

# COMM CONNECTION

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

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THIS IS

## MASON COMM

COLLABORATE. CREATE. COMMUNICATE

### **Class of 2019 Undergraduate Series**

by: Dr. Meg Tucker

**Rosemary Isidi**

"I studied Communication with a concentration in Journalism and a minor in Theater."

"My favorite classes were COMM 356 where I learned a lot about skills for on-air work and COMM 148 where we learned skills for being an on-air radio personality. My favorite instructors were Prof. Susan Tomasovic because she is so supportive and encouraging and Prof. Andrew Finn because he's just such a cool and funny guy, also an excellent professor." Rosemary plans to secure a job in the Journalism field after she graduates and work toward her dreams of becoming a Broadcast Journalist."

*Congratulations Rosemary!*



# WELCOME TO FALL 2019!

## GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Mason Communication Community,

Please join us with hope and determination to meet the challenges our current world brings to communication professionals. In this issue, you can read about the Annual Fall Communication Industry Forum (hosted by the Insight Committee, our external advisory board) that each year brings together alumni, faculty, and industry professionals to mentor our students as they navigate communication career entry in this challenging era. If you would like to be involved in the Forum, please do not hesitate to contact us. We always need your involvement as panelists, speakers, or mentors.

Mason's Department of Communication continues to thrive, with exciting courses, active student organizations, and faculty who bring excellence in research and practice.

As always, we would like to have a closer relationship with you, our majors and alumni. Please keep us updated on your professional activities and personal milestones. We are working to build a more robust Department of Communication alumni network, with career mentoring events and social gatherings. Soon, we hope to recruit a slate of Communication Alumni Society officers to help with these plans. Please let us know if you are interested.

You can use this link to join the Mason Communication Alumni Society, provide us with updates, and volunteer for participation in events: [https://gmuchss.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8Dgqa2AikpTofAh](https://gmuchss.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8Dgqa2AikpTofAh).

Stay tuned for information on upcoming events and gatherings! Finally, please don't forget to:

Like our Communication Department Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/gmucommadvising?ref=hl>

Follow us on Twitter @MasonCommDept and our new Instagram page @masoncomm

Until next time, many best wishes to you and yours!

Sincerely,

*Dr. Anne Nicotera*



## Congratulations to the Class of 2019!

We will miss you and hope for only success in your future endeavors and careers. If you would like to keep in contact with the Department of Communication, share and receive emails about student & alumni news, departmental news, upcoming events etc. please join our COMM Alumni Society. All you need to do is to email the Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Megan Edmondson ([medmond3@gmu.edu](mailto:medmond3@gmu.edu)), to join.

## SUPPORT YOUR DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

To contribute online, visit [communication.gmu.edu](http://communication.gmu.edu) and click on the word "Give" in the top right corner. You can also make check donations payable to "George Mason University Foundation, Inc."

You can indicate "Communication Department" in the memo line or the name of the fund you would like to support. If you have any questions about donating to the department, please contact Mark Hall, CHSS Assistant Director of Development, at [mhall19@gmu.edu](mailto:mhall19@gmu.edu).



### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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WEBSITE

<http://comm.gmu.edu>



# DEPARTMENT RE-CAP

## SPRING & SUMMER 2019

### Undergraduate and Graduate

#### Award Ceremonies

Both the 2019 Communication Undergraduate and Graduate Awards ceremonies were held last Spring featuring an abundance of awards to many students.

The **Undergraduate Alumna of the Year** was awarded to **Theresa Coates Ellis** and the **Graduate Alumni of the Year** was awarded to **Jordan Alpert**.

Congratulations to all Undergraduate and Graduate COMM student award winners!



