

## 2 journalism alumni earn university honors

### Peppler discovers right ingredients for career success

By Morgan Counts  
SPJ chapter member

Rebekah Peppler, a May 2008 graduate of UW Oshkosh, will be recognized with the Outstanding Young Alumni Award at Homecoming in October for her accomplishments and quick progression in the field of journalism.

"The Department of Journalism applauds Peppler's career progression because she is working her way up in a highly competitive field and has obtained a wide range of skills that have made her an in-demand, up-and-coming talent," Dr. Tim Gleason wrote in a nomination letter to the university's Alumni Board.

Peppler works in New York City as a food editor for The Tasting Table, an online food publication. As the editor of Tasting Table's Chef Recipe edition, Peppler tests, develops, styles, writes and photographs



recipes for the publication.

"I was always interested in food and in a dream scenario, I wanted to combine food and writing, but I didn't know exactly how I was going to do that," Peppler said.

After graduating with a journalism major and minors in art history and English creative writing, Peppler moved to New York to pursue the other half of

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### Virbitsky's passion for writing, sports leads to Olympics

By Morgan Counts  
SPJ chapter member

Vanessa Virbitsky, the communications manager for the U.S. Olympic Committee, which coordinates all Olympic-related activity in the U.S., has been chosen as a UW Oshkosh Outstanding Young Alumni—at age 26.

"Ever since I was a little kid, I've had a passion for writing, and my favorite book growing up was 'Harriet the Spy,'" Virbitsky said. "I even kept a notebook and reported on daily events. As I continued to get older, writing continued to be fun, so I stuck with it."

Athletic and scholarly achievement defined much of Virbitsky's experience at UW Oshkosh. She was named a Division III All-American gymnast four times, and was chosen as commencement speaker in



2008, according to a nomination letter written by journalism Professor Julie Henderson.

Virbitsky's love for sports transferred into her passion for writing.

"Sports writing—and sports feature writing, in particular—became a natural fit for me because I was able to use my background as an athlete to capture what others were experiencing," Virbitsky said. "At the U.S. Olympic Committee, I get to promote amazing

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## Journalism program gets re-accreditation from ACEJMC

It was three years in the making, but the Department of Journalism has been fully re-accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. The department has been accredited since 1978.

In 2010, the department was placed on provisional accreditation, having been

ruled out of compliance for the third time in the Curriculum standard. A site team in fall semester 2009 determined, in part, that the program needed to be more "directive" in requiring students in the five sequences to take specific courses.

As a result, the faculty undertook an extensive review of its curriculum, and

in fall 2011 implemented a revised curriculum that ensures students are taking appropriate courses in their emphases. For example, the students in the advertising emphasis will be required to take Principles of Advertising, Ad, Copy Layout

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# Ad competition students are back at NSAC

After a two-year hiatus, students in the Strategic Campaigns in Advertising class competed in the district National Student Advertising Competition this spring.

In the two previous years the campaigns class had taken on local clients, the Grand Opera House in 2010 and the Leach Amphitheater in 2011. Both campaigns proved to be beneficial to the local organizations, which needed a marketing strategy but lacked the resources to finance a professional product.

Dr. Jin Kyun Lee, however, believed it was time to get the students back in the national competition, where they would be measured against other teams preparing strategies for a national client. The competition this year was sponsored by Nissan, and was focused on multicultural audiences. Teams had to prepare a 32-page marketing campaign and a 20-minute presentation.

In the District 8 regional competition in Minneapolis in April, the UW Oshkosh team placed fifth among nine universities. The top four teams received recognition, and Oshkosh was 1.5 points behind the fourth-place team.

But the judges were quite impressed with the Oshkosh team's effort. They presented the team with a Judges' Special Spirit Award plaque, which now resides in the journalism reading room with past ad competition team awards.

"It was challenging for the students to prepare within three months," Lee said. They had to learn how to complete



This billboard on Jackson Street uses the logo designed by the 2011 advertising campaigns class

their job within that strict deadline. "This provided valuable experience for students preparing for the advertising and marketing field."

