

Alumni News

WWU DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM • WINTER 2016

Nine alumni win Pulitzer for Oso landslide coverage

By Ashe Lambe

On April 20, Columbia University announced The Seattle Times had won a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news reporting. The staff team was honored for its diligent coverage of the Oso landslide, capturing events accurately and reporting as quickly as possible.

On the team were nine Western journalism alumni, with graduates from 1974 to 2012.

In less than a minute, the lives of local residents were turned upside down as a landslide barreled into the Steelhead Haven neighborhood at 60 miles per hour. But while the slide occurred instantaneously, it took nearly a day before anyone outside of Oso understood the gravity of the situation.

“Nobody really knew the magnitude at first,” said associate news producer Gina Cole, class of 2012. “It was March, it had been rainy, and you really never know how big these mudslides are. We just figured, ‘mudslide in Snohomish County: That must mean the trains are going to be delayed.’”

After some time talking to the Department of Transportation and seeing a photo of a house in the road, the news team realized the scale was potentially huge, Cole said.

Metro reporter Jack Broom, class of 1974, was in the office on the first day of the slide, and said that even emergency



Members of The Seattle Times delegation to the Pulitzer ceremony stand on the steps of Columbia University in New York. Alumni Gina Cole and Paige Collins, who graduated in 2012, attended the event. // Photo by Bridget Nowlin

workers weren’t immediately aware of the number of fatalities.

“It was the kind of thing where you try to get as much information as you can, see that it’s accurate, and share it with the readers,” Broom said.

At the time, Cole had been working at The Seattle Times for only two months. When she came in at 3 p.m., the producer before her had sent out a breaking news alert about just three homes being damaged, Cole said.

It wasn’t until later that evening they started to understand how large the slide had actually been.

By later that evening, reports of damage were becoming more readily available. Members of the staff were being called in early for their shifts. Broom described the story as an “all hands on deck” situation, with nearly everyone contributing to the story in some way.

Associate news producer Paige Collins joined Cole to curate the information received from reporters and keep the front page of the Times’ website updated. The pair also managed social media, and Collins was responsible for designing an interactive slider graphic that allowed readers to compare images of the area before and after the landslide.

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from the chair



Department chair Jennifer Keller.
// Photo by Joe Gosen

Hello! I've just completed my first year as chair of the journalism department and I'm very pleased to share news of the department with you. We miss all of you, of course, but you'll be happy to know we are continuing to grow and serve new journalism students as well (we hope) as we served you.

First, we are so happy to welcome a new faculty member, Brian J. Bowe, who is teaching primarily news-editorial classes and senior seminar. Brian has a doctorate in media and information studies from Michigan State University and has taught at MSU, Grand Valley State University and the Sorbonne. His main research focus is on media framing, especially the representation of Islam in Western democracies. Prior to teaching, Brian had a varied background as a reporter, editor and communications specialist. However, I know our students are especially excited about his background in music. Brian was editor of CREEM magazine, has written books about The Clash, The Ramones and Judas Priest, and has CD liner notes publication credits. I think this means he is about to become the coolest professor in our department.

We are also excited to be given permission to search for yet another new tenure-track professor this year. Maria McLeod and I are both thrilled that this new faculty member will focus primarily on public relations. The two of us have been holding down the public relations fort, as it were, but we desperately need help to increase class sections given how quickly the public relations major and minor are growing.

Enrollment in journalism is increasing rapidly, particularly in the public relations track. Since last year, we have had a 31 percent overall increase in pre-majors, majors and minors (in all tracks) from 249 to 327. We had a 19.5 percent increase in pre-majors/majors and a 95 percent increase in minors overall. Public relations continues to enroll the most students, making up 42 percent of the majors/pre-majors, with a 21 percent increase in public relations majors/pre-majors alone. In addition, the number of public relations minors has doubled. One year ago, we had 39 total minors with 22 of those in public relations. Today we have 76 and 45 of those are public relations.

We also continue to listen to our students and many students have requested that the publications be worth more credits. Beginning this year, staff sections for the Front and Klipsun are 4 credits and editing is 5 credits. In addition, starting this year, public relations and news-editorial students are able to substitute a visual journalism class (photojournalism, intro to visual journalism or digital media) for one publication and those in visual journalism may substitute the principles of public relations course for one publication. They still must write for both the Front and Klipsun, of course.

This year, we had one visual journalism student win fourth place for sports photography in the Associated Collegiate Press Photo Excellence Awards, and another whose documentary was selected for the 2015 National Film Festival for Talented Youth.

Writers, photographers and designers for The Western Front, Klipsun and The Planet scored seven awards from the Washington Press Association and another nine awards from the regional Mark of Excellence competition sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists. Our students also won another eight awards for work done outside Western publications. Plus, many of you may have heard that nine Western alumni were part of The Seattle Times' team that won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting on the Oso mudslide.

Our students are also making a difference in communities near and far. This past year, our 60 journalism interns worked for a variety of organizations, from reporting for the Portland Tribune to writing and photography for Resident Magazine in London to public relations jobs for United Legwear Fashion in New York City and the Boeing Classic. In addition, through our service-learning courses such as advanced visual journalism, public relations campaigns and advanced public relations writing, nearly 120 students provided more than 18,000 hours of service to local organizations.

We hope that you all follow the journalism department's alumni Facebook page to share information and hear more about what's going on in the department. You'll find more news about faculty, student clubs and activities in this newsletter, as well as some updates about alumni. Please drop us a note to share what's new with you, too.

Jennifer Keller
Associate Professor
Chair, Department of Journalism

featured articles

Professor McLeod spotlights diverse student lives on stage

By Libby Keller

Since 2012, Professor Maria McLeod has been encouraging young journalism students to give a voice to the lives of others.

But in her November production, “First Person: Diverse Student Stories,” she gave some Western Washington University students the chance to share their lives on stage.

The show is a compilation of six student monologues, which McLeod worked for nearly a year to gather and are performed on stage by six different actors. Each tells a unique story about fitting in, fighting discrimination and facing adversity.

“People are going to get goosebumps,” she said with a smile on the night of the production’s final dress rehearsal.

That reaction might have come from the story of the student who was isolated because of her Muslim heritage, or of the student who struggled to overcome the challenges of being deaf.

All of the stories, McLeod said, are meant to represent a small sample of the wide range of individuals who attend Western.

“There are 15,000 students at Western, so there are 15,000 diverse people,” director Karee Wardrop said.

The production was made possible, in part, by \$3,000 awarded to McLeod through the Thaddeus Spratlen and Lois Price-Spratlen Inclusion and Diversity Grant.

After applying for the grant in November 2014 and receiving it in January 2015, McLeod set out to find students with stories she wanted to showcase.

Upon interviewing them, McLeod would transcribe the conversations and then rewrite them as monologues to be used on stage. At that point, the subjects were given the opportunity to review McLeod’s work and chose a pseudonym for their character.

It was a process, McLeod said, that taught her a lot about what could still be



Actors “Rocket” (top) and Jaimee Alonso (above) perform monologues while Lori Abrams interprets for the audience in American Sign Language. Abrams signed most of the performances, but verbalized the story of a hearing-impaired student, which the actor performed by sign. // Photos by Joe Gosen

done to improve diversity at Western.

From bringing more heterogeneous populations to classrooms, to including a new pronoun for gender-queer individuals in the English language,

McLeod found that acceptance is still a work in progress.

After the stories were collected, then came the time to find the actors who would portray them on stage.

“We had all these students come in and read. It felt like a movie,” she said, grinning widely. “I wanted to hire them all.”

But the group was eventually narrowed to six actors, including a young man named Rocket, a last-minute replacement who came all the way from Detroit to participate in the production.

“It’s a good first step for starting a conversation,” Rocket said of the production. “Every person here — the cast and crew — is phenomenal.”

While the actors varied from seasoned theater veterans to newbies who hadn’t been on a stage since elementary school, Wardrop said the experience was one that was enjoyable and enlightening.

“It’s an opportunity to see deeply into people’s lives. Each character is different, but they have similarities you can’t help but notice.”

