

Message from the Chair

Water. Where would we be without it? If the Great California Drought continues unabated, we will soon find out, and it doesn't bode well for us. The Communication discipline generally, our department, specifically, and our students as an exclamation point, could be instrumental in steering the water conversation toward more social justice ends. What does Communication have to do with the drought? Allow me to elaborate.

As water increasingly becomes a more precious and rare commodity, experts predict it will become just that: commoditized to the point of being a luxury that only a few can afford. Yet, water is vital for everyone's well-being. How can we use the diverse approaches to understanding human communication that our discipline affords to address the scarcity of water situation in a socially-just way? What can be learned through Intercultural and International Communication from other parts of the world that struggle with water scarcity as much or more as we do in California? And what can we learn together using lessons from courses such as Political Communication, Organizational Communication, or Power, Discourse, and Social Identity about a situation that, if left unaddressed, could benefit a few but harm most? Is guaranteed access to potable water a right or a privilege? How do media discuss the matter? What rhetorical strategies are employed by public utilities officials to encourage people to conserve water? How do the interests of disparate groups such as farmers, urban and suburban residents, resort and car wash owners get represented or silenced in the political arena? Although water is commonly viewed as a public utility in the U.S., it is far from being considered a human right. Should it be? And if so, how can it be protected? What communicative actions could be conducive to establishing water as a fundamental human right?

I invite readers to return to our discipline's many conceptual and theoretical frameworks, our department's commitment to social justice, and to the CommSociety's slogan to "change the world with our words" in taking a leadership role in addressing water scarcity issues.

Keep Calm and Conserve Water.

~ Liliana Castañeda de Rossmann, Ph.D.

COMMUniqué

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First Person: Class Paper, Mentoring Results in Top Paper Award at WSCA

By Maria Valencia

When I first enrolled in Prof. Vincent Pham's Communication 402 class on Approaches to Rhetorical Criticism with no clue on what to expect from the content of the class last spring, the idea that I would go on to earn Top Paper Award in the Western States Communication Annual Conference (WSCA) never crossed my mind. As part of the class, the final project consisted of a research paper, the sections of which had been worked on individually, culminating in their cohesive incorporation of a final paper to be turned in. In my case, I chose President Obama's 2012 initial remarks on the Aurora shooting as the piece of discourse I would analyze as well as generic criticism, specifically the national eulogy genre, as the analytical lens I would use for my research paper. This was what led to the creation of my paper, titled "Generic Criticism of the 2012 Presidential Remarks on the Aurora Shooting."



Maria Valencia and Prof. Pham

Over the course of the fall semester, and under the guidance of my mentor, Prof. Pham, I further developed my final class research paper into an in-depth analysis of the national eulogy and what this analysis meant for the conceptualization of not only the national eulogy genre itself but for generic criticism overall. With encouragement from my family and Prof. Pham, despite being nervous since this was the first time I ever submitted my work to a conference, I decided to take a chance and submit my work to the WSCA Undergraduate Scholars Research Conference Call for Papers. About a month after my submission, I received notification that my paper had been accepted as one of 36 to be presented on February 21, 2015 in Spokane, Washington. It was such a surprise to have my paper be chosen and I was extremely excited to have the opportunity to participate in this prestigious conference.

Attending and presenting at this conference was an amazing experience. As I prepared for my presentation, I was nervous because I did not have any experience presenting in such a setting; however, I was also excited to share with other Communication scholars my work, to which I had dedicated so much time. Listening to the feedback provided by Communication students, professors, and other scholars helped me learn about my writing and improve on areas of weaknesses. This is something beneficial for me as a student and overall writer. In addition to the educational experience that came with being a presenter, it was also very interesting to be part of the audience in this conference because I got to hear about a diverse range of topics that other students presented and think about them in new ways I had never considered. That is perhaps the beauty of a conference like this; knowing you are presenting an idea to someone who had never considered in exactly the same way as you. For me, it was presenting to other students and scholars a new way of looking at Obama's 2012 initial remarks on the Aurora shooting and the national eulogy.

