

## 'Good Days' ahead for broadcast students gaining experience through TV program

**"Good Day DePaul," the College of Communication's student television broadcast, hopes to build on last year's track record, when four graduating anchor/reporters were hired at television stations. It's off to a great start.**

"Good Day DePaul" currently operates with eight anchors, two special assignment anchors and nine reporters who were selected through auditions at the start of the school year. Blessed with a budget for the first time—though it's a small one—the show employs a cameraperson/editor, producer and assignment editor.

Starting this year, the show went from monthly to twice-monthly, with a goal of becoming weekly in the future. It's under the tutelage of new faculty member Rick Brown, former field producer in New England for NBC News and former faculty member at Northwestern University.

"We try to mainly cover school events," says Assistant Professor Lisa Pecot-Hébert, who has been faculty adviser for the show's three-and-a-half-year run. "There are some national issues that we do cover or relate to something that's going on on-campus. It's different every single time."

Pecot-Hébert cites a recent story about what it's like to be a Muslim in America, which included interviews with people at a mosque and the leader of an on-campus Muslim group, as one that she particularly liked. The reporter "got into services, so she could demystify the religion," she says.

But Pecot-Hébert adds, "I'm most proud of getting a lot of students into internships and jobs. It's improved so much in just three years to where students are coming out and getting jobs. It's incredible, especially in this job market. ... They're doing hands-on things. They're writing the scripts. They're doing everything themselves."

That kind of practical experience is paying off for new graduates seeking jobs. After graduating last year, four students landed positions at television stations: Tina Shaerban (M.A. '10) was hired by WTOL-11 in Toledo, Ohio; Morgan Ottier (M.A. '10) by KWQC-6 in Davenport, Iowa; Marcus Wekenmann (B.A. '10) by WNDU-TV in South Bend, Ind.; and Heidi Wigdhal (B.A. '10) by WXLt-Fox 47 in Rochester, Minn.

"Good Day DePaul" began when Pecot-Hébert decided that aspiring television broadcasters needed their equivalent of the DePaulia or Radio DePaul.



*Students go through a training session that teaches them all aspects of television broadcast production.*



*Student Amber Tweedie works a camera during a taping of the show.*

"We had an award-winning newspaper and an award-winning radio station," she says. "I thought it was silly there was no television station. I thought, 'Let's create a show, and get a TV presence up and running.'"

So she started an independent study course that filmed a monthly broadcast that aired nowhere except on demo tapes students sent to potential employers. "They were extremely enthusiastic and very proud of their product," Pecot-Hébert says of her first group of students.

During the 2008-09 school year, the show did air on closed circuit dorm channel 4, but only for 10 minutes per episode, and students hungered to expand those parameters.

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## DePaul dedicates the Richard M. and Maggie C. Daley Building

**The academic building at 14 E. Jackson Blvd. that houses DePaul's College of Communication is now known as the Richard M. and Maggie C. Daley Building.**

DePaul University on Dec. 21 named the building after Chicago's first couple in recognition of their many contributions to the city and the university.

"DePaul is proud to claim Mayor Daley as an alumnus and to be the first to name a building in the city for the current mayor and his wife Maggie, in recognition of their passion for and commitment to education, urban revitalization and the arts, which have helped transform Chicago into a world-class city," said the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., DePaul president. "Mayor Daley's leadership and Mrs. Daley's advocacy have had a dramatic impact on building an educated workforce, rejuvenating downtown and the neighborhoods, and nurturing arts and culture in Chicago. Quite simply, both Mayor and Mrs. Daley have had a lifelong love for Chicago and have given the full measure of their energies to its people. We are proud to mark their faithful service with this symbol of respect and gratitude."

Mayor Daley is a "Double Demon," having received both his undergraduate and law degrees from DePaul. His father, the late Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, also was a DePaul College of Law alumnus, as is the current



*DePaul honored Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley (LAS '65, JD '68) and his wife Maggie on Dec. 21 by naming the academic building at 14 E. Jackson Blvd. after them. Representing DePaul at the ceremony were Mary Dempsey (JD '82) (far left), chair of DePaul's Board of Trustees and commissioner of the Chicago Public Library system, and the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., DePaul president (far right).*

mayor's brother, Michael. Mayor Daley also serves as the honorary chairman of DePaul's \$250 million "Many Dreams, One Mission" fundraising campaign. The centerpiece of the campaign is to raise \$100 million for student scholarships.

