



Alumna Inspires Future Filmmakers

Rachel Vandernick

Messiah alumna (2007) Ernestia Fraser earned high honors this year at the Hollywood Black Film Festival. Her film, *Inside the Fallen Moon*, captured the Best Storytelling award in the festival. Fraser said that this screenplay “took some long hours and some lonely nights to get [it] completed. It was a joy to write and finish but at times the writing process was very rigorous and exhausting. So, in essence, winning this award was like seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.”

This screenplay began as Fraser’s master’s thesis at Chatham University, where she was also a graduate assistant. Since completing her degree, Fraser moved to the Bahamas where she currently teaches at Galilee College.

Gaining Christian perspective in a perceived secular industry proved more difficult than it seemed. “There was not a huge Christian presence in the communities I was a part of and furthermore, none of the industry professionals I interacted with gave me the slightest inkling that they even believed in God,” said Fraser. “However, Christian filmmakers and screenwriters are out there and they want to get involved in Hollywood, which, to many, is an artificial and self-absorbed industry. I believe that God is calling creative Christians like myself to have some influence in these places.”

Fraser also provided some insight on how she sees the world. “We can teach people how to be loving, caring, thoughtful and passionate, and this is bigger than a Christian agenda because there are good non-Christians out there who are more principled and more integral than some ‘church’ Christians,” she said. “However,



Ernestia Fraser '07

God is a God of wisdom and order and He will show, and is showing, the world that He is our Ultimate Reference for love and every good thing.”

Aspiring filmmakers take note. Fraser says that you must do more than dream. “We have to do and act on those dreams. So write a story, make a short film, start small, take risks, network, and the rest will come.”

Fraser’s final advice? “Don’t forget to polish your work and hone your craft. Revise, revise, revise. Don’t get hung up on your short comings or failures, your gender, your race, or your background. Believe that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you and those impossible miracles will happen. And when they do happen, continue to give God the praise. And lastly, love what you are doing and don’t forget to help people along the way.”

Editors:

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Be Heard

Ethics on both sides of the Facebook wall

Nick Hemming

In today's consumer culture, social media plays an overwhelming role in the formation of an organization's reputation. No company knows this better than ChapStick, who made the transition from a social media nonfactor to a marketing villain in late October. After releasing an advertisement that pictured the backside of a woman reaching over a coach, ChapStick encouraged its fans to speak up. The tagline beneath the photo read "Where do lost chapsticks go? Be heard at facebook.com/chapstick." With a campaign that encourages conversation, these consumers expected to be heard. Unfortunately, ChapStick never gave them the chance.




After blogging about the inappropriate nature of the ad, an angry fan attempted to post feedback on Facebook. ChapStick immediately deleted the message. Before long, other outraged fans begin posting comments on ChapStick's Facebook wall. Once again, the company removed the messages. ChapStick did not delete the photo, nor did it respond to its angry publics; instead, the company continued to ignore its angry fans, following a partial apology with a post that called the comments "spam."

ChapStick's failure to appropriately respond to its publics raises valuable questions for the public relations world: when faced with adversity, how should each of these parties respond? Is "smearing" a company's Facebook wall ethical? Can an organization truly be transparent if it removes content from its page? Social media has allowed this practice of viral "smearing" to become a common practice. But when educated consumers takes a step back and think about their response to these organizations, an adjustment just may prove beneficial.

The difference between social media and traditional feedback is undeniable. In today's technology age, addressing an organization takes little-to-no effort. This concept has driven consumers to casually vent in spaces where they can "be heard," causing organizations to cringe behind their commitment to openness, transparency, and authenticity. But is social media truly the appropriate place to express this frustration? Perhaps we have lost the art of writing letters and making phone calls, or perhaps we simply do not care enough to express our frustration in a formal manner. Sure, ChapStick's "spam" comment proved offensive and unprofessional, though the passive-aggressive approach the company's fans took to express their frustration seemed equally inappropriate. If consumers truly want change, they must take the time to reach the organization in a fully committed manner.

From the organization's perspective, true authenticity stems from a willingness to listen. ChapStick ran into trouble when it valued a spotless reputation over holding a conversation, causing one angry individual to launch a viral hate campaign. Had the company explained its intentions, apologized for offending the individual and attempted to move on, the issue may have found immediate resolve. It didn't. Instead, a disgruntled consumer made a mess of the somewhat-racy campaign, turning the once quiet company into a hotbed of negative discussion. ChapStick did eventually remove the photo (after it became unmanageable to keep its page clean), though the company must now rebuild its once modest reputation. The damage has been done.