Members of the 2012 NSAC team were: Jaclyn Abler, Panhia Lee, Christine Dickert, Amy Tramonte, Amber Bemis, Katherine Pecora, Ross Penkala, Marisa Bee and Kayla Guns.

Other teams in the district competition were: North Dakota State University, St. Cloud State University, the University of Minnesota Duluth, the University of St. Thomas, Minnesota State University Moorhead, South Dakota State University, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

The Oshkosh team members held fundraisers to help pay for the competition expenses. They were aided this year by a donation from journalism alumnus Jeff

Griffith, who paid the printing costs for the campaign book. Griffith was a member of several NSAC teams as a student.

While the return to the NSAC competition, sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, was an important step for the program, the efforts of the 2011 team can be seen today in Oshkosh.

Jenny McCollian of the Oshkosh Parks Department told journalism social media intern Sheng Lee that elements of the team's plans were going to be used this year to promote the amphitheater.

"We are having a new Tuesday night concert series at the Leach Amphitheater this summer," McCollian said in an email message. "We are using the name that the campaign class created last year. Our concert series will be called 'Streaming [LIVE]' at the Leach-Tuesday night concert series.' We are also using the logo on all of our advertisements and billboards."



# In campaign, Bateman students tackle issue of childhood obesity

By Molly Linn  
SPJ chapter secretary

Five journalism seniors took part this year in the annual Bateman competition sponsored by the Public Relations Student Society of America.

Tim Sluga, a member of this year's team, said the competition focused on childhood and adolescent obesity. The UW Oshkosh students began by researching the topic and then executing a campaign.

"Once we had an idea of the size of the problem and the area attitudes, we set about raising awareness to help people figure out changes they could make in their lives so hopefully they would be able to turn back the growing problem," he said.

Sluga said the Bateman judges felt that the team's strategy was too ambitious, and partly because of that did not place in this year's competition.

"Basically, we were told that we were too ambitious in how we approached raising awareness ... and were penalized for doing so even though it was also acknowledged that we accomplished much of what we set out to do," he said.

Dr. Julie Henderson, the chapter faculty adviser, said she was proud of the different goals and aspects of this year's campaign.

"I thought the way the students tied fitness to children, information to parents, and technology to college students was quite good," Henderson said.

Sluga said the team was involved with local elementary schools, including Oaklawn. One of the things he said he is most proud of was having so many students at the schools participate in the competition set up in for them.

"Every day when a couple of us would visit the school to update the competition we had set up for the kids there were kids waiting to see us, tell us about what they did the night before and seem interested in how their class was doing overall," he said. "That was really neat."

Sluga said he enjoyed working on a public

relations campaign with a group of students and getting involved in the community through it.

"It makes you step up your game a little bit, which is probably helped a bit by the competitive aspect," he said "This is more than just a grade in a class, it is something that has you battle against other schools from around the nation, and so you don't want to do poorly."

Henderson said the competition is organized through a journalism class, Public Relations Campaigns. She said the class helps students to experience real-world situations while still in school.

"There are many classes in the department that are stringent in their requirements, but the Public Relations Campaigns class is the only class in our curriculum that requires students to not only plan a campaign, but actually carry it out and evaluate the results," she said. "This means students have to deal with problems and hurdles that they will face once they graduate. The experience is invaluable."

She said each year, despite how much time is necessary for the class, she is pleased with the effort her students put in.

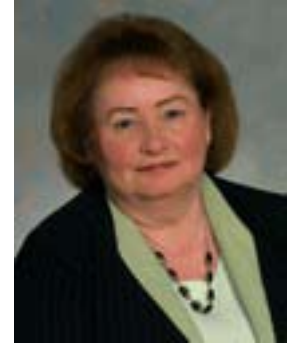
"The class is very difficult, and requires tremendous commitment from the students," she said. "Yet every year I am impressed by how many are willing to devote the time and energy needed to do an outstanding job."

