

CONVERSATIONS

A publication for College of Communication alumni



Senior Conrad Bielic traveled to Hungary to participate in the Budapest Forum, the final round of the Global Debate and Public Policy Challenge, an international scholarship competition for undergraduates. Read more on page 7.

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“ I hope to continue fostering collaborative/interdisciplinary programs, building relationships with alumni and growing our graduate programs. ”

—Dean Salma Ghanem

Photo credit: Jeff Carrion

Salma Ghanem joins college as new dean

In August, DePaul welcomed Salma Ghanem as the new dean of the College of Communication. Ghanem, a communication scholar and administrator with a background in health care communication and international diplomacy, most recently served as dean of the College of Communication and Fine Arts at Central Michigan University. Prior to that role, which she held for five years, Ghanem chaired the Department of Communication at the University of Texas–Pan American. In both roles, Ghanem developed interdisciplinary programs and focused on strategic planning. Ghanem holds a PhD and a master’s degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, as well as a bachelor’s degree in communication from the University of Texas–Pan American. She recently spoke with the editor of Conversations about her new position.

You grew up in Cairo as the daughter of Egyptian and Dutch parents, and you’ve worked internationally as a press and information officer for the Egyptian Mission to the United Nations, as well as for various study abroad programs. How have those experiences informed your approach to educating the next generation of communication leaders?

These experiences helped me to look at issues from multiple perspectives and not be bound by one way of thinking. They helped me to respect how others might approach an issue and to explore multiple options. Future communication leaders will be working in very diverse environments, both locally and internationally. Preparing these leaders to find commonality among the interests

of various shareholders is paramount in our global society. They will need to be creative, inclusive and collaborative, and the College of Communication is the perfect place to learn those skills.

What has most impressed or surprised you about the college so far? Where do you see room for the college to grow and develop in the coming years?

I was very impressed by the faculty when I interviewed and continue to be impressed as I find out more about what they do. They are extremely student-centered and very engaged in the advancement of the college. The college has been doing amazing things, and in my role, I hope to continue fostering collaborative/interdisciplinary programs, building relationships with alumni and growing our graduate programs. In addition, I would like to foster innovation in research, teaching and methods of delivery.

As you reflect on your first few months at DePaul, what have been some of your favorite experiences?

I have really enjoyed meeting with faculty, students and staff in and out of the college. Learning about what they are doing is invigorating—their energy is contagious. At the beginning of the quarter, I shadowed a Discover Chicago class and observed the faculty-student interaction. I was truly amazed by our entering freshmen and the types of questions they were asking. I chatted with several of the students in the class and learned that many of them were from out of state. They were attracted to DePaul because of its reputation and its location. We will continue to build upon these two assets and our many other strengths into the future.

Share your thoughts with Dean Ghanem at communication@depaul.edu.

Students gain public relations experience in summer apprenticeship program

Alex Munoz, a sophomore at Holy Trinity High School, aspires to become a professional soccer player or a pediatrician, but as a backup plan, he’s considering the public relations field. Six months ago, Munoz didn’t even know public relations existed as a term, much less a possible career path, so his interest in the industry speaks volumes about the Midtown Center for Boys College Orientation Program in Public Relations/Communications. The nonprofit organization partnered with DePaul to secure a \$25,000 grant from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Foundation in support of its summer program, and recent graduate Aaron Westbrook (CMN MA ’14) served as lead instructor.

Notwithstanding their stellar academic records, the 13 young men enrolled in the competitive program represent a demographic that doesn’t typically enter the public relations profession. “Midtown’s students come from low-income families and economically distressed neighborhoods,” says Ron Culp, instructor and professional director of the Public Relations and Advertising (PRAD) MA program, who co-wrote the grant proposal with Bob Kornecki, adjunct lecturer. “Per the PRSA Foundation’s own mandate, there’s a need to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of underrepresented groups in PR, and we saw this partnership as a step in the right direction.” While the communications aspect of the program wasn’t new—this is the sixth consecutive year that participants produced a weekly newspaper for the Midtown community—the PRSA funding facilitated the addition of compelling



public relations components, including site visits and guest speakers.