Those similarities range from the tales of isolation, fear and discontent each character felt at some point in their lives. Those emotions came from circumstances such as being a veteran returning to school after decades away, or from a transgender student who had to come out to family and friends.

During the performance, each character had a wooden board decorated with quotes from their monologue. The boards were used to simulate physical props like a table, or abstract concepts like doors of opportunity swinging open.

Combined in an intimate, blackbox-style theater where the audience sits close to the performers, the production was designed to be like a conversation between the actors and the audience.

McLeod watched the final dress rehearsal with giddiness on her face and

pride in her eyes, satisfied that all her hard work was finally coming to fruition.

“I’m tired, but I’ve set myself up for this moment and now I have to reinforce it,” she said.

While the process was long and exhausting, McLeod is looking forward to pursuing more projects in the future. In fact, she already has ambitions for her next “secret project.”

“I really want to do a piece about work,” she said. “Different stories about people and how they relate to their jobs.”

But in the meantime, McLeod hopes to see the idea of “First Person” continue. She noted that everyone has adversity; everyone has a unique story worth being told.

Whether McLeod is bringing those stories to the stage or sending young reporters out to find them, she will see that they continue to be told.

Alumni at The Seattle Times win Pulitzer Prize

Continued from front page

For a month, the centerpiece of The Seattle Times’ website was home to coverage regarding the slide. Ordinarily, the centerpiece cycles several times a day.

The event was the most important in the region, and would remain so for some time, Cole said. After the immediate devastation of the slide, losses would take time to confirm and grieving would continue. How the community of Oso recovered and came together in the time after the slide was also a significant part of the story.

“In order to be sensitive and to convey that to our readers, we were going to leave it in the centerpiece for as long as it was important,” Cole said.

Cole said that one of the biggest decisions they had to make was how to handle reports of the victims. Broom said that the toll fluctuated quite wildly. At one point, he said, over 100 people were unaccounted for, leading to a tremendous amount of uncertainty.

Collins was responsible for designing a memorial page for victims of the slide. She said that she worked with editors and

reporters in order to put the information together.

“It was challenging to keep track, for our sake, of who was who and what happened,” Collins said. “But we also wanted to create a place for [those] who knew anyone in that neighborhood to keep track of statuses and to learn a bit about these people.”

Collins said she was determined to treat the victims as people, and not just numbers — sensitivity she said Western’s journalism program instilled in her. That effort was acknowledged in the Pulitzer announcement, which lauded the digital coverage that she and her colleagues at the Times had put together.

Broom described the coverage as a learning opportunity, especially in terms of how dynamic webpages could be. He said the online platform is still new to The Seattle Times, and determining the best use of the tools has been an ongoing process.

In terms of receiving the Pulitzer, what the team felt was bittersweet.

“It’s hard to be happy that you had a part in covering something so horrible,”

Cole said. The team would not have won the award if not for the “horrific” deaths of 43 people, she said.

However, the news staff were able to find some pride: if not in themselves, then in what they did as a team. Broom described the coverage as a “service to the community,” and Collins had nothing but praise for her colleagues.

The other Western alumni who were in the team that covered Oso were Colin Diltz (2012), Katie Greene Cotterill (2010), Coral Garnick (2009), Heather Trimm (2003), Laura Gordon (1989) and Mark Higgins (1982).

“We all care so much about telling the stories,” Collins said. “Our investigative reporters hopped on the data right away, trying to determine: Why did this happen and could it have been prevented?”

Despite the challenges of covering it, the tragedy hasn’t changed Cole’s way of looking at journalism.

“It reaffirmed that I’m glad to be working in the field,” she said.

Journalism department welcomes Brian J. Bowe to faculty



Brian J. Bowe joined the faculty in the 2015 fall quarter. He is a news-editorial professor with a soft spot for Detroit, and research focuses in music and the portrayal of Muslims in Western media. // Photo by Stéphane Horel

By Sarah Mikkelsen

In fall quarter, the journalism department welcomed assistant professor Brian J. Bowe as the newest tenure-track faculty member.

Bowe's move to Bellingham was an uprooting. He and his wife Heather arrived from Michigan, where he had spent most of his life since early childhood. Though he misses the culture and music scene in Detroit, Bowe has been acclimating quickly to the university.

"This was the job I was looking for," he said, adding that he applied to many teaching positions but is glad to have landed at Western.

His focus is in the news-editorial track and in his first quarter, he taught newswriting and senior seminar. It was an interesting schedule, he said, because he worked with students who were just beginning to explore journalism as well as those preparing to graduate.

In winter and spring quarter, he will continue senior seminar and begin instructing reporting.

Bowe's research is focused on media coverage of Muslims. Largely, Western media lacks the language to discuss Islam

and issues that affect Muslim people, he explained.

He has won four best paper awards for his work on the topic.

He also helped produce a documentary called "The Death of an Imam" about the media coverage in 2009 when FBI agents shot and killed Muslim religious leader Luqman Ameen Abdullah in Detroit. The short film won a best of festival award from the Broadcast Education Association and was nominated for a regional Emmy.

"It kind of haunts me," Bowe said, noting that the initial media coverage didn't hold together. "It was a story that called out for hard-hitting reporting, but it was absent."

Bowe's other main interest is in music, influenced by growing up in Detroit during the punk rock scene of the 1980s, he said.

He has been involved in music as a fan, reporter, editor, author and artist.

Highlights of his music-oriented work include the five years he spent as editor for the online revival of rock and roll magazine CREEM, and writing an essay for the liner notes on a rerelease of Iggy and the Stooges' album "Raw Power," he

said. "Raw Power" is a seminal pre-punk album, and Iggy himself commissioned Bowe to write the liner notes.

Bowe formed the band Voluptuous Panic with Gretchen DeVault, a friend from Grand Rapids, Michigan. The pair have released six singles and plan to debut a full album in 2016.

Heather is also a drummer and she and Bowe are starting a band called the Better Mades. The name comes from a potato chip brand in Detroit, "as a sort of homage to the mother city," Bowe said.

Bowe received a bachelor's degree in journalism at Grand Valley State University in 1997, and a master's degree in communication in 2004. He later attended Michigan State University and in 2014, earned a doctorate in media and information studies, a program focused on journalism and sociology.

His experience as an instructor began in 2000 at Grand Valley, where he was invited to become an adjunct after beginning public relations work for the college. He also taught for a year at Michigan State University and, most recently, at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Letter from the editors:

How The Western Front handled reporting racial stories on campus

In fall 2015, national issues and a series of events in Western's community sparked controversy about racism on campus. Discussions intensified after Nov. 19, when The Western Front ran the story "Vikings no more? Survey to be created to question Western mascot," written by Stephanie Cheng. (Found at <http://www.westernfrontonline.com/2015/11/19/vikings-no-more-survey-to-be-created-to-question-western-mascot/> OR at <http://bit.ly/1mPb6HU>) It explained that a professor and several students were asking whether the Vikings mascot should be changed to more inclusively reflect the student body. Days later, backlash in campus discussions culminated in racial threats made on social media. The Front covered the investigation and campus events that followed. In this letter, several of the editors address the coverage.

By Heidi DeHart and Brenna Visser

On Thursday, Nov. 19, The Western Front staff found that KIRO-TV had picked up the paper's story about opinions on the university mascot. Upon reading the story, staff members were shocked at KIRO's coverage. The headline was misleading, quotes were out of context and a survey on social media suggested opinions that Western was "going too far" or "too politically correct."

While the story was concerning, we had no reason to believe it would go any further. But readers, and even non-readers who chose to comment, were outraged. A university changing their mascot? Unheard of. It sparked comment against Western, as well as the students and professor mentioned in the article.

There was a major element missing in these discussions. In the Front's coverage — and even KIRO's coverage — it was stated that the students and professor were merely discussing whether Western's current logo might be the best choice for the school. The mascot was chosen in an era when even more of Western's population was white than today, and when Whatcom County was one of the largest active Ku Klux Klan communities in the nation, according to the Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project. But the community has changed. The discussion was meant to ask: with Western now trying to be a leader in diversity, shouldn't it have a mascot that reflects that?