Sluga said the competition helped to make the community more aware of the journalism department, and it benefited him personally by allowing him to experience this type of campaign and team building.

"I just hope everyone else in the group feels great about what we did, because the work we put in and the results we accomplished definitely warrant pride in the job," he said.

Other members of the team were: Jessica Bedore, Danielle Beyer, Lindsey Noack and Derek Schroeder.

The previous year the Bateman team received honorable mention for its campaign on the topic of financial literacy.



## PRSSA chapter gets new name, honoring Dr. H

What's in a name?

In this case, it is a well-deserved honor for a member of the journalism faculty.

Student officers in the UW Oshkosh PRSSA chapter asked for and received permission from the governing national organizations to rename the local chapter. It is now known as the Dr. Julie Henderson Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Henderson has served as the PRSSA chapter adviser since 1993. She also was PRSSA National Faculty Adviser from 2009-11.

## CEPR: It's official

The journalism department was notified in the fall that it had received Certification for Education in Public Relations (CEPR) from the Public Relations Society of America.

A two-member evaluation team was on campus in April 2011, and recommended that the certification be granted. The certification is valid for six years.



# Funding approved for computers in journalism labs

Keeping computers and software up to date for students can be a challenge, especially during tough economic times. Finding the money to keep three labs fully equipped is especially difficult.

As a result, the department's Instructional Resources and Technology Committee prepared a proposal for funding through the university's classroom modernization process. It was determined that new computers were needed in two of the labs

because the ones being used were no longer supported by Academic Computing.

Fortunately for the department, the \$49,335 proposal for 32 new iMac 21.5-inch screen computers and a new Hewlett-Packard color printer was approved. The new equipment will be installed this summer, in time for the start of classes in fall semester.

Because the lab mod proposal was approved, however, the department received no funding for a second proposal, this

one submitted in the College of Letters & Science permanent property process. The department was requesting a new laptop to replace an aging one, two computers for the student workroom, five flip cams, and 16 iPads.

"The computers were our most pressing need, so I can't complain about not receiving money for permanent property," Professor Mike Cowling said. "We will apply again next year for those items."

## Faculty achievements

Journalism professors at UW Oshkosh used their skills in the field for more than teaching aspiring journalists this past year.

Faculty members published writings and photographs, presented their work at national conferences, prepared students for national competitions, and worked as professionals in the industry.

**Professor Mike Cowling**, chair of the Department of Journalism, worked as a copy editor at The New York Times in the summer of 2011. It was the 14th summer that he had worked at The Times. Cowling will be back at The Times again this summer, working on the national/foreign desk.

**Dr. Vince Filak**, had a research paper published in the Summer 2012 edition of *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. Under the heading of Theory and Student Press, the paper is titled "A Concurrent Examination of Self-versus-Others Perceptual Bias and the Willingness to Self-Censor: A Study of College Newspaper Editors and Advisers." Dr. Filak also will be presenting research papers at the AEJMC conference in Chicago this summer.

**Dr. Tim Gleason**, meanwhile, had seven photographs published in *f-stop* magazine, an online photography magazine. Among the photographs were "Old Man, White, Cambridge, England," "Johnny Depp's Parking, Oshkosh, WI" and "Cross Men, Madison, WI."

His other accomplishments of 2011-2012 included:

- Authored an article in the *Journal of International and Global Studies*: "Martin Parr in Mexico: Does Photographic Style Translate?" The article utilizes an online, open-access style to allow readers to see the photographs he discusses.
- Co-authored "Driving the Blues Away: Yuan and Letting Go in Wong Kar-Wai's 'My Blueberry Nights'" with Elizabeth C. Crawford and Nan Yu. It was published in *Asian Cinema*, 2012.
- Presented a paper, "A Pain in the Neck: News Reporting on Graves' Disease," for the Medical Humanities Area of the Popular Culture Association in Boston, April 2012.

• Completed a Faculty Development Program teaching grant on HDR photography, which led to a re-photography project involving his Media Photography II class, IMC and the University Archives.

