



### This IS the Start of Something New

Katie Johnston

This fall, Department of Communication welcomes old “friends” back as new majors: public relations, film and media arts, and communication have replaced the former communication major and its three concentrations. Adding to the journalism, broadcasting, and digital media (digital video and story concentration) majors, this brings the Department’s total majors to six, and the total number of students to 131!

The film and media arts major enables students to develop as filmmakers and industry professionals by training them in theory, history, writing, and production skills. Learning from professors experienced in filmmaking, film theory, and new media, film students receive a well-rounded education in theory and production. Sophomore film and media arts major Mackenzie Alexander said, “The best thing about Messiah’s film department is its passion. Each of our film

professors are passionate and extremely knowledgeable about their area of film and it’s contagious to its students.” Through classes, students engage in hands-on projects that hone filmmaking, production, and editing skills.

Messiah’s public relations major prepares students for communication-related careers such as public relations practitioners, social media specialists, crisis managers, publications directors, event planners, or marketing/advertising directors. Senior public relations major Lindsey Campbell said, “The best part about public relations at Messiah College is knowing I am learning the most ethical form of public relations from passionate professors who have a great deal of experience and knowledge in the field.”

Through this major, students will learn ways to assist organizations in ethical, strategic, two-way communication, valuing perspectives from both company leaders and their publics, and emphasizing the importance of building relationships.

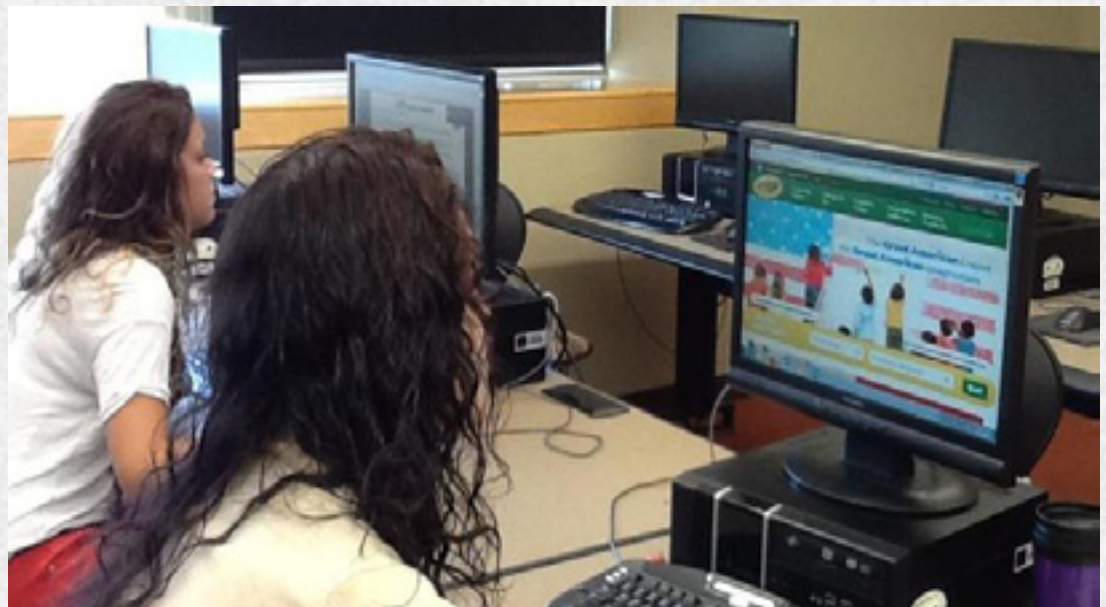
Building relationships holds importance in every area of communication. With the




Editors:  
Katie Johnston  
Jessica Kern  
Brittney Radford

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flexibility to take courses in their areas of interest, Messiah's communication majors will further their knowledge in the general field of communication, and learn to use theories successfully and ethically in a wide range of communication specialties. "I am so excited to be a communication major," said sophomore Hannah Teklits. "I feel like it will give me a wide variety of options after graduation. I'll be prepared for a number of jobs and I also feel like a communication degree lays a nice foundation for graduate school. Also, I absolutely love the faculty in the communication department."

