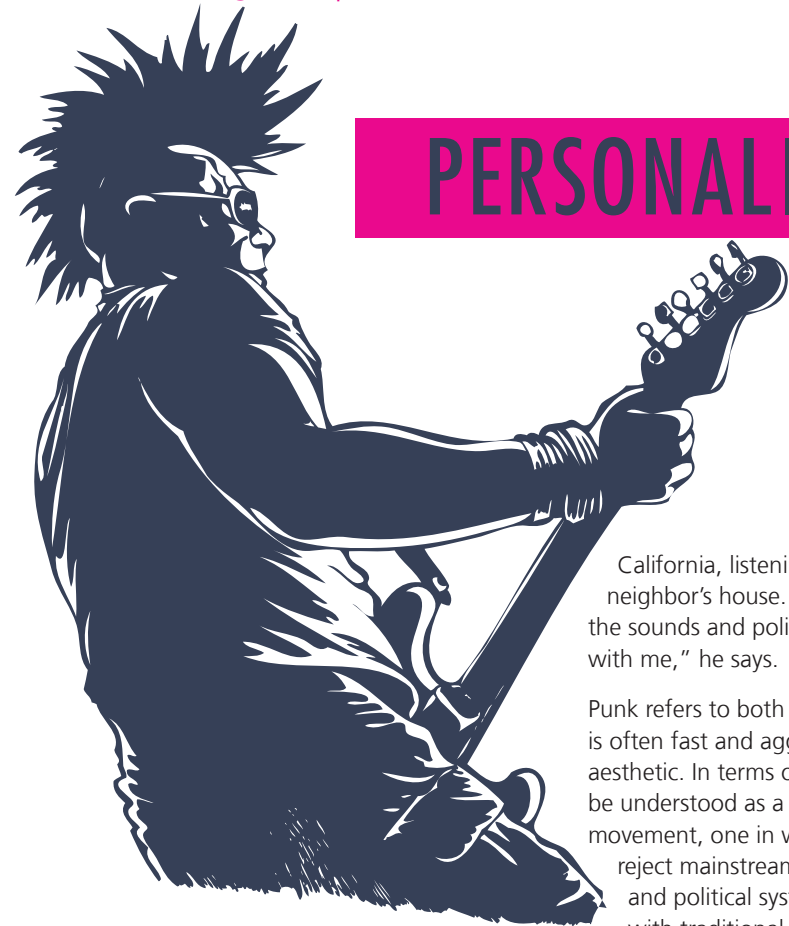
Assistant Professor **Lisa Calvente** published her book "Imprints of Revolution: Visual Representations of Resistance" in May 2016. The book explores how the visual representation of a revolution is significant in its historical context.

Students **Edgar Castellanos** and **Danielle Cole** placed second in the Washington Media Scholars Foundation Media Plan Case Competition. They were invited to participate in the Media Scholars Program in Washington, D.C., and they gave a final presentation on June 9. As runners up, Castellanos and Cole each received a \$3,000 prize.

Led by Assistant Professors of Public Relations **Rajul Jain** and **Maria DeMoya**, a team of DePaul students was awarded an honorable mention in the Bateman Case Study Competition, hosted by the Public Relations Student Society of America. Students Kristin Monroe, Kim Ortiz,



Kellen Shoemaker and Will Inman submitted a campaign to raise awareness of the contributions student veterans make in the community.



PERSONALIZING PUNK

DANIEL MAKAGON EXPLAINS PUNK'S COMMUNITY-FOCUSED CULTURE

California, listening to records at his neighbor's house. "From a very early age, the sounds and politics of punk resonated with me," he says.

Punk refers to both a style of music, which is often fast and aggressive, and a cultural aesthetic. In terms of the latter, punk can be understood as a do-it-yourself (DIY) movement, one in which bands and fans reject mainstream, profit-driven economic and political systems. Instead of signing with traditional corporate music labels and playing at clubs that rely on money-making alcohol sales, the bands in Makagon's book perform in volunteer-run spaces and residential basements. "It's a form of community that seeks to be self-sustaining," Makagon explains.

Makagon draws on aspects of punk philosophy in his courses on intercultural

communication, audio documentary and urban communication. "Since mainstream media communication is driven by corporate profit, it's critical that students learn how to find alternative sources of information," he says. "At the same time, I encourage students to make culture rather than merely criticize or consume culture."

