

# CONVERSATIONS

A publication for College of Communication alumni



Professor Xing Lu, flanked by David Frank (University of Oregon) and Doreen Wu (Hong Kong Polytechnic), at the IAICS conference. See page 8.



Spring 2019

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**"ONE OF THE MOST ROBUST UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN SPORTS COMMUNICATION THAT OFFERS EXPLICITLY SPORTS-DEDICATED COMMUNICATION CLASSES ALONG WITH REQUIRED BUSINESS CLASSES."**

**The College of Communication kicks off a new degree program in sports communication**

According to a 2015 article in Forbes, the North American sports market, worth \$60.5 billion in 2014, was expected to climb to \$73.5 billion by 2019. The biggest reason, according to the article, was increased revenue from media rights deals. Clearly sports media is a growth market, and the College of Communication saw an opportunity to ensure that its students are well-prepared to participate in this burgeoning job sector. In 2018, the college launched a new sports communication degree, which takes an interdisciplinary approach that includes, but goes well beyond, traditional sports journalism.

Associate Professor and Journalism Program Chair Jason Martin, formerly a professional sports journalist, always thought he would teach sports journalism once he finished his PhD, but his specialties and research led him in another direction. Thus, when the college began looking at expanding its sports communication offerings, he jumped at the chance to get involved.

"We are still serving the traditional sports journalism path really well, but the job market there is slowing down," says Martin. "But there are a lot of jobs with sports teams, leagues, organizations, entities, agencies and brands that deal with sports. So we started to look around and ask, 'How can we pull together strengths in a lot of existing things that we have and create new opportunities?'"

With that, Martin, Associate Dean Carolyn Bronstein and faculty from across the college created a working group to explore the idea. Faculty are excited at the new course creation possibilities that this program brings, and taught new courses like Sports Fandom and Sports and Masculinity for winter quarter 2019. The connections to opportunities in the Chicago area were immediately evident. "In the business school, there is a pretty established sports marketing program," Martin says, "and they were interested in linking up with us. Then we started to look around at what other programs were offered regionally and nationally, and there was a market deficit. There's not currently a program like this in a major pro sports town, so even though DePaul has not traditionally been a collegiate sports location, we're really well positioned for experiential learning opportunities, internships and jobs."

Working with Andy Clark, a visiting assistant professor and faculty coordinator of sports management curriculum in the Driehaus College of Business, the college decided to incorporate sports marketing and sports-focused business classes with sports-related communication classes. Together they created, as Martin puts it, "one of the most robust undergraduate degree programs in sports communication that offers explicitly sports-dedicated communication classes along with required business classes."

New college facilities, like the Radio DePaul Sports facilities on the Loop campus, have state-of-the-art capabilities, such as live streaming, used in sports communication, allowing students to get hands-on training they can transfer into the workplace. In addition, the Athletics Department is interested in partnering with the college for its sports photojournalism course. But the college is taking a broad view of sports communication. "We are offering three distinct concentrations in the new program," Bronstein explains. "We have sports journalism, sports promotion and publicity, and sports and society, so that no matter what your desired skill set and professional interest is, the program will be of great value and relevance."

Within Chicago, numerous adjunct faculty members and DePaul alumni are connected with the sports industry. Students may be taking classes with instructors "who covered college football for ESPN or someone who ran Gatorade's account for a major advertising firm," Martin says. In the future, there may be study abroad opportunities that match students with international sports teams doing everything from public relations to marketing communications.

So far, the college is pleased with the number of first-year sports communication majors who have enrolled. Bronstein notes that interest in the new major is high among prospective students, who are eager to connect their passion for sports to their academic pursuits. Time will tell how quickly the new program will grow, but there is every reason to hope that DePaul will become the destination of choice for would-be sports communication professionals.



**DEPAUL AND HARPER COLLEGE PARTNER TO GIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS AN EASIER PATH TO A BACHELOR'S DEGREE**

This past fall, 13 students from Harper College, a community college in Palatine, Ill., started on the road to a bachelor's degree in communication and media from DePaul—all without leaving their suburban campus. Harper and DePaul are partnering on a new 2+2 program that has the enthusiastic endorsement of communication faculty at both institutions and the students who are taking advantage of this exciting opportunity.