Beyond the students' excitement over the reconfigured majors, practical outcomes also lent support to the change. "Messiah is one of only a few Christian colleges and universities to offer full-fledged public relations and film and media arts majors, but when these offerings were concentrations, they were 'buried' in terms of marketing," said Department Chair Dr. Nance McCown. "Now, when prospective students search online for these majors, Messiah comes up in that search. We're thrilled with the attention our newly reconfigured programs are already gaining, and are especially pleased with our current Department enrollment numbers. We look forward to continued growth in the coming years." 

## Event Planning: Lessons in Juggling and Details

Katie Johnston

From classy galas to summer picnics, elegant soirées to dinosaur birthday parties for 4-year-olds, every event has one thing in common: planning. In the world of event planning, juggling wide-ranging jobs and wearing six different hats is common. For nearly ten years students requested an event planning class at Messiah—and finally, the class has arrived.

Taught by Dr. Nance McCown, Event Planning (COMM 360) offers the perfect balance of principle and practice. While reading and studying textbooks holds value for learning methods and information, students test that information by "doing." This "real world" class allows them to get hands-on experience with actual and fictitious clients.

Students recently began planning "COMM Home," an alumni celebration for the Department of Communication (current Communication students also welcome!), as well as "Difficult Conversations Goes Political," an alternate chapel sponsored jointly by Associate Dean's team and the Department. Other class-planned events will include three COMMUNITY events designed to foster relationship-building in the Communication Department, two large-scale events for the Arc of Dauphin County organization, and one large-scale event for a fictitious client.



*Messiah's first-ever Event Planning class*

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Event Planning teaches students how to manage multiple jobs simultaneously, work well with others, pay careful attention to detail, and creatively brainstorm ideas for very different clients. With a professor experienced in the freelance public relations world comes a wealth of perspective and many connections to engage students in meaningful projects designed to prepare them for successful event-planning careers. Sophomore public relations major Brittney Radford says, “I am excited to take an event planning course because I feel like it is a very hands-on course. It is a class the can benefit anyone, because at one point, we will need to plan an event of some sort. It goes beyond lectures and allows us to have hands on experience by working with off-campus clients. Dr. Nance McCown has had first-hand experience on event planning, so she knows what she’s doing.”

Students from any major can apply skills learned in the Event Planning class. Senior theatre major Lauren Adkins says, “Although I am not a communication major, I can see this class playing into many areas of my life as a theatre concentrator. If I desire to share self-written work at some point, organize a cabaret, direct a production, etc., knowing how to effectively plan and host these sorts of events will be a great help to me.”

Beyond honing skills, students taking Event Planning also increase their marketing ability. “The event planning industry is experiencing tremendous growth right now,” says Dr. McCown. “In fact, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 44% job growth rate between now and 2018.” It seems Communication Department alumni had the right idea in requesting this course. 📍

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## Event Planning Beyond Messiah

Katie Johnston

College first-year and sophomore students often think they cannot get jobs in their intended field of study due to lack of experience. But sophomore public relations major Jessica Kern disproved such beliefs this past summer. Interning for Uninvest Bank, Jessica used her existing skills developed through her participation in events and advertising projects completed by Messiah College’s chapter of the Public Relations Students Society of America (PRSSA) and learning from guest professionals who spoke at PRSSA meetings.



*Sophomore Jessica Kern, left, interned with Uninvest Bank last summer.*

Jessica obtained this internship through the connections she formed interviewing Randy Buckwater at Harleysville Insurance for her first-year Communication Seminar (COMM 107) portfolio. Randy introduced Jessica to Kim Detwiler at Uninvest, who later hired Jessica as a summer intern.

During her time at Uninvest, Jessica assisted in planning many different events—everything from children’s events to promote Uninvest in the community to a formal country club meeting for Uninvest’s “big wigs.” She said, “I was given the opportunity to assist in the planning, implementation, and debriefing stages of a couple events. I also was given the chance to write several articles for the company’s quarterly newsletter.”