Westbrook, one of two recipients of the highly prestigious Ketchum Excellence in Public Relations Research Award, actually postponed the award’s 10-week internship at Ketchum’s New York City office in order to teach the Midtown program. “The opportunity to impact students both academically and personally was too inspiring and motivating to give up,” he says. “Since most of the students had never heard of public relations or its function, the biggest challenge was educating them about PR and sustaining that engagement throughout the course.” To achieve this goal, Westbrook’s syllabus featured weekly themes, such as building essential skills, entertainment PR and ethics training.

Halfway through the 7-week program, the students visited two public relations agencies, Edelman and the San Jose Group, and the field trips truly brought the industry to life. “I knew that PR had to do with writing and reading, but what I learned is that you have to build a relationship with your audience,” shares

15-year-old Baltazar Aguirre. “At Edelman, they were talking about social media and how you can find out in minutes, instead of weeks or days, what people think about your products.” A devoted Twitter user, Aguirre quickly grasped the implications of using social media tools for public relations purposes.

His classmate Olajuwon Osinaike admires the industry’s complexity. “It involves a lot more than I thought,” he says. “You have to recruit people, make and revise a plan, and find your story.” Osinaike focused especially on this latter

piece. “At first, it was hard to come up with ideas, but now I can find something interesting and fun to say even if I don’t like the topic,” he notes. Westbrook provided plenty of opportunities for students to develop their skills as PR practitioners. Classroom and take-home activities included impromptu speech-writing exercises, team brainstorming and breakout sessions, case study analyses and various other communication assignments.

For project ideas, Westbrook looked to his DePaul courses. “I continuously referred to notes, PowerPoint presentations and handouts from my professors,” Westbrook says. “The content was graduate-level material, but I adapted the themes for a high school audience—and there’s no question that teaching has enhanced my own knowledge and understanding of PR.” While Aguirre, Munoz and Osinaike agree that they drew inspiration from Westbrook’s dedication to the craft, their admiration went deeper than that. “I’m just glad he spent his free time on us,” Munoz says. “I’ve learned a lot of material that will be useful for the future.”

Hospitals, nonprofits and schools benefit from CMN faculty expertise

For faculty members who live and breathe communication theory, it can be eye-opening to encounter real-life situations where best practices in communication are lacking. “It’s useful to be reminded that things that are very evident to me and that I think about all the time are still new and helpful to other people,” says Associate Professor Elissa Foster, director of the MA in health communication program, who proudly calls herself an applied scholar. Along with many of her colleagues, Foster has found ways to share her expertise in communication studies outside the walls of academia. “Particularly in the area of health communication, it wouldn’t make any sense if my scholarship didn’t have practical applications,” she explains.

Earlier this year, Foster offered the workshop “Communicating Well When Stakes Are High” for a group of nurses, social workers, pediatric residents and administrators at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital. “These are individuals who are normally thinking about patient care and the nuts and bolts of health care delivery,” she explains. “In this type of high-stress environment, communication can be difficult.” With this context in mind, Foster guided attendees through a variety of communication strategies, such as conducting perception checks and introducing empathy into a conflict situation.

Foster asked each attendee to reflect on a past incident where communication failed. One nurse shared a story about being confronted by angry parents waiting for discharge orders for their child. “Family members don’t always understand the nuances of care delivery and systems,” Foster says. “It falls to the health care professional to respond, to listen and to maintain compassion.” This level of attentiveness isn’t always feasible, but Foster hopes that her workshops offer a starting point for enhanced

communication. “People think health care is about drugs, medical equipment and physicians,” she says. “But communication is the primary means through which health care is delivered.” Associate Dean Donald Martin, who teaches courses in organizational and multicultural communication, wholeheartedly agrees. Martin recently provided pro bono consultative services for Operation Walk Chicago, a nonprofit that provides free hip and knee replacements to individuals living in poverty. “Quality medical care involves much more than nursing or medical support,” he notes. “It involves running an organization efficiently and having effective internal communication.” Martin, a member of Operation Walk’s board, adds that these “missing puzzle pieces” are places where DePaul faculty and students can make a difference.