Specifically, my research paper focused on this speech and looked at it through the lens of the genre of the national eulogy as a way to show how it both succeeded in creating a national narrative that helped the nation moved forth but failed at creating a national dialogue about gun control, as seen in the impasse of national gun-control legislation. Underlying this argument, I also wanted to highlight the notion that simply having a discourse be a good example of a certain genre—in this case the national eulogy—does not mean that said discourse has automatic real world change. Therefore, my application of the national eulogy to this discourse asks to consider the flexibility of genre, particularly the genre of the national eulogy.

Given that the caliber of all the students' papers was excellent, I am honored to have earned the Top Paper Award in the conference. I am extremely proud of this accomplishment and of representing CSUSM and the Communication Department with this award. I am thankful to Prof. Pham for taking the time to encourage me to apply and to help me in the writing process, as well as to the CSUSM Office of Graduate Studies and Research and the Department of Communication for providing funding for my trip. My participation in this conference helped shape my future goals by further motivating me to attend graduate school. After graduating this spring, I am interested in working in Public Relations and attending graduate school to obtain a master's degree in a Communication field.

Inside this issue:

Undergraduate Research	2
Alumni Profile	2
Spoken Word Artist	3
Alumni Profile	3
Communication Association Election	4
Study on Racist Violations	4
Student Experiences	5
Advice From Students	6

Undergraduate Research Tradition Continues, Earns Top Paper Award

By, Tiffaney Boyd

Nervous and excited: That is what students feel the first time they present their research at an academic conference. Last February, four students in the department of Communication traveled to Spokane, WA and participated in the Western States Communication Association (WSCA) Undergraduate Research Conference, continuing a long-standing tradition of faculty mentoring student research. Once they got past their nervousness, all four of the students had a positive experience. They soon found themselves confident and comfortable, knowing that they had the opportunity to share their work that they dedicated so much time to with like-minded and passionate Communication scholars. They also were able to hear about a diverse range of topics that other students presented and think about them in new ways they never considered prior.

The four students include:

Janet Brotherton – “Textual Carpentry: How Framing of Female Candidates Constructed Narrative and Reinforced the Political Glass Ceiling in the 2008 Campaign”

Faculty Advisor: Michelle Holling.

Kelli Flodman – “Protesting for Change: Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s Plea to Russia through the Feminist Perspective.”

Faculty Advisor: Michelle Holling.

Nicholas Lacy – “Coming of Age in After School Programs”

Faculty Advisor: Kendra Rivera

Maria Valencia Torres – “Generic Criticism of the 2012 Presidential Remarks on the Aurora Shooting.”

Faculty Advisor: Vincent Pham.

To offset the costs, the CSUSM Office of Graduate Studies and Research and the Department of Communication contribute a portion of the student travel. Congratulations to all!



(Left to right) Professor Michelle Holling, Nick Lacy, Kelli Flodman, Janet Brotherton, Maria Torres, Professor Vincent Pham

Be Like a Sponge, Advises Alumnus Marlino Bitanga

By, Jodi Zalanka



“Always think outside the box, in any situation!”

- Marlino Bitanga

When asked what advice he would give to current Communication and Mass Media students, alumnus Marlino Bitanga (2002) recommends to “be a sponge, and never give up!” He adds that “learning everything you can and getting the most experience possible will help you reach the career you are destined for.”

As a Communication major, Bitanga was very involved during his time here at CSUSM. He was a member in the Asian Pacific Islander Student Society and was so passionate about it that he became an advisor of the organization after he graduated. Bitanga was fortunate enough to do what every graduate plans to do after commencement: travel. He took a lengthy

trip to Hawaii to enjoy some time being a “tourist” and relax a bit before he got on his job search.

After returning from his trip, he decided to start freelancing as a Marketing and Creative consultant. His goal was to help small companies and non-profits develop marketing strategies for their business and revamp their brand identity. To find his niche in the business side of things, Bitanga attended some business classes at the local junior college to help guide him. Bitanga currently has a stable career as a full-time Marketing Specialist for a financial company. He still enjoys providing his branding consultant services for businesses and non-profits on the side.