Uninvest sponsors local libraries around Red Hill, Pa. For one day each summer, Uninvest’s executives and other employees visit the libraries, read the children stories, and have Buck and Penny—Uninvest’s mascot baby Eagles—play with the kids. Jessica aided in planning this fun event, handling logistical details prior to the event, including ordering cookies, stuffing goodie bags, and making raffle baskets; she also took pictures and distributed goodie bags at the actual event. This event received media coverage with Channel 69 News, and promoted Uninvest while giving back to the community.

Jessica felt privileged to land this internship so early in her college career. She noted, “Through these experiences, I learned to hone my writing skills as well as my interpersonal and public relations skills.” 📍

# La Bella Italia!

Katie Johnston and Rachel Vandernick

After months of planning, preparing, and packing, 15 Messiah students embarked on an adventure through La Bella Italia, studying under COMM Department faculty Dr. Fabrizio Cilento (a native of Florence) and Dr. Ed Arke. Traveling through Florence, Venice, Rome, and the Tuscan countryside, students' palpable excitement filled the air as they experienced the rich Italian culture through tour guides (accents included), museum visits, film screenings about Italian society and culture from 1945-present, and interactions with the people.

While abroad, students gained an appreciation for Italian culture—its [food](#), [landscape](#), [art](#), and [lifestyle](#). Senior Cat Joseph said, “From famous statues to chalk paintings in the road, everywhere we went someone had made their mark for all to admire.”

By the end of their 18-day whirlwind, the students felt more comfortable with their Italian immersion, entering more deeply into the experience. “My favorite part of the trip was feeling like I was a part of Italian culture while I was there,” senior Clayton Emory noted, “by interacting with locals, and actually becoming friends with them.”

Because typical classroom study cannot replicate or replace local interactions, this cross-cultural gave students experiences unachievable elsewhere. “It’s a feeling you can’t get in any classroom, because you’re actually living there and going through each day with interactions different from back home, and with different people from a different culture,” Clayton continued.

Becca Franco, junior, added, “Something I couldn’t have learned anywhere else that I learned in Italy was that there is beauty absolutely EVERYWHERE—in the people and the places, especially.”

Through their exceptional experiences in Italy, students became a part of something bigger than themselves, as they learned what it means to take part in a global community. According to Dr. Cilento, “It was rewarding to see how students were appreciating and slowly embracing Italian culture. They really made an intellectual effort to be generous, even when the black and white films we watched were a little bit depressing or when museum visits were overly long. Plus, it was such an intense experience—I never got to know students so well in my life. When we see each other now around Boyer, there is a sense that we’ve gone through an experience that we will never forget.”

Like any trip abroad, the Italian cross-cultural was not without challenges. From over-eager mosquitoes, to late



*The breathtaking view of Florence visible by day became a twinkling, enchanting wonder by night.*

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*The famous canals of Venice offered waterway adventures for the cross-cultural team. Photo by Becca Franco*

buses for early-morning departures, to a pick-pocket situation (luckily students did not have documents with them, and everything turned out okay), trip participants had to handle the unexpected. “Students were always graceful and put things in context,” said Dr. Cilento. “I was very proud of them.”

One particular challenge arose even before the trip began. Villa Agape, the trip’s monastery accommodations, imposed a strict 11 p.m. curfew which raised more than a few inquiries and even a few complaints as the group was preparing for departure last spring. However, Dr. Cilento noted that during the trip, “the unexpected happened. No one was ever late. We came back at 11 and kept chatting, playing the guitar, calling relatives on Skype, and relaxing on the wonderful Villa Agape terrace. It really helped the group to bond together.”

Food, art, landscapes, lifestyle, and lasting friendships—all fantastic reasons to travel to Bella Italia! Wish you could have been there? Click on the links on Page 4 to visit via short films created by students in the class and posted to the Department’s Cinem-

ablography website ([www.cinemablography.org](http://www.cinemablography.org)). Want to see Italy up close and personal for yourself? The May 2013 trip, led by Professors Cilento and McCown, is currently full, but there is a waiting list. Email [fcilento@messiah.edu](mailto:fcilento@messiah.edu) for more information. 

