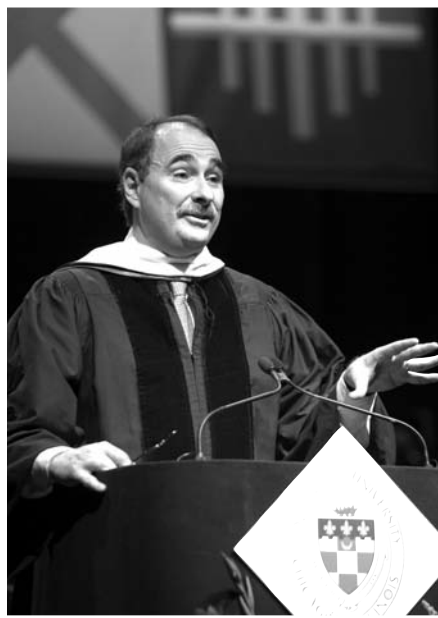


President Obama's top advisor honored at commencement

David Axelrod, senior advisor to President Barack Obama, received an honorary degree from DePaul University's College of Communication at its commencement June 14.

In his speech, Axelrod told graduates to “go for it,” whether they plan to have a career in communication, “where great change is happening and new vistas are appearing every day,” or whether they intend to continue their education. But for those who are still trying to figure things out, he said, “You’re probably getting a lot of advice to find a job that pays well or



David Axelrod, senior advisor to President Barack Obama, delivers the commencement address for the College of Communication June 14.

lends some sense of stability. And in uncertain times, that’s tempting. It’s a tough market out there. You may be feeling a little pressure and anxiety, as if you’re somehow falling behind each day you wait to plot out your entire life.

“Don’t succumb to the pull of the practical, only to defer the pursuit of the possible,” Axelrod said. “Don’t try to discern where you’ll be 30 years from now because there’s no way to know. Because at this moment ... you are as mobile, as unfettered and as free as you will ever be to pursue your passions and chase your dreams. And I’m here to tell you, that is the truest path to happiness and success.”

Axelrod shared his own personal story. He said that when he was young, his father passed away. Axelrod didn’t have any connections or come from money. The day he graduated from college, he said, “the last thing I imagined was that I’d walk into an office every day 20 feet from the Oval Office.”

He added, “I had no plan that would lead me to this point. What I did have, however, was a dream. And I would do anything to chase it.” His dream then was to be a newspaperman, which he realized.

Before entering politics in 1984, Axelrod spent eight years at the Chicago Tribune, where he worked as a political reporter and columnist. Since 1988, Axelrod has been senior partner at the consulting firm AKP&D Message and Media, based in Chicago. In that capacity, he managed media strategy and communications for more than 150 local, state and national campaigns. In 2004, when Obama was a member of the Illinois State Senate, Axelrod helped him achieve a landslide win in his U.S. Senate campaign.

Faculty members nominated Axelrod to be honored at commencement before the outcome of the election was clear—back in September while he was serving as senior strategist to Obama’s campaign for the presidency, according to Dean Jacqueline Taylor. His selection “was based on the game-changing nature of the presidential campaign. It was a political campaign that every political campaign would have to answer to from now on. It also totally changed the nature of every PR campaign from now on,” Taylor said.



College of Communication graduates

continued from front page

President Obama's top advisor



Shown (l to r) are: The Rev. Dennis Holschneider, C.M., DePaul's president; honorary degree recipient David Axelrod, senior advisor to President Barack Obama; Dean Jacqueline Taylor; and Helmut Epp, university provost.

Taylor said she was thrilled to have Axelrod speak at commencement because he is “connected to every area of study within the college. He’s been a working journalist. He’s a PR professional. He’s engaged in political communication, which involves communication studies, and he knows how to use every form of media. He has done some honorable work in every single area that we teach in.”

Axelrod’s decision to accept the college’s invitation says a lot about DePaul, according to Taylor. “If you are a mastermind of voice in political communication, and you choose DePaul as the place where you are going to give a commencement address, that says something about the image DePaul has of being a diverse, high-quality, engaged-with-the-city university that you’re proud to be associated with,” she said. At dinner the night before commencement, Axelrod told her that he accepted because “DePaul is Chicago’s university,” said Taylor.