The idea for the partnership began at an annual roundtable conference held by DePaul's Office of Community College Partnerships during which faculty from community colleges meet DePaul faculty in their disciplines. Associate Dean Carolyn Bronstein attends this annual conference and appreciates the productive exchange. "It's very important for DePaul faculty and staff to understand the experiences of community college students so that we can continuously enhance our programs to meet their needs," she says. "The Harper/DePaul degree program is a great example of a partnership that makes a DePaul education available to students who are not able to attend classes at our Lincoln Park or Loop campuses because of family or work obligations or other factors. Bringing DePaul courses to Harper increases accessibility for an entire student population."

"The Harper College communication faculty were very interested in making a

path for their students to be able to get a bachelor's degree," says Lois Bishop, DePaul's director of community college partnerships. "One of the communication faculty members at Harper College was very impressed with DePaul's communication faculty, so he was kind of the champion on the Harper side, saying, 'I really like DePaul. I like what they have to offer. They've got a good, strong program.'"

"Harper College is one of DePaul's top feeder community colleges for transfer students," Bishop says. "Based on those relationships, we pursued the partnership concept."

Bronstein and the college's Director of Advising, Ginny Nightingale, worked together to determine what degree program would work for these students. They decided that the communication and media major, one of the college's most flexible degree programs, offered the best fit. "It allows students to take classes from both the media side and the communication studies side of communication. It can really appeal to a broad range of students," says Nightingale. "What's nice about it, particularly for transfer students, is they can have the flexibility of the classes they already took counting, so they're not going to be behind if they have a lot of transfer credits."

A unique feature of the program is that it is cohort-based. "Students take the same classes together as a cohort every quarter," says Nightingale. "We have laid out the two years for them. For the most part,

these 13 students are going to be taking the same classes together every quarter as they progress through the program." The scheduling logistics for faculty who teach classes at DePaul and Harper can be challenging, so the program currently has only one cohort of students per year, with the eventual goal of running two cohorts a year.

Prospects are bright for the partnership. Voters approved a referendum on the Nov. 6, 2018, ballot to fund a new \$28.5 million, 43,000-square-foot building to house the college's University Center and a regional economic development hub, both of which will be a valuable resource for students and faculty. At the same time, a newfound awareness of DePaul on Harper's campus has boosted the university's enrollment.

"Students are happy and excited, and the faculty are having a great time with the students," says Bishop. "This partnership is already on its way to forging futures in communication for some very motivated students."



Harper students have DePaul spirit as incoming undergraduates.



# CAN WE TALK?

*Associate Professor Tim Cole teaches the art and science of interpersonal communication*

“What we’ve got here is failure to communicate.” The cruel Captain in the 1967 film “Cool Hand Luke” utters this famous line after whipping Luke, a prisoner on his chain gang who refuses to meet the Captain’s expectations for obedience. The movie scene illustrates an extreme breakdown in communication, but this type of failure is hardly unique. Human beings are social, and our lives are filled with interactions that can go well or badly, depending upon the expectations we have and the communication skills we bring to our social exchanges.

Associate Professor Tim Cole focuses his research and pedagogy on relational communication, specifically close relationships and deceptive communication. “If I had to summarize it, what I teach is how to manage interdependence,” Cole says. “It’s one of the most difficult and complex things you’re going to do. So we look at this process, how this process works, and the benefits and constraints of being in a close, intimate relationship.”

Relational communication is a far cry from the more traditional subjects taught at colleges and universities, but as automation and artificial intelligence increasingly displace the person-to-person interactions that used to be the norm, the value of what Cole calls the “empathy economy” becomes all the more important. “This is what people who talk about the future of jobs talk about—the importance of empathy, constructive communication, setting clear goals and objectives, giving constructive feedback and managing conflict,” says Cole.

Research shows that nationwide, students are experiencing higher levels of anxiety, loneliness and depression than ever before. Cole’s course on mindfulness helps students understand, regulate and

constructively work through their emotions. “I love teaching this,” Cole says, “because the research shows that in about six to eight weeks, you can significantly improve their ability to cope with stressful events and emotions. I can see students actually improve their lives.”

Cole also focuses on having students assess their expectations. “It’s not realistic to expect a partner to always understand you or agree with you,” he says. “So you have to be able to ask, ‘Is this something that an average person could do or is this even a realistic expectation to have?’ The other thing I spend a lot of time on is understanding that your partner is a human being and is going to violate your expectations from time to time. Relationships are nothing but a series of dealing with issues. Can we deal with them with compassion, love, support and understanding versus hostility, competition and confrontation?”