To that end, Martin tapped Jake Bronowski (CMN MA ’14), a health communication graduate student at the time, to lead an assessment of the organization’s communication needs. “Prior to [Martin’s] involvement, Operation Walk spent very little time or resources on either internal or external communication outlets,” Bronowski shares. “The challenge was working within their means to make recommendations that were realistic and timely.” After interviewing the founders, performing a comprehensive analysis of the organization’s website and conducting a benchmark assessment, Bronowski and Martin concluded that Operation Walk would benefit from the development of an



electronic communication portal. With doctors operating on patients in locations around the world, it was essential that the physicians be able to communicate in real time. “Through this portal, doctors can review files simultaneously, meet and consult face to face onscreen, examine MRIs and X-rays, manage supplies and so much more,” Martin says. He worked closely with Interim Provost David Miller, dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM), as well as CDM lecturer Anthony Zoko (CDM ’99, MS ’02), to research viable technology, ultimately selecting the Microsoft Office 365 platform.

In February, Martin hopes to accompany Operation Walk on a trip to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where he will assist patients with postoperative physical therapy. By then, the organization will have been using the electronic portal for more than six months. “I participated in the training, but don’t worry, I won’t be reviewing patient files,” Martin laughs. “It’s just meaningful to know that it’s working so far and that there’s a way to balance my professional orientation with actual practice in the field.”

While some DePaul professors initiate community partnerships, it’s not uncommon for local organizations to contact the university for help. For

example, the Helen C. Peirce School of International Studies, an elementary school on the North Side of Chicago, sought out the college for assistance in leading a communication workshop for parents. Assistant Professor Suchitra Shenoy-Packer took on the challenge. “The parents hoped to [learn how] to better and more effectively facilitate discussion in diverse group meetings through cultural understanding and respect,” Shenoy-Packer explains. Since her research focuses on the socialization and assimilation of underrepresented groups, she was an ideal candidate to conduct this intercultural sensitivity training.

With five parent-led organizations and committees lobbying for various changes at Peirce, the potential for misunderstanding threatened to detract from their overall goal of improving the educational experience. During the workshop, parents and other participants worked with Shenoy-Packer on steps they could take to develop their intercultural communication and collaborative problem-solving skills. Chris Inserra, the chair of one of the parent committees, thanked Shenoy-Packer for guiding the attendees through this difficult process, saying, “You gave us desperately needed tools to open a few more doors, begin a few more conversations and [become] a more inclusive school community.”

In sharing their knowledge not only with DePaul’s students but also with the wider community, Shenoy-Packer and her colleagues embody the generosity of spirit at the heart of the university’s mission. “I believe that if we have been fortunate enough to have had the privilege of education and have acquired a certain expertise, then it is our social duty to give back,” Shenoy-Packer says. “Academia is not an island unto itself—I’m glad I can contribute to building symbiotic relationships in the communities that sustain us.”

Alumnus inspires next generation of college graduates

Donnell McDavid (CMN '10), dean of discipline at UIC College Prep, spends his days preparing students for the rigors of higher education. It's a process that he didn't undergo himself. "I had no formal knowledge or education about how college works," he recalls. "I played football at a school in Wisconsin because it was the first college that was introduced to me." After a year, he left to join the U.S. Army Reserves and then attended community college, where he focused on not getting lost in the system. "I pushed myself and decided to reach for the stars," he says. "DePaul is a selective university, so I thought I'd start there and apply elsewhere if I didn't get in."

Since the South Side Chicago native had never traveled farther north on the CTA red line than Chicago Avenue, his arrival at DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus was particularly memorable. "I was taken aback," he recalls. "Just that transformation from the subway to seeing the athletic fields and how beautiful it was—I immediately felt such pride for my school." McDavid quickly fell into a routine, arriving on campus at 10 a.m. and staying for 12 hours, studying in Richardson Library and eating at the dining hall. "You'd think I lived on campus because I basically did everything but sleep there," he laughs.

