

# Alumni News

WWU DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM • WINTER 2013

## Pete Steffens Remembered

Retired Western professor leaves legacy of loving family, inspired students, scholarship



Photo courtesy of Valerie Alia.

Article by Hannah Leone

Pete Steffens, who died Aug. 23, 2012, was at Western Washington University for 27 years before he retired in 1999. His time in the Department of Journalism profoundly impacted both the students he taught and the faculty he worked alongside.

Steffens came from a news-writing family: his father, Lincoln Steffens, was a notable early 20th century muckraker and one of the most important journalists of his time, and his mother, Ella Winters, was an economist and journalist.

Carolyn Dale, an associate professor in Western's journalism department, said she

first met Steffens when she moved to Bellingham in fall of 1976 and he hired her as an adjunct professor.

Steffens liked to get past surface conversations and see what his students and colleagues were like as people, she said. Although Steffens was liberal and progressive on social issues, he was able to talk with people from every perspective with respect.

"He would have long, wonderful, friendly conversations with people who disagreed vehemently with him on every point," she said. "That would just amaze me."

Steffens believed in journalism as a strong

force of change in the world, Dale said.

"I always felt that Pete had a deep, abiding appreciation for the power and importance of journalism, and he infused his students with his passion," said Heidi de Laubenfels, a former student of Steffens. "On top of that, his confidence in us pushed us to accomplish more than we thought we could. His heart is certainly still with me, 25 years after graduating."

R.E. "Ted" Stannard, a colleague of Steffens for many years, said that Steffens' wit was an inspiration in the classroom.

"He brought a sharp intellect and probing mind to his journalism history classes. He showed a special bent for inspiring meaningful story-telling in his writing classes," Stannard said. "He lectured with off-beat insights, sly humor, and a circuitous narrative approach that made telling points."

“He brought a sharp intellect and probing mind to his classes.”

— Ted Stannard

Retired professor, colleague of Steffens

Steffens would have said, without blinking, that his favorite part about teaching was students, said his wife, Valerie Alia. The two met when she came to Western to teach journalism and inaugurate a new chair in Canadian culture. They were married 16 years.

"He had colleagues he loved," Alia said, "but he loved teaching and learning from students."

According to Dale, Steffens liked to instruct through stories.

"He was a writer, he was a journalist, so that's how he learned, that's how he taught," Dale said. "Story was everything."

In his "Celebration of Life," Steffens'

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# From the Chair

It has been a busy year for the Department of Journalism, and we're eager to share our news with you.

Enrollment has climbed to about 200 majors and pre-majors, plus about 40 minors. We still offer three sequences: news/editorial, public relations and visual journalism, but constantly review and revise our curriculum to stay current with technology and industry trends.

Our friends and colleagues in the profession are a huge help. Our Professional Advisory Board of editors, photographers and public relations professionals (including several alumni) has been a source of inspiration in our planning and progress. You may remember our Visiting Professional program, when a guest participates in numerous classes over several days. We've recently welcomed Colette Weeks, editor of the Skagit Valley Herald, and Neal Pattison, editor of the Herald in Everett.

Western's journalism students continue to excel in a changing field. They've landed some amazing internships recently, including the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.; Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico; the Future of Flight Museum; Emily's List; Real Change newspaper; and the U.S. Army. Our students also regularly find internships at the Bellingham Herald, Skagit Valley Herald, Seattle Times, Conservation Northwest, Downtown Bellingham Association, Bellingham Alive, and University Communications office, among many others.

Journalism students scored big in contests last year. They picked up a possibly record-breaking 22 out of 101 Mark of Excellence awards in Region 10 of the Society of Professional Journalists, sweeping two categories and winning many, including Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper by the Western Front. Students also won recognition from the Washington Press Association, including an ad design award as well as editorial categories.

Our students continue to share their talents with community organizations through service learning



projects in many of our courses. VJ and PR students have designed campaigns for community partners including the Whatcom Literacy Council, Girl Scouts, Allied Arts, Hope House, and others. Advanced Reporting students partnered with Investigate West to develop and publish investigative reports on the coal train controversy in Whatcom County.

This year we welcome a new colleague, Maria McLeod, joining us as an assistant professor on the tenure track, teaching primarily in the PR sequence. She brings extensive experience in public relations, videography and multimedia, and has a particular interest in oral history.

Catch up on other activities of the journalism department in the pages of this newsletter. Drop us a note and share what you've been doing with your journalism degree.

*Peggy Watt*

Chair of the Department of Journalism

# Student Club Updates

## NPPA

National Press Photographers Association



Nick Gonzales  
Visual Journalism

The National Press Photographers Association meetings kicked off the year by sticking cameras in each other's faces. The idea was to help us better relate to our subjects while on assignment. Whether the outcome was positive or negative, some Facebook-worthy pictures were captured.

Just as in the past, we are not an official chapter of NPPA, though we are listed on their website, nor are we part of the Associated Students. I like to think of our group as the WWU photojournalists meetup.

Brooke Warren and I have been co-coordinating the meetings each week. We're consistently six members strong. We've had regular appearances from alumnus David Rzegocki and one special strobe-filled Halloween portrait session with Mark Malijan, Jordan Stead and Rhys Samuel Logan. I can say on the behalf of the group, that night was the most fun meeting so far. So alumni, please do come back to visit. You bring laughter and knowledge, but most of all, inspiration.

We are looking to hold lots of workshops and guest speakers this year. Next quarter, we plan to take everyone to Seattle for the Northwest Photojournalist Meetups.