In fact, punk's DIY mindset and community-building focus align closely with DePaul's Vincentian emphasis on social justice, compassion for others and caring for our world. "Within that mission, there's an understanding that we are responsible for helping to bring about positive change," Makagon notes. "Think about that important Vincentian question, 'What must be done?'" Long before punk rose to popularity in the 1970s, DePaul's own namesake tackled some of punk's fundamental concerns—though, of course, he didn't do so musically.

Associate Professor Daniel Makagon laughs when asked if he's the punk rock professor. "Yeah, I guess I am," he says with a chuckle. With last year's publication of "Underground: The Subterranean Culture of DIY Punk Shows," Makagon made the moniker official, but his interest in punk dates to the late '70s and early '80s when he was a young boy growing up in Southern

A STARTER GUIDE TO AMERICAN PUNK

GET TO KNOW AMERICAN PUNK THROUGH SOME OF ITS MOST IMPORTANT BANDS, PUBLICATIONS AND FILMS. MAKAGON OFFERS INSIGHT BELOW.

FILMS

"The Decline of Western Civilization" "This documentary shows how mainstream society treated punk almost like a disease."

"Another State of Mind" "A documentary that examines the experiences of a few early punk bands on tour together."

PUBLICATIONS

Maximum Rockroll "The longest-running punk magazine in the United States is still produced entirely by volunteers."

"Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture" "Stephen Duncombe's academic look at punk fanzines."

"Underground: The Subterranean Culture of DIY Punk Shows" "I recommend my own book to understand the rise of DIY touring and why that's important to the punk movement."

MUSIC

The Stooges "A lot of people argue they're the first punk band because of their sound and their lyrical content."

Minor Threat "This is a great example of a band that introduced community politics to punk."

Drive Like Jehu "As a postpunk band, they helped set the tone for the shift to emotional hardcore."

Distract "This all-female band was very involved in the punk scene in Chicago a few years ago; they helped create safe spaces for people of all races, sexualities and gender identities to enjoy punk."

Los Crudos "The bandmates were children of immigrants from Latin America, and they sang primarily in Spanish."

Boilerman "This is a contemporary pop punk, Chicago-based band that's a bit gruffer in sound than pop punk bands played on the radio."

A JOURNALIST'S JOURNEY



Senior Jessica Villagomez summarizes her DePaul experience in three simple words: "Not as planned." But, she explains, that's a good thing. Villagomez transferred to DePaul for her sophomore year, and she quickly felt at home, even as a commuter student. By junior year, she was a resident advisor and news editor for the university's award-winning paper, The DePaulia. Now, Villagomez lives in an apartment off-campus and helms the paper as editor-in-chief. "I never thought my college experience would be so varied, but I wouldn't have it any other way," she says. "Each year has been so different and has taught me so much."

Although Villagomez came to DePaul with editorial and writing credits from her high school newspaper in Darien, Ill., she developed her journalistic chops working for The DePaulia. "Last year, I wrote an article about an undocumented student at DePaul," she says. "I really found my passion for immigration and issues of documentation thanks to that story." After Villagomez graduates, she hopes to attend graduate school for journalism and eventually obtain a law degree with a focus on immigration and refugee law. Long term, she sees herself as an immigration reporter for a wire service or print publication.

In the meantime, Villagomez looks forward to shaping conversations on campus this year. "I'm excited to work with other student journalists who are passionate about DePaul and issues affecting our community," she says. "My goals for this year are to maintain our high journalistic standards, as well as expand stories using different multimedia elements." When she's not guiding the newsroom or working toward her journalism major with a minor in graphic

design, Villagomez can be found interning at HOY, the Chicago Tribune Media Co.'s Spanish-language newspaper, and serving as vice president and events coordinator for DePaul's chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Villagomez's focus and dedication paid off with two recent scholarship awards. Together, the Carlos Hernandez Meritorious Endowed Award for Undergraduate Journalism and the Les Brownlee scholarship from the Chicago Headline Club eased her financial worries for her final year at DePaul. "It means so much to me to have received these awards and be recognized as a future journalist capable of making change, especially in the Latino community," she says.

Undoubtedly, Villagomez is well on her way to maintaining momentum as she juggles her senior year responsibilities. "I came to DePaul with high hopes, but my experience here has definitely exceeded my expectations," she says. "Transferring to DePaul was the best decision I've ever made."

Interested in supporting talented and motivated students like Villagomez? Consider making a gift to one of the funds below.

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College of Communication
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General Scholarship Fund
Continue DePaul's commitment to being accessible to all students by helping fund need-based scholarships.

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