

The Inside Track

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ABOUT THE COVER

Frostburg State University is the first in the state to have a Grass Valley Switcher; see article on page 7.



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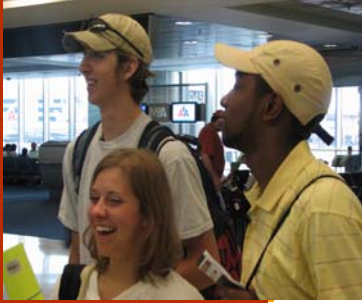
New Editing Lab

This year, the Department of Mass Communication acquired some much needed new equipment. Every year Frostburg State University generates money through the student technology fee. And every year, the Department submits a wish list to the Dean's Office. Unlike years past, the Department received signifi-

cant funding. The funding allowed the department to purchase seven Mac G5s and peripherals for editing video footage using the latest edition of Final Cut Pro Studio. In addition, the Department was able to purchase NTSC video monitors and wide screen LCD computer monitors. These purchases have allowed the Department to

create an 11-station video editing lab located in OM 204. A new LCD overhead projector hooked into the editing system allows for better class instruction. In addition to the new editing equipment, the Department purchased five more Canon GL2 digital video cameras and high quality microphones. With the new cameras and the
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To Miami and Puerto Rico We Go



Bobby Bonser,
Amanda Demler and
Eric Bibbs

The goal of the podcasting initiative is to give students the opportunity to work in a rapidly growing mode of delivering media content ...

It's not everyday you get to take a tour through a tropical rainforest or meet the executive producer of a television show. But thanks to *Roadtrip Frostburg*, students have been given the opportunity to travel and meet people who are truly passionate about their careers.

"I think it's great for students to be involved with this program. It's a powerful reminder to pursue a career that is mean-

ingful to them," said professor Tom Bowling.

The idea for *Roadtrip Frostburg* actually began with *Roadtrip Nation*, a documentary filmed by three young men who, upon graduating from college, toured the nation interviewing people to find out what inspires them to be successful.

"I had found out about what they (*Roadtrip Nation*) were doing and then read an article about

Frostburg alumni Greg Garcia, the executive producer of *My Name is Earl*. I thought, 'Why don't we, as a university, fund our own *Roadtrip*?' And we got all kind of support for it," said Bowling.

And that's how it all began.

This semester, senior Eric Bibbs and sophomores Amanda Demler and Bobby Bonser traveled to Miami and Puerto (continued p. 5)

Message from the Chair

Much has happened since our last Newsletter. The Department has made major curriculum changes, has received a significant infusion of new equipment, has begun exploring new initiatives, has hired a new faculty member, and lost an adjunct faculty member.

During the latter

portion of the spring semester, the Department of Mass Communication received some sad news. Mr. Edward Mallory passed away. Mr. Mallory had been affiliated with the Department of Mass Communication for several years and served in a variety of functions.

Mr. Mallory spent many years in Hollywood where he held several on-screen television roles. Later in his life, Mr. Mallory was involved in the production of documentary projects for such cable channels as A&E and the History Channel. While at FSU, Mr. Mallory (continued p. 3)

The Launch of *FSU This Week*

Eight students, one anchor, and a whole lot of news. This isn't your typical college class.

Under the direction of artist in residence Tom Lewis, Mass Communication 490 students have recently launched *FSU This Week*, the 15-minute maga-

zine show that covers a variety of campus topics.

"The show's designed to give students a feel for working at a small television station," said Lewis. "Students learn to think and act like news people."

The studio and fieldwork not only keeps

the students busy, but also gives them great hands on experience. Conducting interviews, shooting footage, and editing the show brings together a combination of communication skills and challenges the students to manage their time wisely.

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Message from the Chair (Continued)

Mr. Mallory served as an Artist in Residence and an adjunct instructor. As Artist in Residence, he created one documentary and made significant progress toward the completion of a second. Mr. Mallory also taught several classes for the Department. Ed Mallory was 76.