On Saturday, Nov. 21, we received an email from the professor interviewed in the story. It detailed his grievances with the coverage, saying we misrepresented his voice in the story and included information about the survey he did not want published.

The editor-in-chief, managing editor, daily editor and reporter held an emergency meeting on Sunday, Nov. 22. The daily desk listened to the recordings again, but found everything in the article was, in fact, on record and could be sourced to two people interviewed. After meeting with the professor on Monday, Nov. 23, we found there was a miscommunication between him and the reporter not captured on the recording, and promptly ran a correction saying no email was ever sent to the athletics department. It was the only error we could find.

That, we believed, was the end.

On Tuesday, Nov. 24, the editor-in-chief woke to a phone call from the daily editor, who informed her that school was cancelled in response to threats on social media directed at students of color. The closure was unprecedented.

The editor-in-chief read the university's email announcing

the closure, and called Jack Keith, advisor to The Western Front. They discussed a plan: cover what was happening, but do so cautiously. She informed the daily editor and called Western's communications director Paul Cocke, reaching him after several attempts. She asked for confirmation about the threats and, if possible, whether they had anything to do with the story.

Cocke informed her off the record that they did.

After updating the brief about the threats, posted on Tuesday, we heard that a protest against the racial slurs would take place on campus. The decision was made to cover it, along with talking to students who had come to campus and those who hadn't.

“The story became this:
How are students feeling?”

The story went through several rounds of edits by the managing editor and editor-in-chief, while the daily and opinion editors wrote and edited the article. We decided that in the story, students would identify their race in the terms they preferred. This was because students of different races reacted differently and we wanted to hear all sides of the story. We also reached out through friend networks to see if anyone had stayed off campus. We interviewed the friends of friends of friends about why they chose not to come to the university.

After this, coverage became more complicated. As the story transitioned out of breaking news, we were left with a plethora of story angles to consider and ethical questions to answer. On Wednesday, Nov. 25, a press conference was held by the Associated Students president, Belina Seare. There it was first confirmed that these threats were specifically made toward her and the Associated Students vice president for diversity, Abby Ramos, who was interviewed for the mascot story. She addressed what she claimed to be failings on behalf of the university when handling these threats. We sent the opinion editor, Libby Keller, to report that Seare felt the university failed to provide adequate police protection after these targeted threats, which the university ultimately denied was the case. The press conference was the last time Seare chose to comment to any media.

One of the greatest challenges with coverage was the fact it

happened the day before Thanksgiving break, shortly followed by dead week. Late night on Monday, Nov. 30, the Front's second to last publication of fall quarter, the university stated that Western student Tysen Campbell was arrested in suspicion of the threat "let's lynch her" directed at Seare on Yik Yak. The newsroom scrambled to include this in the paper, as well as another story addressing a listening session that happened earlier that day, where faculty and students came together to debrief about racism on campus.

In our final issue, we covered a student-organized meeting without school authority figures to gain a more unfettered and honest reaction to the events on campus. Again, in this story, we tried to capture the essence of this conversation, as well as reach out to diverse body of students for comment.

The Western Front has continued to cover the updates in Campbell's case, now that he has been suspended from Western and pleaded not guilty to first-degree malicious harassment. Up until this point, coverage has been relatively episodic: what is happening now, and how do we inform people? But the rapid fire of breaking news has started to slow, and The Western Front has an obligation to uncover the larger issues that lead to these events. What does racism look like on a college campus in the 21st century, and how do we report it as student journalists?

You can follow our coverage at westernfrontonline.com.

About the authors:

Heidi DeHart was editor-in-chief of The Western Front in fall quarter, when the racial threats occurred and following discussions and events began to take place. Brenna Visser was daily editor at the time and is editor-in-chief for winter quarter.

scholarship recipients

AAF Seattle Scholarship

\$1,000 to Lauren Prater
\$1,000 to Taiki Sakurai

Gerson F. Miller Journalism Scholarship

\$1,000 to Daniella Beccaria
\$1,000 to Beatrice Harper
\$1,000 to Jesse Nichols

Journalism Alumni Scholarship

\$500 to Stephanie Bishop
\$500 to Brooke Hanson

Pioneer Newspapers Scholarship

\$1,000 to Marilyn Napier

Shearlean Duke Memorial Scholarship

\$1,000 to Nicole Shapiro

Western Washington SPJ scholarship

\$3,500 to Daniella Beccaria

Department Tuition and Fee Waiver

\$900 to Kjell Redal
\$900 to Yvonne Worden

Nancy and Ralph Babcock Jr. Memorial Scholarship

\$1,000 to Paolo Bicchieri
\$1,000 to Alyssa Pitcher
\$1,000 to Sierra Tryon

Steven Rupp Memorial Scholarship

\$700 to Christina Becker
\$700 to Jennifer Seifried

Pacific Northwest Newspaper Association Scholarship

\$1,400 to Halee Hastad

Woodring Scholarship

\$4,000 to Yvonne Worden

from the students

The Planet

This year The Planet Magazine maintained its reputation for award-winning, high-quality environmental journalism. The Planet placed as a national finalist for the second year in a row in the Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Awards for “Best Student Magazine.”

The Planet Magazine turned 35 in 2015. To commemorate this landmark moment, we published a special edition “Anniversary Issue” featuring stories written by Planet alumni. Founder Brian Blix flew up from San Francisco to join us for “Pioneers of the Planet,” a documentary video that can be viewed on theplanetmagazine.net. Dedicated to our mission of “environmental advocacy through responsible journalism,” we released our “Environmental Justice” issue in spring 2015, exploring environmental issues that disproportionately affect marginalized communities. The staff also launched a quarterly radio podcast in fall 2014 with Western’s KUGS channel, establishing Planet as the only publication at Western with a radio program. Elevating our content, digital platforms and local reputation, we anticipate another fantastic year ahead at The Planet. Here’s to the next 35 years!

Editor-in-Chief Yvonne Worden
www.theplanetmagazine.net
[@theplanetmagazine](https://twitter.com/theplanetmagazine)
[Facebook.com/ThePlanetMagazine/](https://www.facebook.com/ThePlanetMagazine/)

Klipsun

Behind the sturdy glass-and-wood door of the Klipsun Magazine office, something wonderful is unfolding.

This quarter, Klipsun departed from the longstanding practice of choosing a theme for the current edition, then soliciting queries from writers. We decided to develop a theme more organically: We asked our writers to pitch and pursue stories they were passionate about — and let the theme suggest itself.

Inspired by the refugee crisis, two writers examined the experience of being a stranger in a strange land. Social justice is another strong theme: Consider the irony that in the health-conscious city of Bellingham there are children who do not have enough to eat. In an age of gender fluidity, why are there so few gender-neutral bathrooms on campus?

They’ve given us stories of inspiration and creativity: the geology professor who raised vegetables in Antarctica in a test for NASA that could influence agriculture on Mars. The graduate who won a plum internship in the office of Senator Patty Murray. The design student who landed an internship at Starbucks, and ended up working on high-profile projects.

Our theme clearly presented itself: Purpose. During fall quarter at Klipsun, we wrote with passion and precision about people pursuing their goals with energy, with certainty, with a particular sense of purpose.

We invite you to read these stories on our website or peruse the print edition. If you’re in town, please drop by and see the good work unfolding behind that door.

Editor-in-Chief Halee Hastad
www.klipsunmagazine.com
[@klipsunmag](https://twitter.com/klipsunmag)

The Western Front

The Western Front editors and reporters strive for each quarter to be better than the last, with breaking news and creative stories. The Front continues to develop for the ever-changing online world, from creating a new website to finding our own archiving system and developing best tactics for social media.

Many stories from major news organizations include multimedia elements, something the Front hopes to further adopt in future quarters. For now, online exclusive content is required to have some kind of media element.

The Front also recently established a partnership with KUGS radio to develop radio news broadcasts. The Front strives to be the students’ source of news — get it first, get it right.

