Internships
Faculty Hobbies
K-State 2025 Plan
Diversity in Journalism
ROTC students use degrees in military careers
Welcome to the Spring 2015 edition of Update magazine!

I would like to start my welcome remarks by congratulating Dr. Joye Gordon and Dr. Barbara DeSanto for reaching a major milestone in their academic careers. After an extensive internal and external review of their respective academic achievements, President Kirk Schulz accepted Provost April Mason's recommendation that Dr. Gordon be promoted from associate to full professor and Dr. DeSanto be promoted from assistant to associate professor with tenure. Both promotions will be effective August 2015. We are very proud of their accomplishments. Their contributions to strengthening our academic unit are invaluable.

With three faculty searches going on this year, the spring semester turned out to be extremely busy for our faculty, staff, and students as we hosted eight finalists for on-campus interviews. Our collective efforts to fill these faculty positions by the end of this academic year have almost come to fruition. At the time of writing this column, a written offer was extended and accepted by the winning finalist for the PR/AD assistant professor position. A verbal offer was extended and accepted by the winning finalist for the R.M. Seaton Professional Journalism Chair. The search for the Ross Beach Chair position, which is handled by the dean's office, is not yet completed.

For the first time in the A.O. Miller School's history, we inducted five advertising students into Alpha Delta Sigma: Kathryn Beemer, Taylor Cabine, Kelly Myers, Elizabeth Reichert, and Kathryn Silva. ADS is a national honor society, sponsored by the American Advertising Federation. It was founded in 1913 at the University of Missouri. ADS recognizes outstanding scholastic achievement in advertising studies. Congratulations to the best of the best advertising students!

For a detailed story on this year's student awards that were presented at the Honors Banquet on April 24, please see story on page 25.

In an effort to strengthen our partnership with Fort Riley, four faculty members volunteered again to teach a special class, one per month, on the post: Kelly Furnas discussed interviewing techniques; Tom Hallaq demonstrated how to use a press release for broadcast; Bonnie Bressers covered how to prepare for an interview; and Steve Wol gast talked about writing concisely and editing tightly.

Our annual Professionals Day, organized by Gloria Freeland, was a big success. We changed the format this year to better serve our students. To get a prospective employer's undivided attention, students sat down for a 30-minute face-to-face "interview" for which they had to sign up prior to the event. This allowed for more extended and meaningful conversations than networking while walking around the room. It featured more than 30 employers and attracted almost 100 students looking for jobs.

In an effort to revive student-mentoring with JMC alumni, several members of the JMC National Advisory Council volunteered their time and expertise during an informal Mentoring Night with students on April 23. This event complemented the Professionals Day very well.

At the Kansas Professional Communicators conference in Salina, Gloria Freeland was named the Kansas Communicator of Achievement. State winners move up to the National Federation of Press Women, where the national winner will be announced in Anchorage, Alaska, in September. Congratulations, Gloria!

Each spring, K-State's Housing and Dining Services recognizes educators for their outstanding commitment to students and academics. On-campus residents nominate their favorite Professor of the Year who has made a difference in their lives both inside and outside the classroom. We were pleased to learn that our own Steve Smethers was among the nominees this year. Thank you, Steve, for your dedicated service to helping students. Congratulations!

Moving forward, always in purple,

Wassmuth@k-state.edu

From the director

Birgit Wassmuth

Sequence update

Advertising
The newest addition to the advertising sequence is the requirement for all advertising majors to complete an internship. A committee is looking into a new professional development opportunity for students within the advertising sequence. This opportunity would include the School inviting a representative from a prestigious advertising portfolio school. This representative would spend a short time with students in the advertising sequence and the Ad Club and provide them insightful knowledge and guidance.

Public Relations
For the last two January intersessions, Associate Professor Barbara DeSanto took students from the public relations sequence to Costa Rica and worked in conjunction with the University of Costa Rica and Costa Rica Department of Tourism. The summer of 2015, DeSanto will lead an international public relations team of undergraduate students to the United Kingdom for a course in collaboration with the University of Chester.

The public relations sequence is also excited to recognize students who had the opportunity to have a prestigious and unique public relations internship experience. Sydney Pugh, senior, interned with the FBI in Washington D.C., Reghan Tank, senior, interned with Southwest Airline in Dallas, Texas.

Journalism and Digital Media
By Fall 2015, the faculty would like to have a restructured curriculum for the journalism and digital media sequence. This curriculum would ideally reflect on the new trends seen in the professional world of journalism and digital media.
Things you may not have known

By Kelly Myers

The Collegian was first published in 1896, and the first online version was made available in 1994.

The Domestic Science building was built in 1898 and was later renamed Kedzie Hall in 1902.

The first Royal Purple was published in 1909.

The first graduate degree from the department was granted to Mariam Dexter in 1933.