While the Department is saddened by the passing of Ed Mallory, there are many positive things occurring within the Department. Beginning with the fall 2007 catalog, MCOM majors noticed a significant difference within the major curriculum requirements. The old MCOM major required a total of 54 credit hours. The "new" major requires 39. For students who follow the 2007-2009 Undergraduate Catalog, CMST 102, COSC 100, ART 207, ENGL 336, MCOM 316, and MCOM 336 is no longer required. A new class, MCOM 246 (Mass Communication Research) has been added to the curriculum. These courses were dropped as core requirements not because they lack value, but because the Department feels these classes are better used as part of a professional focus. In other words, these courses are more specific in nature and, therefore, do not need to be required of all MCOM majors.

Another change to the MCOM curriculum involves the professional focus requirement. Students still must take a total of 12 credit hours to satisfy the professional focus requirement, but the number of options has increased. Professional focus categories will include "Web Management", "Events Planning", "Audio Production", "Video Production", "Media Management", "Media Marketing", "Multimedia Design", and others. Students will also have the option of undertaking one of several minors such as Graphic Design, Journalism, Public Relations, Leadership Studies, Marketing, or Communication Studies as a means of satisfying the professional focus requirement. As always, students will still be allowed to create their own professional focus, but this

must be done with permission from the Chair prior to students earning 90 credit hours. The purpose of this change is to help students recognize the wide array of choices within the field of mass communication while also requiring them to seriously think about their professional focus before they get too far along in the program.

The Department of Mass Communication has begun discussing the creation of a podcasting "channel". "Radio Free Frostburg" is the tentative name for the Department's podcasting initiative. The goal of the podcasting initiative is to give students the opportunity to work in a rapidly growing mode of delivering media content while at the same time helping to showcase the work that Department faculty, staff, and students produce on a regular basis.

Another initiative that is underway has to do with the issue of sustainability. Mr. Tom Lewis, the Department's Artist in Residence, is currently planning a conference to discuss issues of sustainability. Global warming, security threats, threats to our food supply, aging national infrastructure, and dependence on quickly eroding resources such as fossil fuel should be cause for concern for everyone. The power of the mass media is such that we can, if we do it properly, bring important information to large groups of people. Practical solutions are available. Mr. Lewis has spent many years studying these issues and will be bringing nationally known speakers to campus to help present information on this important topic.

Each year the Department submits a request for new equipment. This year's request was met with considerable support. The Dean recommended this year's equipment request be fully funded. The Department received enough digital video editing equipment to create an 11 station Final Cut Pro lab in Old Main. Each

station should be equipped with a high speed Mac G5, a flat panel wide-screen computer monitor, an NTSC monitor, speakers, microphone, DV-tape deck, and the full Final Cut Pro editing suite. In addition, the Department received five new Canon GL2s giving us a total of 10, new NTSC monitors for the TV studio, and a new graphics/still store package for the TV studio. Our next step will be to move toward HD video production.

The influx of video equipment coincided with the arrival of our new faculty member, Micheal McAlexander. Micheal will be very involved in moving our video production program forward. He has spent many years in L.A. and Hollywood; he holds an MFA from the University of Southern California and has taught at Cal. State-Fullerton and a university in Thailand. He has had a screenplay optioned by Paramount and has worked with representatives from some of Hollywood's leading production houses including Lucas film, Ltd, Twentieth Century Fox, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Warner Bros, the Walt Disney Company, and others. His experience in documentary production, online gaming, writing, and digital convergence will surely help our program better serve our students, the University, and the surrounding communities.

As you can see, the Department of Mass Communication has been busy. It continues to be my pleasure serving our faculty and students. As always, I invite your feedback and wish you nothing but success.

John Lombardi

FSU This Week (continued)

"The course gives you a real world perspective on how things are organized," videographer Marty Leibold explains. "You're actually the creator and producer of each piece. You go out in the field and make it work."