*“If I had to summarize it, what I teach is how to manage interdependence.”*

Relational communication is a burgeoning, multidisciplinary academic field. The International Association for Relationship Research welcomes scholars from communication, psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics and even neuroscience. Interpersonal relationships form the crucible for understanding a variety of complex issues, and the research and practical instruction are transferable to a variety of career tracks.

Cole affirms that what works in personal relationships also makes for successful managers and leaders in the workplace. “There is really interesting research out recently on the most effective leaders,” Cole says. “They are the most humble people, the people who are the best listeners, and the people who are the most empathetic. They bring out the best in others. They know how to motivate others, and again, they know how to make other people feel understood, cared for, valued. They build a lot of trust.”



# Fred Astaire’s Dancing Lessons

**Professor Dustin Goltz bridges the LGBTQ generation gap with his solo performance piece**

Dustin Goltz cuts a curious figure onstage. Dressed in a wide-striped T-shirt, a print kimono, open-toe orthopedic sandals and white crew socks, Goltz contorts his face grotesquely as he launches into his latest performative creation, “Fred Astaire’s Dancing Lessons.” For 70 minutes, Goltz engages his imagined (and sometimes actual) audience of undergraduate queer students in an examination of “the shifting perceptions of queer male mentorship, LGBT aging anxieties and the lingering cultural threat assigned to queer sexuality.”

Goltz premiered the show in late October 2018 at the DePaul Art Museum and will be touring it to colleges and universities across the country. He prefers performing in intimate settings. “I actually like familiar spaces being transformed with performance rather than spaces that are set aside as ‘This is for theatre!’” he says.

As a professor of the performance of literature, performance for social change

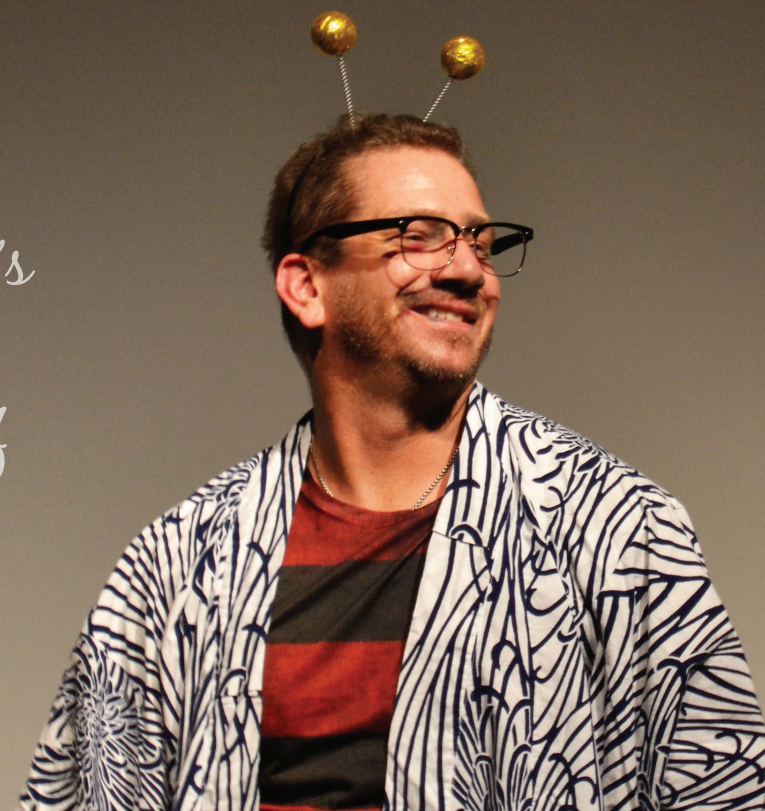
and the rhetoric of popular culture, Goltz has focused much of his research over the last decade on cultural narratives surrounding gay male aging, and particularly on the “idea of ‘the homosexual’ as this predatory being,” Goltz says. “We have a lot of mediated stories of LGBT community members in their 20s and 30s, where there isn’t that element of threat. But the older queer body is still seen as dangerous, particularly if it exhibits any sexual desire.”