Editor-in-Chief Heidi DeHart
www.westernfrontonline.com
[@TheFrontOnline](https://twitter.com/TheFrontOnline)

SPJ

The Western chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has been spending the year building membership and working to create a program where journalism students can connect with each other and professionals in the field. This past year we have had a variety of speakers, including Daniel Bolton, who spoke on niche writing and his years of experience covering teas and coffees, and Cheryl Stritzel McCarthy, who spoke about her work around the country and the importance of fact checking and sourcing.

This coming year, we hope to continue growing. SPJ has many exciting events in the works including a visit from The Seattle Times team who worked on the Oso coverage that was awarded a Pulitzer Prize.

Co-chair Racquel Arceo



The Western Student Chapter of the National Photographer's Association hosted a visual journalism showcase in spring. The collection, called "The Way We See It," consisted of works submitted by students in the visual journalism track, and was on display in the B Gallery of the fine arts building from May 18 through May 23. The photos on the left were among those in the exhibit. It was the first gallery of visual journalism works on campus, and the organizers hope to establish the show as an annual event. // Photos by Paul Bikis (top), Danny Miller (middle) and Daniella Beccaria (bottom)



NPPA

With big shifts and developments in the journalism industry, visual journalism can seem like an intimidating career choice. However, I am constantly surprised by the enthusiasm and resiliency of the students that are part of our tight-knit community. Always dedicated to improvement, our members both new and old bring their unique perspectives through a lens to help inspire each other and expand their capabilities.

The WWU National Press Photographer's Association Chapter has fostered the growth of stellar photographers who are now working in locations all over the country. Last spring, our academic year ended with Western's first photojournalism gallery solely of student work, as well as our third annual professional portfolio critique. The critique included presentations highlighting women visual journalists in the Pacific Northwest and individual feedback for students from local professionals.

Looking forward to this year, we are excited to have a handful of new, motivated members and hope to host a variety of seminars, events and activities to continually create an environment that will assist photographers in telling the stories around them.

If you are an alumni who has time, and visual journalistic experience to offer at one of our club meetings, please email us at www.nppa@gmail.com.



President Nick Danielson

student awards

Associated Collegiate Press – Photo Excellence Awards

Danny Miller, Fourth Place, sports photography

2015 National Film Festival for Talented Youth

Becca Freimuth, “Keeping Focus” documentary selected for festival

Society of Professional Journalists: 2014 Mark of Excellence Awards

Region 10

Best use of multimedia

Finalist: “Peeking into the Past” by Becca Freimuth, Klipsun

Feature photography

Finalist: “At Home in the Woods” by Danny Miller, The Planet

Finalist: “Soakin’ up the sun” by Bailey Barnard, The Western Front

Sports photography

Winner: “Woodworth, the Hero” by Nick Gonzales, Western athletics department

Best student magazine

Winner: “The Human Issue,” Editors-in-Chief Mikey Jane Moran and Sarah Mikkelsen, The Planet

Non-fiction magazine article

Finalist: “Wonders of the Wilderness” by Michelle Dutro, Klipsun

Finalist: “Switch: Breaking Gender Norms in Sports” by Mikayla Raley, Klipsun

Radio feature

Finalist: “The Green Blues” by Sam Carlos, KUGS

Radio news reporting

Finalist: “Sex Workers Left Out of Conversation on Sex Trafficking Prevention” by Taylor Sanders, KUGS

National

Best student magazine

Finalist: “The Human Issue,” Editors-in-Chief Mikey Jane Moran and Sarah Mikkelsen, The Planet

2014 Washington Press Association Awards

Student publications

Features – personality profile

Second place: “Duran Durandy” by Stephanie Bishop, The Western Front

News – general

First place: “Race Remark Sparks Threat” by Brandon Stone and Shelby Rowe, The Western Front

News – investigative

First place: “Professor Breaks Sex Policy” by John Boone, The Western Front

News – sports

First place: “Taking the Icy Plunge” by Heidi DeHart, The Western Front

News – social issues, religion, minority affairs

First place: “A Feud in the Field” by Mikayla Raley, Klipsun

News – agriculture/environment

Second place: “Burden of a Breath” by Sam Carlos, The Planet

Photography – feature

Honorable mention: “A Feud in the Field” by Mikayla Raley, Klipsun

Internship work

Photography – portrait

First place: “Soccer Portrait” by Danny Miller, Skagit Valley Herald

Photography – sports

Second place: “Dugout” by Danny Miller, Skagit Valley Herald

Features – personality profile

Honorable mention: “Couple Celebrates 70 Years” by Alisa Gramann, Federal Way Mirror

faculty updates



Brian J. Bowe
Assistant professor

There was a great deal of excitement when my wife, Heather, and I packed up our two cats and made the long drive from Grand Rapids, Michigan to Bellingham in August. We weren't sure where we would end up when I finished my Ph.D. at Michigan State University in 2014. We feel particularly lucky that I landed at Western. With great faculty colleagues, intelligent

and committed students and gorgeous surroundings, it's an ideal environment. I know I probably sound like an ad for the university, but you all know I speak the truth.

This year, I'm teaching senior seminar, newswriting and reporting. I'm covering familiar terrain from previous teaching experiences at Grand Valley State, Michigan State and the Sorbonne, but it has taken some work getting used to the accelerated pace of the quarter system. I'm already getting into the rhythm of it, and I think I will come to prefer quarters to semesters.

Western provides a lot of resources for faculty, particularly new faculty, and I've tried to take advantage of these

opportunities to help me get acclimated. Before school started, I spent two days with colleagues at a course design retreat in Anacortes, and I participated in another two-day workshop in Bellingham. I've been an active participant in the Teaching-Learning Academy, and in the new year I will take part in a series of workshops aimed at internationalizing Western's curriculum.

On the research front, my time has mostly been devoted to my work on media coverage of Muslims in the United States. In August, I won the top faculty paper award from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's Religion and Media Interest Group. I've recently had articles accepted by *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* and *Media, Culture & Society*. My colleague Donghee Yvette Wohn and I also had an article accepted to the journal *Social Media and Society*. This work is part of a long-term project called *Crystallization*, which is an update of agenda setting theory in the social media era.

Looking forward, I'm in the early stages of a research project that will involve surveys with American and Pakistani journalism students. This project is a collaboration with Lawrence Pintak from Washington State University and Serena Carpenter from Michigan State University.

Outside of my scholarly pursuits, I'm continuing to write and record music with my group *Voluptuous Panic*. We released several singles in 2015 and hope to put out a full-length record in 2016.

Joan Connell
Instructor

In this, my fourth year at Western, I'm teaching mass media ethics and serving as the faculty advisor and writing coach to *Klipsun Magazine*. I continue to be impressed with the enthusiasm of students at Western, their curiosity, intelligence and desire to make the world a better place.

Klipsun continues the evolution that began last year when the magazine became a digital first publication. *Klipsun* is now a four-credit course, combining the basic student-led magazine writing, editing and production with a writers workshop focusing on readings, lectures and discussion on narrative storytelling, marrying the techniques of fiction writing with the discipline of journalism. Now, stories are posted at klipsunmagazine.com beginning in mid-quarter and a robust, 40-page print edition is produced at the end of each quarter.

My mass media ethics class has had plenty to talk about this quarter: media coverage of school shootings, the First Amendment standoff at the University of Missouri, false balance, the limits of "he said, she said" reporting and the challenge of covering political races when candidates present competing claims to the truth.

Using cases drawn from Columbia University Case Study Consortium and other sources, students apply ethical theory to a variety of ethical dilemmas, from how broadcast media in Uganda covered the government crackdown on gays to the ethical challenges of the Edward Snowden affair. The students, evenly split between public relations and journalism, also write a major research paper based on their own personal and professional interests.



Outside of class, I continue to work as a media consultant with an emphasis on manuscript editing, reflecting my background in religion, ethics and moral issues. "God Is Not Here: A Soldier's Struggle with Torture, Trauma and the Moral Injuries of War," by Bill Russell Edmonds was published by Pegasus Books in 2015 and favorably reviewed in *The New York Times*. I'm currently editing a book by a scriptural scholar on Christianity and the environment, linking themes of nature and healing in the Gospel of Mark and the Book of Genesis.