When asked what he learned here at CSUSM and how we have applied it to his life, Bitanga says that being taught how to collaboratively work as a team has been very helpful in his career path. “Working in groups with other students really prepared me to work with my clients and employers that thrive on collaborative environments.” Overall, Bitanga says that all his courses taken at CSUSM taught him to always think outside the box in any situation. Critical thinking skills are crucial in his line of work now and there are times where he needs to put those communication theories to practice. Sponges, take note!

Communication Students Come Together for Spoken Word Artist

By, Tiffany Boyd

With heightened anticipation the crowd gathered to hear the San Diego-based spoken word poet, Rudy Francisco. Francisco immediately put the audience at ease by encouraging the crowd to interact with the poetry by shouting out phrases during poems such as: "Uh-Huh!" "Amen!" and even "Jesus take the wheel!"

Francisco was down to earth, relatable and spoke about the real pains and joys of being a Black man, of love and loving somebody, and about the parts of San Diego that don't appear on postcards. According to Elexus Harris, a senior Communication major and ASI representative who coordinated the event, said mentioned that, what was most enjoyable about Francisco's performance was the opportunity to hear a story of a man who risked it all to follow his dreams. "His poems were phenomenal"

she noted. "I was inspired by a man who with the support of his friends and family, had the courage to believe in himself and pursue his dreams of becoming a world renowned spoken word poet." Similarly, communication student Nick Lacy commented, "What I took away the most from it was lis-

tening to his [Rudy Francisco] journey of how he got to the place he is now."

After his final poem, Francisco answered eclectic questions from students in the audience, which ranged anywhere from, "Will you follow me be back on Instagram? Follow-for a -follow?", to "How long did it take you to feel comfortable to love again and to allow yourself to feel vulnerable after your ex-girlfriend broke your heart", to which Francisco responded, "with all things it just takes time. Heart break is bound to happen. Just give it time"

After the Q&A, a long line emerged to meet and take pictures with Francisco. Francisco provided a truly superb evening of spoken-word poetry featuring excellent wordplay, humor, connections to real-world experiences, and with plenty of heartfelt moments.



Poet Rudy Francisco with Prof. Rivera and Communication students

Living Outside Your Comfort Zone: Students Share Their Experiences

By, Swara Chandran

Anyone walking through campus can hear a variety of languages other than English spoken. At the Founder's Plaza, in the University Student Union (USU), in the Kellogg Library (although no one is supposed to speak there!) and even in the parking lots, from passing greetings, to intense discussions, English is but one of the many languages that students use to communicate. This linguistic diversity points to the fact that there are a large number of international students at CSUSM. Two of these students have been willing to share their experiences about living in the United States and abroad. This opportunity of living abroad allows "native" students (those who started here as freshmen) and transfer students alike to explore in the city or country that they have always dreamed about for a semester through the study-abroad programs available at the Office of Study Global Education <http://www.csusm.edu/global/index.html>.

Swara Chandran

Who knew that one of the most appealing aspects of CSUSM would be its proximity to Hollywood? For Swara Chandran, that was the deal-breaker. Traveling to a foreign land was a dream come true for Swara. America is known as the land of opportunity. This journey can

only make Swara stretch her boundaries into spacious margins.

Swara is an International Student from Singapore; Indian by nationality, she came to study at CSUSM to gain a four-year college degree in Mass Media. CSUSM, was one among a few universities to which she had applied in the United States. She chose CSUSM because of its geographical location and climate. However, the most alluring earmark was the Mass Media program offered at CSUSM.

CSUSM provided the ideal location for career opportunities in her field of studies. Some of her interests in career fields were Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing. She mentioned "My experiences in college has been tremendously exciting, challenging and eye-opening. Living in San Marcos has made me much more independent and autodidact, making me more aware on the American History and Cultural values."

Living 8,610 miles away from home is not painless, but Swara has definitely learnt to survive amongst the dissimilar province. "The

comfort of family and sense of familiarity was always lacked, living away from home," Swara said.

For Swara, things are much different in America, compared to Singapore. Adapting to the food portions, which are double the size in America. Swara is dearly attached to Indian cuisines, but these never seem to meet the lavishness in taste as it does back in Singapore. However, she claims, nothing beats the authenticity of her mother's kitchen.