But the show also teaches students to think fast on their feet. It's about problem solving and getting the show on air even when something unexpected pops up.

"You have to be prepared for anything. Students learn that get-

ting in touch with people isn't easy. Sometimes you just can't get that interview, but you have to have a backup plan," said Lewis.

"You have to do your share of the work no matter what," agrees Producer Liz Gilpin. "Everybody depends on you to get your story done. If you don't, then we can't put the show together."

Despite the chaos, the students still manage to have

fun while learning.

"The fact that it's our show is awesome. It's something we've created and set the standard for," said Leibold

"Anyone interested in radio or broadcast journalism should really consider taking this class," said Lewis. "It's a good introduction to the work force and an excellent way to get on the job training without actually being on the job."



Professor Tom Lewis overseeing taping of FSU This Week

"Do you remember way back when you were so happy to see snow?"

Tyra Talks

It is late autumn in the mountains. Do you remember way back when you were so happy to see snow? This is a reflective time. We have come a long way in the department since 1988. Wasn't there something special about that old Compton building? There was a time that my classes were *moon*ed through the windows at the end of Compton. Of course, we watched plenty of people ride their bicycles down the steps. Some fun-loving students even turned around to come back and wave to all of us suffocating inside the room. Those were the days of no air conditioning and yet, Mass Communication majors triumphed. We also suffocated in winter, because of the boiler running full blast. The radio station, WFWM filled the room that once belonged to coaches in the athletic department. The production lab was the place where a washer and dryer were once housed to clean up athletic uniforms. We loved to share space. Do you remember Mr. Bob McCarthy and Dr. Kay Walsh? Dr. Walsh put together the first studio in the costume area of the theater side in Compton. Did you have a Fundies class with Mr. Parnes? I'm sure you remember Joan Holliday. That was back in the days when people actually

typed on a typewriter, and she was the one that helped you get through all of your tight spots. She retired this past summer. We sure did have wonderful end of the year celebrations where all of the students got to practice their table manners!

We were also anxious to move to the Performing Arts Center in 1992. When it finally happened, we were fortunate enough to have built-in equipment. Then all of a sudden, we realized the control box better be locked up. And we never knew if the system in the ceiling was going to work, but it looked really good. So did Page "Tom" Shanklin, who was not just a Mass Communication major. He loved theater. We recently celebrated his graduation a little bit late. To commemorate his 1996 departure from the University, we asked everyone in the Middle East to lay down their weapons and clap their hands in honor of Tom. We also gave him a big round of applause. He is doing so well as a pharmaceutical rep, husband, and father of two children. Congratulations Tom! In the 90s, we were joined by Dr. Lindsay Pack and Dr. Sarah Reagan. The new building proved to be too

much for Mass Communication to handle. In 1999, we moved up the mountain to the older Guild Center. By the year 2000, we were established as our own independent department. We still had trouble with equipment, but we had a lot more of it.

What decade do you remember? Change is inevitable, but I'm glad that so many of you participated in the evolution of the program. We lost some people along the way. Mr. Howard Parnes passed away, and there is a small memorial on the grounds of the Performing Arts Center in his honor. Dr. Gary Cook was the department chair when Mass Communication began. He and his wife, Janet attended all of the functions in the department. He retired. Janet recently died of breast cancer. Both Howard and Janet are separated from us, but not forgotten. Mr. McCarthy, Drs. Walsh and Reagan moved on. Micheal McAlexander is our newest addition. I'm still here, and applauding everything you do. Keep in touch!

Tyra

To Miami and Puerto Rico We Go by Kimberly Robertson



Rico and interviewed a variety of people including health professionals, a music composer, and a world-renowned chef.