## SPJ

Society of Professional Journalists



Alexander Bevier  
News Editorial

The rumors of the death of journalism are highly exaggerated. However, the journalism that existed a decade ago is long gone. The media has evolved.

Western's Society of Professional Journalists club intends to focus on the evolution of journalism. We want to look at what is going on today and tomorrow, while discussing how to apply it to our future jobs. We need to be aware of how the media is conditioning itself to things like apps, paywalls, eBooks, Kickstarter, and the potential of new platform for journalists. The club will be a space to discuss how well the news industry is doing its job.

Finally, we want to connect people with other journalists. Washington state is filled with talented and innovative people. Western's club will do its best to give members a clear idea of the industry we'll be graduating into.

Our goal is to make people better at talking about their craft. We want to discuss how journalism works and how it's changing. We want to be a place where people will be able to discuss jobs without the pressure of making deadlines and good grades.

## PRO

Public Relations Organization



Mason Luvera  
Public Relations

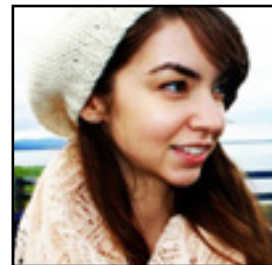
The Public Relations Organization (PRO) provides an outlet for current students to connect with each other, familiarize themselves with the PR trade, find guidance for classes, and gain experience in the field. PRO hosts workshops, guest speakers, career development seminars, and other related events at our weekly meetings. Beyond fostering skills, PRO also provides an opportunity for PR-interested students from varying backgrounds and majors to connect with each other.

This year, we are excited to begin the next phase of PRO by becoming a chapter of PRSSA, a leading national PR society. PRSSA membership provides a new level of opportunity for students at Western, and will allow our organization to become an even more engaging and active group. PRSSA offers unique opportunities to connect with the PR industry and to take advantage of national resources. Student members of our PRSSA chapter will be eligible for scholarship opportunities, PR competitions, recurring professional networking events and national conferences. While we are still in the application process, we hope to launch as members by Winter of 2013.



# Where are they now?

## Public Relations



Jillian Vasquez (2010)

I spent the summer after graduation visiting local townships and communities in Zimbabwe, to listen to and write the stories of people there. It was a meaningful way to launch my career, and I was able to bring my feature-writing skills to a community that needed a voice. Back home, I worked for Pacific Northwest Ballet for two years, both on the marketing team and in development. I now work for University of Washington's World Series, a performing arts program. Skills I learned from WWU's journalism program (juggling deadlines, writing clean copy, editing publications, among so many others) have undoubtedly brought me success in the arts.



Allison Milton (2010)

Following my 2010 graduation and a short stint living and working in Los Angeles, I took a six-month internship at Edelman Public Relations in Seattle working on technology accounts. I was then hired on full-time at Edelman to support the Xbox 360 account. For more than two years, I have helped develop the team's analyst relations program to educate and build relationships with top industry analysts. My role as an Account Executive has led to exciting opportunities such as traveling to LA to support media relations at E3, the gaming industry's largest event of the year.

The WWU PR education set me up for success in the PR industry.

## Visual Journalism



Mark Malijan (2009)  
Jordan Stead (2011)

Along with digital producer Kyle Seago, we founded The Emerald Collective, a visual productions team committed to providing premium imagery and videography of uncontested quality to individuals and companies worldwide. Our mutual visual journalism degrees helped us to develop a diverse array of skills that are essential in the creation and operation of The Emerald Collective. We both continue to freelance. The WWU journalism program sparked the wanderlust and worldly curiosity that continues to power our endeavors.



Benjamin Woodard (2011)

Within my first year in Chicago, I'd worked as a legal writer, a communications intern for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and (gasp) an intern for a PR firm. But I couldn't shake my love for storytelling. I freelanced and launched a simple news site for my neighborhood. It was that site, and the skills I learned at WWU, that finally landed me a dream gig at DNAinfo.com, a pioneering online-only startup out of New York with big plans to shake up the Chicago news media industry.

I write and shoot photos and video, covering an area of the city neglected by journalists since the fall of neighborhood newspapers. I'm happy, and lucky, to be part of this new model for news.

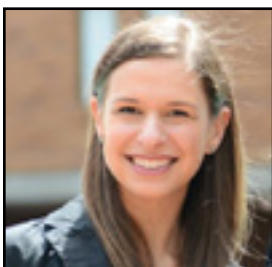
## News Editorial



Paige Collins (2012)

After a frustrating summer of dead ends, I applied for a temporary position as a copy editor at The Seattle Times in the features section. After multiple interviews and a grueling copy-editing test, I was in.

I'm having an absolute blast learning from some of the best in the field. I spend most of my time editing copy. I help direct communication between editors, reporters and designers. I post things online and on social media outlets. I write blog posts. The work is fun, challenging and dynamic. I have been able to help solve problems. Compared to other papers I have worked for the Times is a huge paper. The resources are vast and the passion is addicting.



Gina Cole (2012)

In every part of my job as a news reporter for the Skagit Valley Herald, a daily newspaper, I use skills picked up in Western's journalism department.

I have to write headlines for my stories, make sure photographers shoot pictures for the stories, put them on the next day's budget, and tweet links to them after they're published.

The journalism major helps me do my job, but it also helped me get the job in the first place. The publication requirement is one of the most valuable parts of the news-editorial track.

There's a reason people want to hire Western's journalism alumni: we graduate ready to do the job.