Swara faces a serious drawback in San Marcos: the public transportation systems. Public transit is the most common and recommended means of transportation in Singapore. In California, a car is an essential resource because the public transportation does not get to her to every nook and corner.

Swara Chandran has made San Marcos and CSUSM her second home. She hopes to embark on future journeys around the United States and other parts of the world that she has yet to discover. Swara is extremely grateful for having this unique, enriching opportunity.



Swara Chandran

Prof. Holling Elected First Vice President of Western States Communication Association (WSCA)

By Tiffany Boyd



Prof. Holling

One of the most exciting aspects of Prof. Michelle Holling's new position as First Vice President will be to plan the 2016 regional conference of the Western States Communication Association (WSCA), to be held in San Diego next February 26 through March 2. "WSCA is a not-for-profit educational association of scholars, teachers, and students of communication with over 1,000 members from around the globe" (from their website [http://](http://www.westcomm.org/)

www.westcomm.org/. WSCA hosts the annual Undergraduate Student Research Conference (USRC) at which some of our Communication students have presented, and also publishes the Western Journal of Communication. Holling was elected by the WSCA membership last fall and took office on February 24, 2015. During this one-year term, she will be responsible for conducting membership drives for the association as well as assisting the current President-Elect with

planning the next conference that will be hosted in San Diego, CA. Over the next few years, she will succeed to other positions including President-Elect in 2016-2017, President in 2017-2018, and Immediate Past President in 2018-2019. This is a very exciting opportunity for Prof. Holling, as she looks forward to involving COMM and/or MASS undergraduates in assisting during the 2016 USRC convention.

"Over the next few years, she will succeed to other positions including President-Elect in 2016-2017, President in 2016-2017 and Immediate Past President in 2018-2019"

Racist Violations & Apologies Contain Microaggressions, Study Shows

By Tiffany Boyd

In the so-called post-racial era, racist expressions, as well as the apologies that sometimes follow them, are rife with microaggressions, according to a new study by Communication Professors Michelle Holling and Dreama Moon. Together with Communication alumna Alexandra Jackson Nevis (2011), they authored the article "Racist Violations and Racializing Apologia in a Post-Racism Era" published in the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*. The article examines racist violations and racializing apologia from political figures and public icons, including performances and electronic statements disseminated via social media, published press releases, television interviews, and editorial articles.

Significant findings in the article revealed that although the racial violations themselves contained all types of microaggressions (specifically, microassaults, microinsults and microinvalidations), so did the apologies offered for these violations. This means that there was a "double whammy" or a double as-

sault in both offenses and apologies that damage the targets/listeners. Denying intent as well as blaming the offended person(s) for playing "the race card" are typical in these double assaults. Other offenders minimize their racist violations by

"Denying intent as well as blaming the offended person(s) for playing 'the race card' are typical in these double assaults"

framing their comments as "off-the-cuff" or "just a joke."

Racial violations are defined as "verbal and/or written statements that offend on the basis of race (whether intentional or not), thereby maintaining existing 'racial formations,' committing harm based on marginalized group identity, and violating (implicitly or explicitly) the norms of colorblind ideology" while racializing apologia are "public statements by individuals who are called

on their perceived racist comments and seek to redress and apologize." However, rather than redressing the insult, "violators continue to offend consequently, the apologia exacerbates the racialization process that surfaced in a violation." Another interesting finding is that about half of all racial violation contained a microassault, including the "N" word, used in seven or one third of the racist violations sampled, which is the most overt type of microaggression. In these cases, racist expression was not subtle and nuanced, as one would think in a "color-blind era" but on the contrary, quite direct and overt.

The article provides much needed insight into the notion of the post-racial era in light of recent events – both locally and across the country. To access the article,

visit <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17513057.2014.964144>

Congratulations to Drs. Holling and Moon, and Alexandra Jackson Nevis on their continued research and contributions to academia!