Joe Gosen
Assistant professor

I had a rewarding first year of teaching photojournalism, digital media, intro to visual journalism and advanced visual journalism. I thoroughly enjoyed working with Western students throughout the year and was continually impressed with the quality of work the visual journalism students produced across the curriculum. While there were many noteworthy teaching moments from my first year, I'll focus on digital media (Journalism 370) and advanced visual journalism (Journalism 446).

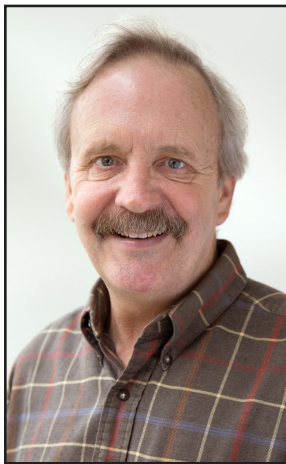
Many of the students in my section of 370 owned a DSLR, which allowed me to teach multimedia storytelling and production using DSLRs instead of traditional video cameras. I had a blast teaching this class and the resulting student projects from the winter quarter can be seen on www.digitalmediainjournalism.com, which is a class website Stephen Howie has curated since 2011.

Teaching two sections of 446 in spring quarter provided a great opportunity for me to get more involved with the Bellingham community and beyond. With the help of our faculty and our professional advisory board, I was able to establish

partnerships with nonprofit organizations, one commercial client and several editorial publications. Students produced graphics, photographs, websites and video projects for Salish Sea Sustainable, Whatcom Council on Aging, Western's Center for Service-Learning, San Juan Island Distillery, Canoe & Kayak Magazine, The Daily Herald of Everett, Skagit Valley Herald and The News Tribune of Tacoma.



Other notable activities outside of the classroom include attending the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference in San Francisco this summer, becoming the faculty advisor of our student chapter of the National Press Photographers Association, and being selected as a Community Engagement Fellow with Western's Center for Service-Learning. To end this with a shorter sentence, I'm happy to say I became a Bellingham homeowner this year.



John Harris
Associate professor

A dozen or so years ago the department asked if I would fill in for the photojournalism teacher, who had a health issue. I'd never taught the class before, and it seemed like a daunting task, but I figured I'd give it a shot. I've taught it every year since, often three times a year. But not this year. The class now is in the capable hands of professor Joe Gosen, who joined us last year from Brooks Institute. I'd

be bummed that I'm not the department's main photojournalism teacher if I didn't have such high regard for Joe, and also for Scott Terrell, the photo editor of the Skagit Valley Herald, who teaches it occasionally as an adjunct.

When I first began teaching it the students shot one 36-frame roll of black-and-white film per assignment. An assistant — my first was Heather Trimm — processed their film in Bond Hall and made proof sheets for them. The class met in College Hall in the room with the big table and fireplace, and we looked at the students' prints on an overhead projector — I think that seems like a lifetime ago.

Over the years I've been blessed with many remarkable students, some of whom have gone on to full-time shooting jobs, where they've made a name for themselves and represented the department well. Others simply took the class for the experience, and it was just as rewarding to see them go from shooting their first assignment indoors at ISO 25 to producing quality images by the end of the quarter.

I'm sure I'll be teaching photojournalism periodically in the future, but now my focus is more on writing classes. This year I'm teaching feature writing three times, which is a change of pace, but just as challenging and just as rewarding.

Stephen Howie
Senior instructor

During my 10th year as a full-time instructor at Western, I served on a successful search committee that ended with the hiring of assistant professor Brian J. Bowe. I enjoyed teaching multiple sections of the editing class. I also had the opportunity to teach digital storytelling during the winter quarter, and students created some incredible videos in both my class and a second section taught by our new faculty member, assistant professor Joe Gosen. To view those, go to www.digitalmediainjournalism.com.

When I wasn't teaching, I continued to serve as the sole adviser for the multidisciplinary studies program. I also continued to take advanced Spanish courses offered by the university and, for the first time, tried pilates. At the end of the academic year, I was awarded a \$4,000 faculty development summer grant and attended a week of intensive classes in June to add web enhancements to the classes I teach.

This year, I am teaching two sections of the editing course in

the fall, newswriting and editing in winter quarter and editing and digital storytelling in the spring.

Assistant professor Joe Gosen, department manager Karen Smith and I coordinated a campus visit in November from a Canon executive, in hopes of establishing a partnership with Canon that would provide journalism students with much-needed access to a wider variety of cameras to shoot high-quality video.

Outside of school, I am in the early stages of creating (and attempting to fund) a documentary about my brother Philip, who converted from a right-handed to a left-handed sculptor after suffering a stroke in the wake of Hurricane Irene that left him without speech and unable to use the right side of his body.



Jack Keith
Senior instructor

I'm now in my sixth year as the faculty adviser to The Western Front, and we are quickly evolving to keep up with the changing media world. I bring in some guest speakers each quarter from Northwest news organizations, and they are all telling us that the expectation these days is for reporters to not only write stories but take photos and videos as well

as using social media to connect with readers. It's all part of the new style of journalism, and we're expanding the Front's website and social media rapidly to get students ready for their careers.

I continue to enjoy Western as I plunge into my 10th year as an instructor. And it's great to see our department expanding: We added a new professor last year, another this year and we're

beginning the search for a third new teacher for next year. All of this has meant we're getting tight on office space, so in the fall I moved out of the department and down the hall to a vacant office in the Student Publications Office. It fits with my connection to the Front, and the transition has gone smoothly. I'm still in and out of the department offices multiple times a day, so I feel very much a part of this fun group.

Part of the reason for my upbeat attitude is the success of our journalism students. Western has clearly established itself as the premier journalism training ground in the Northwest, and we now regularly place interns and graduates into top organizations. The Pulitzer Prize-winning team at The Seattle Times was filled with students who were leaders at the Front during their Western days, and we're so proud of them.

On a personal level, my wife and I continue to be active outdoors, whether it's riding bikes on trails around Puget Sound or encouraging our three young grandchildren to try kayaking and paddleboarding during their three-week summer visit to our home on Lake Whatcom. Life is good.



Jennifer Keller
Associate professor

This year was quite exciting for me as I became chair of the journalism department. I still teach the public relations campaigns and case studies courses, but much of my time is spent figuring out schedules, conducting exit interviews for our graduating students, writing reports and attending way too many meetings.

While I do miss teaching ethics, feature writing and the other public relations courses, I'm happy that I get to work with so many students from all of our tracks. Our students are the reason we are here and they make our work worthwhile. As a former student at Western once told me, "You don't need kids. You have us." So true. And I love hearing from all of my #JKids, wherever they are.

Now that I've made it through a year as chair, I am getting back into service for the university. I am serving on both the curriculum council for the college of humanities and social sciences and the search committee for our new dean. I'm also acting as chair for our search for a new public relations professor. Of course, this is part of the reason for so many meetings! Luckily, I have great support from all our faculty and, particularly, department manager Karen Smith, without whom this job would be impossible.

I'm also getting back to my scholarship and presented a paper with Maria McLeod at the Western Social Sciences Association conference in Portland. Our presentation was on "PR Skill Acquisition and Self-Assessment Through Video Review," also known to our public relations students as the PSAs in Maria's 380 class and the press conferences in my 407 class.

On the personal side, we're still working on the house but now have family to help us. My mother-in-law, Joni, has moved to Bellingham and I'm thrilled! Mostly, however, we're looking forward to our trip to Tuscany next year to celebrate our 50th birthdays.

Maria McLeod
Assistant professor

The 2014-15 academic year was a big one for me in terms of academic research and publishing. In June, I gave a presentation at the International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities in Vancouver, British Columbia, that focused on the most iconic photograph from the 2013 Gezi Park uprising in Turkey. The presentation was based upon my paper, "The Lady in Red: Image Deconstruction and the Gezi Park Uprising," which has since been accepted for publication in International Journal of Communications and Linguistic Studies.

Last spring, I responded to a university-wide call for proposals and was awarded the Thaddeus Spratlen and Lois Price-Spratlen Inclusion and Diversity Grant. As part of my grant project, I launched #StudentsofWestern, a Western Facebook series similar to "Humans of New York." I oversaw an independent study with Teena Thach. Thach, who graduated spring quarter, created weekly postings of photos and pull quotes from students of diverse backgrounds. That Facebook series continued over the summer and then fall quarter with journalism major Stephanie Cheng.