During his speech, Axelrod acknowledged the role young people, including some of the graduating students in the audience that day, played in the presidential election.

Many of the 91 graduate and 405 undergraduate communication students earning their diplomas that day “were just going wild,” said Taylor. “They kept leaping to their feet.”



Kanalley

Craig Kanalley (M.A. '09) was one of the graduates. “David Axelrod’s speech was very inspiring,” he said. “He said a lot that I could relate to, and I’m really glad he addressed the changes in journalism and potential of new media.”

Kanalley was struck by Axelrod’s assertion that “we can change the world through the Internet and new technology like real-time search. This immediately hit home for me through my work with Breaking Tweets,” he said. In January, Kanalley launched the Web site breakingtweets.com, which posts eyewitness commentary about news from around the world. He got the idea for the site last November when he had the opportunity to watch Obama deliver his presidential victory speech. He noticed spectators punching messages into their cell phones and sending them to friends via the online microblogging site Twitter. “It was then that I saw the real power of Twitter and what it could do,” Kanalley said.

Fellow journalism graduate Mary Jo Maffei (M.A. '09) called Axelrod’s speech “by far one of the most inspiring I have ever heard.

“He didn’t stand there and tell us everything was going to be OK or that we were the next great hope for the country,”

Maffei said. “He talked about following your dreams and how sometimes they develop into something entirely different from what you thought they would be. It meant a lot to know that someone so closely affiliated to the president gets it. David Axelrod understands what happiness is truly made of—pursuing your wildest dreams—and he wasn’t afraid to share that with us.”



Maffei



College's future is in the Loop

We're moving. Actually, we've been moving. Undergraduate enrollment growth of 40 percent, graduate enrollment growth of 55 percent, 13 tenure-track faculty hires, new graduate and undergraduate programs, creation of a distinguished Dean's Advisory Council, national and university awards garnered by our faculty, and a curriculum that engages our students with the city of Chicago—all of these accomplishments and many more indicate a college moving fast in its first two years. But now, we're literally moving—to amazing new facilities in the Loop (See story, p. 5).

Since its inception as an undergraduate major 31 years ago, communication has served students at both the Loop and Lincoln Park campuses. When the college was founded in 2007, the university built state-of-the-art teaching spaces at the Loop campus for courses in journalism, public relations and advertising. Faculty, administrative and advising offices remained at Lincoln Park, but as we responded to the space crunch created by our explosive growth, our course offerings in the Loop increased. By our second year as a college, we were teaching nearly half of our courses downtown. Although we will continue to offer courses at both the Loop and Lincoln Park campuses, this summer we move our faculty offices and base of operations to the Loop.

The university is fitting out two-plus beautiful floors for us in the newly acquired 14 E. Jackson Blvd. building at the corner of Jackson and State, immediately across the street from the DePaul Center. This move opens up significant new space for our college. As we planned for the move, it was possible for us, for the first time in our history, to dream up the kinds of teaching spaces and facilities our students need, and then work with the university and the architects to realize those dreams. Now, we will have state-of-the-art facilities for our first-class curriculum and top-quality academic programs.

One of the great strengths of our college is our location in the heart of the great city of Chicago. Our internship program connects our students to a vast array of first-rate professional experiences. Communication professionals regularly visit and sometimes even teach our classes. We take our students on field trips to see the inner workings of newspapers, radio and television stations, and advertising agencies. The new location will only strengthen our ability to take advantage of our urban environment to build opportunities and connections for our students.

Moving date for the college is mid-July. By the time the doors open on a new academic year, we will be unpacked and ready to show you around our new quarters. If you are a current student, get out your U-Pass and come calling. If you are one of our alums, this fall will be a great time to visit your former professors and take a tour of our new space. On Oct. 16, we are planning an open house and a special alumni reunion. But any day is a good day to drop by and see all that we are doing to add value to the degree you earned and further build the fine reputation of DePaul as a fantastic place to study communication. We're moving. Corner of Jackson and State. Come and see us.