“My favorite activity was visiting the Rainforest with Dr. Eddie Laboy Nieves, Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences and FSU Alumni. He was able to show us first hand what he has chosen to do with his life. We could see how passionate he is about teaching and learned something about

Bonser, Demler, and Bibbs in the Rainforest

the environment as well,” said Demler. Prior to *Roadtrip Frostburg*, Demler, like many college students, was intimidated by the thought of life after college. She felt that she needed to know exactly what kind of career she wanted to pursue.

“Many of the people we interviewed said they were in their 30’s or 40’s before realizing what their real passion was. After going on this trip, I feel more confident in finding my own passion and not feeling the pressure of confining myself to one idea,” she explained.

Overall, everyone had an amazing experience this year.

“It surpassed all my expectations,” said Bowling. “I was struck

by how eager these professionals were to talk and share their ideas and advice to our students. They really provided all of us with some helpful insights on how to be successful.”

“It was really inspirational to hear people say they love their job and look forward to going to work everyday. You just don’t hear that very often,” added Bibbs. “I took the opportunity to get inspired and I know I came back a different person.”

For more information about *Roadtrip Frostburg*, contact 301-687-4311 or stop by Hitchins Administrative Building Room 116.

New Programming Has Arrived by Melanie Lombardi



FSU TV3 has added Annenberg Educational Programming to its programming line up. The [Annenberg Channel](#) is a free satellite channel for schools, colleges, libraries, public broadcasting stations, public access channels, and other non-

commercial community agencies.

Shows airing on TV3 include *Democracy in America*, *Earth Revealed*, *American Cinema*, and *Exploring the World of Music*. We will be adding additional shows as the semester progresses.

For more information about the shows TV3 is airing, log onto <http://www.frostburg.edu/dept/mcom/channel3/programmingoutside.htm> or Annenberg’s website <http://www.learner.org/index.html>.

Your Help Is Needed

The Department of Mass Communication continues to find itself in need of your help. Due to state-wide budget cuts, our operating expenses far exceed our budget. We are asking students, alumni, friends and families for tax deductible donations to help us to continue teaching our students at the level we have strived to achieve.

Your donation can be mailed to: Department of Mass Communication, Frostburg State University, 101 Braddock Road, Frostburg, MD 21532. Make your check payable to *FSU Foundation MCOM 460*. You can also make an on-line donation at <http://alumni.frostburg.edu/>. Under [Get Involved](#), click on “make gift online.” From there just follow the direc-

tions for a totally secure transaction. You must designate your gift go the Department of Mass Communication.

We would greatly appreciate any help you could give us. Again your gift is tax deductible and will go to help current and future Mass Communication students achieve the experience they need to be successful in today’s world.

Grass Valley Switcher Acquired



Our new Grass Valley Switcher

Paris, France/Nevada City, Calif. -- Frostburg State University has purchased a Grass Valley™ Indigo™ AV Mixer from Thomson (Euronext Paris: 18453; NYSE: TMS) for its Department of Mass Communication to support the production of a wide variety of programming seen via cable TV throughout the area. Frostburg State University, a comprehensive regional university that serves as an educational and cultural center for Western Maryland, is one of 13 institutions in the University System of Maryland.

The Grass Valley Indigo AV Mixer will be installed in the university's on-campus TV studio, where students will use it to combine multiple camera feeds, audio sources and graphics elements in the

production of a educational access cable newscast, as well as sporting events, student government meetings, and specialty programs within the university. The department also records the monthly Frostburg City Council meetings, which are televised across the campus and the surrounding region.

"The intuitive interface and easily accessible features of the Indigo make it easy to train students," said Dr. John J. Lombardi, Chair and Associate Professor of the University's Department of Mass Communication. "The AV Mixer, with its full feature set and compact size, also offers the institution great value."

Regional Grass Valley reseller Washington Professional Systems, located in Wheaton, MD, supplied the Indigo AV Mixer. The

AV system provider also maintains an engineering facility in Mount Laurel, NJ.

