



A Note from Dr. Jim Owens '79

Dean, School of Communication Arts

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As we look at this past semester, we celebrate the blessings and accomplishments of the School of Communication Arts.

- Media students and alumni were invited to participate in one of the pre-Oscar Awards events in February the day before the Oscars. (See more on next page.)
- More than 20 students were involved in research and design studies while working in the Asbury Production Design Studies Center located online and in the Miller Center. Chemistry students and faculty also did a yearlong study of the art material for archival purposes. Prof. Heather Hornbeak and I are overseeing student research and design. See some of our work at: asbury.edu/productiondesign.
- Seven media students and 12 alumni were hired to work on a drone race for ESPN.
- Highbridge Film Festival 2019 was a huge success. This year, Michael Swanson, Vice President of Production at NBC/Universal, served as a judge and our Chapel speaker. He is the highest-level judge or campus media guest we have ever hosted. Other judges included producer Dean Batali ("That 70's Show" and "Buffy the Vampire Slayer") and editor Nicole Baer ("SWAT," "Timeless" and "Supernatural"). All three of the judges are very outspoken Christians in Hollywood. Communication Prof. Todd Wold is the new director of the festival.
- Asbury Media Communication students impressed at this year's National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (Ohio Valley Chapter) Student Production Awards, being nominated for a record number of awards. Seven Asbury students were nominated in five categories.
- Eleven students travelled to the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, in January with Prof. Sean Gaffney. They participated in the Windrider Forum, a Sundance workshop partner that includes 12 Christian colleges and universities. During their time at the festival, they discussed the screened films with their directors from a Biblical worldview.
- We have hired a new film directing faculty member, Megan Weaver, who will begin teaching full-time in the fall.
- Worship Arts had three songs from the 2018 Worship Arts Album chosen by Spotify for a featured playlist of Christian worship songs.
- Dr. Jim Shores led a Theatre trip to Europe. Ten students will take classes, work as part of the theatre crew, and actually do a performance at the Globe Theatre in London, England. This group will then be performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland.
- Dr. Doug Walker took 10 Media students to New York City to visit media outlets including ESPN, ABC, NBC and others, meeting with a number of Christians in the media.

We celebrate many great opportunities in the School of Communication Arts.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Sarah Kuban

Sarah Seaton '05 Kuban is a graduate of the School of Communication Arts and former director of original programming at HGTV/DIY Network. Kuban learned to embrace new opportunities — no matter the type of work, whether it be sports management, television, film or journalism — during her time at Asbury. She sought every opportunity in communications available to her. In her career, Sarah has continued the practice of embracing new projects. As an influencer, she interacts with many significant leaders and decisions makers in primetime television shows. Her influence is her ministry as she encourages her audience to promote good values and to tell redemptive stories. New technologies that allow viewers to watch programming any time and any place are challenging, but she is excited to create a story so meaningful that viewers still desire to watch programming she creates over other entertainment options. She hopes to continue this investment in storytelling through new positions at Discovery Inc. and Magnolia, a multiplatform media company that will include a new television network as well as a 'TV Everywhere' app and more.



DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Students Attend Art Directors Oscars Panel

Thanks to a unique production design trip, Media Communication students were able to meet with several nominees for the 91st Annual Academy Awards. Jim Owens '79, alumni and students were specially invited to attend the Art Directors Guild Oscars Panel. Panelists included production designers and set decorators from all five films nominated in this year's Academy Awards' Production Design category. In addition to attending the workshop, Asbury students got a backstage tour of the Warner Brothers Studio. They also spent extended time speaking with several nominees one-on-one.

Engaging Culture Weekend 2019 Sparks Inspiration

Engaging Culture Weekend 2019 put a special emphasis on the spiritual aspects of the arts — focusing on how humans are wired to dream, create and inspire. In addition to a new comedy sketch — “Friday Night Live — the 15th Highbridge Film Festival gave students, faculty and community members an opportunity to celebrate the work of Asbury students. Highbridge featured 10 undergraduate and two graduate student films. The Audience Favorite was “Psalm 19 by Oleksandra Shuliahina '20 and “Date Debate” by David DeMena '19 won Best Picture.

For more information about the School of Communications, visit

asbury.edu/comarts

asbury.edu/gradcom

For upcoming events, visit:

asbury.edu/calendar

To update your contact information or to share a class note, please contact the Alumni Office:

alumni@asbury.edu



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:
Dr. Elizabeth Jones

Dr. Elizabeth Jones is assistant professor of Communication and Media Communication and serves as program coordinator for the Masters in Communication Arts. She received her B.A. in Communication from Grove City College and her M.A. in Digital Storytelling and Telecommunications from Ball State University. She has a deep passion for the intersection of faith and media. Jones is currently researching the effects of communication on people physically, emotionally and spiritually through a variety of channels. She is specifically exploring how older adults are portrayed in media and hopes to inspire content creators to portray all people, especially older adults, as whole persons. Her passion for portraying the whole person stems from her deep belief in the Imago Dei and the understanding that each person has an intrinsic value given to them by their creator. This belief affects the way she teaches her students, as well. She leads a trip them in experiential learning opportunities and technology field courses in Silicon Valley. The best part of teaching at Asbury for her is the opportunity to develop students for a career in media while incorporating faith into the classroom and developing them as followers of Christ. She leads undergraduate trips, partners with students in research and enlists the network of Asbury alumni around the world in the graduate courses she teaches. Jones believes the things students need most are prayer and mentors who can inspire them to choose joy, courage and faithfulness and to see light in a dark world.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: *David Stephenson '19*

A 2019 Asbury MFA graduate, Stephenson has been awarded a Telly Award Bronze in the category of Branded Content Non-Scripted Documentary for his “Pigeon Beat” web series pilot video. Stephenson, a professor in the

University of Kentucky School of Journalism and Media (College of Communication and Information), knew he wanted to further his teaching career, so he searched for a program that would help him without requiring him to leave his current position. He found Asbury, dove into the program and has just completed his Master of Fine Arts degree. The MFA degree was perfect for him. It was creative, flexible and allowed him to continue teaching at the University of Kentucky, putting him on track for tenure. Since beginning his MFA at Asbury, Stephenson has been able to take what he has learned and transfer it to his students at UK. He has even had students enter Asbury's MFA program after completing their undergraduate degrees at UK.