**Dr. Sara Steffes Hansen** will be on a panel titled "Social Media, Games and Advertisers: Industry Planning and Research Activities" at AEJMC. Other panelists will be Anne Enright, senior vice president and digital director of Starcom, and Dr. Jin Lee. Dr. Tim Gleason will be the moderator.

**Dr. Julie Henderson** served on two boards, as a director-at-large on the board of the Educators Academy of the Public Relations Society of America, and as an editorial reviewer for *Revista Romana de Marketing* (Romanian Marketing Journal). Her other achievements:

- Co-authored a chapter, "Practitioner to Professor," in the book "Learning to Teach: What You Need to Know to Develop a Successful Career as a Public Relations Educator" with Dr. Donald Schwartz. Published by PRSA, 2004. Revised 2009, 2012.
- Selected to present at the 15th International Public Relations Research Conference in Miami in March 2012. She presented "Shared Values: An Examination of the Codes of Ethics of Mass Media-Related Associations."
- Presented "Social Media for the Social Good: Incorporating Reverse Mentoring Into the Classroom" to the Educators Academy at the International Public Relations Conference in Orlando October 2011.

**Dr. Jin Lee** made or will make these academic presentations:

- "Engagement Ads in Social Network Games: Persuasion Knowledge and Consumer Choices to Send Marketer-Generated eWOM to Friends." Paper written with Dr. Sara Steffes Hansen was accepted for the 2012 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference in Chicago.
- "Strategic Brand Alliance in Magazine Ads." Paper presented at 2012 International Advertising and Integrated Marketing Communications (IAIMC) conference in Anaheim, Calif.



Kappa Tau Alpha inductees

Three students were inducted in May into Kappa Tau Alpha, a national honor society for achievement in journalism. From left, Hajra Ahmad, Danielle Beyer and Lindsey Noack.

## Advance-Titan earns top award for excellence

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association named The Advance-Titan the state's top non-daily student newspaper this year.

The first-place finish was one of two major awards the paper won in the WNA's Better College Newspaper Contest. Elise Stuebs took home first place in the Column Writing category for her piece, "Virtual reality becomes replacement for human interaction."

The A-T's overall win marked the first time the paper had earned a top-paper nod in this contest.

The award added to the collection of honors the student paper had received a year earlier.

One of those awards was the Associated Collegiate Press Best of Show. Shortly after receiving that award at a conference in Louisville, the paper was recognized as one of the top 50 student publications by eCollegeFinder.org.

Dr. Vince Filak is the faculty adviser for the A-T.

## Journalism website redesigned to include new features

By Molly Linn  
SPJ chapter secretary

The journalism department worked with the Integrated Marketing and Communications office during the year to create a revised website to match other UW Oshkosh websites and improve navigation.

Dr. Jin Kyun Lee, the chair of the department's Instructional Resources and Technology Committee, said the new website was important for the because it now features the most updated information regarding the department and its curriculum.

He said it was also significant because it is consistent with the university's brand.

"It was important for our department to move to the Plone system so that the look and feel of our department website is consistent with other departments and

programs at the university level," Lee said.

The new site features information about journalism majors, minors and emphases, faculty and staff, student organizations, opportunities, internships, alumni, awards and honors, and the Northeastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association (NEWSPA).

"Most importantly, potential students and their parents are very likely to access our website and it will give them a good first impression of our department," Lee said.

Professor Mike Cowling, the chair of the journalism department, said a key benefit of the website is the design itself, which includes links to the program's Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wordpress and LinkedIn sites.

"It is easier to navigate with key section

fronts listed on the left side of the home page," he added.

Lee said another feature of the redesigned site are the descriptions and syllabuses for the journalism classes offered.

"As a professor teaching advertising, our website provides brief descriptions of courses that I teach," Lee said. "Also, students can download course syllabuses whenever they need. This will help students see the big picture of classes."

Cowling said another feature is the ability the faculty members have to include more information through links to their individual websites and class material.