*To view more pictures, go to the [Messiah College Department of Communication Facebook page!](#)*

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## Post-Grad Internship Takes Alum to the “Big Apple”

Jessica Kern

*Recently, we had the opportunity to catch up with 2012 Messiah graduate Caroline Hoffman who shared with us the details of her professional life post-graduation. After several volunteer hours and an extensive job search, Caroline landed an internship with Healthstar Public Relations, a pharmaceutical public relations firm located in New York City. While the “hustle and bustle” of the city life certainly differs from life in Grantham, Caroline quickly adjusted and now loves her job.*

Q: What led you to your current job that you obtained after graduation from Messiah?

A: “The daughter of my mom’s friend from church worked at a healthcare and pharmaceutical PR firm in NYC. I sent her a quick email introducing myself and asking if she would review my resume and or had any advice for a grad looking to work in the city. Instead, she asked if I would like to be considered for their internship program. After a phone interview and an afternoon of in-office interviews, I was offered the job.”

Q: What key skills have you taken away from this internship thus far?

A: “[Because of this internship], I now have hands-on experience in skills...like media monitoring, building media lists, pitching, coordinating interviews, media training spokespeople and more.”

Q: What specific tasks are you responsible for at this internship?

A: “One of the things I enjoy about this internship is the

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truly well-rounded experience I'm receiving. I spend the morning media monitoring and the afternoon varies. Some of the things I've worked on include planning a long lead breakfast event for editors introducing an unbranded men's health awareness campaign, working on a RMT, writing pitches and actually pitching traditional and social media, coordinating interviews, training spokespeople, drafting key messages, working on a viral video script, writing a matte release, media audits, brainstorming for a new business proposal, writing the copy for an infographic, researching and editing."

Q: What is it like working in the city? Do you enjoy it?

A: "Working in the city is surreal at times, fast-paced, overwhelming and exciting at other times and occasionally a little boring but I do love working in the city. The pace and intensity suit me well. I enjoy the anonymity of the city and the polar opposite warmth and friendship that comes from working in a small office."

Q: What are your plans moving forward? Do you hope to obtain a permanent position at Healthstar?

A: "When my internship was extended, I discussed with my supervisor my hopes to attend graduate school, which I thought threw a wrench in my hopes for employment, as I would theoretically be leaving in nine months. She said, 'We will do whatever we can to keep you for as long as we can.' I can think of few compliments better than that." 📄

*At presstime we just learned that Caroline has been offered a full time job with Healthstar. Congratulations, Caroline!*

# Difficult



## Conversations *goes political*

**Who:** Students,  
Educators, and Staff

**What:** Difficult  
Conversations Workshop

**Where:** Brubaker  
Auditorium

**When:** Tuesday,  
October 23, 8 p.m.

**Why:** Enhance your  
political communication  
while receiving alternate  
chapel credit!



## Department Welcomes (Back) Krista Imbesi

Katie Johnston

As we store summer memories in the recesses of our minds, changes in the Communication Department offer excitement as refreshing as the crisp fall air. In addition to three newly reconfigured majors (communication, film and media arts, and public relations), one new faculty member has joined the Department's team for a one-year lecturer position. Hailing from Buffalo, N.Y., Krista (Hamlen) Imbesi '09 is excited for the opportunity to teach Fundamentals of Oral Communication and two new classes, Persuasive Filmmaking and Global Indigenous Media.

After graduating from Messiah with a communication major/film and digital media concentration and a studio art minor, Professor Imbesi went to Los Angeles with the Temple internship program to complete several invaluable internships, giving her real-world experience for this position. She worked on the post-production of the documentary "A Small Act" by Jennifer Arnold, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival, and worked with documentary filmmaker Grace Lee on the pre-production of a documentary about a 90-year-old activist, Grace Lee Boggs. In summer 2008, Professor Imbesi went to Uganda to begin filming her thesis documentary, "Where We Belong," with two non-profit organizations, including an orphanage for children with special needs and an orphanage aiming to reunite orphans with their families. Krista will submit "Where We Belong" to film festivals this spring.