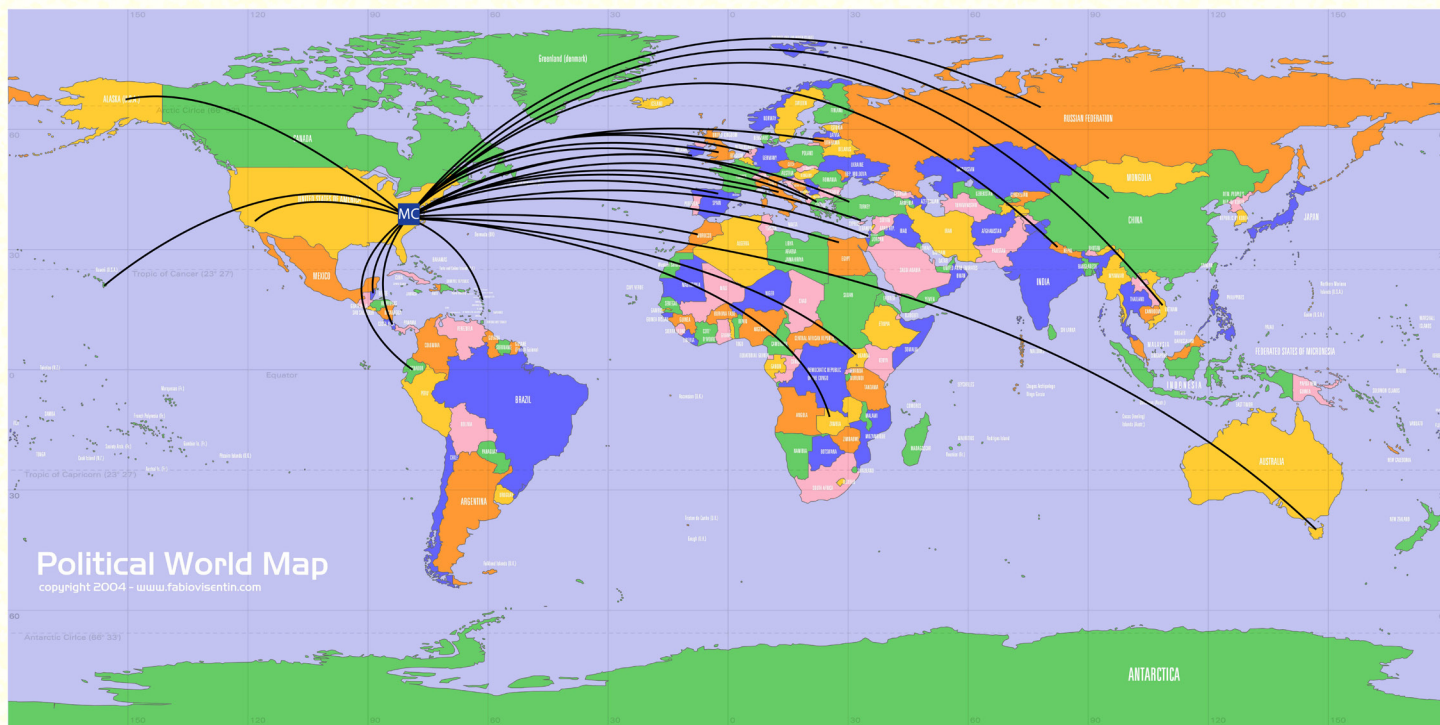
As consumers in this technology age, we must professionally respond to the issues we face. Though we will never know how ChapStick would have responded to a letter or a phone call, we do know that the company stumbled when addressing its social media audience; a campaign with the tagline "be heard" that restricts its publics from doing so seems wildly hypocritical. Still, we cannot bail out ChapStick's adversarial fan base. They, too, communicated a rigid message, one that may have been inflated and fully biased. Perhaps both of these parties would benefit from a renewed sense of professionalism. 

Semester Abroad Brings Growth

Nick Hemming

With travel locations in England, Belize, Uganda, New Zealand and 36 other countries, Messiah College's student body has developed an infatuation with studying abroad.

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Since 2009, Messiah College has sent 117 Communication Department students to 40 locations across the globe to study abroad.

But can a semester overseas truly benefit the study of communication? Three current students think so.

For Heather Nero '12, studying in Lithuania represents an essential piece of the college experience: "Going abroad exposes you to things that may be uncomfortable, controversial and that go against your personal beliefs and opinions," she states. "It is the exposure to those kinds of things that broadens your worldview and fosters understanding and relationships between people of different cultures."