Although several facilities, including the Daley Center and Daley College, have been named after the mayor's father, this is the first building in Chicago named for Richard M. Daley and Mrs. Daley. DePaul acquired the 97-year-old office and retail building in 2008. ■

## 'Good Days' ahead

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Last school year, as word spread about the program, the College of Communication began posting video to its website, and students started a Facebook page (facebook.com/goooddaydepaul). The show's following grew.

"She's really nurtured it," Dean Jacqueline Taylor says of Pecot-Hébert. "Of the eight students on air [last year], four moved into television news positions, which suggests that having the record of their on-air work—even though it's not literally on air in the sense of being broadcast—demonstrated their knowledge and expertise when they entered the job market and gave them an edge."

Pecot-Hébert will phase out of her decidedly part-time role as Brown gets up to speed. She believes the show will

benefit from him stepping in because "Good Day DePaul" will be a more dedicated part of his work and because of the field experience he brings.

"I'm just coming in and following up on the great thing she's set up," Brown says. "My goals are to do very substantive, meaningful stories, with high production values, and give the kids experiences to prepare them for the real world—and hopefully enhance their chances of getting a good job in broadcast, if that's what they want. I just want to build on what she's done. She's gotten it off to a great beginning."

Video recordings of past shows can be accessed at [communication.depaul.edu/StudentWork](http://communication.depaul.edu/StudentWork). ■



## What's your news?

**Cien is in Ethiopia, working to develop health care services for roughly 10,000 students and community members.** He finished his bachelor's degree

in communication and culture and went on for a public health master's and service in the Peace Corps. Recently he sent two of our teachers an update about his efforts to persuade a busy doctor to provide life-saving surgery for a 14-year-old boy from his school. We like to think his focus on service to the neediest populations is a value we helped to encourage in our communication classes.

Kelly works for a large public relations firm in New York City. She completed her M.A. in organizational and multicultural communication at DePaul in the late nineties. When I visited with her recently, she told me that she uses what she learned in our program on her job every day. She feels the depth of theoretical and critical knowledge she gained gives her a real advantage in a competitive workplace.

Amanda came by my office recently to ask me to write a letter of recommendation for her application to law school. We met when she took a class in political humor with me in 2003. During our visit, I had the chance to learn about the wonderful work she is doing with immigrant communities in Chicago, as well as the production work she did prior to her current job. Also, I was delighted to learn that she is still dating a man she met in my classroom.

Last week, I ran into a woman I had taught two decades ago. She brought me up to date about her work and her two beautiful children. She described a class another instructor had taught on the rhetoric of oppression, recounting a particularly powerful conversation on racism and oppression that she remembered clearly and still thought about after all this time.

**"I am proud to be a DePaul alum, and I want to make the college proud."**

At this fall's awards ceremony honoring faculty member Teresa Mastin for her Plank fellowship, a recent graduate approached me. She works for a major PR firm in the city, where she reports that she has applied much of what she learned in our classroom. "I am proud to be a DePaul alum," she told me, "and I want to make the college proud."

A 2010 alum wrote Lauren Upton, one of our amazing academic advisors, with a word of praise: "You have no idea how much of an impact you had on me while I was at DePaul and how incredibly patient and helpful you were." Inspired by Lauren, this young woman is now contemplating a career in advising.

In December, we hosted a party for our Dean's Advisory Council, a great group of communication leaders that includes three of our talented alumni—Dave Kohn (B. A. '82), executive director of public affairs for the Union League Club; Anne Kavanaugh (B.A. '81), a former TV news reporter at Fox News; and Marty Wilke (B.A. '86), vice president and general manager at WGN Television—to celebrate the wonderful work these folks do on behalf of the college.

That evening, the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., DePaul president, shared with us news about yet another alum who had reconnected with DePaul. Brooke Anderson, a graduate of the very first class in our journalism M.A. and who handled media relations for Gery Chico's mayoral campaign, told the president what a great education she received at DePaul. "She was naming names," Fr. Holtschneider told us, "as she talked about the dedicated faculty in the College of Communication who had prepared her for the work she is doing now."