# PR students learn by experience

## Service learning projects team up PR students with community organizations

By Osa Hale

In last year's Alumni Newsletter, we profiled service-learning projects done by Visual Journalism and News Editorial students. This year, we're covering the PR students who engage in service-learning projects.

"Experience enhances understanding, understanding leads to more effective action." So says the WWU Center for Service-Learning. Over the past three years, the Journalism Department has been implementing service-learning as a part of its upper-division classes. Since the fall of 2009, PR students have worked with nearly 60 different local organizations.

WWU's mission includes active learning, critical thinking, and societal problem-solving. The Advanced PR Writing course (JOUR 380) teams students up with non-profit organizations such as the

YWCA and Habitat for Humanity to form partnerships where students learn firsthand how to develop communications materials such as newsletters, brochures, and websites. The 2012 fall quarter saw fourteen different local organizations being aided by PR students in Jennifer Keller's class, who attend to the individual nonprofit's needs, including brochure and web design and writing for blogs, press releases and pitch letters.

The PR Research and Campaigns (JOUR 440) students work as agency teams to create campaign proposals for nonprofit clients, including one that was honored by the WWU Center for Service Learning. This fall, Keller's students developed campaigns for the Girl Scouts of Western Washington.

Through these projects, students have gained real-life experience in the public relations field and the university has formed solid relationships with community organizations.

## Steffens was known for his passion for learning and teaching, love for family

» From Steffens, p. 1

daughter Daneet Steffens wrote that she loved sitting in on his classes and seeing the powerful effect he had on his students.

"What a grand man he was. I always thought of him as our own Pappa (Hemingway)," said Sarah Gregory, Communication Director at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a former student of Steffens. "I've had a successful career in publishing and writing and I know that Pete had a great deal to do with my success. His dedication and intensity has stayed with me these last 30 years."

Former student Graham Evan MacDonell noted his wonderful memories of the challenging days of his journalism classes in the 1970s.

"Pete was a motivator because he knew how well his students could do and he used every trick in the book to get them, and me, in realizing my potential," MacDonell said.

Steffens opened his students' eyes in many ways, de Laubenfels said.

"Pete taught us to use all our senses to write in a compelling way. In feature-writing class, he gave us listening assignments that required us to capture overheard conversations verbatim," de Laubenfels said.

"The results of this exercise were not only hilarious, they pushed us to think about what conversations really sound like - unintelligible noises, unfinished sentences. What does compelling dialogue really

sound like?"

Dave Thomsen, another former student, was grateful for Steffens' encouragement.

"I was the student who had to work twice as hard and felt inferior at every step. Pete was the one person at the Western J-School who saw my intelligence and potential and encouraged me. Better, Pete cared about me. He was professional and he was personal," Thomsen said. "Pete met me at my level and showed me, convinced me, I could do the work."

Among his many passions, Steffens promoted journalistic integrity and education with the Lummi and Nooksack tribes. Frederick Lane, Jr. was editor of the Lummi Nation newspaper, Squol Quol, when he contacted Pete for advice regarding conflicts between the tribal council and the newspaper. From that day on, Lane said, Steffens mentored him in many ways.

"Pete was encouraging to me at the lowest part of my life," Lane said. "He'd tell me, 'Don't ever forget you are working for

the truth.'"

Steffens always made Lane laugh and remember that he was on the right path, he said.

The "Pete Steffens Native American Journalism Scholarship Fund," which Alia created with the help of Steffens' friends and Western's administration, is intended to help First Nations students realize their potential by attending college.

**Note: If you would like to contribute to the scholarship fund, please see page 6.**



Pete Steffens and wife Valeria Alia in Leeds, UK, in 2006. Photo courtesy of Valeria Alia

# Scholarships

## Congratulations to this year's scholarship recipients:

- \* **Keegan Strandness**  
Cartridge Family (\$2,000) and Washington State Tuition Waiver (\$1,800)
- \* **Amy Holm**  
Shearlean Duke Memorial (\$1,000) and Babcock Memorial (\$2,000)
- \* **Kyle Elliott**  
Rupp Memorial (\$1,200) and Gerson Miller Memorial (\$900)
- \* **Jessica Pain**  
Journalism Alumni (\$1,000)
- \* **Alexandra Kocik**  
PNNA (\$650)
- \* **James Kozanitis**  
Pioneer Newspapers (\$1,000)
- \* **Katya Slater-Szirom**  
Hale Family Internship Scholarship (\$1,500)
- \* **Brianna Kuplent**  
Gerson Miller Memorial (\$900)
- \* **Nick Gonzales**  
Ad Club of Seattle (\$1,000)
- \* **Samantha O'Brochta**  
Ad Club of Seattle (\$1,000)

Your donations are much appreciated. They fund these scholarships and provide opportunities to current students.

We are hoping to add another to our great line-up of scholarships, the **Pete Steffens Native American Journalism Scholarship Fund**.