In America, Nero says, we often become attached to our culture, developing a sound comfort with its familiarity. Stepping out of this comfort into an entirely new culture allows students to become "culturally competent communicators." This immediately became apparent to the senior public relations student, who discovered a newfound appreciation of language during her journey overseas: "Language is so much more than just a way of communicating — it is a part of our identity."

Jordan Seiz '13, who traveled to Athens, Greece, in the spring of 2011, experienced a similar period of growth. This time, the value of language reflected itself in the art of nonverbal communication. "There were times when I could not use words, which tends to be the easiest form of communication...so I had to figure out how send the message I wanted to send without speech," she notes. "I really learned the value of body language and nonverbal communication, which can be just as powerful as verbal language."

For Seiz, a junior communication major, conversation and connection are inevitable; the method creates the challenge. In her own international context, she discovered this truth, an understanding that will continually shape her approach to communication.

Emily Mohler '13, learned a nearly identical lesson when she traveled to Cheltenham, England, and throughout the continent of Europe. Although England and the United States share a written language, Mohler still needed to make an adjustment: "It was not the same language — they had a different way of expressing and describing. In order for our stories to hold the same meaning, I had to learn to adapt my communication."

Mohler's experience — perhaps the most diverse due to her broad range of travel — reflects the difficulties of communicating with new cultures. As she watched Greek, Italian and British citizens tell their personal stories, she began to align her communication with the communication around her. "En route and around Europe, I experienced different languages," she continues, "and was intrigued by the varying use of verbal and nonverbal communication."


For these three communication students, a semester in a foreign country helped developed significant growth and a newfound sense of what it means to communicate with a different culture. Through the transition, they discovered the value of language — a truth readily available for those who step overseas. 

Dr. Arke Goes FAR

Nick Hemming

For Associate Professor of Communication Dr. Ed Arke, a recent trip to Petco Park in San Diego, Calif., presented a valuable opportunity to serve the Messiah community. As the college's faculty athletic representative (FAR), Dr. Arke seeks to help student-athletes develop a balance between athletics and academics. In essence, he bridges the gap between the athletic department and the faculty on campus.

The journey to California — and the home of the San Diego Padres — stemmed from the NCAA FAR's national conference, a meeting that included representatives from colleges and universities across the country. But for Dr. Arke, the role revolves around a much greater factor; above all, he enjoys "seeing firsthand the outstanding scholars at Messiah who are also involved in intercollegiate athletics and having the opportunity to help call attention to their accomplishments." With a number of high-achieving student athletes in mind, Dr. Arke continues to reinforce the importance of education, even amidst athletic success.

Although his role is NCAA-mandated, the inspired professor finds motivation in his ability to represent Messiah College to a wider audience. Showcasing the institution's strong reputation in both academics and athletics, Dr. Arke has effectively linked two of Messiah's greatest commodities. 



Associate Professor of Communication Dr. Ed Arke pictured here in the San Diego Padres press box

Campaign Helps Forgotten Voices

Rachel Vandernick

Every fall, a handful of senior communication students take a class called Public Relations Campaign (PR Campaign). From inception to completion, they plan and


orchestrate a project for a non-profit organization. This year's project partner, Forgotten Voices International (FVI) founded by Messiah alum Ryan Keith, is a non-profit organization committed to meeting the physical and spiritual needs of children orphaned by AIDS in southern Africa, says senior Hannah Starr. Charged with creating a "tool kit" for the organization, the PR Campaign class soon put all of their skills to work.



Faculty advisor Dr. Nance McCown says, "No other public relations class at Messiah offers this kind of 'in the field research' that provides the foundation for the entire campaign. Our work has a direct impact on whether or not children in Africa are going to live or die. We try to remind ourselves of that every week as we complete our work."

Unlike other classes where conceptual application and group work may be limited, in PR Campaign, students see the direct connection between teamwork and results. "The most important thing is teamwork. You can talk about it all you want but when you have to do it, it's a different game. Creating deadlines and not having them imposed on you takes a different kind of teamwork," says senior Brian Clapp.

Senior Lauren Seneca adds, "It's like full time small group work. It's a group of students with the same passion and drive to help the organization...it's a long term process. It's nice to see results other than just a grade."

While the project nears completion, the class doesn't lack the motivation to finish. Well aware of the effect their effort will have, they continue to work diligently toward their end goal of helping orphaned children. 



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Get connected with Messiah College Department of Communication online. See what's new with social media practices, student projects, internship opportunities and much more!