With more than 20 similar installations at educational facilities worldwide, the Grass Valley Indigo AV Mixer combines features normally found in high-quality video production switchers, presentation mixers, and audio mixers. Designed for Pro AV applications, the Indigo provides video up- and down-conversion, the ability to mix in high-resolution PC graphics from any DVI-I source, advanced audio mixing, and automated device playback and control via industry-standard connections. It accepts analog and digital, standard- and high-definition (SD/HD) video and audio inputs (including embedded audio in SDI), plus high-resolution computer inputs.

*...the FCC
frequently fined
Infinity
Broadcasting for
alleged indecency
on Howard Stern's
program.*

Alumni Spotlight *By Stephanie Thornton*

Jillian King is an alumni of the Mass Communication program here at Frostburg State University. She graduated in May 2005 and already she has gained experience working with radio, TV, and the recording industry. She is now working at the Rachael Ray Show in New York City. Her job at the show entails “booking guests to be on the show. I work with everyone from stay at home mom’s to “A” list celebrities. I also pitch ideas for upcoming shows. I’m in charge of all the logistics for my producing team,” she said. Jillian moved to New York City in hopes of finding a career, “I figured I just need to get up here and see what happens. I thought I wanted to be in the music industry so I started out as an A&R talent scout for Island/Def Jam records,” she said. However she realized the music business can be harsh, so she aimed for something else. Fortunately,

her mother knew Rachael Ray and sent her Jillian’s resume. “Rachael passed on my resume to the executives here and I was called in for an interview,” Jillian said.

As for her thoughts on the Mass Communication program at Frostburg, “I believe the Mass Communication program at FSU is what you make it. If you take advantage of every opportunity they provide you will have great resume material and experience for the work place,” she said. She attributes her success here to Dr. Lombardi and Dr. Phipps. “[Dr. Lombardi] is always trying to invent a new way for the students to gain experience,” she said. “Dr. Phipps also impacted me to change my major. I took her Intro to MCOM class and loved it. She showed us videos of “Yes Dear” the show written by Gregory Thomas Garcia, Frostburg alumni. It showed me that you didn’t need to go to a big

school to be a huge success in the industry,” she said. She offered some advice for Mass Communication majors soon to graduate. Her top three pieces of advice were “never burn a bridge,” “think big and big things will happen,” and “get involved at school.” When Jillian was at school here she was involved with the UPC, “I planned student concerts such as Maroon5 and Doobie Brothers. It was that experience that got me a lot of interviews when I moved out to New York,” she said.

In the future Jillian would like to try working with movies. She feels she has gained experience with every other aspect of Mass Communications. “I think I would like to get into movies eventually. The best thing about working at a huge show like Rachael Ray is the connections you make. All of my co-workers come from other shows and backgrounds,” she said.

New Major’s View *By Stephanie Thornton*

Brett Fox is a new student at Frostburg State University; he’s a self proclaimed “Fourth year junior.” He plans to stay here for two years to take “just a slew of Mass Communication courses,” and to “learn as much as the department has to offer,” he said.

Fox is originally from Silver Spring, which is where he lived while attending University of Maryland – College Park for his first three years in college, gaining most of his GEP credits. At UMCP, Fox tried majoring in Engineering, but “Calculus II and Chemistry convinced me I wasn’t an engineer,” he said.

His interest in Mass Communication developed during High School, while attending Montgom-

ery Blair High School. Fox took a television news class and was also a member of their Communication Arts program. After he determined he wasn’t an engineer at UMCP, Fox decided making the move to Frostburg State University wouldn’t be tough. “I’d heard a lot about the Mass Communication program . . . about how easy it would be to get involved quickly with the TV station and radio,” he said. This semester he is doing a practicum for a radio show next semester, he’s taking a couple different video production classes, and volunteering for FSU-TV3. “It’s impressive how quickly I’ve gotten involved,” he said.

Video production is his focus and main interest, but “it’s best to be well-rounded,” he said. He

hopes to get involved with television somehow after his time at Frostburg State University.