"It provides the faces and updated details available to current and prospective students who want to know more about a faculty member or to contact him or her," he said.

# A special reunion - a decade in the making

By Jeremy Ott  
SPJ chapter president

The last official alumni reunion held by the Department of Journalism was in 2001. A lot had changed in the profession and in the program at Oshkosh during the intervening 10 years, so it was decided that another reunion was long overdue.

In October 2011, the department hosted a special two-day reunion event in its new facilities in Sage Hall. The festivities included a tweet-up session, a panel discussion, an awards banquet where three journalism alumni were honored, and an open house.

"With the department's move during the summer to the new academic building, it seemed like the perfect time to invite our alumni back to campus," said Professor Mike Cowling, chair of the department. "Keeping in touch with alumni and making them feel welcome is important, and we needed to re-establish that connection."

Several special features were created as part of the reunion, including "Your Lead," where alumni sent in remembrances of their years in the program, a special room with memorabilia including old copies of the Quiver yearbook and the Advance-Titan newspaper, and a slide show where a series of photos over the years were put to music and continuously run in one of the computer labs.

Troy Janisch led the tweet-up session on Friday afternoon, Oct. 21. That was followed by a panel discussion on the state of journalism today. The panel members were Pat Stiegman of ESPN digital, Mike Fredrick of Bader Rudder in Milwaukee, Laura Denissen of Harley Davidson in Milwaukee, and Mary Callen of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in Madison. The panel session was videotaped and can be seen on the department's YouTube site.

At the Alumni Association awards dinner that evening, Stiegman received the Distinguished Alumni Award, Fredrick



Kate Briquet at a display of lead type at Homecoming

received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award, and Lori Krauss received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

On Saturday morning, Oct. 22, a special ceremony was held as part of an open house in the journalism department. Current and past faculty, student club leaders, and alumni in attendance were recognized. Tours also were given of the department's new facilities, including the digital photo lab.

Emily Miels, a journalism major and editor of the Advance-Titan, said the events were useful.

"I thought it was a lot of fun and very inspiring," Miels said. "It was interesting to see how far the journalism department has come and how much everything has changed... It was a great way for the current students, alumni and faculty to connect and swap stories."

The department's program assistant, Cindy Schultz, who worked with Profes-

sor Cowling and Dr. Sara Steffes Hansen in doing much of the reunion planning, echoed Miels' comments. Schultz added, however, that she wished more students had participated.

"It was a great day," Schultz said. "I wish that we could have had more involvement from not only alums, but also from our own majors and minors. There was a lot of information that was shared from very valuable resources in regard to what they look for when hiring. What an awesome way to network, and so many students missed out on that opportunity."

In order to find out what the alumni thought of the Homecoming reunion, Schultz said the department is preparing questions related to the event as part of a survey.

"We are about to do an alumni survey where we ask alums for feedback about the day," Schultz said. "Also we are inquiring as to how often they would like to see an event honoring them in the future."

The idea of having reunions on a regular basis would be beneficial, Miels said.

"I think it's a great opportunity for students and is definitely something that should continue," Miels said. "It was inspiring to hear what alumni of the program have accomplished in their careers."

Miels plans on graduating in December 2013, and said that returning for a reunion will definitely be a priority.

"I owe a lot to the professors, the journalism department and UW Oshkosh in general for all the opportunities and support they've given me already," Miels said. "I'd love the opportunity to stay connected with them as well as help and inspire other young journalists."



# PEPPLER: Finds ingredients for success

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her passion. She completed the pastry arts program at the French Culinary Institute, while building up some real-life skills.

“One of the internships I had was on a food television show, and it kind of stemmed from there,” Peppler said. “I started working in TV and worked as a freelance food stylist for quite a long time before starting full time at The Tasting Table.”

William Hereford, of William Hereford Pictures in Brooklyn, N.Y., said he had the pleasure of working with Peppler in the last year on a number of productions for The Tasting Table.