Your donations to all our scholarships can be sent to

**The Western Washington University Foundation**  
MS 9034, 516 High St., Bellingham, WA 98225-9034

You can also visit the foundation's website to donate:

<http://www.foundation.wvu.edu/>

# Western Excellence

Western's students and publications had a year of unprecedented success with a mountain of awards from the Society of Professional Journalists. The 2012 winners are:

## Newspaper

**Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper**

*First Place:* The Western Front

## Magazine

**Best Student Magazine**

*First Place:* The Planet

**Non-Fiction Magazine Article**

*Second Place:* "Beyond the High: A Fight against Disease, Stigma and Jail" – by Benjamin Woodard (Klipsun)

## Photography

**Breaking News Photography**

*Second Place:* "Fire Destroys Waterfront Homes on Swinomish Land" – by Benjamin Woodard (Skagit Valley Herald)

**Feature Photography**

*First Place:* "Cosmopolitan Cowboy" – by Jordan Stead (Klipsun)

*Second Place:* "Parkour: the World is a Playground" – by Erin Nash (The Western Front)

*Third Place:* "Acid Tide" – by Lauren Owens (Planet)

**General News Photography**

*Third Place:* "After Air Combat, a Few Precious Weeks Home" – by Benjamin Woodard (Skagit Valley Herald)

**Photo Illustration**

*First Place:* "Smashing Good Time" – by Jordan Stead (Klipsun)

*Second Place:* "Strategic Sleuth" – by Jordan Stead (Klipsun)

*Third Place:* "Journey to the Center" – by Jordan Stead (Klipsun)

**Sports Photography**

*First Place:* Northwest Collegiate Climbing Challenge – by Jordan Stead (Bellingham Herald)

*Second Place:* Ski to Sea Kayak Finish – by Jordan Stead (Bellingham Herald)

## Reporting

**Breaking News Reporting**

*Second Place:* "Western Student Leaves Egypt Amidst Protests" – by Brianna Gibbs (The Western Front)

**General News Reporting**

*First Place:* "Ride Along with the Party Bus" – by Caleb Hutton and Colin Diltz (The Western Front)

*Second Place:* "Death with Dignity Act May Face Amendment" – by Evan Marczynski (The Western Front)

**In-Depth Reporting**

*First Place:* "Pipeline Safety vs. Property Rights" – by Benjamin Woodard (Skagit Valley Herald)

**Online Feature Reporting**

*First Place:* "Undammed: the Elwha River Story" – by Lauren Owens and Heather Shupe (Planet)

**Radio Feature Reporting**

*Second Place:* "Mother of Mercy" – by Bethany Jo Denton (KUGS)

*Third Place:* "Placentophagy" – by Jeff Emtman (KUGS)

**Radio In-depth Reporting**

*Second Place:* "Bellingham Boo's" – by Bethany Jo Denton (KUGS)

**In-Depth Reporting**

*Second Place:* "Elwha Articles" – by Jameson Hawn & Ryan Hueter, Peninsula College (Hawn is now a student at WWU)



# Faculty Updates

Carolyn Dale



I started wondering the other day whether it's all right to be teaching page layout in the J309 Editing class as though people are still going to be reading things printed on paper. The mobile tablet I've been using for the past year must be insinuating itself more into my brain and habits than I've realized. This year brought a few other "Who knew?" experiences. One was hiking in massive sand dunes at the national park in southern Colorado, dunes bigger than the Oregon Coast's, and at 8,000 feet, abutting the Sangre de Cristo mountain range. This year at Western, I'm teaching editing and grammar classes and the online feature-writing class. I also teach in the evening Professional Editing program, which draws people from the community, and I work on my own writing and editing projects. It's been fascinating to work with authors venturing into self-publishing and e-books and to watch the tumult that is remaking the field of book publishing. On a consulting job with a major e-book publisher last year, though, I saw how basic skills of good writing and grammar are highly valued. Maybe it's becoming more true that publications, to stay competitive, have to offer not just technical wizardry, but also well-crafted content – and even attractive layout.

John Harris



For the first time since I started teaching 12 years ago, I took the summer off. It was wonderful. I visited my son in Chile, and my wife and I took a long-awaited trip to Lake Louise and Jasper in Canada. But it was almost too wonderful. When fall quarter rolled around I felt like Peter from the movie "Office Space." I kept thinking, "Yeh, I don't think I'm gonna go to work anymore." Fortunately, once classes started it was easy to get back into the swing of things, especially because I was teaching photojournalism and ethics, two of my favorites. Those two classes are so pleasurable in large part because of the great guest speakers willing to share their time and expertise, people such as renowned sports photographer Mike Powell and Seattle Times photojournalist Erika Schultz. The ethics class last spring heard from a surprise speaker — department manager Carol Brach. Carol told the students about her experience dealing with the media following the death of her son in an explosion in 1994. Afterward, some of the students thanked her for her courage and honesty. Times like that make it easy to return to the classroom, regardless of how wonderful the summer was.

Jennifer Keller



An important focus for me over the past year was hiring our new full-time public relations faculty member – Maria McLeod. She is a fabulous addition to our team. I know that together we will continue to improve the PR program. As a start, I am finally able to offer a course in PR Case Studies this winter. This is one course that the Public Relations Society of America recommends that we do not yet teach. My hope is that it will become a permanent required course for our majors; it has been approved by our faculty and is being reviewed by the college and university. In the past year I completed the final draft of a chapter on corporate social responsibility for the second edition of an ethics textbook. In addition, I was asked to write a chapter on beginning PR writing for the second edition of a mass media writing text. Both are due to be published in early 2013. Brad Howard and I also attended the PRSA International Conference to present information on how we are using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the background assignment of the Advanced PR writing course. We are seeing more and more students find their GIS experience helpful when interviewing for jobs or internships.