Separate from the Facebook series, but part of the grant project, I spent spring quarter conducting in-depth interviews with Western students from diverse backgrounds. During the summer, I wrote monologues based on those interviews

to create a play, "First Person: Diverse Student Stories," which was performed Nov. 19 – 21 at Western's Performing Arts Center. I also used those monologues to produce an educational module on the topic of diversity for the first-year interest groups program at Western.

In relationship to my introduction to mass media class, which includes a focus on gender and media representation, I hosted a documentary filmmakers panel on Oct. 17 for the Female Eye Film Festival in Toronto. The event included filmmakers whose films were shown as part of the Pickford Film Center's documentary film series, October.

This fall I presented at the Sixth International Conference on the Image, at the University of California at Berkeley. My presentation focused on the use of crowd funding as a financing mechanism for high-end, cross-genre web series. My paper, "Crowd Funding the Web Series: A Case Study in the Political Economy of New Media and the Production of a Fan Following," is currently being considered for publication.





Carolyn Nielsen
Associate professor

The past year has been extra busy in the classroom as I have added new data scraping and data analysis work in reporting and advanced reporting. In many cases, I've been learning alongside my students.

In June, I finished my doctorate coursework at the University of Washington, and am working now on my dissertation exploring how

journalists cover race in a digital news environment. It's exciting and fulfilling work. I find myself regularly bringing topics and findings from my research into my teaching. Over the summer, I attended the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual conference where I presented my research on the "journosplaining" of Jeremy Lin as an Asian-American NBA star.

I've also been serving as chair of our Student Publications Council as our student newspaper and magazines strive to increase their online presence.

I've been trying to get some fun in, too, and over the summer took a trip to Croatia, where I happened to meet Seahawks coach Pete Carroll in a line to exchange money. He offered to help carry my luggage. True story.

Peggy Watt
Associate professor

I've been teaching two of my favorite classes, Journalism 350 mass media law and Journalism 307 reporting. The reporting students are becoming regulars at the Bellingham City Council meetings. At first, they expect they won't hear anything relevant to them, and then they cover such topics as rental inspection rules, bike lane construction and smoking (and vaping) regulations in public. I also advised The Western Front this summer for the first time.

I got more insight on priorities for journalism skills last summer when I attended Excellence in Journalism 2015 — the Society of Professional Journalists national convention. I still serve on SPJ's national Journalism Education Committee, too.

Alumni might remember getting a lesson in public records and Federal Communications Commission rules from "professor

Colbert" in media law, or hearing from Weird Al regarding copyright. My idea of using pop culture references in media law courses won second place in Law and Policy Division Teaching Ideas Competition, from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, last summer at the national conference in San Francisco.

I also got a grant to go to Oakland last spring to learn more about the Open Oakland project, which developed an online system for submitting, tracking and retrieving public records. This is part of my ongoing research in public records management.



Sheila Webb
Associate professor

I have long been intrigued by the startup of new media forms, be they the pictorial magazine or new media sites. I was fortunate to receive sabbatical for fall 2014 and winter 2015 quarters, and devoted that time to producing a manuscript on the buildup to Life magazine. Drawing from archival material from Time Inc., including memos between publisher Henry Luce and Managing Editor John Shaw Billings, I described the launch of the pictorial and discussed the cultural milieu that helped make this new media form an “immediate success.” The article will appear in *Journalism & Communication Monographs* in spring 2016.

Spring quarter I taught two sections of senior seminar, our capstone class that asks students to examine a media source through a research paper. I am always engaged by the projects the students produce and by how exciting exploring media from a research perspective proves to be.

I was honored to participate in a National Endowment for the Arts Summer Institute in New York City, which focused on

the city’s role in the history of periodicals. A typical, but still red letter day was a morning spent discussing the New Yorker, then lunch at the Algonquin with a talk by an expert on the Round Table, and then a trip downtown to the new quarters of Condé Nast at One World Trade Center to visit the New Yorker archives. Their offices provide a 360-degree view of Manhattan, and one can see the Statue of Liberty from one view and the footprint of the Twin Towers from another.



As I was on the East Coast, I also greatly enjoyed exploring with my two daughters, in particular this time, music at Lincoln Center and riding on the Baltimore Water Taxi, which provides a great view of the Inner Harbor.

emeriti faculty

Carolyn Dale

After one year, I’m ready to say retirement is great. Even though most mornings find me heading upstairs to the office with my coffee cup, it’s to my home office, and to writing fiction, nonfiction, stories and essays.

I attended the Chuckanut Writers Conference this year and enjoyed running into old friends and former students. It was fun — and a big change — to hang out with writers of fiction and poetry, rather than news and journalism.

Every month I pack and unpack my suitcase, as we do more traveling. Though all of this year’s trips have been within the United States and Canada, they span from Hawaii to the Florida Keys, with some good desert hiking in the Southwest in between.

At home, there’s always the garden, the cat, meals and friends — and, we’re discovering — more houseguests. But having the leisure for good visits is also a real benefit of this time of life.

Lyle Harris

Retirement is tremendous — no deadlines, no committee meetings and no schedules. But I do miss working with the great students who I see on LinkedIn are now doing well in their careers and moving into midlife.

I’ll share few stories from my years with you. An unusual excuse for missing class: My canary was sick and I had to take him to the vet. Not-to-be-repeated experience during a study-abroad program in Australia, while diving in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Perth: I looked up at the dolphins and saw sea slugs coming down on me, then realized the dolphins were crapping. Delighted comment on a study-abroad program in Prague: Here I am at an opera, drinking champagne and all for \$6. In mass media law class: After I worked all night on the Front, you still called on me in class? And a shocked statement from reporter on the Front: But I thought it was spelled right.

Best to all of you and I’d enjoy hearing from you.

Floyd McKay

Floyd McKay celebrated his 80th birthday on Oct. 18 by putting the final touches on his new book, to be published in March by Oregon State University Press. Reporting the Oregon Story: How Activists and Visionaries Transformed a State is a personal and political memoir of Floyd's career as a political reporter in Oregon before he joined the Western faculty.

Oregon in the period from 1964 to 1986 was widely recognized as a leader in environmental and land-use legislation and practices, and its best-known politicians, such as Tom McCall, Wayne Morse and Mark Hatfield, were often in the national headlines. Floyd covered those stories for The Oregon Statesman in Salem and KGW-TV in Portland, where he delivered news analysis and commentaries for 17 years.

Otherwise, Floyd and Dixie are well, and spent a month in Scotland in September.

Tim Pilgrim

Tim Pilgrim, who retired in 2013, still writes and publishes poetry. He co-authored "Bellingham Poems" late in 2014, and his book new book of poems, "Mapping water," will be published soon. He has published 266 poems.

The journalism department server, Hope, continues to get more than a million hits a year from visitors around the world — most looking for mass media material and links to alternative media (see <http://hope.journ.wvu.edu/tpilgrim>). Hope got nearly 160,000 hits in October alone. His poetry site (<http://www.timothypilgrim.org>) can also be reached from Hope.

Pilgrim still runs every day, hikes and travels with Carolyn Dale, visits children and grandchildren — and has taken up yoga. He is headed for the bend, so to speak.

Ted Stannard

R. E. "Ted" Stannard, Jr., emeritus professor of journalism, still lives in Bellingham but he and Femmy travel frequently. They've been visiting family in California regularly this year. Friends and faculty frequently enjoy Ted's emails, in which he shares analyses of current events.

*Thank you to our
emeriti faculty and
alumni, who have
strengthened the
department for
each generation
of journalists that
follows.*

alumni updates

2015:

Tara Almassi is public relations coordinator at United Legwear Co. in New York City.

David Anderson is a reporter for the Del Norte Triplicate in Crescent City, California.

Marlena Av is a meter reader for Seattle City Light.

Lucas Clark is a communications and marketing intern at the Downtown Seattle Association.