MAC Day 2015 Calendar

*Alumni Panel on Careers

Monday, April
14th 1-2 pm

*Sony Pictures Field Trip

Wednesday, April
15

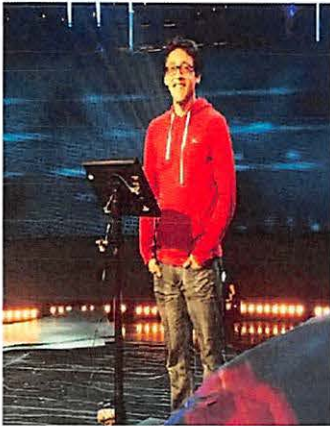
Student Research Panel

Thursday, April
30th

SBSB 1103
12-1pm

From Cougar Chronicle Sports Columnist to Hollywood Producer, Sandoval Does it All in Communication

By, Jodi Zalanka



Alumni Josh Sandoval

While being an 18 year-old student passionate about sports journalism, Josh Sandoval (Communication, 2007) was the one to create a sports column for "The Pride," as our student paper previously was known. When a reporter from the San Diego Tribune contacted Prof. Liliana Castañeda Rossmann to inquire about students who would be interested in working as a sports writer for the Tribune, she recommended Sandoval. As he was covering a story, he met with the reporter who became impressed with his work. This launched his career as a sports writer, news journalist and self-made television producer.

After graduation, he then became a writer for the Los Angeles Times by day and an inspired television producer and writer by

night. After six months of hard work, Sandoval was stunned by a job offer with ESPN. "I couldn't believe it, working for ESPN was a dream come true for me," says the sports fan. "And television had definitely become my creative medium of choice." Sandoval loved the experience he was getting at ESPN, however he knew that he would have to venture out on his own if he really wanted to make it to television. So, with only a few months at ESPN under his belt, he decided to take the next step in seeking contract work. While in-between jobs, he managed to maintain a presence on all social media posting videos he produced and articles he wrote.

It wasn't long before his efforts paid off and a former coworker offered him a job on a pilot for

NuvoTV called "Latino 101." The show was picked up for two seasons, during which Sandoval served as producer. His next project was a dating game show called "Baggage on the Road," featuring Jerry Springer. The show is currently airing on GSN. Just when it seemed it couldn't get much better, a couple of weeks ago he finished casting a show for NBC called "I Can Do That" which was just announced to start airing this summer. Along side that, he is producing a new comedy food game show pilot for CMT called "Eat it to Beat It."

He claims that if it weren't for CSUSM and the department's willingness to let students create their own opportunities, this chance never may have happened for him.

CSU Media Arts Directors Visit COMM Dept., Promotes Media Arts Festival

By, Swara Chandran

Any current Communication and Mass Media majors, as well as recent graduates, who are the director or/and producer of a media project are eligible to enter the CSU Media Arts Festival, says Ms. Shannon Pringle. As Director of the CSU Media Arts Festival, Pringle explained the criteria that students would need to meet in order to participate during her visit to the Communication department on Thursday, March 26. She met with faculty in the department to explore opportunities for CSUSM students to participate and faculty to collaborate with the CSU Media Arts programs.

Students who produce media while being enrolled at a CSU campus between Spring 2014 and Spring 2015, in conjunction with a film, communication, electronic media or other program are eligible to submit. Categories include Animation, Documentary, Experimental, Motion Design, Music Video, Narrative, New Media, Promotional, Feature Screenplay, Short Screenplay, News Television, Serial Television, and Variety Television. Distinguished CSU professors and industry leaders choose the student finalists and winners in the film, video, and interactive media competition, and all finalist works are screened during the Festival. Pringle observed

that Prof. Dreama Moon has participated as judge in the past, an experience she greatly enjoyed and recommends highly. Cash prizes and the prestigious Rosebud Award are awarded to the winning student entries. The 2014 Festival saw 170 student entries from which 30 finalists were chosen. Since the Festival's inception, more than 4000 students have submitted entries in this juried competition, according to Pringle. The 2015 Media Arts Festival will take place in the fall this year (Oct/Nov). The deadline for submitting entries is May 22, 2015.