Maria McLeod



I joined the journalism faculty teaching in the PR sequence this fall as an assistant professor. This summer, I completed a documentary theatre performance of monologues based on in-depth interviews I conducted with women across the United States. I produced and staged "Body Talk: Sexual Triumphs, Trials, and Revelations," in September in Bellingham to sold-out audiences. Performers included three WWU faculty members, one of whom, Sarah Eden Wallace, also teaches for the Department of Journalism. "Body Talk" includes edited ethnographic narratives from a mammography technician, a nun, a new mother, a transgendered woman, a Buddhist feminist, and others. The performance addresses issues of gender identity, women's health, sexuality, and representation through both comic and dramatic monologues. This summer, I also served as interviewer and co-director for the mini-documentary, "Peacemaker," profiling Bellingham's 46-year-old weekly Peace Vigil and its founder, 94-year-old professor emeritus Howard Harris.

Carolyn Nielsen



This fall, I've begun work on my Ph.D. at the University of Washington, where I am studying political and global communication with a focus on news narratives about immigration in the general-market and Spanish-language news media. This past year I was selected as the faculty mentor for the department's outstanding graduate, Gina Cole, and I was named, with Prof. Sheila Webb, a legacy educators by the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication. In August, I presented my framing analysis of editorials about Arizona's SB 1070 immigration legislation at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference. I also presented a teaching module about journalistic blogging in the Great Ideas for Teachers competition and completed my work as secretary for AEJMC's Commission on the Status of Women. I am eagerly awaiting publication of two pieces: a journal article on framing of news coverage of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and a book chapter on Spanish-language News Media and Social Identity Theory. I am still in touch with many former students and love hearing your updates!

Tim Pilgrim



I continue to teach mainly two courses: Editing, and Introduction to Mass Media, which now is offered twice each quarter. Each section attracts around 125 students from across campus. It is now functioning as the primary media literacy class at WWW and is still connected in the fall to other departments on campus via the Freshman Interest Group program. This fall the courses connected to my class were Environmental Science and Women Studies. I also published 26 poems during 2012, bringing my total to over 150; they are available online either through WWU or at timothypilgrim.org. As always, I find time for running and getting to Idaho where my two children and grandchildren live. Yes, I still uses a garden hose to spray raccoons in pursuit of the cats who allow Carolyn and me to reside with them.

Sheila Webb



This past year, student teams in J446 created logos, brochures, videos, and websites for, among others, the YWCA, Hope House, and Meals on Wheels. I was honored to be named Legacy Educator of 2012 by the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communications for a joint submission with Prof. Carolyn Nielsen of our ethics teaching module. I continue my work on the Reiman magazines to see how legacy media is adapting to the new media environment, for which I received a Summer Research Grant. Since AEJMC was in Chicago this year, I decided to make a Midwestern tour, so did research at the Cleveland Museum of Art, then examined the photo archives at the State Historical Society in Madison, Wisc., then on to Chicago, where I delivered a presentation on magazine cover design. I now design and edit the AEJMC Magazine Division's newsletter *Magazine Matter*. I published two articles this spring: "The Consumer-Citizen: *Life Magazine's* Construction of the Ideal American" in *Studies in Popular Culture*, and "The Woman Citizen – A Study of How News Narratives Adapt to A Changing Social Environment" in *American Journalism*.



# Adjunct Faculty

## Matthew Anderson

I am a Western journalism alumnus. I manage social media for Western and produce content for the Office of Communications and Marketing on campus. My wife Brittany, also a Western journalism alumna, and I are taking a brief break from foster parenting to give more attention to our son, Elijah, whom we adopted 11 months ago. We were lucky to have a set of the most wonderful 4-year-old twins in our home for a year, and though we're enjoying the break, we're eager to start parenting more foster children. In what free time we have, we continue to remodel our small, aging home in Bellingham, a project we started three years ago and are far from completing. After the passing of the inimitable Pete Steffens this past year, I was lucky to chat with his family, friends and former students for an obituary. Through the process, I gained great respect not only for Pete but for the journalism department he helped to found here at Western.

## Joan Connell

During the 2012-13 academic year at Western Washington University, I am teaching news writing and feature writing. I am also an editorial consultant with Connell-Wright Media, offering guidance to media companies worldwide on editorial policy, strategy, messaging and ethics.

My first daily journalism job was as a reporter and editor at the Bellingham Herald. As Religion and Ethics Editor at the San Jose Mercury News from 1986 to 1991, I did pathbreaking reporting on reporting on Islam, bioethics, business ethics, and the culture wars. I was a member of the team that won a Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for the newspaper's coverage of the Loma Prieta Earthquake. As national correspondent at Newhouse News Service in Washington, D.C., I was a finalist for the 1993 Pulitzer Prize finalist for reporting on religion, ethics and moral issues. I served five years as editor of the DC-based Religion News Service, a global source of religion news for newspapers and broadcast organizations, before leaving traditional journalism for internet news. From 1997 to 2005 at MSNBC.com in Redmond, I was executive producer for opinions and developed editorial policies and standards for the MSN portal. As online editor at The Nation magazine, I directed Web coverage of the Bush administration and 2008 presidential campaign.

Prior to returning to Bellingham in 2010, I served as associate director of the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma, a project of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. In that position, I worked with individual journalists and news organizations worldwide to raise ethical standards of reporting on war, crime, natural disaster and other tragic events, with an emphasis on the needs and dignity of victims.

I currently live in Birch Bay with my husband, Dean Wright, former global editor for ethics at Thomson Reuters.

## Brad Howard

Brad Howard is teaching news writing, introduction to mass media and senior seminar this year. He continues to enjoy backpacking, biking and hiking in the Pacific Northwest.