“Fred Astaire’s Dancing Lessons” arose from Goltz’s desire to form a bridge between the generations that are alienated from each other because of the gaping hole AIDS blew in the fabric of the gay community. “The phrase ‘Fred Astaire’s dancing lessons’ is queer vernacular about queer mentorship,” Goltz explains, referencing how the queer community functioned before it came out into the open during the late 1960s LGBT civil rights movement. “It is a way of being brought under someone’s wing and being taught what it is to be a part of the queer community, its norms, language,” Goltz says. “Coming out was not about a public declaration. It was about being welcomed into a subcultural space—and that’s shifted. Gay culture is no longer a space or a location, but rather a pervasive identity.”

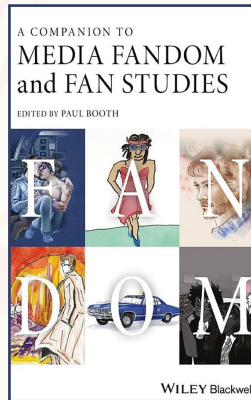
Goltz came of age in the late 1980s, just after the generation that was decimated by AIDS. “From the moment I understood gayness,” he says, “it had an inescapable linkage to HIV and AIDS.” With the loss of that generation, the mainstream narrative about gay culture has lost much of its history and stories. “You talk to a student body of LGBT freshmen and sophomores, and the majority of their understanding of HIV/AIDS is that it’s a sexually transmitted disease—a bad one. It’s divorced from sexuality. It’s divorced from history. How do we share LGBT history when now gayness, in some ways, has gone mainstream and the textbooks only talk about HIV/AIDS as a health issue?”

With “Fred Astaire’s Dancing Lessons,” Goltz has made a place for the complications and tensions of this generational rift to exist and mix. “Performance is where you can really have discussions and create spaces for ideas to be processed in a way that’s profoundly different from what we could do in a traditional lecture or a book,” he says. “This piece, in many ways, is a very personal, self-reflexive attempt to provoke that discussion.”

*“It is a way of being brought under someone’s wing and being taught what it is to be a part of the queer community, its norms, language.”*







### A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies

By Paul Booth (editor)

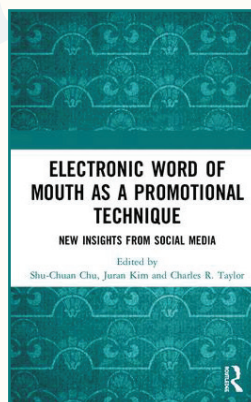
With “A Companion to Media Fandom and Fan Studies” (Wiley Blackwell) Associate Professor of Media and Cinema Studies Paul Booth has curated more than 30 original essays by an international team of scholars on the rapidly expanding field of fan studies. The book’s five sections are Histories, Genealogies, Methodologies; Fan Practices; Fandom and Cultural Studies; Digital Fandom; and The Future of Fan Studies. It also considers fandom and fan studies as models of 21st-century production and consumption and looks to the future of this area of academic research.



### A Celebration of Slashers

By Paul Booth and Alena Karknias (editors)

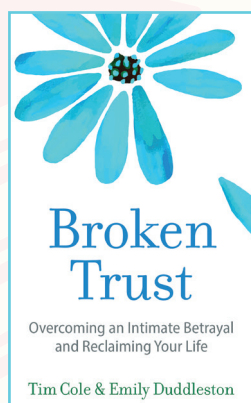
Taking its name from the 2018 DePaul Pop Culture Conference, “A Celebration of Slashers” (Blurb) contains essays and other contributions from event participants, who included Rachel Talalay, director of “Freddy’s Dead: The Final Nightmare” and panelists for discussions such as “Questioning the Slasher: Genre Considerations and Feminism and the Final Girl.”



### Electronic Word of Mouth as a Promotional Technique

Edited by Shu-Chuan (Kelly) Chu, Juran Kim and Charles R. Taylor

Consumers online interact and share their thoughts on brands and their experiences using them, and these electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communications have become very important to the success of products. In “Electronic Word of Mouth as a Promotional Technique: New Insights from Social Media” (Routledge), Associate Professor and Public Relations and Advertising Department Program Chair Kelly Chu and her co-editors offer insights into how eWOM advertising operates and how marketers can influence eWOM on social media and other online sites.