Tyler Crebar is a public relations intern with the National Collegiate Athletic Association in Indianapolis.

Caitlyn Daniels is owner of Caitlyn Jackson Photography in Seattle.

Margaret Degman is the owner of Margaret Degman Photography in Bellingham.

Stefanie Donahue is an editor at PRWeb in Ferndale, Washington.

Michelle Distro is an intern for The California Report at KQED in San Francisco.

Mallorie Estenson is a photographer with Balancing Stone Media in Bellingham.

Katelyn Garza is a fellow with Aramark in Bellingham.

Nick Gonzales is a photojournalist at The Elkhart Truth in Elkhart, Indiana.

Josh Hart is a reporter for The Bellingham Herald.

Jenny Hubbard is recruiting coordinator for A Nanny for U in Seattle.

Lily Jaquith is a news-editorial assistant with MyEdmonds News in Edmonds, Washington.

Kramer Janders operates Kramer Janders Photography in Bellingham.

Kari Kato is restaurant menu coordinator for Schwartz Brothers Restaurants in Bellevue, Washington.

Stephanie Kirk is assistant account executive at Curator in Seattle.

Lise Latronica is a PRWeb editor at Cision in Ferndale, Washington.

Carina Linder Jimenez is an instructor at LA Fitness in Renton, Washington.

Danny Miller is a photographer at The Flint Journal in Flint, Michigan.

Lindsey Oosterhof is marketing assistant at Over Easy in Bellingham.

Mariko Osterberg is scheduling coordinator for Jung H. Kim, D.D.S. in Bellingham.

Danielle Oyama is a public relations and marketing intern at Filson in Seattle.

Kameron Payne is a public relations specialist for the Bellingham Blazers.

Shelby Rowe is education and statehouse reporter for The News Tribune in Jefferson County, Missouri.

Brandon Stone is the government reporter for the Skagit Valley Herald in Mount Vernon, Washington.

Brianna Stoutenburgh is sales and marketing coordinator at Crystal Mountain Resort.

Keegan Strandness is a freelance photographer in Bellingham.

Tina Thach is a social media and marketing specialist for Socedo in Seattle.

Josiah Ubben is principal with Josiah Ubben Design and Branding in Bellingham.

Caity Walthall is a public relations and marketing intern for Ben & Jerry's in Seattle.

Alexandra Withrow is a social media content creator with Pearl Jam Activism in Seattle.

Rika Wong is a server at The Rickshaw in Seattle.

2014:

Evan Abell is a photographer at the Bellingham Herald.

Rachel Brown is owner of Rachel Brown Photography in Seattle.

Daniel DeMay is a business and culture reporter for SeattlePI.com.

Alisa Gramann O'Donnell is a bookseller at Barnes & Noble in Modesto, California.

Paul Grzelak is copy editor for Northwest Leaf magazine.

Steve Guntli, editor of The Northern Light in Blaine, played Sir Robin, a knight of the round table, in the Bellingham Theater Guild's production of Monty Python's Spamalot in fall 2015.

Shannen Kuest is with K9 Korral in Lake Stevens, Washington.

Hannah Leone is now a visual journalist at the Idaho State Journal in Pocatello, Idaho.

Mason Luvera is a public relations account manager at Slice Communications in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Kati Slater-Szirom is a web content editor and blogger at Ultimate Guitar and is teaching English in Kaliningrad, Russia.

2013:

Laura Going is an assistant graphic designer at Whatcom Community College in Bellingham.

Olivia Henry is now a digital strategist for KALW, the Institute for Nonprofit News, in San Francisco.

Brianna Kuplent is social media specialist at Platypus in Redmond, Washington.

2012:

Femi Abebefe is a reporter/producer for KTVZ News in Bend, Oregon.

Brianne Beets is teaching English at VIPKID in the Zapopan area of Mexico.

Rosa Beyene is a program assistant at the University of Washington, Bothell.

Emma Chadband is digital media manager at the Transport Workers Union of America International Union, based in Washington, D.C.

Christina Crea is a military news reporter for The Northwest Guardian in Fort Lewis, Washington.

Marianne Graff was recently promoted to assistant assignment editor at the Skagit Valley Herald.

Rachel Lerman is now a business reporter at The Seattle Times.

Kristy Kim is a teacher assistant at the YMCA of Greater Seattle.

Evan Marczynski is the crime and court reporter for the Skagit Valley Herald.

Geraldine Massengale was promoted to communications manager for the Bellevue Downtown Association, overseeing the organization's digital presence, after starting as an intern three years ago.

Amanda McIntosh is an education specialist at Assumption Catholic Church.

Tara Nelson is a communications consultant and freelance writer. She was campaign manager for Bellingham City Councilman Terry Bornemann's re-election campaign in 2015.

Mary Shoup is an editor at PRWeb in Ferndale, Washington.

Kelly Sullivan is a reporter for the Peninsula Clarion in Kenai, Alaska.

Robin Turnblom is a communications specialist and staff writer at Nexstar Network in St. Paul, Minnesota. She writes and edits the corporate magazine and oversees social media. She completed a master's degree in media studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2014, with a thesis on sexualization and postfeminism in breast cancer awareness campaigning.

2011:

Kaylin Bettinger is communications and development manager of Upper Valley MEND in Leavenworth, Washington.

Elise Harrington is marketing coordinator for Nintex, a workflow services company in Bellevue, Washington.

Ross Buchanan is on the board of directors at the Seattle Community Law Center, supervising editorial content for marketing materials and managing social media.

Kimberly Cauvel is environmental reporter for the Skagit Valley Herald.

Mike Homnick is an experienced design intern working on user-centered design programs at the e-commerce company FiveStars in San Francisco.

Mark Stayton is the media and communications coordinator at Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

Jordan Stead is a writer, reviewer and photographer at DPReview, a division of Amazon, in Seattle.

Preston VanSanden is a marketing associate at Purevoltage Enterprises in Lakewood, and is preparing to move to South Korea to teach English.

Paul Wright has taken a position managing new business development for the National Federation of Independent Business. He previously was an advertising account executive for The Bellingham Herald.

2010:

Carolyn Copstead is an administrative assistant at Seattle Children's Hospital.

Julio Cortes is public relations manager for the nonprofit Cocoon House, overseeing social media, community outreach, media relations and more.

Andrea Davis-Gonzalez is now editorial and social media manager at iSpot.tv in Seattle.

Gabrielle Nomura Gainor, co-founder of the Relay Dance Collective, collaborated with Seattle Kokone Taiko to create a dance piece that tells the story of the Japanese-American World War II experience, including a performance in June 2015 at the Wing Luke Museum.

Tristan Hiegler is a reporter for the Herald and News in Klamath Falls, Oregon covering public safety, transportation and the military.

Peter Jensen is a reporter for the Idaho Mountain Express in Ketchum, Idaho.

Brooke Loisel is human resources manager at Aramark dining services at Western Washington University.

Stephanie Sarff is a recruiting coordinator at Puppet Labs in Portland, Oregon.

Skyler Wilder is marketing and media manager at the International Surfing Association in La Jolla, California.

2009:

Shawn Brennen is corporate communications specialist at Crane Aerospace and Electronics in Lynnwood, Washington.

Sarah Cannard is the visitor information coordinator at the Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau in Juneau, Alaska. She previously worked at the Juneau Empire, first as a copywriter and page designer and then as a columnist.

Tela Crane is a member of the U.S. cycling team as a track cyclist.

Jamie Fife is program manager of Xbox Studios and operations at Microsoft.

Ian Wright is a client manager with Medical Web Experts based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He manages projects for custom applications, branding designs, web designs and web content for practitioners in the healthcare industry.

2008:

Keeli Archer is senior cyber consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington, D.C.

Jessica Araujo earned a degree in interior design from Cornish College of the Arts and is now working as an interior designer at Mithun in Seattle. Tali (Bendzak) Wee is marketing content coordinator at Zillow in Seattle.

Jessie Knudsen is convention and group sales manager at the Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau in Juneau, Alaska.

Tyler Nelson is studying fashion and apparel design at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, and is working as a design intern at Puma.