We would love to hear from you, too. Please e-mail us and tell us what's new in your work and your life. ■

## Students ‘Discover Chicago’ through film, advertising

**It’s not every class that offers the opportunity to tour the Chicago Tribune or local television stations, sites where major motion pictures were made, advertising agencies such as Leo Burnett, or neighborhoods that range from ethnic to touristy.**

The College of Communication offered two courses—Chicago in Film and The Chicago Advertising Industry—as part of the university-wide Discover Chicago program this fall. Incoming freshmen are required to take a Chicago-themed course such as Discover Chicago to learn about different aspects of the city.

“It’s a great way to introduce the students to the city and to DePaul,” says Assistant Professor Paul Booth, who taught the film class. “They appreciated getting to know the city better, where they’re living for the next four or five years.”



*Lara Barnes (l) and Tara Poyer were among a group of students visiting the set of WGN-TV as part of their Discover Chicago course.*

During Immersion Week, which is a week prior to the start of the regular quarter, the students saw media landmarks as well as such historic sites as the statue commemorating the Haymarket labor riots. “I wanted to introduce the students to Chicago through the lens my background

offers,” Booth says. “I wanted to look at how the media works in Chicago. I wanted to look at how the culture emerged at key moments in history.”

During the remainder of the course, students watched movies connected to Chicago in various ways, from “Scarface” to “A Raisin in the Sun,” and discussed what the films revealed about the city. To learn more about Chicago’s past, students watched a variety of documentaries, Booth says.

Students who took the advertising class spent Immersion Week touring Leo Burnett and urban-youth-oriented Burrell Communications, as well as four Chicago neighborhoods, where they studied outdoor advertising.



*Discover Chicago students on the set of WGN-TV*

Assistant Professor Kasey Windels, who taught the class, notes that Leo Burnett in many ways is where the modern concept of branding originated through emotion-oriented characters like Tony the Tiger and the Keebler Elves, transforming a previously fact-oriented industry.

When it came to the neighborhood tours, Windels says she chose Streeterville for its tourist focus, Hyde Park and Pilsen for their ethnic populations, and Lincoln Park because it’s where DePaul’s main campus is located. “I wanted them to see unique shops, not chains,” she says.

At the outset, students understandably did not have the proper language or necessary critical skills to evaluate advertising. The class initially sounded more like a focus group than a consulting team, Windels says. But that changed during the course, as students explored such issues as social class and stereotypes and how they impact advertising.

“They learned how to analyze [advertisements] from a critical perspective,” she says. “They definitely gained a level of sophistication.”

College of Communication Dean Jacqueline Taylor says the Discover Chicago courses continue to reverberate for both students and the faculty who teach them.

“As faculty teach in that program, they develop a facility for using the city as a resource,” Taylor says. “Discover Chicago not only plunges the students into the heart of the city and into realizing that the city is a classroom, but it plunges faculty in as well. They deepen their networks and expand their knowledge of what Chicago offers our students.” ■



## Cinema studies student spreads media literacy gospel to area youth

**For media and cinema studies graduate student Michael Lachney, learning enough to make himself more media literate is only part of the picture.**

Lachney spent a month and a half last spring at Sullivan High School in Rogers Park delivering media literacy workshops to students. Last summer, he spent four weeks at Grace Place in the South Loop and other locations as part of the Social Justice Summer Institute, which taught youth how to use video for social justice purposes. Lachney sought out both opportunities entirely on his own initiative.

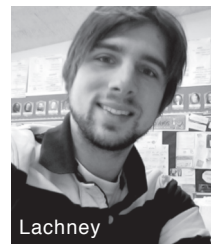
Organized through the American Friends Service Committee, the summer workshops were part of a larger program designed to provide students with alternative career paths to joining the military, teaching skills such as video production.

"It's the future of how we're going to communicate and gain information," Lachney says. After producing the videos, students learned "how to distribute them online and get them out there."

During the fall, Lachney switched to teaching students how to produce podcasts as part of an

after-school program at Talman Middle School in Chicago Lawn, on Chicago's Southwest Side.

Conducted through Digital Youth Network, the program teaches students to use cameras and editing software.