Veteran journalist Krause raises The DePaulia's profile

On Monday evenings, The DePaulia editors and writers meet to talk about the stories they want in the upcoming issue. In the newsroom where faculty adviser Marla Krause once worked, these meetings were called “dopings.” In the new media environment in which The DePaulia staffers are polishing their journalistic skills, they turn to Twitter and Facebook to find story sources.

Both Krause and her advisees are learning from each other.

The student journalists she works with are not afraid to try something new, Krause says. And neither is she. Finishing her first year as The DePaulia advisor, she is determined to keep making the paper relevant and fresh in a Facebook and Twitter world. One of her biggest accomplishments this year was upgrading depauliaonline.com and improving the site's navigation and readability.

Jacqueline Taylor, dean of the College of Communication, cheers the changes. “Marla oversaw the development of a fine Web site,” Taylor says. “For the first time, we have AP (Associated Press) service, which takes us to a whole other level.”

Even with the emphasis on The DePaulia's Web site, Krause says the print edition still drives everything they do, and she wants to see it more widely distributed in Lincoln Park and downtown spots where students hang out. Getting additional distribution boxes for the paper ranks high on her list for the coming year.

A big part of Krause's determined push into the online realm is “because I think there are going to be more [journalism] jobs online,” she says. Her next goal is to make the site more newsy and timely between The DePaulia's print editions, which come out on Fridays. “We're in a big city, so there's news all the time.”

Krause always has loved the news. She started her career as an editor at the Milwaukee Sentinel and moved on to the Chicago Tribune, where she worked for 22 years. She was the paper's first female sports news editor. She took another position as an editor for the Sunday Magazine in the features department and later became editor of the paper's pioneering WomanNews section.



“Being the faculty advisor makes me feel like I'm doing journalism, which I really miss,” says Krause, sitting in her office before a recent DePaulia doping. During the story meeting, Krause mostly listens, letting the student journalists work out the details of their ideas and talk through reporting questions. When she has information or guidance that's helpful, she offers it.

After the meeting ends, she chats with students, eliciting more information about their stories or suggesting

her own story ideas. She says to one editor, “I've heard about graduating seniors being asked to take down their Facebook pages by prospective employers. That sounds like a good story.” The editor agrees that it is.

That's what Krause is there to do—help The DePaulia staffers identify stories that will interest their readers and use the best practices of journalism.

The DePaulia editor-in-chief, Sarah Oswald, thinks Krause has brought tremendous professionalism to the publication. “When we have a story idea, she can think of 20 different [directions] to take the story in,” Oswald says. “She's taught me a lot about journalistic rules.”

In addition to advising The DePaulia, Krause teaches feature writing. Next year, she will teach Writing for the DePaulia, a course designed for students who aren't editors for the paper but want to write for it and the Web site.

Visit The DePaulia online at depauliaonline.com.

Growth puts college in the Loop

The College of Communication is shifting its center of operations to the heart of Chicago.

In mid-July, two floors—11 and 18—of the 14 E. Jackson Blvd. building will become the college's new home, putting it in the Loop and closer to Chicago's newsmakers and media centers.

A rapidly growing college needs room to grow, says Dean Jacqueline Taylor. "We are experiencing such enrollment growth that we really need to be in a space where that growth can be accommodated."

DePaul Provost Helmut Epp says the downtown location, once the flagship of the former Lytton's clothing store chain, also offers greater opportunities for students. "Given the professional nature of the program, the location in the business center of the city will ease student access to the numerous internship opportunities that such a great city provides."

Taylor expects all the new teaching spaces on the 11th floor to be up and running for the fall quarter. Her office, as well as administrative, advising and more than 25 faculty offices, will be on the 18th, or top, floor of the building. Additional faculty offices and specialized teaching spaces will be on the 11th floor. The building's lower level will house the college's new 100-seat film screening room that will double as a black-box theatre for performances.