Public relations and advertising were originally a part of the journalism program. The radio and television sequence were not added until 1967. The print and electronic journalism sequences were combined into journalism and digital media focus in 2009.

Carl Miller's financial gift resulted in the elevation of the department of journalism to a school and naming it the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications in 1989.

Bob Dole Hall was completed in 1994.

In 2009, The A.Q. Miller School received the University Outstanding Unit Award for Enhancing Diversity.

Journalism education started in the Department of Technical Journalism.

Kedzie Hall once had the campus’ largest honeycomb in its walls. The honeycomb, made by bees, was discovered after the remodel of Kedzie’s basement.

There is a bat that occasionally comes out to fly on the second floor in Kedzie Hall. There is no proof as to whether it is the same bat each time.
Director discusses K-State's 2025 plans

By Connor Hunt

Sitting behind her scattered but organized desk, wearing Kansas State University purple from head to toe and thin wire rim glasses, is Dr. Birgit Wassmuth. As the director of the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, Wassmuth oversees the future of the A.Q. Miller School at K-State.

Over the past few years, K-State President Kirk Schulz has promoted the 2025 Visionary Plan. The overall goal of this plan is to have K-State recognized as one of the nation's Top 50 Public Research Universities by 2025.

“ar university strategic plan is never done – it evolves as the university adapts to changing circumstances,” Schulz said.

With this plan, each college at K-State was required to prepare its own strategic plan that will complement the university’s overall goals.

Wassmuth and the JMC faculty and staff have big plans to improve the A.Q. Miller School.

Research plays a major aspect in the overall 2025 Visionary Plan. Faculty in the A.Q. Miller School are researching topics of technology, cognitive research and brain waves, crisis communication, health communication, community involvement and more.

There are also plans to work with the upcoming National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, which is coming to K-State’s campus.

Wassmuth said faculty members are prepared to continue and redirect their research with whatever is evolving in the community.

The current sequences offered are Advertising, Journalism & Digital Media and Public Relations. Currently, the largest sequence is public relations.

In the future, Wassmuth said she can see the journalism and digital media sequence becoming just “journalism.” She said students in this sequence work digitally anyway.

Wassmuth said she is currently working on “trying to anticipate the future of journalism” to see what types of classes will be added to each individual sequence.

Another aspect of the 2025 Visionary Plan is the globalization of education at K-State, said Wassmuth. Dr. Barbara DeSanto, associate professor in the public relations sequence, has been offering a Costa Rican tourism study abroad class during the winter intersession period. During this trip, students work with a university in Costa Rica, along with companies involved in tourism, to create campaigns for the companies. Since Kansas, after WWII.

JMC faculty and staff are working to “define what they need in order to be a leading journalism school in the nation,” said Wassmuth.

She said there are currently talks of a renovation of Kedzie Hall, an expansion of Dole Hall or a new building in order to meet the needs of the increase in student enrollment.

Different classes, organizations and clubs associated with the A.Q. Miller School are located in four buildings across campus.

By the year 2025, Wassmuth said she hopes to have all journalism and mass communications-related activities under one roof. She said ideally this would include a galleria, improved working space for students, an updated area for The Collegian Media Group, conference rooms, a TV studio, space for KSDB Radio Station and room for student organizations.

Wassmuth said a second floor terrace and even the possibility of a coffee shop would be nice additions.

Wassmuth hopes this would attract additional students and allow current students to have better resources.

“I’m very excited for what the 2025 Plan has in store for the JMC school,” said Ryan Haxton, junior in public relations.

“It’ll help us become even more competitive with nearby schools and better prepare students for all kinds of jobs in the communications world.”

Wassmuth sees the plan as a checklist for the A.Q. Miller School and as a building block for future plans.

Overall, Wassmuth says the A.Q. Miller School’s 2025 Visionary Plan is a “very do-able and manageable plan.”
Employers offer one-on-one interviews at networking event

Career advice given at Professionals Day

By Ashlee Wolters

The Kansas State Union Ballroom was filled with enthusiastic, well-dressed students preparing to meet with potential employers on March 6 for the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications Professionals Day.

More than 30 employers, including the American Jazz Museum, the Flint Hills Discovery Center, Kansas First News, the Salina Journal and Sullivan Higdon & Sink, were available to discuss internship and career opportunities, critique resumes and give career advice.

The A.Q. Miller School, Career and Employment Services and the Society of Professional Journalists sponsored this event.

Gloria Freeland, coordinator of the A.Q. Miller School’s internship program, began the annual event in 2003.

“The JMC School initially had several years where Professionals Day was primarily for journalism-focused employers. Later, the A.Q. Miller School partnered with the Staley School of Leadership Studies nonprofit focus and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. It was only three to four years ago that the school decided to switch back to solely JMC,” Freeland said.