A course on interpersonal communication inspired the self-described introvert to change his major from political science to communication studies. In subsequent classes, McDavid acquired both practical and theoretical skills. "Different people come from different walks of life, so it's important to be able to communicate effectively with individuals from all backgrounds," he says. "That's one place where I shine in my career."

Now in his third year with the Noble Network of Charter Schools, McDavid started as a disciplinarian at Johnson College Prep in Englewood. "Originally, I viewed my role

as the person handing out punishment, but I discovered that discipline isn't always punitive—it's also restorative," he says. While McDavid strives to ensure that students meet discipline requirements, this objective is only one aspect of an overall goal. "My job here at UIC College Prep is to improve school culture," he explains. "I help make sure students are well versed in the school's expectation of excellence."

By creating a positive and safe learning environment, McDavid nurtures student success. "A lot of times, when you think 'safety,' you think 'security,'" he explains. "But security is emotional as well." For McDavid, this means listening to his students, encouraging their achievement and letting them know that school is a place where they will be challenged, but also supported. To that end, he makes it a point to get to know each student by name, not an easy task in a school of 875.

Not surprisingly, McDavid relies heavily on his communication background to get through each day. Whether he's briefing his staff, onboarding parents or redirecting student behaviors, he aims for clarity and openness. "Being an introvert won't make me successful in this field," he says. "I have to dig deep and use the skills I learned as an undergraduate, whether it's verbal or nonverbal communication."

Finding a career that allows him to give back was important to McDavid. "Our network targets low-income and underserved students, so I always think of it as service in a way," he says. "That value system is definitely something DePaul instilled in me." When he sees his students cross the stage at graduation, ready to continue their education, McDavid knows he has made a difference. "If you build a culture of excellence, students expect excellence of themselves," he says. "That's the greatest feeling."



Donnell McDavid's top four tips for recent graduates:

Learn your core values.

Understanding your core values will make life and work that much easier; it gives you a framework for finding out what you want to do. It can be hard to find a job once you leave school, but stay focused on knowing yourself and what drives you.

Be patient.

Good opportunities will come your way if you stay patient. This might mean taking an unglamorous job at first in order to work up to what you really want to do, but if you stay focused and patient, you'll get there eventually.

Give back.

DePaul gave you a lot! As you go out into the world, show your gratitude to DePaul if you have the opportunity to do so. I talk about DePaul all the time.

Learn from others.

I learn a lot from others. For example, when I was at DePaul, many of my classmates studied abroad. When they came back, I had the opportunity to learn and benefit from their unique experiences, even though I didn't go abroad myself.



Bielic proudly displays his GDPPC certificate.

Students showcase debate skills on campus and abroad

When Instructor Beth Zoufal considers the political, societal and media commentary around today's most pressing issues, she can't help but feel discouraged. "The public face of politics is one of stalemate and rancor," she says. "Debates are often reduced to personal attacks and sound bites." Despite, or perhaps because of, this grim assessment, Zoufal spends much of her time helping students learn how to discuss difficult issues in a fair, diplomatic and respectful manner. In addition to teaching courses such as Business and Professional Communication and Advocacy, Zoufal serves as the faculty advisor and coach of DePaul's Discussion and Debate Society, a three-year-old student organization that hosts noncompetitive public debates.

Students join the society for a variety of reasons. "Some students feel unable to hold their own in arguments with friends or feel silenced in class and are looking for personal improvement," Zoufal explains. "Others come to find a real audience to speak to, to hone their critical-thinking skills and to look more deeply into issues." Regardless of their motivation, students work toward finding their own unique voices. Among the tough topics students have debated are gun control, violence in schools, conflict in the Middle East, freedom of the press, the 2012 NATO Summit and the Chicago mayoral race.