"This is a really exciting move for the college," Taylor says. "It represents a lot of additional opportunity for us. When you walk onto our floors, you're going to know this is a college that's teaching communication."

Alumni and parents will have a chance to check out the new home of the College of Communication during Reunion Weekend at an open house on Oct. 16, Taylor says.

The new space, designed by Chicago's Vasilko Architects and Associates, not only expands the college's square footage, it includes what Taylor calls "very exciting teaching spaces." A mid-size conference room on the 18th floor will have a one-way mirror to accommodate focus groups and social science research, she explains. A large conference room, available for faculty meetings and graduate seminars, overlooks State Street.



The new home of the College of Communication will be at 14 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

The 11th floor will have a computer lab available to any DePaul student, another large conference room for graduate seminars, and a classroom designed as a converged newsroom—complete with conference table, Macs, a camera and an anchor desk. Here, students can create content for the Web, print, video—any platform they might use to tell a story, Taylor says. Flat-panel televisions will allow journalism instructors to show how different networks cover a breaking news story. Writing labs that accommodate about 26 students will have Macs around the perimeter and a table in the center so students can move in closer for instruction. Another room has been specially designed for audio documentary and radio classes and will have two soundproof studios adjacent to it.

A faculty committee worked hard last fall to identify the college's space and instructional needs, Taylor says. "The university has been incredibly responsive in ensuring that we have the kind of space that we need to do the caliber of teaching we want to do."

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Growth puts college in the Loop

Taylor says that when she told the architect to make the space look like a college of communication, he asked what that meant. “I said, ‘It means we’re cutting-edge, we’re fun, we’re innovative, and we’re technologically savvy.’”

Mike Vasilko, principal and owner of the firm, says Taylor’s comment stuck with him as he designed the two floors. Public spaces have plenty of flat-panel monitors and a lot of visuals, he says. The small black-box

theatre has tiered seats that allow good sight lines and flexible use of the space. It’s also acoustically soundproof. “Students are going to get a lot of experiences they can’t get now,” he says.

Taylor gestures toward the architect’s drawings with pride. “We have first-class programs and high-quality, innovative teaching in our college. Now, with our new home in the Loop, we will for the first time have facilities whose quality matches that of our programs.”

Bike-lending program empowers youth in Chicago’s Humboldt Park neighborhood

In Associate Professor Daniel Makagon’s spring quarter course, Communication, Culture and Community, students came to see bicycles as more than self-powered transportation. They are community assets that can be lent to residents just as library books are. Thinking along those lines led Makagon and his students to create a bicycle-lending program in conjunction with Ciclo Urbano, a Humboldt Park bike shop that focuses on underserved populations.

Called Boricua Bikes, the lending program began operation June 1 and allows residents to check out bikes for periods of five to six days. The program, geared toward youth, Makagon says, charges nothing for use of the bikes. Borrowers use a simple checkout system that keeps their names and addresses on file.

“The idea is to provide people with alternative modes of transportation that put them out in the public more, where they can meet other people,” says Makagon. The goal of his course, which meets the university’s experiential learning requirement, is to teach students about community life, he says. “It focuses on what it means to be a citizen. What does it mean to participate in public life? What does it mean to feel like you belong in a city like Chicago?”

Transportation is a big issue in Chicago, Makagon says, but the city works to address it by promoting increased bicycle use. In fact, Makagon says he and his students learned from a Chicago Bike Program staff member that having bicycles on the streets has a calming effect on traffic. “Cyclists make auto drivers more aware of what they’re doing and slows drivers down.”

Boricua Bikes also aims to promote health and exercise in a community that has high rates of youth obesity.

To make the whole operation run efficiently, Makagon divided the class of 25 students into four groups—bike acquisitions, fundraising, marketing and promotions, and operations.

Senior and organizational communication major Josh White, who was assigned to the operations group, says the class gave him a better understanding of how communities function. “Chicago is full of smaller communities,” he explains. “At first I didn’t fully understand what that meant, but now I have a better understanding of how public life is managed and how people come together in the public sphere.”