This year’s JMC Professionals Day also came with a new feature. Students were offered the opportunity to set up 30-minute one-on-one interviews with employers.

“Networking night is more informal compared to the interviews. If you stop to talk to them at a table, there’s most likely five other people behind you, whereas if you actually have a sign-up time where you get 30 minutes with that person, you don’t have to worry about other people waiting. I think it’s better for the employer and the student,” Freeland said.

Freeland said she has received numerous positive feedback on the one-on-one interviews from students and employers.

“I think this event is really important for students to understand what employers are seeking and how we can continue to refine our skills in the journalism sequence. I think it’s really important for students to meet with employers and get the interview practice, as well as really highlight their skills,” Leah Hill, senior in public relations, said.

Other students, such as Rafael Ramos, junior in public relations, used this time to meet with people he had already connected with. He said he was hoping to make a lasting impression.

“You got to do your research and reach out to these people before you came here,” Ramos said.

He said that way, they already know who you are, and they are expecting you.

“I talked to Jordan Rogers with InkInc. PR where I applied and was in contact with him a couple of weeks ago. He was waiting for me to show up. I talked to him, and we’re totally bros. He invited me to come over to Kansas City and talk with him at his office. Bottom line, if you talk to these people beforehand, they’ll expect you and instead of awkwardly breaking the ice for the first five minutes you can bro out and definitely get a job,” Ramos said.

JMC Professionals Day also allows employers to seek talented, hard-working interns.

Jess Rezac, development manager and “Jazz Notes” editor at the American Jazz Museum, said the quality of interns at K-State is better than any other programs she has been to.

Hill came back to the JMC Professionals Day to connect with the employer she interned with last summer.

“I visited with her and checked out what she was doing and what interns she was looking for. She said she was excited to come back to K-State because they had a really pleasant experience with me as an intern last year and are looking for further K-State undergrads to intern at the radio station,” Hill said.

“You should come to this event because it helps you enhance your professional skills whether you are looking for a job or an internship or you just want to meet people,” Katie Good, senior in public relations, said.

Royal Purple Yearbook up for award

By Ana Carolina Santos

Collegian Media Group’s Royal Purple Yearbook is up for a Pacemaker Award, one of the major awards for college publications. The award is given out by the Associated Collegiate Press, which recently announced the Royal Purple as one of the finalists.

The Royal Purple won this award for the first time in 1936. It has been nominated for the Pacemaker Award numerous times.

With the theme “emerge,” this yearbook was made by some of the best and the brightest students in Kedzie Hall, according to Kelly Furnas, last year’s adviser for the yearbook.

The staff consisted of 11 students with different functions: three staff writers, one photo editor, one associate editor, two marketing staff, one copy editor, one production manager, one assistant editor and one editor-in-chief.

“The students who worked the yearbook were incredibly hardworking, passionate students,” Furnas said.

He said the yearbook production is a year-long process.

With more than 300 pages, the yearbook features many profiles, stories and photos of K-State students. Furnas said quality control is a key element when putting the book together, since “the entire book is as weak as the worst story or the worst photo.”

The Associated Collegiate Press will announce the winner in October 2015.
By Jessie Pearson

Three sashes hang next to her bedroom door, a tiara sits on top of her dresser and a small collection of books about black history lines her bookshelf.

For Raychel Gadson, senior in public relations, winning the title of Miss Black and Gold at the 16th annual Kansas State University Miss Black and Gold pageant was about more than being a beauty queen.

“The purpose of being up there wasn’t just to be beauty queens, but it was about showing the intelligence and charisma, elegance and grace of black women,” Gadson said.

Originally from Manhattan, Kansas, Gadson transferred to K-State from the University of Tampa in August 2013.

That December, she attended the Miss Black and Gold pageant as an audience member for the first time.

“I thought it was just really an awesome show,” Gadson said. “It’s a beautiful production that highlights everything that it’s meant to [highlight] about women.”

After seeing the show, Gadson said she decided to participate in this year’s Miss Black and Gold pageant, which is hosted by K-State’s Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. Although the pageant is primarily meant to highlight black women, women of any race are allowed to participate.

Gadson said participants started preparing for the show in September. They had practices up to three times a week, each of which lasted three to four hours.

During practices, the 11 contestants worked on everything from their entrance into Forum Hall to the choreographed dance that they performed during the pageant. Gadson said they spent the first few practices simply learning how to walk in heels on the steep, carpeted floors of Forum Hall.

“I feel like I’m not probably the kind of girl that you would normally expect to see in a pageant, but the reasons I won make me really proud of it,” Gadson said.

Gadson not only won the title of Miss Black and Gold, but also the titles of Miss GPA, for having the highest GPA out of all the contestants, and Miss Souvenir Book, for selling the most advertisements for the pageant’s souvenir book.