## Stephen Howie

In the past year, along with Maria McLeod, I shot and edited a 6.5-minute video about the creation of the Bellingham Peace Vigil and its 94-year-old founder, Howard Harris. We are submitting the video to a number of film fests, including the Bellingham Human Rights Film Festival. I spent the summer working on an essay about masculinity that I submitted to multiple contests. I also trained and competed in the Clear Lake Triathlon in Skagit County. (I came in 88th and realized part way through the race that I was primarily competing against myself.) This year, I am the primary general studies adviser for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. During the fall quarter, along with Associate Professor Sheila Webb, I serve on an academic panel discussing a nonfiction book by my former grad school colleague, Rebecca Skloot, titled *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.

## Ron Judd

After teaching News writing off and on for several years, I'm starting my second year teaching J-307, Reporting. It's an intensive but fun course that brings me frequent flashbacks, as I took it myself back in the dark ages of circa 1984. It's rewarding to see students come in intimidated about abandoning their comfort zones and doing hands-on reporting in Bellingham, and leaving as confident reporters, drilled in deadline writing in plain, non-bureaucratized English! I also recently served as a department facilitator for the spring 2012 Western Preview, a day-long fair for prospective students and their parents. It was a chance to sell the department, and a great reminder of the strength of what we offer.

I'm also still with the Seattle Times, where I write a Sunday column and, for the past year, magazine pieces for Pacific NW. In my "spare time," I'm taking online graduate courses, working toward a master's degree in history and rekindling a love for a subject that I also developed as an undergrad at Western in the 1980s.

## Jack Keith

I'm into my third year as the faculty adviser to The Western Front, still going strong and loving this job. One of the joys I find is seeing our students land jobs throughout the region. To help that networking, we continue to work closely with the Seattle Times, which sends editors, photographers and reporters to Western each quarter to critique the Front and offer guidance. The paper is consistently strong, and last spring the Society for Professional Journalists named it the best non-daily college paper in the five-state Northwest region. We celebrated that, but now the students are hard at work, staying up way too late and putting out excellent work. We just completed a transition to a new website this fall, and I hope you'll take a look. As I write this, it's still a work in progress, but we are adding more Web emphasis all the time as we try to stay current with industry trends. Check it out at <http://www.westernfrontonline.net/>

Meanwhile, my wife and I focus lots of attention on our five grandchildren. We've got two high school teens here in Bellingham and three young ones in the San Francisco Bay area.

# Emeriti Faculty

## Lyle Harris

I taught Mass Media Law fall quarter and, as usual, loved it — great students and some new material. What has been happening since many of you took the course 10 or 20 years ago is that libel law is mostly well defined now. The cases showing up are repeats of past questions that now are largely settled law. So, I'm still using *Desert Sun v. California Superior Court*, in which the judge wrote a great little history of political combat in a libel suit: "Our political history reeks of unfair, intemperate, scurrilous and irresponsible charges against those who seek public office. ... Henry Clay was called a pimp, Andrew Jackson a murderer and an adulterer. ... Lincoln was called a half-witted usurper, a baboon, a ghoul. ... Franklin D. Roosevelt a traitor to his country. Dwight D. Eisenhower was charged with being a conscious agent to the Communist Conspiracy." Remind anyone of a recent election?

## Floyd McKay

I am continuing my retirement writing, filing pieces on the proposed coal-export terminal at Cherry Point north of Bellingham for Crosscut.com, in Seattle, and working on some history pieces and manuscript reviews for Oregon connections.

I am befuddled by the rise of social media and the decline of "respectable" journalism and hope our new graduates can find good jobs and maintain standards of the department and profession. Otherwise, Dixie and I continue to travel, live well and enjoy life.

## R.E. "Ted" Stannard

We whirled-in New Year 2012 in Vancouver, BC, Femmy's first dance date on new knees installed three months earlier. I continued all year on the King Mountain Neighborhood Association board dealing with development issues. Time out in the spring for a month in China for a week of centennial celebrations at the Shanghai American School, where I graduated in 1948, and rewarding visits to my Ningbo birthplace and childhood haunts in Shaoxing, as well as a sidetrip to Guilin.

In September, after a splendid visit here by a friend, international affairs reporter To Phuong Thuy of the Hanoi labor daily Lao Dong, I was hastening down our garden steps when I miss-stepped at the bottom and ended up falling (twice) to the lawn. It later turned out I had severed the quadriceps tendon on my left knee. Surgery soon after reattached the tendon and I spent the rest of the year in a brace, wearing a sarong for convenience. It should be back to normal by the time this reaches print.

# Alumni Updates

## 1983

**Shari Day-Campbell**  
*Vice President*  
JayRay Ads and PR

Bob Bolerjack (1985), former Everett Herald editorial page editor, was appointed by Governor Gregoire to Everett Community College's Board of Trustees through September 2016.

## 1987

**Jackie Zils**  
*Advisor*  
JayRay Ads and PR

## 1992

**Vanessa (Loveland) Bloy**  
*Director of Public Relations*  
Paul Gauguin Cruises, InterContinental Resorts French Polynesia, and The Brando

## 1995

**Kristin Alexander** spent the last year living abroad; earned her master's of arts in acting with a Commendation Award from Birmingham School of Acting in England.  
*Communications Director*  
Washington State Wine Commission