While in Uganda, Professor Imbesi experienced many adventures. "I bungee jumped into the Nile," she said, "and I actually mean into. I actually got to be immersed in the water of the Nile at the bottom of the jump!"

Professor Imbesi particularly enjoys teaching two classes in her area of expertise, Persuasive Filmmaking and Global Indigenous Media. In Persuasive Filmmaking, students learn the production skills and theory behind creating non-fiction films, modeled on her own experiences working on the documentaries. She created the Global Indigenous Media course based on her background with ethnographic film. In that class, students study the ethnographic film's progression, and discover how ethnographic films and aboriginal media portray the people's unique culture.



Professor Imbesi is thrilled to teach at Messiah. She noted, "Coming back to Messiah as a professor has been a surreal experience. It feels a little like coming home... While I was a student, I remember thinking that the word 'community' was a little overused at Messiah, but then went out and experienced a severe lack of that concept in other places. I'm happy to be back in a place that values community and relationships within a working environment."

This past summer, she married Christian Imbesi, whom she met while attending Messiah. The couple is enjoying reconnecting with Central Pennsylvania friends and has recently taken up cycling.

*The Department has received approval to conduct an official search for a tenure-track film professor to replace Professor Reid Perkins-Buzo, who left the college last spring to pursue other interests. We look forward to receiving many great applications in the coming months, including Professor Imbesi's.*

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## "Lights, Camera, Action!"

Katie Johnston

Much to Messiah's future filmmakers' delight, film officially became a major this past May. Dr. Kate Simcox, Dr. Fabrizio Cilento, and former professor Reid Perkins-Buzo reviewed the film and digital media concentration

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# Meet the family!



**WHEN: Saturday,  
October 20, 2012,  
2 - 4 p.m.**

**WHERE: Boyer 235**

**WHO: All Students &  
Alumni**

**Be a part of the  
reunion!**

last fall, making appropriate revisions to create the film and media arts major and ensure it met the requirements to receive the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation.

To apply for accreditation, the department submitted an extensive written proposal, which NASAD will review in October. The film and media arts (FAMA) major cannot receive accreditation until three people graduate under it, but will easily meet that requirement because all students studying film at Messiah have chosen to switch from their previous communication major with a film and digital media concentration to the newly reconfigured major.

Sophomore FAMA major Mackenzie Alexander said, "Looking at the rapid growth of the film department in the year I have been here is incredible and makes me stoked for the developments in the years to come...and now having the ability to call ourselves true film majors is a wonderful feeling."

Students and professors share excitement about this major, its growth, and its accreditation. Dr. Simcox says, "Having NASAD accreditation definitely gives the major a mark of credibility...It will help the film major grow in credibility and size, and bring attention to the high instruction and high course offering."



As part of the major reconfiguration, the Department decided to transform film history's scope from American

Cinema 1 and 2 to Film History 1 and 2, which draws from international sources. Dr. Cilento found this extremely important, as international sources created film's progression over time. "It is not possible anymore to study U.S. cinema in isolation," he said. "A comprehensive history of cinema needs to take into account European cinema, Latin American cinema and Asian cinema. All these industries/cinematic tendencies are pretty much connected these days."

To meet NASAD accreditation, 20 percent of the film curriculum must exist as "studio courses," including hands-on filmmaking and digital production, which now happens in the production courses. The Department added a production course to give both FAMA majors and other interested students experience in creating non-narrative films such as documenta-

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ries. Another new major requirement course, Persuasive Filmmaking, capitalizes on new Lecturer Krista Imbesi's documentary experience.

Mackenzie continued, "Our department keeps pushing its boundaries, with new courses offered, more opportunities on campus and at MCPC (Messiah College Philadelphia Campus)." The Department hopes these new offerings will entice more students to consider majoring in film and digital media.