Senior Conrad Bielic, a communication studies major, participated in the debate on gun control, which was held as part of DePaul Talks, the college's April 2014 symposium on violence. "That was my first-ever debate in front of a real audience," he recalls. "Afterward, I was ready for more." Bielic became interested in public speaking when he took a communication course that included a mock trial, and his passion for debate emerged when he enrolled in Zoufal's course on civil discourse. "It boiled down to the question of whether we can civilly argue in society, which I thought was a great topic," he explains.

As part of that course, Zoufal assigned a midterm paper based on the Global Debate and Public Policy Challenge (GDPPC), an international scholarship competition for undergraduates. The GDPPC's first phase required students to submit a policy memorandum related to the challenge's 2014 theme, "Rethinking Drugs." Bielic, writing from the standpoint of a senior government advisor on drug policy, argued for the decriminalization of marijuana. "The difficult part was finding credible research," he says. "Everyone has something to say about marijuana, but a lot of it isn't credible."

Bielic's score on the memo sent him to the next round, an elaboration of his stance in a policy brief. His outstanding work on the brief then qualified him to travel to Hungary for the final round, the Budapest Forum. To prepare for this weeklong event, Bielic met regularly with previous DePaul qualifier Oliver Yoder (LAS '12). "He would listen to my speeches and absolutely destroy me," Bielic laughs.

After several days of training in Budapest, which helped Bielic further refine his onstage presence, topic content and overall debate style, the participants defended their policy briefs before a judges' panel. While Bielic did not advance to the grand finals, he has no regrets. "It was an absolutely amazing experience," he says. "Everyone was so insightful—some of their arguments I hadn't even thought of—and it was fascinating to hear how different governments and economies impact this issue."

With an eventual goal of law school, Bielic knows he will use the skills he developed at DePaul and throughout the GDPPC process. "My favorite part of debating is how much you learn about a single subject," he asserts. "You have to see all perspectives and make a strong argument whether you believe in it or not." Zoufal seconds Bielic's enthusiasm and takes it a step further: "Debate helps students become advocates for important issues—in short, it empowers them."



Senior Taylor Brandon (second from left) was selected for a 2014 Frank Karel Fellowship in Public Interest Communications, a competitive program that connects undergraduate students with leading nonprofit organizations for a hands-on learning experience. Brandon headed to Washington, D.C., this past summer to work with the Food Recovery Network, which brings college students together to fight waste by donating surplus food to those in need. Learn more at bit.ly/2014KarelFellowship.

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation awarded a \$20,000 grant to The Red Line Project and its Data/Chicago initiative to provide training and support for data visualization projects. Instructor Mike Reilley developed the grant proposal for the yearlong project, which pairs Chicago media outlets with journalism students to learn basic data visualization tools, public records research, and web and mobile platform development. Staffed by journalism students, The Red Line Project covers news and urban issues in Chicago neighborhoods along the red line.



The Robert R. McCormick Foundation also provided a \$20,000 grant to DePaul and Univision Chicago to establish a four-month digital journalism fellowship for high school and college students. Five teams of bilingual students from the college's journalism program and Pasos al Futuro, a high school journalism program offered at DePaul, participated in the partnership. The grant supported the purchase of iPads, microphones and lights that the students used to help produce stories on the millennial generation, Hispanic neighborhoods in Chicago and the 2014 midterm elections. The foundation also made a \$60,000 grant in support of Pasos al Futuro for 2015.

In August, Scott Sutton (CMN '14) was honored at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) annual conference for his article "4/15: Running Toward Recovery," which won the AEJMC International Communication Division's multimedia news story writing competition. Sutton's piece about Chicago runners who were present during the 2013 Boston Marathon terrorist attack combined text, photos and audio. He produced the multimedia project in Instructor Mike Reilley's Online Sports Reporting class. Read the article at redlineproject.org/roosevelt-boston-marathon.php. At the same conference, Assistant Professor Jason Martin was awarded third place in the open research paper competition. Martin was also recently selected as a 2014-15 Coleman Fellow and will be using the accompanying \$5,000 grant from the Coleman Foundation to implement entrepreneurial concepts into his courses.