The bike-lending program is based at Ciclo Urbano in Humboldt Park.



Union League Club executive says DePaul enriched his life

Residence:

Evanston, Ill.

Occupation:

Kohn is the executive director of public affairs for the Union League Club of Chicago (ULCC). The ULCC is the only private club in the United States with an institutional commitment to public policy advocacy and community service. Kohn manages the club's public policy initiatives, serves as its liaison to local, state and federal government officials, and works to build coalitions with other civic organizations.

Education:

After graduating from Deerfield High School in Deerfield, Ill., in 1978, Kohn enrolled at DePaul. He earned his bachelor's degree in English/communication. At DePaul, he helped establish the student-run radio station in 1979. He earned a master's degree in communication studies from Northwestern University in 1983.

Vital stats:

From 1985 until 2000, Kohn served as press secretary to U.S. Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.), directing the congressman's media relations and serving as spokesman for the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services and Education. Before joining the Union League Club, Kohn worked as director of communications for former Illinois Lt. Gov. Corinne Wood and also served as senior public policy advisor at Holland & Knight LLP in Chicago. Prior to his government service, he worked as a reporter and talk show host at radio stations in the Chicago area and produced nationally syndicated public affairs programming. Kohn is a drummer in two Chicago-based rock bands and has a 14-year-old son, Keith.

What I like best about my job is:

"It gives me the opportunity to work on important public policy issues and to make a difference in such areas as education, transportation, health care, criminal justice and the environment. Every day I draw upon my previous experience and work at the fascinating and challenging intersection of government and media while collaborating with civic and public policy leaders. It's especially fulfilling to work for an organization that gives back so much to the community. The club is home to three wonderful philanthropic foundations: the Union League Boys & Girls Clubs; the Union League Civic & Arts Foundation; and the ULC Engineers Foundation."

The biggest challenge I face in my job is:

"Prioritizing my work on the many issues and events on the club's agenda and keeping track of the latest developments in a wide range of public policy matters. I also try hard to leave my work at the office when spending time with my friends and loved ones—because I'm always thinking about the next objective and how best to achieve it."

My College of Communication experience helped me:

"The critical thinking, writing and interdisciplinary training I received from its outstanding faculty made it possible for me to pursue a successful and fulfilling career. My overall experience at DePaul—and becoming part of its proud Vincentian tradition—has enriched my life beyond measure."

The words I live by are:

"Love life and those who love you, keep an open heart and open mind, and give generously to those in need."

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DePaul puts Chicago's Olympic bid under microscope

The College of Communication is assembling a cast of experts, activists and journalists to examine Chicago's contested bid to host the 2016 Summer Olympics at a three-day symposium this fall. Scheduled for Sept. 13 to 15, the McCormick Specialized Reporting Institute will take place two weeks before the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announces the winning city.

The institute will include panel discussions and a bus tour to some of the proposed Olympic venues so attendees can listen to residents' and community leaders' views about the games coming to their neighborhoods. Former IOC Vice President Richard Pound, an IOC member since 1978 and chairman of the World Anti-Doping Agency since 1999, will be a keynote speaker.

"We want to get a more balanced look at the whole process and how it will impact the city," says Mike Conklin, DePaul journalism instructor and symposium convener. "This will not be a Chamber of Commerce event featuring

only those in favor of Chicago's bid."

Conklin, who has taught hands-on journalism classes on the Olympics for the last two years, thinks the symposium will provide a rare opportunity for journalists and students to get a jumpstart on Olympics reporting.

"I don't think any other college in Chicago has jumped into this with both feet like we have," he notes.

The McCormick Foundation, a longtime supporter of journalism training initiatives, is underwriting the cost of the institute with a \$41,000 grant.

"These institutes are really professional development opportunities. Journalists come and listen to the leading authorities and top experts on a specific topic and exchange ideas amongst themselves for a couple of days," explains Clark Bell, the foundation's director of journalism programs. "We like working with DePaul. I think the College of Communication is evolving and maturing very nicely."

Visit communication.depaul.edu/Notifications/Events/McCormick.html for more details.