**Vanessa Blackburn**  
*Executive Assistant to the Mayor*  
City of Bellingham

**Hilary Parker**  
*Managing Editor*  
'Bellingham Alive' magazine

## 1996

**Tedra Meyer**  
*News Editor*  
The Wall Street Journal

## 1999

**Sheri Emerson**  
*Director of Communications and Community Relations*  
Opportunity Council, Bellingham

## 2000

**Tiffany White**  
*Strategic Account Manager*  
Amazon (Seattle)

## 2002

**Homer (J.R.) Cook, Jr.**  
*Senior Account Advocate*  
The Cobalt Group (Seattle area)

**Levi Pulkkinen**  
*Reporter and Producer*  
Seattlepi.com

## 2003

**Casey McNerthney**  
*Reporter*  
Seattlepi.com, Hearst Seattle Media

**Karla (Tillman) Swanson**  
*PRWeb.com Editor*  
Vocus

**Robert Gara**  
*Vice President*  
APCO Worldwide (United Arab Emirates)

## 2004

**Annie (Billington) Dumond**  
*Senior Marketing Communications Manager*  
Concur (Seattle)

**Jaclyn Ruckle**  
*Advisor*  
JayRay Ads and PR

**Jen Rittenhouse**  
*Copywriter*  
JayRay Ads and PR

**Katie Grimes**  
*Creative Ad Manager*  
Wetpaint

**Lee Fehrenbacher**  
*Reporter*  
Daily Journal of Commerce (Portland)

**Matt McDonald**  
*Photographer & Online Content Manager*  
INNATE, The Bellingham Herald, Equality Designs

**Sarah (Getchman) Always**  
*Executive Assistant*  
Wright Runstad & Company (Seattle)

## 2005

**Cari Lyle**  
*Copy/Content Editor*  
Waggener Edstrom Worldwide (Seattle)

**Jeanna Barrett**  
*Digital Marketing Strategist*  
SAIL at VeriFone (San Francisco)

**Kaitlin (King) Goodall**  
*Public Relations Manager*  
Intermec Technologies (Seattle)

**Krissy (Gochnour) Stencil**  
*Public Relations Coordinator*  
4G Americas (Seattle)

**Laura McVicker**  
*Social media editor*  
KATU-TV (Portland)

**Paolo Mottola**  
*Digital Engagement Program Manager*  
REI (Seattle)

## 2006

**Chris Huber**  
*Disaster response news writer*  
World Vision  
*Owner*  
Christopher Huber Photography  
*Writer & photographer*  
The Issaquah Press, Sammamish Review, SnoValley Star and Newcastle News