### COMM UNDERGRAD AWARD WINNERS:

**COMM Challenge Award Finalists:** Chloe Clark and Cristina Izurieta  
**Media Production Award Winners:**

**Best Commercial Project-** Ian Leach, Lauren Yoo, Lareesa Brunstion, John Riedlin

**Best Music Video Project-** Ian Leach

**Best Overall Production, Videography-** Alexandra Dimas, Layth Alwatban, Timothy Ross, Ziyi Li

**Excellence in Videography-** Layth Alwatban, Kera White, Theresa Porter, Kelly Guerrero

**Excellence in Digital Post Production-** Jordan Latham

**Journalism Award Winners:** Alex Shedd (Excellence in Journalism), Angeliqe Arintok (Excellence in Broadcast Journalism), SPJ (Chapter of the Year), Dana Nickel (Multimedia Journalism), Lauren Sullivan (Feature Writing), Natalie Heavren (Writing & Reporting), Laurn Cantrell (SPJ Leadership and Journalism Student of the Year), Ashkan Motamedi (Journalism Special Recognition)

**Kevin Athari Award:** Natalie Heavren

**COMM Ambassadors of the Year:** Jimmy O'Hara & Lauren Back

**PRSSA Special Recognition:** Sydney Cano, Chloe Clark, Monica Forero

**WGMU Awards:** Vivek Rangarajan (Announcer of the Year), Giselle Aparicio (Broadcaster of the Year), Rhema Johnson (Broadcaster of the Year)

**Excellence in Communication:** Angeliqe Arintok, Lauryn Cantrell, Alyssa Carr, Dylan Donlon-Moyer, Amanda Douillette, Alex Linares, Sabrina Fine, Sydney Foster, Maeve Grogan, Larry Lock, Rachel Ann Markfelder, Charity Martinez, Christina Matt, Melanie Miller, Thomas Motak, Melody Noori, Ashley Palmer, Theresa Porter, Jihye Rhodes, Bethzabe Rother, Licie Leite, Erica Seay, Zachary Seay, Eliza Smith, Lauren Sullivan, Katherine Wernerl, Alexis Whitted, Ariel Young

**Dr. Bruce Manchester Outstanding Academic Achievement Award:** Monica Echols

### COMM GRAD AWARD WINNERS:

**Lt. Colonel William Schroeder Memorial Award:** Christopher Sullivan  
**Joe Witte Special Recognition in Science Communication:** Julia Hathaway

**Outstanding MA Student:** Selena Nelson

**Graduate Teaching Award:** Karin Nordin

**Department Leadership:** Andrea Malterud

**Commitment to Graduate Program:** Christian Seiter

**Wendy Balazik Communication and Social Change Award:** Rochelle Mhonde

**Communication Graduate Challenge Award:** Marissa Strang and Adebanke Adebayo

**Outstanding PhD Student:** Katherine Hyatt Hawkins

## DCHC 2019



The D.C. Health Communication Conference (DCHC), organized by the department and the Center for Health and Risk Communication, recently brought graduate students, as well as early to senior level scholars, together to hear about the latest research and advancements within the field through panels and roundtable discussions. This year's theme was international and global health communication research.

Over the course of three days, the more than 200 attendees were invited to attend numerous panels on current health communication research. Dr. Anne Nicotera led the planning process as chair of the DCHC Planning Committee. "DCHC has become the most important conferences in the field of health communication," she said. "Putting it together takes a group effort of our department's faculty, staff, and graduate students. Everyone pitches in."

### Summer Study Abroad in Milan with Dr. Wright

During this past summer semester, our Mason COMM study abroad group had the time of their lives in Milan, Italy and the surrounding northern cities. Want to go in the Summer of 2020? Ask an advisor!