### Broken Trust

By Tim Cole and Emily Duddleston

The key to working through an intimate betrayal is learning how to communicate with your partner in a way that promotes truthfulness and understanding, say Associate Professor Tim Cole and co-author Emily Duddleston in “Broken Trust: Overcoming an Intimate Betrayal and Reclaiming Your Life” (Immensus Press). The book provides a research-based approach to coping with emotions, taking the necessary steps to rebuild trust and creating a more loving and compassionate relationship.

# in PURSUIT of impact

## Investigative journalist Prabjot “PJ” Randhawa garners her first Emmy Award

“It felt like jumping into a pool where you’re just overwhelmed with sensations,” says TV investigative journalist Prabjot “PJ” Randhawa (CMN MA ’11) of how she felt when she was announced as the winner of a Mid-America regional Emmy Award in the health and science category.

“I was told it takes several years of being nominated to win, and I only had one nomination. So I really didn’t expect to be called on stage,” she says. But her report on prescription drug errors for NBC affiliate KSDK in St. Louis impressed Emmy voters and viewers alike. The scope and dangers of the problem caught Randhawa and her team’s attention, and interviews with pharmacists confirmed that they were being pressured to fill more prescriptions an hour or be replaced with pharmacists who would.

“We were able to find a man who was struggling with lung cancer, and he was given the wrong prescription. He almost died, and there are so many people out there like this,” she says. “They’re given a settlement and forced to sign a nondisclosure agreement, so we don’t hear about it.”

The value of investigative journalism is its ability to shine a light on hidden problems and make the public aware that they may need to take action. Sometimes these reports get the attention of investigating agencies and legislators, but sometimes the findings go nowhere. When that happens, Randhawa says, “it’s the worst feeling in the world.”

Still, she says, “It’s the daily, little successes that keep you going—getting somebody their money back or making a business change its policy.” Indeed, people who have been taken advantage of often turn to their local TV news station for help. “It is something that we

can do that not many people, not many other fields and professionals, have the power to do,” she explains.

Randhawa is a Canadian Sikh whose parents, Sukhdev and Kuljinder Randhawa, immigrated to Winnipeg from India almost 50 years ago. She ended up in Chicago because her sister was a doctor at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center. “My parents didn’t want me to live in the U.S. by myself.”

After excelling as an undergraduate at Northeastern Illinois University, Randhawa decided to pursue her master’s in journalism at DePaul. “I got a lot of encouragement from my mother, who wanted me to be the next Oprah,” Randhawa says, but first she would have to overcome her shyness. “I didn’t plan on going into journalism to be in front of the camera, but then I got to DePaul, and I just had a lot of encouragement. Once I was representing an issue, telling a story, the shyness went away—because it wasn’t about me.”

As a Sikh, Randhawa was guided by the main tenet of the religion—everyone is equal—in choosing her career path. “I knew almost instantly I wasn’t going to be doing entertainment news. I wanted the hard stuff, things that anyone would find impactful, relevant,” she says.

Although she is now an award-winning journalist, Randhawa still turns to her mentors at DePaul, Professional Lecturer Rick Brown and Anne Kavanagh (CMN ’81), an adjunct faculty member in investigative journalism. “I knew exactly what I was going into because I was being taught and trained by people who have been there, who saw value in pursuing this path and who didn’t just abandon me once I graduated,” Randhawa says. “I have such wonderful memories of my time in grad school, and I’m so thankful for all the opportunities I had there.”



“I knew I wasn’t going to be doing entertainment news. I wanted the hard stuff, things anyone would find impactful, relevant.”



# AROUND THE COLLEGE

## Intercultural Communication Studies Conference Held at DePaul

The 24th International Conference of the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies, chaired by DePaul Professor Xing “Lucy” Lu, took place on the Lincoln Park Campus July 5–8, 2018. Keynote speakers included Margaret D’Silva, professor of communication at the University of Louisville and IAICS president-elect; David Frank, professor of rhetoric at the University of Oregon, Robert W. Vaagan, professor in media studies and journalism at Oslo Metropolitan University in Norway; and Associate Dean and Associate Professor Michaela R. Winchatz, from DePaul’s College of Communication. They and other speakers presented on the theme, “Communication and Dialogue: Integrating Global Communities.”