“Rebekah’s attention to detail and general ambition can turn a ho-hum day of work into something extraordinary,” Hereford said in a letter of support. “It is clear Rebekah understands her craft: she has elegant taste and a knack for recipe development. More importantly, however, Rebekah is inspired.”

Some of Peppler’s freelance work went to clients including the Food Network, the Cooking Channel, Kraft, AOL/Kitchen Daily and Organic Gardening, according to Gleason’s letter.

Peppler said her experiences at Oshkosh helped her to realize what she needed to do to achieve her dreams.

“I had a couple of unique opportunities to travel to different places; I studied in Cambridge for the journalism program and went to Rome for art history,” she said. “The study abroad opened a lot of doors and made me realize that I couldn’t stay in Wisconsin to do what I wanted to accomplish in my professional career.”

It only took Peppler four years to achieve what she thought would take many years, which she says leaves the next few years open to what comes next.

“I think the over-arching accomplishment I had was that I wanted to combine food and writing, but I didn’t really know how to do it,” she said. “This job was the first place that I’ve been able to do everything I’ve strived to do with writing, photography, food styling, recipe development, interviewing chefs and trying new foods all at the same time.

“I think it’s a huge accomplishment to be able to do that at a young age because this is kind of my ultimate goal. Now I have the opportunity to create an entirely new set of goals because I’ve accomplished this sooner than I expected.”

# VIRBITSKY: Passion leads to Olympics

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storylines every day.”

Virbitsky’s career began when she was selected for an internship for the U.S. Olympic Committee during her time spent in the public relations graduate program at Ball State University.

“The USOC is recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the sole entity in the United States whose mission involves training, entering and underwriting the full expenses for the U.S. teams in the Olympic, Paralympic, Youth Olympic, Pan American and Parapan American Games,” Henderson wrote. “It also oversees the process by which the U.S. cities seek to be selected as a candidate city to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games, winter or summer.”

Virbitsky learned many real-life skills

while at Oshkosh in the classroom and in writing for The Advance-Titan, The Northwestern and the Integrated Marketing and Communications office.

“From learning the ins-and-outs of AP writing style to presenting in front of large groups of people both in the gym and the classroom, UWO gave me the skills and confidence necessary for pursuing my dream,” she said.

Although Virbitsky has achieved much already in her young career and is grateful for the recognition, she says she has many more goals to pursue.

“I’m incredibly honored to have been chosen as an Outstanding Alumni,” she said. “I remember sitting in class—we were in Clow at that time—reading every bio of the accomplished Oshkosh alumni hanging on the walls. Those profiles gave

me something to strive for—they made me want to do something special with my career.”

It’s no doubt she will be busy working with the international media to cover every U.S. athlete in the 2012 London Olympic Games this summer, but she says what she takes from the task makes it all worthwhile.

“To me, there’s no greater honor than helping to tell the stories of incredible U.S. athletes—many of whom have inspired me to jump a little higher, push a little harder and dream a little bigger,” she said. “Working for an organization with a mission to ‘inspire all Americans’ and knowing that something I’ve done during my workday has made the life of someone else a little better, a little brighter—that makes me proud.”

## SPJ students have busy year

The student members of the Society of Professional Journalists were on the go much of the year, attending conferences and networking, touring a newspaper, hosting guest speakers, promoting a national writing competition, and holding fund-raisers.

In the fall, five students and chapter adviser Professor Mike Cowling visited the offices of The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. They toured the newsroom and talked to various editors, hearing how the paper is transitioning to a mobile- and web-first publication, and heard about internship possibilities.

In January, three students participated in the Wisconsin Newspaper Association convention in Madison. At the convention, the students went to various sessions, met with students from other campuses, and attended the awards luncheon.

To top off their travels, five students drove to Minneapolis at the end of March to attend the Region 6 conference. It

had been several years since Oshkosh had been represented at the regional conference. The students said the conference featured many valuable sessions, particularly on the digital growth of the media.