### COMM GRAD 2019 DEGREE CONFERRAL'S:

**Science Communication Certificate:** Valerie Klavans

**MA:** Cara Bousie, Katrina Cheesman, Nicole Droney, Daniel Gagen, Henri Huber, Ronaldo Martinez Jr., Nicolas Mercurio, Grayson Moore, Sylvia Mphofe, Selena Nelson, Aliasha Pulliam, Jan Carlo Videna, Casey Whitaker

**PhD:** Lindsey Beall, Allison Harper, Liza Ngenye

# STUDENT NEWS

## COMM Undergraduate Research

COMM 400 and 490 can be daunting courses for COMM students. COMM 400, otherwise known as Communication Research Methods, and COMM 490, the Honors equivalent to COMM 400, are the the final courses that all COMM majors and minors need to take in order to complete their COMM Core, an essential part of the Communication Major. COMM 491 student, **Claire Underwood** recently had her research featured at the **National Conference of Undergraduate Research** this past Spring in Atlanta. Read more here: <https://communication.gmu.edu/articles/13160>

At the **Virginia Association of Communication Arts and Sciences (VACAS)** held at Radford this past Spring, four Communication majors--**Kier Askew, Tifara Davis, Phanida Langer, and Melanie Miller**--presented their media criticism papers as part of a panel chaired by Mason COMM Associate Chair, Dr. Gibson.



## Student Video Brings #MasonComm to Life:

### "This is Mason COMM"

The faces and voices of Mason students majoring in communication shine through in a new student-produced video, "We Are #Mason COMM."

Senior Alexandra Tubell created the video as part of COMM 411, Public Relations Practicum, in which students worked as the in-house PR agency for the communication department. They brainstormed various message strategies and ultimately developed the theme line "Collaborate. Create. Communicate." which has been adopted and incorporated into the department's brand.

"This video showcases our students' many talents, interests and diversity," said Communication Department Chair Anne Nicotera. "This will help incoming students better understand the value and flexibility of a communication degree."



# FACULTY NEWS

## 4 VA Grant to Support Communication Skills

"Melissa Broeckelman-Post, introductory communication course director, associate professor in the Department of Communication and a senior scholar in Mason's Center for the Advancement of Well-Being, is leading a team of faculty and graduate students to devise a layered approach to ensure students continue to learn these vital skills after completing the required COMM 101 course.

"Communication skills are necessary for communicating ideas, for working in teams, for developing relationships. It's necessary for their families and their communities," said Brockelman-Post. She and her team are collaborating with partners and experts to bring communications skills into classrooms and learning experiences across campus over a variety of disciplines.

With support from their recently awarded 4-VA grant, Broeckelman-Post and her team are creating the support and tools the faculty is telling her it needs. The work centers on creating three core elements—online resources and tools, faculty curriculum consultations, and in-class workshops. Read more here: <https://communication.gmu.edu/articles/13392>



## COMM CENTER

Located in the **One Button Studio**  
(Gateway Library,  
Johnson Center)

### Contact:

[gmspeech@gmu.edu](mailto:gmspeech@gmu.edu)

### Website:

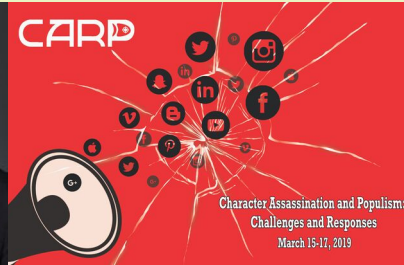
<https://communication.gmu.edu/co-curricular-activities/gmu-communication-center>

## CARP 2019

George Mason University's **Character Assassination and Reputation Politics (CARP) Research Lab** hosted its second international conference "Character Assassination and Populism: Challenges and Responses" on March 15-17, 2019 at the GMU Arlington campus. The CARP research team helps host the event, with one of the members being GMU COMM Faculty member Sergei Salmoilenko.

**Background:** The CARP Research Lab includes scholars with disciplinary homes in psychology, history, communication and public relations. With investigators from both George Mason University and the University of Amsterdam, the CARP team focuses efforts along three main dimensions: research on historical and contemporary examples of character assassination; education for academic and public audiences about character assassination causes, impacts and prevention; and risk assessment to determine vulnerabilities and mitigation strategies for public figures concerned about their reputations.