"The faculty at DePaul really give me the freedom and creativity to think outside the box in radically new ways," Lachney says. "But coming from a production background, which is labor intensive, I need to apply all that theory and research to making a difference and affecting people outside my area of study. Working with Chicago Public Schools youth as a media educator fulfills that need. I am not only able to talk the talk of cultural theory, but to put it into action and champion the humanities as a relevant part of everyday life."

Assistant Professor Kelly Kessler says Lachney continuously pushes himself. "It's so easy for students who do well to rest on that," she says. "He's always figuring out what will help him in the bigger vision of what he wants to do."

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## Parents create "Innovation Fund" for College of Communication

**Joan and Jeff Ferrill, parents of sophomore communication major Mary Ferrill, recently established a \$25,000 Expendable Innovation Fund in the College of Communication.** The one-time gift, payable over three years, will be used at Dean Jacqueline Taylor's discretion to purchase goods and services that support the college's educational and academic goals.

The Ferrills, who live in Alexandria, Va., and have family ties to Chicago, became acquainted with the university and Dean Taylor while touring colleges with their daughter in the summer of 2008.

"During our visit, Dean Taylor spoke to a group of prospective communication students," Joan Ferrill says. "My husband and I were very impressed with her knowledge and enthusiasm."

The Ferrills also were impressed with how DePaul integrates the city into the academic experience through

Discover Chicago programs for incoming students and service learning opportunities.

After reading about the Many Dreams, One Mission Campaign on the DePaul Quad (an online community for parents of DePaul freshmen) and in university publications, the Ferrills felt compelled to help the College of Communication reach its \$3.5 million campaign goal. They themselves initiated talks about the gift with DePaul.

"It's not too often that the university is on the receiving end of a phone call made to begin a gift discussion," says DePaul's president, the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M. "Innovation is a critical element in the world of communication, and the Ferrills' gift will assuredly help to keep the college innovative and academically strong. As a discretionary fund, it will provide great flexibility to address the college's greatest needs." ■

**Students blog Chicago elections:** Undergraduate and graduate students covered the Chicago mayoral and 43rd Ward aldermanic races for the DePolitics 2010/2011 blog (depolitics1011.com). Part of the Lincoln Park Campus is in the 43rd, and the race had the most direct impact on DePaul and the lives of the students, according to instructor Mike Conklin. “The Feb. 22 Chicago election is unbelievably historic, the most significant in the lifetime of anyone on our faculty,” Conklin said in an interview prior to election day. “A year from now, we will have a new mayor and possibly a new person in charge of every department. Also, there will be enough new city council members to make everything better or worse in Chicago.” Chicago news outlets closely monitored the blog, and it is likely that some of the students’ work served as the catalyst for stories done by the mainstream media, Conklin said. Also on Election Day, some of Conklin’s students worked for The Associated Press.

**Election panel discussion:** The College of Communication and Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development hosted a panel discussion titled “The Race to City Hall: Politics as Usual?” Feb. 7 in the lower-level auditorium at 14 E. Jackson Blvd. Panelists included Cook County Clerk David Orr, a DePaul adjunct professor, whose office oversees elections in the county; Cindi Canary, director of Illinois Campaign for Political Reform; and Mick Dumke, political reporter for Chicago News Cooperative. The discussion was moderated by Thom Serafin, political commentator at Chicago Fox affiliate WFLD-TV and CEO of Serafin & Associates, a Chicago-based public affairs consultancy.

**PRSSA at national conference:** DePaul’s PRSSA chapter hosted a chapter development session at the 2010 national conference, which took place in mid-October in Washington, D.C. Titled “PR in Gear: Advocating Your Chapter and Community,” the session gave students an opportunity to share and convey to their peers effective tactics that they have found to be beneficial. The chapter also won two awards—the Presidential Service Award for exceptional commitment and dedication to PRSSA and the Dr. Frederick H. Teahan Outstanding Chapter Website Award—and was recognized at the conference.

**Student media recognition:** The Huffington Post recognized DePaul in its list of The 9 Best College Radio Stations. Also, the DePaulia is among the most-read student papers in the nation, according to College Publisher, which hosts college newspapers’ websites.