Ciara O'Rourke has left the Austin American-Statesman to spend a year as a Ted Scripps fellow in environmental journalism at the University of Colorado, Boulder. She is working on a series of stories about how the increasing development and fragmentation of rural land in Texas is changing communities around the state.

Katie Regan is an environmental health communications specialist for the National Association of County and City Health Officials, based in Washington, D.C. She also earned her master's degree in creative nonfiction from Chatham University in 2013.

Colin Simpson is staff editor of MedEdPORTAL, a peer-reviewed online journal specializing in educational resources for multiple health professions.

Justin Steyer is director of digital media and technology at KPLU in Seattle. He earned his master of business administration at Pacific Lutheran University in 2014.

Ryan Wynne is manager of communications and marketing in the admissions office at Western.

2007:

Erin Dewey is marketing and communications coordinator at Scratch and Peck Feeds in Bellingham. She edits newsletters and blogs, oversees social media and works on product knowledge and development.

Liz McNeil is the project manager for marketing at TUNE, a Seattle mobile marketing company. She was previously a project manager at Cole & Weber.

Katharine Raynor Howard is now a marketing manager for Eweing and Clark, a Seattle real estate firm.

Shawn Query is human subjects review coordinator at the University of Washington.

Mark Reimers is marketing manager with Bonaventure Senior Living in Bellingham.

Devin Smart is a Ph.D. student in history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This year he has a Widener teaching appointment and is teaching U.S. history.

Bradley Thayer earned his Juris Doctor degree from Willamette University College of Law in 2015 and is now a law clerk with Schauer Mann Thayer Jacobs Staples & Edwards in Vancouver, Washington.

Jared Yoakum is marketing manager of Yakima Valley Tourism.

2006:

Lesle Adams works in technical recruiting for Google in Los Angeles, hiring software engineers.

Michelle Acosta Rodriguez is an account executive with WE Communications in Bellevue.

Kenna Hodgson Smith is account manager at Lasting Impressions, an events services firm in Seattle.

2005:

Kellyn Ballard is lead video game editor at The Pokémon Company International and author of Pokémon HeartGold and SoulSilver The Official Pokémon Kanto Guide National Pokédex: Official Strategy Guide.

Jeanna Barrett is head of inbound and content marketing at Kabbage, which provides business financing, in San Francisco.

Gerald Craft is now the consumer marketing director at McNett Corporation in Bellingham. He previously was brand marketing director.

2004:

Ian Alexander is senior analysis manager for merchandising and supply chain at Nordstrom in Seattle. He was promoted after having two other positions at Nordstrom in the past two years.

Benjamin Arnold is an agent with Larry Haley Insurance Services in La Mesa, California.

Shauna Bakkensen is an account manager with Level 3 Communications, a global communications consulting firm.

Christine Cameron is a fashion stylist and founder of My Style Pill, based in New York City.

Josh Dumond is now senior manager for e-commerce with AT&T in Bothell.

Brianne Pruitt is a senior content

strategist at WE Communications in Bellevue.

Carly Wyatt is technical assistant to the vice president and general manager of the communications and devices group at Intel in Portland, Oregon.

2003:

Michael Baab is an adviser to the Human Rights and Business Country Guide, working with the Danish Institute for Human Rights, and is based in Germany.

Valerie Bauman is a staff writer for Newsday, covering local government and schools for the town of Huntington.

Candance Nelson recently obtained certificates in intellectual property law and in digital publishing from New York University and is now working as a copywriter for T-Mobile in Bellevue, Washington.

Ivory Ore is a senior recruiter for Romac Industries, a manufacturing firm in Bothell.

2002:

Taber Sreur is the founder and marketing director of Tosten Marketing in Redmond, Washington.

2001:

Kelly Cudworth, president of NuLeaf Office Solutions, Seattle, was recently named one of Puget Sound Business Journal's 40 under 40. The program spotlights the top business leaders under the age of 40 who excel in their industry and show dynamic leadership.

2000:

Bob Beeman is communications manager for Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles, Washington.

Laura Bode is a stay at home mom and a freelance writer for The Costco Connection magazine, based in Redmond, Washington.

Erica Oakley-Courage is now the development director of Palmer Land Trust in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Tiffany White is senior account marketing manager at Amazon.

1999:

Mark Heberden has written a new novel, "The Big Tide," which was expected to be published at the end of 2015. His historical novel "14 Days in July" and fiction novel "Outside Man" are available on Amazon. He makes his home in Paris and is also working on a screenplay.

Amy Christiansen Morgan is a digital news editor for NPR. She now lives in Silver Springs, Maryland, with husband Dave, daughter Ellinor and son Edward, who was born this February.

Kari Benny Sherrodd is a Microsoft Education public relations lead at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. She moved to that position from the Microsoft YouthSpark team in June 2015.

1996:

Mara Applebaum is in private practice as a psychotherapist in Seattle.

1995:

Greg Garrity is now the senior associate relations specialist for Ross Stores, based in Seattle. He provides human resource support for more than 450 locations in eight states.

Ruby Quemuel is the acting internal communications manager at the New Zealand Fire Service in Wellington and Wairarapa, New Zealand.

1993:

Colin Wilcox is a writer and editor with Entirenet, which does a number of projects for Microsoft.

1992:

Scott Ayers is senior communications specialist with the Lower Colorado River Authority, based in Austin, Texas.

Darryl Carr is senior director of corporate communications at Krispy Kreme, based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He was previously the director of corporate communications and public relations at Papa John's International.

Alexandra Henning is a marketing associate with Greystar Real Estate Partners in Lynnwood, Washington.

1991:

Peter Ide is president of Captain Pete's Charters on the Chesapeake Bay. He is also a mortgage loan officer.

1990:

Vicki Alonzo is director of public information and grants at Auburn School District in Auburn, Washington.

1989:

Alycien Cockbain is a staff analyst at Boeing, based in Bothell. She also manages advertising and communications for the Wedgwood Broiler in Seattle.

Eric Evarts writes monthly auto reviews, regular blogs and features about cars and automotive technology as senior associate autos editor at Consumer Reports Magazine in New York City. He also covers alternative fuels and ways to improve fuel economy.

1988:

Brian Bean is a homeowner advocate, marketing professional and probate real estate specialist who is part of the Dream Big Real Estate Team at Realty ONE Group in Los Angeles.

1986:

Elisa Claassen is a freelance writer whose work has appeared in Northwest Business Monthly Magazine, Bellingham Alive, The Bellingham Herald and elsewhere.

1982:

Abby Haight is a writing coach and editor at Mercy Corps in Portland, Oregon. She had a long career at The

Oregonian, and then reported for the Associated Press and freelanced for several organizations. Today she works with interns who write for the Mercy Corps blog, Global Envision, helping them develop their voice and style.

1979:

Bruce Hyland is president of Higher Ground Communications, a public relations and communications firm in Rochester, New York.

Jessie Milligan is an editor for the TCU Magazine at Texas Christian University. She is pursuing her master's degree in library and information science at the University of North Texas, Denton, and she lives in Fort Worth.

1978:

Sherry Wickwire is in wealth management marketing, investment and fiduciary services at Wells Fargo Bank in San Francisco.

1971:

Paul Madison retired after 48 years as director of sports information at Western Washington University. He received numerous awards during his time on campus, including the 2015 WWU Lynda Goodrich Legacy Award and the WWU President's Exceptional Effort Award in 2010. He was inducted into the College Sports Information Directors Hall of Fame in 2011. He remains affiliated with Western's athletics department as its historian.

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Every year, alumni, corporations and friends of the journalism department contribute to the journalism alumni fund, the Gerson Miller Memorial Scholarship, Pete Steffens Native American Scholarship and the Shearlean Duke Memorial Scholarship. Alumni may also contribute to the Frank Varga scholarship fund, which is in the endowment process. If you wish to support a particular student publication, each can accept gifts individually. The alumni fund pays for subscriptions in the journalism library and goes toward scholarships and other special student needs such as the Scholars Week reception.

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keep in touch

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 Karen Smith via email to karen.smith@wwu.edu; via fax to (360) 650-2848, or to 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.wwu.edu/journalism.

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