For more information about the CARP Research lab, check out their website: <https://communication.gmu.edu/research-and-centers/carp/overview>



Character Assassination and Populism:  
Challenges and Responses  
March 15-17, 2019

# FACULTY NEWS

## Dr. Star Muir honored as a Distinguished Teaching Fellow by the Eastern Communication Association

Star Muir, associate professor, teaches and coordinates the writing-intensive course for communication majors, rhetorical theory and criticism. He was honored at the association's annual meeting in Providence, Rhode Island this past April.

The award recognizes faculty with a career of teaching excellence in the field of communication.

"Star sets a high bar and challenges his students, but he also provides the necessary support through engaging content, clear instruction, and detailed feedback," said Melissa Broeckelman-Post, associate professor and director of the basic courses in communication. "He has been a pioneer in experimenting with new educational technologies making high-quality learning available in face-to-face, hybrid, and online course contexts."

In addition to teaching, Muir is a leader on campus and in his scholarly field. He is president of the National Communication Association.

"Dr. Star Muir is a valuable member of the Mason community," said Anne Nicotera, professor and chair of communication. "His gifts extend far beyond the classroom. He is a leader in our field and at the university. As he is always helpful and wise, I depend on him for many things, and I am so proud to call him my colleague and friend."



# NEW FACULTY

## Dawn Lowry

A veteran coach of over twenty years, Dawn Lowry is the Director of Forensics. She received her MA from Illinois State University and her bachelors from Northern Illinois University. Although she began her scholastic journey in rhetorical film criticism and mass media studies, she has since moved in mass communication among social movements, particularly in the area of peace rhetoric. As a Forensics educator, she's passionate about growing students holistically, creating engaged speakers who can succeed both in and out of the competition arena.



## Mallory Saleson

Mallory Saleson a communication and media specialist with extensive experience as a broadcast journalist. Saleson began her journalism career at Voice of America. From overnight shift news writer, she moved on to domestic reporter, then foreign correspondent, and finally to newsroom deputy director with responsibility for more than 50 correspondents across the globe. She covered a broad range of issues over nearly two decades at VOA in Washington, D.C., Europe, and southern Africa, reporting first-hand some of the most compelling stories of our time.

She earned a MSc. in Journalism from Boston University's School of Public Communication and a BA in Russian Studies from University of Wisconsin.



The Department of  
Communication  
would like to  
formally welcome  
two new faculty  
members to the  
GMU COMM Family!  
**Dawn Lowry and  
Mallory Saleson.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 2, 2019: **Coming Together in the Age of Division: Social Media, Civic Engagement and the Future of American Participatory Democracy Symposium**, hosted by The Department of Communication, Insight Committee, and the Association of Americans for Civic Responsibility, George Mason University, Merten Hall 1201
- October 22, 2019: **The 9th Annual Communication Career Forum: "Find Your Future"**, hosted by the Department of Communication and Insight Committee, George Mason University, the HUB Ballroom
- November 14 - 17, 2019: **National Communication Association (NCA) Conference**, Baltimore, Maryland
- Spring 2020: **Arts, Communication, and Design Internship and Career Fair**, TBD
- Spring 2020: **Virginia Association of Communication Arts and Sciences (VACAS) Conference, "Communication & Identity"**, George Mason University, Johnson Center

## Links and Information:

### Faculty Directory:

[https://communication.gmu.edu/people/full\\_time\\_faculty](https://communication.gmu.edu/people/full_time_faculty)

### COMM Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/gmucommadvising?ref=hl>

### COMM Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/MasonCommDept>

### COMM Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/masoncomm/>

**Donate Button "Give button" on our main website:**

<https://communication.gmu.edu/>

**Join the Society/Update us:**

email [medmond3@gmu.edu](mailto:medmond3@gmu.edu)

## ANNOUNCING VACAS 2020

### COMMUNICATION & IDENTITY

Spring 2020  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, VA  
Website: [vacas.gmu.edu](http://vacas.gmu.edu)  
Contact: [vacas@gmu.edu](mailto:vacas@gmu.edu)