#### Sharing knowledge:

Fay Ferguson (right), co-CEO of Burrell Communications, and Kristena Lucky, vice president, met with



undergraduate and graduate students at the College of Communication on Oct. 25 to answer questions about careers in advertising and public relations and how agencies specializing in multicultural audience outreach work in today’s marketplace. Ferguson and Lucky also were guest lecturers in Associate Professor Carolyn Bronstein’s undergraduate Advertising and Society class and in Associate Professor Teresa Mastin’s graduate Introduction to Public Relations seminar, speaking about multicultural strategic communication and crafting effective messages for ethnic audiences.

## Cinema studies student

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Engaging with the after-school and summer programs was “totally self-motivated,” she adds. “It was all him. He touched base with them. He fought through the red tape. He assumes he can accomplish what he sets his mind to.”

A native of Spring Lake, Mich., near Grand Rapids, Lachney initially came to Chicago to attend Columbia College and then enrolled at DePaul. He hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in media and cinema studies and to teach at

the university level.

“The program here has really been beneficial in directing me toward what I want to do,” he says. “I’m hoping in my Ph.D. program to combine an understanding of how people acquire media literacy skills and how they apply those skills to science or math—courses heavy in fact.” ■



## Groupon VP says DePaul training helped him excel in business

### Residence:

Chicago

### Occupation:

Simms is regional vice president of sales at Groupon Inc., a website that partners with local merchants to offer its subscribers huge discounts on fun activities in their city. Groupon's daily deals offer discounts on a variety of activities, including dining, spa treatments, theatre performances and hotel stays. As regional VP of sales, Simms oversees a team of 150 to 200 sales professionals and ensures the sales team is mobilized to execute the strategic vision of Groupon and to maintain its partnerships with merchants.

### Education:

Simms majored in communication at DePaul after graduating from Lafayette High School in Chesterfield, Mo.

### Vital stats:

Prior to working at Groupon Inc., Simms was a senior sales manager at Echo Global Logistics, a transportation brokerage firm that was actually founded by Groupon's original investors. Prior to Echo, he worked for the Corporate Executive Board (CEB) as an associate director of sales. CEB is a strategy-consulting firm that provides best practice research and intelligence to more than 80 percent of the Fortune 500. He has been married to Mallory Simms (B.S. '08) for three years. He and his wife, who earned a degree in psychology at DePaul, met while working out at the Ray Meyer Fitness and Recreation Center on the Lincoln Park Campus.

### What I like best about my job is:

"Connecting with my employees and helping them put tactical plans in place that allow them to achieve both their personal and professional goals. The people and culture of Groupon are truly special, and in my career thus far, I have seen nothing that can even compare."

### The biggest challenge I face in my job is:

"Also the most exciting: hyper-growth. At the rate Groupon Inc. is growing, every single day we are changing how we do things. You have to get used to not being able get used to anything."

### My College of Communication experience helped me by:

"Providing me with a versatile understanding that helped lay a solid foundation that has helped me to excel quickly in the business world. Additionally, DePaul helped me develop a better understanding of the importance and value of service in your community."

### The words I live by are:

"What we do in life echoes for eternity."

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## Deconstructing media

**Associate Professor Carolyn Bronstein wants to alert her students to hidden media messages.** “Many students tell me I’ve ruined advertising for them,” she says. “They can’t just idly flip through magazines or watch TV. They’re thinking critically about why the ads make certain promises or use certain actors. Our students are very sophisticated and savvy about media, and they come to us with inherent deconstruction skills. I try to build on that by giving them a theoretical framework.”

Bronstein received the college’s 2010 Excellence in Teaching Award, both for her zest in opening students’ eyes and her dedication to working one-on-one with them to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Bronstein spent her early career reading motion picture and TV scripts for Creative Artists Agency, an influential Hollywood talent agency. In script after script, she saw only a handful of different roles for women: the idealized mom, the shrew, the temptress, the ingénue. She already had earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in communication

from Stanford University and decided to return to academe to study how media images affect people’s perceptions of themselves and others. She earned a Ph.D. in journalism and mass communication from the University of Wisconsin in 2001. Her book, “Battling Pornography,” is scheduled to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2011. It analyzes how women’s grassroots critiques of 1970s advertising evolved into a feminist anti-pornography movement.

“I hope students leave my classes with a higher consciousness,” Bronstein says. “I want to see them be industry agents of change who care deeply about the consequences of their work: to be the kind of ethical practitioner that DePaul strives to create.” ■