## GLAAD Media Institute Training

In October, the college worked with the GLAAD Media Institute to provide training to those interested in learning how to get a message of inclusion and acceptance across effectively in the mainstream media narrative about the LGBTQ community. Topics included in the training were LGBTQ acceptance, understanding media mentality, speaking to your audience, messaging and framing the issue, social media basics, and interview techniques.

## Cinema and the City

Film studies scholar Celestino Deleyto, from the University of Zaragoza in Spain, visited the college in October to discuss how cities are depicted in the movies. His talk focused on David Lynch’s “Mulholland Drive.” He is part of a research project called From Utopia to Armageddon: The Spaces of the Cosmopolitan in Contemporary Cinema.



## DePaul Hosts Illinois Broadcasters Association’s Student Conference

On Sept. 28, DePaul played host to the annual, one-day student conference of the Illinois Broadcasters Association. Twenty-two universities took part, and a career fair was held outside of the Radio DePaul Sports facilities in the DePaul Center on the Loop campus. Panel discussions were held on such subjects as TV news and careers in broadcast and digital sales.



## Data Visualization Expert Visits College

Cole Knafllic visited the college to give a talk, “Storytelling With Data: Bringing Data to Life Through Pictures and Story.” A prominent voice in the world of data visualization, she is the author of “Storytelling With Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals.” The subjects Knafllic touched on included directing your audience to your most crucial data elements and using the power of storytelling for compelling communication.

## Fan Studies Network Conference

The inaugural Fan Studies Network (FSN) North America Conference took place Oct. 25–27, 2018, at the college. The popular FSN conference, which celebrated its fifth year in 2017, branched out this year to include scholars from throughout North America. Abigail De Kosnik, an associate professor in the Berkeley Center for New Media and the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, gave the keynote address, “Everything Is Fandom, and Fandom Is the Problem, So What Are We Going to Do About It?” Among the DePaul participants were Assistant Professor Samantha Close, who was part of a roundtable discussion about fandom studies in the media classroom; Associate Professor Paul Booth, who spoke on fandom and the 2016 U.S. presidential election; and Associate Professor Blair Davis, who gave a talk titled “All Negro Comics and Black Comic Book Fandom in the 1940s/50s.”



## Media Engagement Lab Opens

The Media Engagement Research Laboratory (ME Lab) officially opened in October 2018. This collaborative space for faculty, undergraduate and graduate students was started by PRAD faculty to investigate the impact of communication on society. The ME Lab aims to become a multidisciplinary consortium of faculty and students that examines advertising, public relations, health communication, marketing, social media and other communication methods.

## Journalist Dan Sinker Visits DePaul

On Oct. 25, Dan Sinker, former director of OpenNews, which helps place creative technologists in news rooms, visited Carol Marin’s investigative journalism class to speak to students about the current state of journalism and discuss its future.

## New Faculty and Staff

The college welcomes new faculty and staff: left to right below: Ashlyn Lozano, administrative assistant; Kristen Pengelly, instructor, communication and media, organizational communication, and communication studies; Juliet Stantz, instructor, public relations and advertising; Nina Abnee, advertising professional in residence; Katherine Cooper, assistant professor, organizational communication; and Jen Himes, digital content administrator.



## Alumni and Student Event in NYC

On Nov. 29, alumni, friends and students of the College of Communication met in the New York office of Edelman to hear from Dean Salma Ghanem, network, and reconnect with classmates and friends. The event was held as part of the New York Way study away course. “I’m grateful for these opportunities to connect students, industry and alumni as an example our college’s commitment to student learning.”





# ACCOLADES

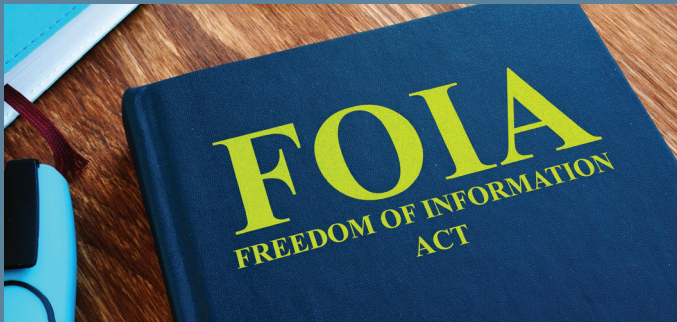


## 2017 Career Outcomes Bright

Results of a 2017 career outcomes survey by DePaul's Career Center show that a College of Communication degree sets alumni up for a high rate of success. More than 90 percent of bachelor's and master's degree recipients were employed, continuing education or not seeking employment within six months of graduating from DePaul. Of those who were employed, 87 percent of undergraduate students and 93 percent of graduate students said their jobs were related to their degree. Many master's degree recipients advanced their existing careers, with 72 percent reporting new or better jobs immediately following graduation.