**Jessica Evans**  
*Senior Account Supervisor*  
Edelman Digital (Seattle)

**Kara Lundberg**  
*Senior Account Executive*  
RH Strategic Communications (Seattle)

**Kate (Miller) March**  
*Graduate Teaching Fellow*  
University of Oregon

**Lindsay Hamsik**  
*MA Candidate, International Relations and International Communications*  
Boston University

**Stefani Harrey**  
*Corporate Marketing Specialist*  
GeoEngineers (Seattle area)

**Tara Nelson**  
*Copy Writer*  
Cascade Radio Group (Bellingham)

**Timory (Wilson) Burleson**  
*Marketing Communications Specialist*  
Avid Technology (Boston)

## 2007

**Amy Harder**  
*Reporter*  
National Journal (Washington, D.C.)

**Caleb Heeringa**  
*Reporter*  
Sammamish Review (Issaquah)

**Candace Cusano**  
*Account Executive*  
Health Advocacy Strategies, LLC (Seattle)

**Lance Henderson**  
*Digital Content Editor for Fulfillment*  
Amazon (Seattle)

**Marinda Peugh**  
*Executive Assistant*  
LifeWave, Inc. (San Diego)

**Matthew Gagne**  
*Principal Consulstant*  
Zia Imaging (Seattle)

**Mollie Foster**  
*Journalist, Residential Program Director*  
Denali Education Center (Alaska)

**Sean (McGrorey) DeButts**  
*Founder*  
NetSquared (greater Seattle)

**Liz McNeil**  
*Project Coordinator*  
POP Agency

**Justin Steyer**  
*Multimedia Manager*  
Pacific Public Media at KPLU

## 2008

**Annie Runnels**  
*Communications Coordinator*  
Aging Services of Washington (Seattle)

**Colin Simpson**  
*Freelance Content Writer*  
Cut Media (Seattle area)

**Jon Sayer & Abby Vincent** are continuing their stint as *TEFL Teachers* in the Peace Corps in Fieni, Romania.

**Julia Waggoner**  
*Media, Tourism, Education and Social Services Professional*  
Paris, France

**Kacie McKinney**  
*Advisor*  
JayRay Ads and PR

**Keeli Archer** is a post-graduate student studying international affairs  
United Kingdom

**Nicole (Lanphear) Miller**  
*Social Media Coordinator*  
University of Western States (Portland)

**Yuki Nakajima**  
*Risk management specialist*  
Amazon

**Shannon Deveny**  
*Marketing Communications Manager*  
Fluke Biomedical (Seattle)

## 2009

**Amanda Winters**  
*Reporter*  
Sequim Gazette

**Danielle Koagel**  
*Digital Advertising Specialist*  
The Everett Herald

**Elizabeth (Beaulieu) Backstrom**  
*Content Analyst*  
Next IT (Spokane)

**Harte Onewein**  
*Marketing Communications Manager*  
hawkeye

**Kaleb Gubernick**  
*Shift Lead and Operations Manager*  
Microsoft

**Marisa (Willis) Ellis**  
*Events and Special Projects Coordinator*  
Whatcom Community College

**Mark Malijan**  
*Co-founder, Visual Production and Technical Design*  
The Emerald Collective, Seattle

**Ryan White**  
*Contributor and Reporter*  
Hayeswire (San Francisco)

## 2010

**Adam Cochran**  
*Assistant Advisor*  
JayRay Ads and PR

**Ali LeRoy**  
*Development Associate*  
Donor Relations, Northwest Burn Foundation

**Amanda (Mandi) Brady**  
*Outreach Coordinator*  
Pacific Lutheran University (Seattle)

**Becca Rice**  
*Copy editor*  
MSN

**Emily Linroth**  
*Communications Specialist & Community Planner*  
National Park Service

**Jeremy Schwartz**  
*Reporter*  
Peninsula Daily News (Port Angeles)

**Jillian Vasquez**  
*Campaign Associate*  
Pacific Northwest Ballet (Seattle)

**Juan Cornejo**  
*Account Coordinator (T-Mobile PR)*  
Waggener Edstrom, Seattle

# Alumni Updates

**Lauren Sauser**  
Social Media Coordinator  
Cheezburger, Inc.

**Olivia Scalet**  
Account Manager  
SuperGraphics

**Stephanie Castillo**  
Account Executive  
Rachel Kay Public Relations (San Diego)

**Katie Greene**  
Photo and Multimedia Specialist  
The Seattle Times

**Keegan Prosser**  
Assistant Editor  
The Bellevue Scene magazine

**Leah Sauser**  
Marketing Representative  
Google

**Lindsey Otta**  
Social Media Rep  
Clearwire

**Megan Jonas**  
Copy Editor  
The Spokesman-Review

**Michael Homnick**  
Editorial Intern  
PC World

**Paul Wright**  
Administration  
Whatcom County Sheriff's Office

**Rhys Logan**  
Owner  
Rhys Logan Photography

**Samantha Sorden**  
Blogger and Social Media Coordinator  
JohnsAddiction.com

**Samantha Oberholzer**  
Junior Copywriter  
OMEGA SA, Basel (Switzerland)

**Reiko Endo Ihle**  
Japanese Communication Professional

**Carey Rose**  
Multimedia Analyst  
Puget Sound Energy

## 2012

**Abigail Espiritu**  
Social Media Analyst  
Northwest Public Relations, Inc.

**Alex Bacon**  
Media Producer  
Expedia

**Alexa Zaske**  
Marketing and Events Coordinator  
Loud Technologies

**Ariana Lopez**  
Communications and Marketing Intern  
Downtown Seattle Association

**Daniel Berman**  
Photographer & Designer  
Northwest Leaf

**Elysia Nazareth**  
PR Assistant  
Hill+Knowlton Strategies

**Emma Chadband**  
Interactive Media Intern  
National Education Association

**Evan Marczynski**  
Reporter  
The Bellingham Business Journal

**Geraldine Massengale**  
NWFASA Conference Fundraising Chair

**Gina Cole**  
Reporter  
Skagit Publishing

**Graig Hill**  
Owner  
Graig Hill Photography (Bellingham)

**Kathleen Marriott**  
Promotions Assistant  
KMPS "The New Country"  
Campaign manager  
Edibly Pike Place

**Olena Rypich**  
Communications, Program Coordinator  
Washington Center for Nursing (Tukwila)

**Paige Collins**  
Copy Editor  
The Seattle Times

**Rachel Lerman**  
Freelance Journalist

**Sydney Brusewitz** is a graduate student at  
Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu

**Tessa Johnston**  
Research Analyst  
Zucker Media Group, Inc.

**Sarah Smith**  
Secretary to Executive Board and College  
Coordinator  
Washington Press Association

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We appreciate the generosity of alumni and friends of the department who continue to support the Department of Journalism. Your donations fund scholarships, the Alumni Library and special events for students, including the awards picnic each June. Among these donors are those who helped endow the Shearlean Duke Memorial Scholarship for Public Relations, and those who are building the endowment for the Pete Steffens Native American Journalism Scholarship.

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Katie Greene (2010) and TJ Cotterill (2011) announced their engagement. They will be married in June 2013.

## 2011

**Alison Lo**  
TB Promo Production Coordinator  
Studio City (Los Angeles)

**Benjamin Woodard**  
Reporter and Producer  
DNAinfo.com (Chicago)

**Celeste Erickson**  
Administrative Assistant  
Trellis Advisors

**Chelsea Asplund**  
Account Coordinator  
GreenRubino

**Chelsea Kennedy**  
Styling Assistant  
zulily (Seattle)  
Freelance Designer  
Bottlerocket Wine and Spirits (New York)

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Freelance  
Ferndale Record

**Jordan Stead**  
Co-founder, Owner and Photographer  
The Emerald Collective (Seattle)





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Have we heard from you lately? Keep us posted on your career changes, travel adventures, graduate degrees or any personal updates you want to share. Alumni news will be added to our online edition of the journalism newsletter. Send your news to Carol Brach:

Email — [cbrach@hope.journ.wvu.edu](mailto:cbrach@hope.journ.wvu.edu)  
Fax — (360) 650-2848  
Mail — Western Washington University, Department of Journalism,  
MS 9161, 516 High Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Complete alumni news and updates can be found on the web: [www.wvu.edu/~journal](http://www.wvu.edu/~journal).

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**Department of Journalism**

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Website  
[www.wvu.edu/~journal](http://www.wvu.edu/~journal)

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News of career moves, family, life in general (attach info if needed): \_\_\_\_\_

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**online connection**

The alumni newsletter is also available online! Would you like to get your annual update on journalism alumni via email? Send an email to Carol Brach at [cbrach@hope.journ.wvu.edu](mailto:cbrach@hope.journ.wvu.edu)