Guest speakers at the weekly meetings of the SPJ chapter included Alex Hummel, director of news and public relations in the Integrated Marketing and Communications office on campus, and Terri Dougherty, a alumna of the journalism program who does freelance writing and also works as an associate editor at J.J. Keller & Associates.

The chapter continued to solicit and process entries for the national Hearst Foundation writing competition. Articles were submitted this academic year in five different writing categories.

Regular members during the year were: Jeremy Ott, president; Molly Linn, secretary; Morgan Counts, Taylor Lackey, Sonia Zimmerman and Brian Osmond.

## '94 journalism graduate will be keynote speaker

Blois Olson, Class of '94 with degrees in journalism and political science, has been selected to be the keynote speaker at the UW Oshkosh Foundation Community Breakfast on Sept. 18, 2012.

Olson is senior counsel—public affairs + media at Tunheim Partners in Minneapolis. He also is the founder and publisher at morning take.

The following background information is from his LinkedIn site:

Olson provides leadership for Tunheim Partners and its clients in public affairs, crisis communication and online strategy. Prior to joining Tunheim, he founded and led New School Communications for nine years.

He works for clients across the country, including corporations and organizations in health care, technology, energy, telecommunications, real estate, retail and consumer products, food and beverage, and legal affairs.

Olson reads and monitors dozens of media outlets on a daily basis. He has worked with national and regional media, politicians, lobbyists and media relations experts. In 1998, he co-founded MN-Politics.com, the leading online source for Minnesota political information, and he is the former co-publisher of "Politics In Minnesota."

His interest in media and current affairs can be traced to his job as a daily newspaper carrier for the St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch. While a student at UW Oshkosh, he worked for The Advance-Titan.

## RE-ACCREDITATION: Council gives OK

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and Production, and Ad Media. In addition, they must take three courses from a selection of five or six that provide knowledge important in the advertising field.

A second site team visited the department in November 2011, and this time found the department to be in compliance in the Curriculum standard. After the ACEJMC Committee approved the site team's report in March, 2012, the ACEJMC Council gave its blessing in April.

The Council, in a letter to Chancellor Richard Wells, said it concurred with the site team report and the Committee vote. It said the next visit for the program would be during the 2015-2016 academic year.

In the letter, Peter Bhatia, the Council president, said, "Please accept my congratulations and best wishes for continued success for the Department of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, its students, faculty and other professional media constituencies it serves."

Professor Mike Cowling, the journalism chair, said that receiving re-accreditation was well worth the hard work put in by the department's faculty and staff.

"We are one of only three accredited programs in Wisconsin," he said. "Being accredited means that our students are getting an education that is backed by strict standards and guidelines supported by the industry. It also is a great recruiting tool for bringing students into the program."



# NEWSPA tradition of training students continues

By Jeremy Ott  
SPJ chapter president

With nearly 400 students from 25 different high schools in attendance, the 2012 NEWSPA conference at Reeve Memorial Union on April 25 was a success, according to Barb Benish, the group's executive secretary.

Benish said that although attendance was down some from the previous year, she thought it was one of the best conferences sponsored by the Northeastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association in a long time.

"What was particularly exciting this year was the large number of speakers we had who were NEWSPA alumni," Benish said.

This year's conference consisted of more than 40 guest speakers, including keynote speaker Pat Stiegman, editor-in-chief and vice president of digital media at ESPN.

Stiegman, a UW Oshkosh journalism graduate who Benish referred to as "a renowned journalist," spoke for 45 minutes about his four E's of success: experience, enthusiasm, energy and execution.

The journalism department's program assistant, Cindy Schultz, who assists in organizing the annual event, said Stiegman's speech was popular among the students.

"Pat Stiegman was very well received," Schultz said. "A lot of good comments were received about the keynote address."

Other speakers included Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter Meg Jones, WLUK FOX 11 weekend producer Hillary Kline, and Oshkosh North High School adviser Jason Cummings.

Sessions included "Get Yourself on YouTube," "Get the Dirt: Harnessing Search Functions on the Web to Get the Story," and "Do You Love Facebook or Twitter? It Could Land You a Job."