Undergraduate advisor Lauren Upton (CMN '07, LAS MA '10) received the 2014 Gerald Paetsch Academic Advising Award for the 2013-14 academic year. She was formally recognized during the Academic Convocation this past fall. Upton joined the college as an undergraduate advisor in 2008 and has served as a staff mentor for Discover Chicago and a member of DePaul Women's Network, among other university affiliations.

The college's student organizations continue to produce exceptional work. Recent awards and honors include:

- The College Media Association Pinnacle Awards named Radio DePaul as a finalist in the Best Radio Newscast category, honored the DePaulia as a finalist in the Four-Year Weekly Newspaper of the Year category and selected David Webber (CMN '14) as a finalist in the Best Sports Columnist category.
- Radio DePaul also received recognition from the Illinois Broadcasters Association Silver Dome Awards for the Best Website, designed and maintained by Jordan Johnson (LAS '13), and for the Best Community Affairs Project for "Demonthon 2014" by former student general manager Joe Lanzerotti.
- DePaul's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) earned a competitive bid to share their presentation, "How I Met Your Mentor," at the PRSSA National Conference Chapter Development Sessions in October.
- SPJ/ONA DePaul, the college's Society of Professional Journalists and Online News Association chapter, was named the Region 5 Campus Chapter of the Year for the third time in four years at the SPJ Excellence in Journalism conference in September. SPJ/ONA DePaul was also the only student organization invited to present at the conference. Pictured: SPJ/ONA DePaul members Sade Carpenter, Stephanie Wade, Rima Mandwee, Brianna Kelly (CMN '13, MA '14), Jenna Duddleston and Emily Brosious. Photo credit: Mike Reilley.



The university honored recently retired Associate Professor Jill O'Brien with the Via Sapientiae award during September's Academic Convocation. The name of this prestigious award, the highest the university bestows on an individual, comes from DePaul's motto, "Viam sapientiae monstrabo tibi," which is taken from the biblical Book of Proverbs (4:11) and translates as "I will show you the way of wisdom." O'Brien, a longtime faculty member, was recognized for her dedication to the purpose and ideals of DePaul. Photo credit: DePaul University/Jamie Moncrief.

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations selected Rajul Jain, assistant professor, as one of 10 Plank Center Educator Fellows for 2014. For her fellowship this past summer, Jain spent two weeks with the United Services Automobile Association (USAA) in San Antonio. Jain shadowed the enterprise affairs department, gaining insights into the organization's strategic communications in public relations, brand/reputation management, media production, content, community management and more.



Associate Professor Daniel Makagon received the college's Excellence in Teaching Award for the 2013-14 academic year, while Instructors Marla Krause and Mike Reilley were each honored with the Excellence in Teaching Award for Term Faculty. Makagon, who has taught courses in urban communication, intercultural communication and audio documentary, received recognition for his experimental and collaborative approach to teaching. Journalism instructors Krause and Reilley were cited for inspiring students with their dedication to and passion for the field. As faculty advisor for the DePaulia, Krause works with students on the print and online versions of the weekly paper, while Reilley guides student success through The Red Line Project and its microsites. Reilley is also the faculty advisor for SPJ/ONA DePaul and was recently elected to a two-year term as the college campus advisor at large for the SPJ board of directors.



“Storytelling and teaching can provide a platform to inspire.”

Jill Wallace, a graduate student in the journalism program, exemplifies DePaul’s Vincentian mission. Thirteen years ago, the Milwaukee native founded Teen Worldview Inc., a literacy and education nonprofit for underserved youth. “Through our Girlz Place and Boyz Place book clubs, we have been able to provide books to youth who live in foster care, juvenile correction centers and poverty-stricken neighborhoods,” Wallace says. “Storytelling and teaching can provide a platform to inspire and be of service in our communities.”