CSU Summer Arts established the Media Arts Festival in 1991 to give talented students studying film, video, and new media within the 23-campus California State University system an opportunity to present their work for critical review. In 2000, the Media Arts Festival expanded its mission to include helping students of the CSU bridge the gap between student and working professional. In an effort to realize its expanded mission, the Festival now includes events geared to helping students of the CSU become better prepared to work in the entertainment and media industries.

In addition, Pringle explained the major role that CSU Summer Arts plays in expanding the



Prof. Rossmann (left) with Shannon Pringle

opportunities for talented film, video and interactive media students. By offering two- and four-week masterclasses for college credit dur-

ing the Summer Arts Festival in July, and by offering the Media Arts Festival in November, they help give a voice to the talented CSU students who study at the world's largest university, the California State University.

FMI, please visit: <http://www.MediaArtsFestival.org>

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Liliana Rossmann, Ph.D.
Editor and Publisher

Tiffany Boyd
Creative Director

Debbie Andrews
Distribution Manager

Jodi Zalanka
Managing Editor

Swara Chandran
Managing Editor

Editorial Inquires and
Letters to the Editor
rossmann@csusm.edu

Advice From Students

In preparation for the “going live” date of the Fall 2015 schedule, students chime in with their course choices. What communication classes are a must take or were really insightful/impactful to you OR what professors are awesome to take and why?

“I really enjoyed my Intercultural Communication COMM 330 class with Fredi Avalos. She is one of the most passionate professors I have ever had and I was challenged in every way possible in this class. I learned a lot and was able to apply the concepts to my own life.” –Jodi Zalanka

“A class I really enjoyed was Leadership & Social Change COMM 456. It was very eye opening because we had the opportuni-

ty to work with young kids and teach them communication skills. Fredi Avalos was an excellent professor and she taught us how to get involved in our community and help others!” –Kaylea Bradley

“I learned a lot last semester in Organizational Communication COMM 440 with Kendra Rivera. It was a great experience because this class taught me integrated communication skills for the real world. Rivera was a really cool teacher as well!” –Adam Eakles

“A class I really enjoyed here at CSUSM, was Dreama Moon’s Whiteness class COMM 454. I highly recommend everybody to take it if they have the opportunity. It opened up my eyes to many important issues going on in today’s generation. Also, Dreama made the class feel so comfortable and

safe, that it was like we became a family by the end of the semester! I learned so much about myself in this class and would say it was the best experience of my college career thus far.” –Damon Moore

“The most useful and helpful class I have taken is Dr. Katherine Brown’s Communication Portfolio COMM 445. Currently in this class, I am learning how to perfect my business writing skills, along with my oral presentation skills. Dr. Brown stresses the importance of building your professional voice in order to succeed after college. I truly feel that everything we are learning in this class is applicable to my life. This course should be a mandatory class for all graduating seniors, it is great!” –Emilie Germandt

CHABSS Dean's Office Welcomes Communication Alumni

By, Jodi Zalanka

There’s a new College-Wide Student Initiatives Coordinator at CSUSM in the College of Humanities, Arts, Behavioral and Social Science. His name is John Scheuerman! He will be working closely with Leo Melena and the Associate Dean for Instruction and Academic Programs to help expand the level of support for strategic student initiatives (like the Career Readiness Initiative, the Global Commitment Initiative, and the Engaging in Diverse Dialogues Initiative) and with services to undergraduate and graduate students in the College. Scheuerman happened to earn his Bachelor’s Degree in Communication from CSUSM (2014). We are very pleased that such a talented and successful alumnus has chosen to pursue a career working in our College. Welcome back and we are excited to see the great things you’ll do for our College!

Comm Students Making a Difference

By, Tiffany Boyd



Members of Lambda Pi Eta (Honor Communication Society) came together on March 17th to assemble Easter Baskets for Casa Kids at Casa de Amparo in their Child Development Center. They helped bring smiles on the children faces and contributed to the Easter Basket hunt that Casa de Amparo host annually.



Casa de Amparo is recognized as a major force in the field of child abuse

prevention. They partner with the San Diego community to assure children and families receive unique and innovative services for healing, stopping mistreatment of any kind, and for ending generational cycles of abuse.

To learn more about community service opportunities within Lambda Pi Eta please contact the student org at orgcomhonorso@gmail.com