"Film has been a gem that was buried in our department," Dr. Simcox added, "and we hope that both converting it to a major and gaining accreditation draws attention to our high-quality film instruction and course offerings."



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## "It's a bird, it's a seahorse, it's Nick Hemming in Belize!"

Katie Johnston

An exotic Belizean escape from the United States' hustle and bustle presents senior public relations major Nick Hemming with countless adventures as he studies abroad this fall. As Nick dives into the culture-rich Belizean lifestyle (and the natural waterfall, Monkey Falls), he is studying sustainability and reconciliation, primarily through the relationship between God and man/creation, while learning ways to serve the land instead of recklessly mastering it.

Nick's Belizean adventure began five weeks ago, when he and 17 students from various colleges departed with a program run through the Creation Care Studies Program, promoting environmental stewardship and creation care. Under program director and '09 Messiah graduate Jeff

Fisher's leadership, the students take classes in Santa Elena. About the campus location, Nick said, "When we pulled up, it felt as though I was on a Disney safari ride. Our ¼-mile-long driveway is covered in broom trees and tropical plants, as well as geckos and other native creatures. The campus itself houses jungle hiking trails, a stretch of the Macal River, and the perfect scenery for birding. I haven't gotten into the 'sport' quite yet, but I have a feeling this place will pull it out of me sooner or later."

Alongside the every-day learning experiences studying abroad offers, Nick will apply his public relations skills through a two-week internship experience in November, probably with a farmer's union seeking fair trade for cacao beans. He noted, "It sounds like an incredible opportunity to take my classroom knowledge, my professional experience, and my knowledge of the developing world into a professional organization."

Soon, Nick will live with a Belizean family. "As homestays draw closer, I cannot help but find excitement in digging into the culture through the ideal source—its people," Nick continued. "During my time here, I've noticed that Belize truly represents a diversity of cultures; in just three weeks, I have interacted with Mayans, local Belizeans, Asians, Mennonites, Americans and Europeans." Later in the semester, Nick



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will experience a Mennonite homestay, working on their farms, and acclimating himself to the Mennonite culture.

Along with the diverse people, Nick daily experiences the Belize's splendid culture through the hand-prepared Belizean foods he eats, and his excursions. He noted, "So far, we have tubed down the Macal River (through the jungle), and visited the coveted Belize Botanical Gardens and the Belize Zoo (where we saw jaguars, ocelots, and tapirs in their natural environment). We spend many of our afternoons in San Ignacio, a town with little Central American Cafés and shops, and a bustling market on the weekends. ...A bunch of us traveled to an island called Caye Caulker... We rented a hotel room on the water, went kayaking in the Caribbean, ate freshly cooked meals on the beach. For a moment, I think we forgot where we were—it seemed like something out of a movie or travel brochure."

But life in Belize is not simply all play and no work. Nick takes class from 9 a.m.-12 noon and 7 p.m.-9 p.m. He says, "I am most looking forward to Marine Ecology. We will be traveling to a remote island to live in a tiki hut that floats on the water. During class, our professor will brief us on certain sea creatures and plants to search


for, and we will spend the rest of the morning searching for them. Apparently, this stretch of the Caribbean contains the second-largest collection of sea horses in the world—a thought I cannot even wrap my mind around."

Nick will return to the States on December 7, ready share his new knowledge and experiences with Messiah, and the community. 

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## Internship Opportunities

Did you know the Messiah College Internship Office maintains an online database of available internship opportunities? Visit the Internship Center website to find the latest positions in communication, broadcasting, film, public relations, media, and journalism.

For more information, check out the website, stop by the Internship Center near The Falcon, or contact [mtrue@messiah.edu](mailto:mtrue@messiah.edu). 



### Join the COMMunity!

Photos of professors in the 1970s? Our students' latest in-class antics? Blogs from Oregon, Chile, Belize and beyond? Check out the COMM Department's latest capers on our [Facebook Page](#), and catch up today!