Throughout her time at DePaul, Wallace has honed her own storytelling abilities with the assistance of dedicated professors and engaged classmates. “I’ve been challenged to grow personally while acquiring the skills necessary to transition into a journalism career,” she shares. “I’ve had the opportunity to learn from some of the best in the business, and I’m grateful for my instructors’ commitment to excellence.” The backdrop of Chicago, with its combination of career opportunities and areas of need, motivates Wallace both in and out of the classroom.

“My experience at DePaul has been rewarding and filled with great educational experiences,” she says. “I know it’s my life’s work to provide opportunities for underserved children to dream, and the knowledge I’ve gained here will help me to achieve that goal—both through my volunteer work and through the voice I’ve developed as a journalist.” Armed with new skills and a determined sense of purpose, Wallace anticipates a great future for herself and for the youth she serves through Teen Worldview Inc.

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Around the college

- 1 On Sept. 12, the Dean’s Advisory Council held a reception for Dean Salma Ghanem, who joined DePaul’s administration in August. Advisory members welcomed Ghanem over breakfast at the Union League Club.
- 2 Approximately 80 leading professors and deans from around the world converged at DePaul for the 2014 Academic Summit, a partnership between Edelman, PRWeek, the DePaul College of Communication and the University of Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business. The invitation-only event, which is designed for academics in the fields of public relations, journalism, media, communications, marketing and business, featured three days of sessions and activities focused on “Storytelling @ The Speed of Now.”
- 3 The PRAD program hosted an e-Portfolio Showcase at the end of the 2013-14 academic year. This inaugural event gave graduating students an opportunity to discuss their best work with an audience of alumni, faculty and communication professionals. Jon Harris, former chief communications officer at the Hillshire Brands Co., offered the keynote address. Photo credit: Ron Culp.
- 4 Three students from Instructor Eva Bongiovanni’s spring quarter campaigns courses secured summer internships at Hyatt after presenting work to the corporation as part of the class. Throughout the quarter, 90 students in 18 teams conducted market research and developed creative strategic plans in response to a project brief from the hotel and resort chain. Three teams were then selected to share their ad campaigns with Hyatt representatives. “Eva threw us into the real world, with a real client, a budget and a deadline,” says senior Madeline Mitchell (pictured), who was offered a digital strategy and marketing internship. “The internship was wonderful and incredibly eye-opening, both in experiencing a corporate environment and in steering me toward a possible new career path in hospitality.” Other summer interns included Taylor Hunt in brand management and Charlie Hart (pictured) in brand marketing.

- 5 Throughout the summer, communications consulting firm Gagen MacDonald showcased a series of interviews conducted by DePaul graduate students. Instructor Ron Culp, director of the PRAD MA program, worked with Gagen MacDonald to develop the project, which required students to research and interview prominent Chicago business and civic leaders. The Q&A-style profiles were featured on Let Go and Lead, a website dedicated to conversations on leadership in the 21st century. Read the interviews at letgoandlead.com/summer-series. Speaking of business leaders, Culp was recently recognized on the “2014 Who’s Who in Chicago Business” list from Crain’s Chicago Business.
- 6 Recent book publications from CMN professors include “India’s Working Women and Career Discourses: Society, Socialization, and Agency” by Assistant Professor Suchitra Shenoy-Packer; “Reading the Bromance: Homosocial Relationships in Film and Television” by Associate Professor Michael DeAngelis; “Communicating Pregnancy Loss: Narrative as a Method for Change,” coauthored by Assistant Professor Jay Baglia; and “Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators: Creating Shared Value for the Organization and its Stakeholders” by Instructor Ron Culp and Assistant Professor Matt Ragas.
- 7 This fall, Kendra Knight joined the faculty as an assistant professor in relational communication. Knight, who holds an MA and a PhD from Arizona State University, researches and teaches courses on topics such as dating and sexual relationships, work/life balance and quantitative research methods. In 2013, she received the Gerald R. Miller Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award from the National Communication Association.

CONVERSATIONS

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On Oct. 19, former members of the DePaul Public Relations Society of America gathered for a cocktail reception at the Palmer House Hilton as part of DePaul's Reunion Weekend 2014.

View more photos at
bit.ly/affinityreunion.



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