PRSSA Hosts Sweet Success

Rachel Vandernick

The Kupcakes for Kris 2nd Annual Benefit Koffeehouse achieved sweet success. Headed by the Messiah College Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), the Koffeehouse raised over \$1,000 for families of terminally ill cancer patients. Featured in this year's musical line up were Messiah students Hana Grosh, Alex Brubaker, Drew Frey and Josh Kerr (Story of my Life). Regional artists Darry Miller and the Veil as well as nationally touring band Calling out Closer also performed.


As the night grew sweeter, shuttles ran, kupcakes disappeared and music played. After three hours of snacks, friends and fun the event wound down as months of planning came to a close. PRSSA extends a big "thank you" to everyone who supported the event. 



Photo Credit: The Pulse

Senior Shoots with Integrity


Rachel Vandernick

Senior Leigh McCauley describes her photography as a "hobby that exploded." It's an accurate description for the student who began taking photographs of family and friends. A chance barter with a blogger friend launched

McCauley's current project with publishing company Thomas Nelson. They've commissioned McCauley to shoot the cover photographs for three of their books, as well as many of the interior photos.

This self-taught photographer has not always had pleasant experiences with others in the industry. "I was once called a faux-tographer. It's so cut-throat and some people are very discouraging and they try to hold you down, but you just have to go for it and have integrity," said McCauley. "I don't see the point. If I'm nasty, God won't honor that."

McCauley says that she has learned a lot and that these experiences have only served to make her better. As for continuing her photography post-graduation, McCauley hasn't quite decided that. "I'm taking it as whatever God brings me." She did note that she finds communication job descriptions hysterical. "We're qualified to do everything. As far as I'm concerned [photography] is just another tool in my tool box as a COMM major." Currently McCauley sees herself continuing to develop her marketing and promotion skills.

As for advice, McCauley encourages others to seek mentors. "Ask for help over and over." 

Internship Opportunities

Hershey Entertainment and Resorts

Location: Hershey, Pa.

Majors: Public Relations

Description: Must be able to attend one of two Company Site Visits that will be held in January-February 2012. Interns will learn to navigate the many standards in the hospitality industry. Must meet appearance standards and be able to maintain hospitality standards for the assigned property. Ability to maintain composure in a fast paced environment. Deadline for submission is 12/23/2011.

Contact: Submit application to www.HersheyJobs.com

The Wall Street Journal

Location: New York City/Other

Majors: Broadcasting, Journalism, Film

Description:

VIDEO INTERNS: Work as part of our video team shooting and editing video that complements and supplements print stories.

WSJ.COM INTERNS: Work exclusively online; packaging and editing stories, video and graphics for our website.

Contact: Deborah Brewster, Deputy Managing Editor, The Wall Street Journal Internship Program (U.S.), 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. Emails not accepted.

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You can receive more information on the following internships through the Internship Center in the Eisenhower Commons, or by contacting Mike True at mtrue@messiah.edu. Stop by or email if any of these sound like you!

Bravo Group

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Develop press releases, media alerts, fact sheets and backgrounders on clients; contact media; develop research; assist with events and meetings; and assist with general office work.

Delta Development Group, Inc.

Location: Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Description: Review client and project files and prepare summaries of these engagements.

Forgotten Voices International

Location: Dillsburg, Pa.

Description: Launch student advocate groups on college campuses; learn and implement training for high school/college students in public narrative; write stories based on information received from African projects; and research and develop resources related to microeconomic development in southern Africa.

Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Event planning assistance with all aspects of upcoming events; assist Events Marketing Manager and AVP of Communications & Marketing with development and dissemination of event marketing collateral material; assist in development of committee meeting agendas and minutes; communicate with Chamber members with event details, assignments, etc.

Jump Street

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Assist with outreach programming, including: Gift of Music (collect and distribute of instruments); maintain contacts with schools and donors; assist with community art shows and liaison with artists and companies; assist with program marketing (create flyers, newsletters, postcards, etc.).

Keystone Human Services

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Help with press releases, marketing, events, database work, mailings and possibly help with grant writing.

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Prepare and organize materials for Candidate

Training, Kickoff Celebration, Mid-Point Breakfast and Grand Finale Celebration; coordinate and assist with the set-up various events; assist with video presentation at Candidate Training.

PA Family Institute

Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Assist in production of weekly radio shows, video projects and media press releases; write and report for publications such as The Pennsylvania Citizen and Pennsylvania Families & Schools magazine.

Rite Aid Corporation

Location: Camp Hill, Pa.

Description: Assist with electronic editing; develop custom media lists; develop content for website; draft press releases; assist with programs/promotions and support fundraising efforts.

PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers

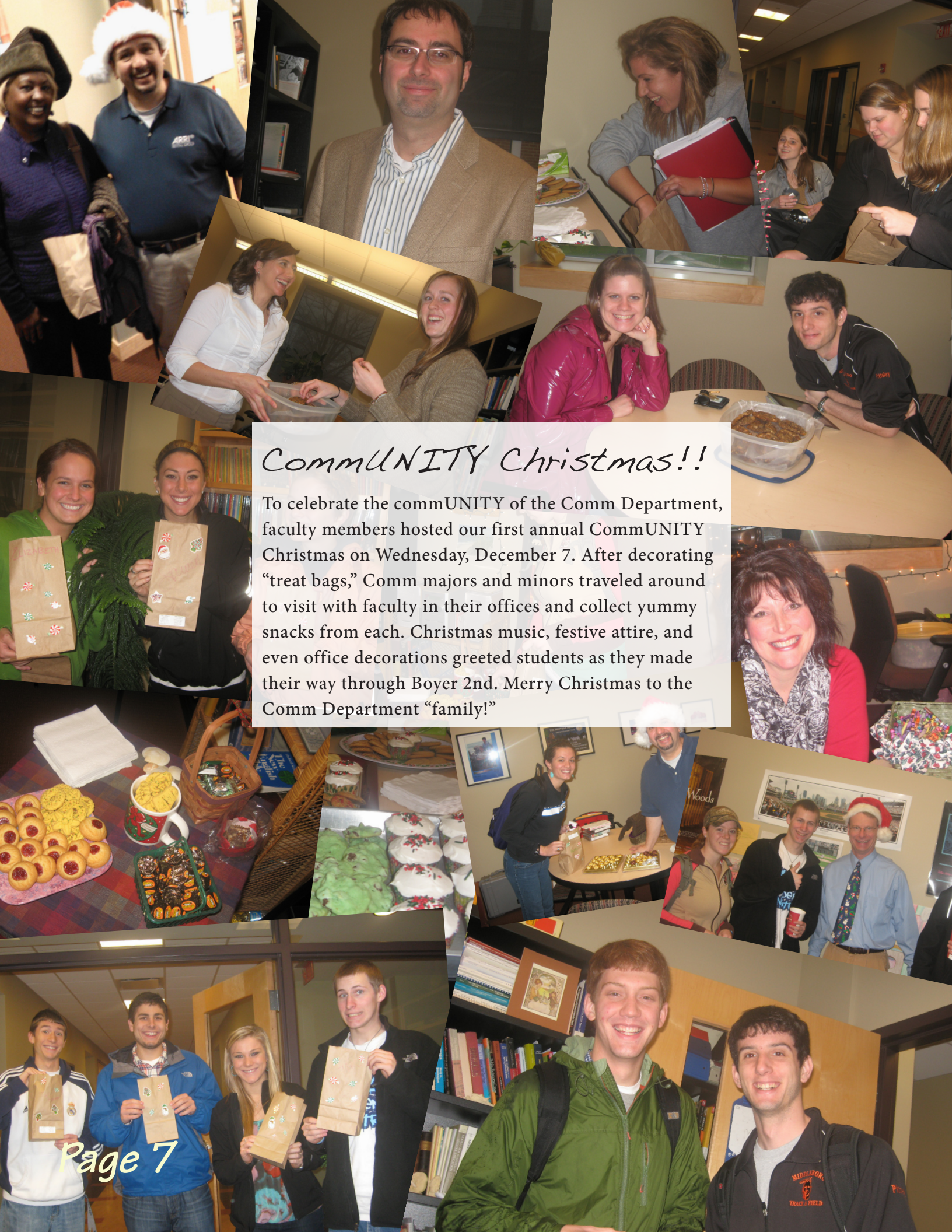
Location: Harrisburg, Pa.

Description: Review data; assist in arranging training sessions and in promotional activities; prepare and distribute manuals; draft phase and final grant reports; write and research articles for two publications; process memberships and insurance endorsements; update and maintain contacts database; maintain calendar of events and attend promotional events.

Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA)

Location: Wormleysburg, Pa.

Description: Assist in the development of special feature articles and graphics for PMAA magazine; assist in development of conference program and materials.



CommUNITY Christmas!!

To celebrate the commUNITY of the Comm Department, faculty members hosted our first annual CommUNITY Christmas on Wednesday, December 7. After decorating "treat bags," Comm majors and minors traveled around to visit with faculty in their offices and collect yummy snacks from each. Christmas music, festive attire, and even office decorations greeted students as they made their way through Boyer 2nd. Merry Christmas to the Comm Department "family!"