## CJIE Grant Award

The College of Communication received a \$20,000 grant from the Gannett Foundation to expand annual programming related to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) reporting. The funds will help DePaul's Center for Journalism Integrity and Excellence (CJIE) host its second annual FOIA Fellows training and mentoring program in the 2018–19 academic year. The center is co-directed by Peabody Prize-winning veteran journalists and DePaul journalism faculty members Carol Marin and Don Moseley.



## College of Communication Awards

Each year, DePaul presents awards to faculty and staff across the university for their dedication to academia and the campus community. At the annual academic convocation ceremony on Aug. 30, the College of Communication faculty and staff recognized were Paul Booth, with a Quality of Instruction Council Excellence in Teaching Award, and Shena Ramsay, who received a Staff Quality Service Award. In addition, the college presented an Excellence in Teaching Award for part-time faculty to Adriane Stoner (CMN '02, MA '08).



## Faculty Recognitions

Veronica Appleton (CMN MA '13), an adjunct faculty member and assistant director of diversity and inclusion at advertising agency We Are Unlimited, was named to the Crain's Chicago Business 20 In Their 20s list for 2018. Appleton works to bring people from underrepresented groups into the advertising workforce. She also oversees a high school mentorship program and a college internship program that seeks out and works with diverse young talent.

Adjunct faculty member Janet Barker-Evans, senior vice president and executive creative director at Epsilon, was named the Charles S. Downs Response Marketer of the Year by the Chicago Association of Direct Marketing (CADM). The award was announced during the CADM Tempo Awards Gala, held June 21, 2018. The prestigious Downs award recognizes one person in the Chicago marketing industry who has exceptional career, leadership and mentorship achievements and who has made civic and charitable contributions to the community.

# A Life of Purpose and Passion

## Communication double major trains at the Climate Reality Project

Nicole Granados is the very definition of a people person. The DePaul junior is eager to sit down with anyone and talk about the things that matter to her, bringing her passion to communicating about environmental problems and solutions, as well as the need to support those affected by mental illness.

"I'm a very genuine, face-to-face person. I can't be just a number. That's not how I learn," Granados insists.

Granados, a double major in public relations and advertising and communication and media, with a minor in environmental communication, has a packed course load, but her seemingly boundless energy carries people along in her wake. At her recent training in Los Angeles with the Climate Reality Project, founded by former Vice President Al Gore, Granados brought a unique perspective that was eye-opening to the college students with whom she was grouped, whose focus was on ecology and environmental science, not communication.

"They were angry. They just wanted to scream," she recalls. "But I was sitting there, and I'm like, 'Well, that's not the best way to communicate—to yell at people. You're not going to get anywhere with them.'"

Granados understands the passion and frustration, but in a different way. "I'm a very passionate person, but I'm a very loving person. I'm a very empathetic person. I communicate with compassion—that's my mentality."



Environmental communication wasn't a natural fit for Granados. Her parents, who immigrated to the United States from El Salvador, brought with them a meat-reliant diet. "There was little me in high school, and I care about the animals, so I became a vegetarian," Granados says. It took her best friend, an environmental science major, to connect her concern for animals with the larger issues of climate change and environmental justice.

At the L.A. training, Granados attended a panel on social equity. "They brought in people from low-income communities, who said, 'What you are doing is affecting us directly,' and it's so true," says Granados. "A lot of the environmental degradation is happening in low-income communities. For example, in Los Angeles, oil fracking is in the low-income communities."

When she is not attending to her studies, Granados freelances as a photographer and volunteers as a family advocate for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, helping

families work through their difficulties supporting a loved one suffering with mental illness. "It all ties back into that compassion and the way that I live my life."

Granados is thrilled to be at DePaul. "I walked onto campus and thought, 'I can totally see myself here. I can see myself thriving.' It was the best decision. I've been given so many opportunities. One thing I love about DePaul is that they match my energy in this very face-to-face communication way. I love the personal touch at DePaul."



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## CONVERSATIONS

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