At the end of each session, students who attended were able to fill out assessment sheets to grade the presentations. Benish said every speaker received positive comments.



Students at the NEWSPA spring conference comparing papers from other schools

"I loved his energy," a student at Cumming's brainstorming session wrote. "I can't wait to use these suggestions for my future issues."

Due to the enthusiasm shown by the students throughout the day, Schultz said she hopes the high school journalists seriously consider Oshkosh when choosing a university to attend.

"I think it is an excellent recruiting tool," Schultz said. "I wish that we had a way of tracking to see how many students come to UW Oshkosh after participating in NEWSPA. I am also very curious about how many of those students wound up majoring or minoring in journalism after having attended NEWSPA in the past. I know that some of our journalism students were NEWSPA attendees a few years ago."

Getting more than 40 guest speakers to participate at the one-day event is not an easy task.

"Yes, it's a lot of work to put together a conference with 40-plus speakers and 400 or more students and advisers," Benish said. "But when you see the students engaged and staying after to meet with

presenters, you know it's worth it."

Besides the numerous sessions at the conference, the NEWSPA board of directors introduced something new for the students this year – Twitter.

"We tried a live Twitter feed," Benish said. "By the number of students who stood around the hallway outside of the ballroom watching the feed, I know it was a success."

Schultz said the NEWSPA board members are hoping to expand on the live Twitter feed next year.

Schultz said she is looking forward to what next year's conference will consist of because Benish is "pretty awesome in finding speakers and putting together great topics."

"I love all of the energy that the students bring to this campus while they are here," Schultz said. "I also enjoy seeing if their respective schools have put together their own T-shirts to wear on the day—to set them apart from the rest of the crowd. I am excited to see what NEWSPA 2013 will have to offer."

## Student Awards

Gary Coll Journalism Fellowship  
**Amber Bemis, Taylor Cook,  
Morgan Counts, Ashleigh Edgersen,  
Katherine Pecora**

Kappa Tau Alpha new members  
**Hajra Ahmad, Danielle Beyer,  
Lindsey Noack**

Dave Engels Journalism Scholarship  
**Morgan Counts**

Jeff Griffith Portfolios Scholarship  
**Morgan Counts**

David J. Lippert  
Memorial Scholarship  
**Morgan Counts**

Virginia Sokolowski  
Memorial Scholarship  
**Morgan Counts**

2011 National Organ Donor Awareness  
Competition: 2nd Place  
**Jessica Bedore, Danielle Beyer,  
Paige Fagan, Sarah Hartwell, Kim  
Parsons, Derek Schroeder, Paige  
Wagner**

PRSSA National Conference panel  
presentation, Orlando, Fla.  
**Jessica Bedore, Danielle Beyer,  
Ashleigh Edgersen, Derek Schroeder**

Photographer's Forum 32nd Annual  
College Photography Contest  
Finalists:  
**Josie Bennett, Elizabeth Granberg,  
Adam Jungwirth, Panhia Lee,  
Jessica Newlin**  
Honorable Mention: **Deniz Cakmak**

Wisconsin Newspaper Association  
General Excellence Award  
**Staff of The Advance-Titan**

WNA Better College Newspaper  
Contest: Column Writing  
First place: **Elise Stuebs**

## Contributors

The Department of Journalism is proud to recognize the following alumni and patrons for their generous donations. These donors assisted the journalism program by contributing to the Journalism Fund, various scholarships offered by the department in the past academic year, and special projects involving students.

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For information on establishing a scholarship fund or including the UW Oshkosh Department of Journalism in your estate plans, please contact Barbara Beuscher '99 at [beuscherb@uwosh.edu](mailto:beuscherb@uwosh.edu) or 920.424.2428.

## Journalism Alumni Newsletter

Designer: *Taylor Krentz*

Contributors: *Members of the student chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists: Morgan Counts, Molly Linn, Jeremy Ott*

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