As far as his social life, “editing schoolwork in the lab” is a main hobby for Fox this semester. Although schoolwork has kept him busy, in his free time he likes to play video games and watch football (he misses the Division I football at UMCP). He lives in Edgewood and he feels he’s gotten a chance to be more social this semester since he’s no longer living at home. He describes UMCP as “Bigger, busier . . . irritating.” With a smaller campus, more intimate classroom settings, and involving Mass Communication program, Fox is sure to get an enriching experience at Frostburg State University.



New equipment in editing lab

New Editing Lab (continued from page 1)

new editing equipment, "the quality (of the footage) is incredible!" said Melanie Lombardi, FSU-TV3 manager.

Maybe the most impressive new piece of equipment is the new digital video switcher located in the TV studio. The Department purchased Grass Valley's Indigo AV Mixer. This allows students to combine multiple camera feeds, audio sources, and graphics elements in in-studio productions. "It has all sorts of bells and whistles!" said Lombardi, including chroma-keying capabilities. The Department of Mass Communica-

tion was one of the first to purchase this new switcher. As a result, several industry magazines, such as *AV in Education*, *Campus Technology*, and *Professional AV*, have published articles about FSU's Department of Mass Communication.

Other TV studio upgrades include a chroma-key wall and a new air conditioning system. Dr. John Lombardi, Chair of the Department says, "The new equipment and the attention to the Department will allow us to better serve and prepare our students. It is hoped that

more equipment can be acquired in the coming months so that we can continue to grow our program."

The new equipment is changing the Department for the better. Professor Micheal McAlexander, a new professor in the Department, is working on developing new classes and new opportunities for Mass Communication students. Dr. Lombardi hopes that these new offerings will move the program even further and draw interest from perspective students in the region and beyond.

New Faculty Member by Stephanie Thornton

Micheal McAlexander is not only new to Frostburg State University and teaching full-time, but he is also new to the east coast. McAlexander grew up and attended school in Southern California. He has lived and worked "all over Southern California," he said. He received his Master's of Film Production from the University of Southern California – Irvine.

His original goal was to "be the next Steven Spielberg or George Lucas," he said. He has always had an interest in television and film, but he originally wanted to be an actor. Before finishing at USC-Irvine, he worked in Hollywood for years at

various places. Some of his jobs included video production, talent casting, and audience research. Today he is still screenwriting and even plans on incorporating it into upcoming classes at Frostburg State University. He originally started teaching under an Entertainment Studies program in Fullerton, California part-time. He also teaches at Ram Kom Haeng University in Bangkok, Thailand once a year. Full-time opportunities came up in Frostburg and in Kansas City. He decided to give the east coast a try, "They offered a tenure track, and it sounded like an adventure . . . after 26 years in L.A. there are attractions to a small town. It's

quiet, peaceful, the cost of living is lower," he explained. "If I need a big city experience I've got D.C. or Pittsburgh."

As for the Mass Communication department at Frostburg, "I have lots of goals," he said. He is working on two new classes – a television screen writing class for Fall '08 and an episodic TV show production class for Spring '09.

This semester he has taken over MCOM 105 – Intro to Mass Communication, MCOM 311 – Single Camera Production, MCOM 212 – Video Production Industry, and MCOM 185 – Electronic Media Aesthetics and Criticism.

His original goal was to "be the next Steven Spielberg or George Lucas"

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Mission Statement

We believe that higher education should prepare students for not only career success, but also civic success. Ultimately the department seeks to stimulate intellectual curiosity, imagination, rational thinking, thoughtful expression, and independent learning. These are the skills necessary for success in any mass communication related field. In order to allow students to acquire these skills the Department of Mass Communication couples hands-on experiences with theoretical course work. The department supports a strong program of co-curricular, extracurricular and internship activities which further helps students to gain an understanding of the role of our discipline in society. Students who complete the program should possess a broad understanding of the foundations of our field and acquire an in-depth knowledge of at least one area of concentration.



Editing Lab being utilized by students