“It wasn’t because I got there, and I was the prettiest girl there. Or that I walked the best in heels. Or I [said] the ‘world peace answer’ the best,” Gadson said. “I actually scored high for being intelligent.”

Gadson said one of the things that made her successful in the pageant is how comfortable she is talking in front of people.

“My personality traits that made me want to be a PR major are the same things that made me comfortable being up there in front of people,” Gadson said.

Gadson enjoys planning, coming up with new ideas and talking with people. She said those are a few of the reasons she enjoys studying public relations.

“PR is challenging for me in all the right ways, because it demands creativity and being willing to think outside the box,” Gadson said.

Gadson said participating in the pageant also helped her figure out how she wanted to use her degree in public relations in her future career.

Because of her involvement in the pageant, Gadson became interested in researching black history and racial issues in America.

“I think that the mentality is still really pervasive all over the country for people to still feel inferior based on skin color,” Gadson said.

She said feeling inferior was a subconscious thought she always had, even as a child. She remembers specific times when she was discriminated against by her peers in high school just because of her skin color.

“My theory was always that we’re all responsible for the way that we think,” Gadson said.

“Where you grew up and what you’ve heard is not an excuse to be ignorant. It’s our responsibility to educate ourselves, to allow ourselves to learn, to be open-minded and be willing to change our viewpoints on things.”

To Gadson, education has always been important.

She graduated high school a year early so that she could spend a year as an exchange student in Sweden. She said she wanted to go to Sweden to expand her knowledge of the world and her understanding of her Swedish heritage.

She is currently educating herself on racial issues so that she can educate others.

After graduating, Gadson wants to work for a university, particularly in an office of diversity or a multi-cultural student office.

She said she wants to dedicate herself to getting as many minority students into college as possible.

“I would love, in my lifetime, if there was a time period where there were more black men in college than in jail,” Gadson said.

Gadson said she always knew she would find some way to make a difference in the world and educating people about racial issues in the U.S. is where she plans to start.

Gadson placed second in the district Miss Black and Gold pageant on March 6, 2015.

In the district competition, she competed against candidates from the University of Kansas and Wichita State University.

“It’s made me more passionate about inspiring young, black women to think more highly of themselves,” Gadson said.
Technology offers journalism students bright futures

A.Q. Miller School makes changes in digital media equipment to help enhance knowledge, skills, learning experiences

By Kelly Myers

Understanding technology in today's society is more than owning a computer or texting on a cell phone. It is more than turning on the radio to listen to a broadcast or sending e-mails on a computer.

From Kedzie Hall to Dole Hall, technology has an impact on the Kansas State University journalism program. The A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications is home to a collection of unique technology.

In Kedzie Hall, public relations, journalism and advertising students use new Mac computers, large monitors and projection screens.

The Mac computers are equipped with Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office and are used by several courses in the JMC program.

Also, equipment, such as video and digital cameras and tripods can be checked out by students and faculty for free. This equipment can be crucial to those who do not have access to such advanced technology.

Students are required to think ahead and check out needed equipment due to limited hours of check out accessibility.

In Dole Hall, broadcast students use mainly donated equipment to run weekly shows run by the journalism students. The equipment dates back as far as the 1980s. More than $100,000 has been invested into the Dole Hall facility in the past two years.

While some equipment from the 1980s continues to be used, none is considered crucial technology.

According to Steve Harvey, an instructor in broadcast journalism, the “technology doesn't matter if there's no content.” Harvey said he is more concerned if the students can construct a decent story with the tools they have. He said having the latest and greatest technology is not necessary if the students cannot produce anything worth filming.

Harvey added older technology would most likely be found in smaller news stations, where many graduates will find themselves working after graduation.

However, Dole Hall also has new technology. An iPad kit has been purchased for the Media Convergence Center to produce live feeds from various locations in the Manhattan area. This allows students to practice live shots just like actual news broadcasts.

Some students enrolled in the A.Q. Miller School believe the technology is outdated but still beneficial.

Som Kandlur, senior in public relations, believes technology enriches his education “only to an extent” because “it’s not being used to its full potential.” He added, “Journalism is all about building the foundations and making sure you’re good with the principles of journalism.”

Kandlur said technology is not being utilized in this way. However, Kandlur said, “as time goes by, technology is going to progress and isn’t going to be consistent.”

Advertising student, Teryn Carmichael, agreed.

“Journalism will always be trying to catch up with technology.”

However, Carmichael said the technology offered here consists of, “things [students] can’t afford such as new computers and cameras,” and “the fact that we’re given the opportunity to use it freely … is a gift.”

As of fall 2014, students were encouraged to purchase computers, and the computer studios that exist will be enhanced. The computer studios will become high-end labs that include equipment over the price of $4,000. This upgrade will be completed by 2017 and by 2018 all students in JMC should be providing their own computers for classroom use.

The computers students are required to purchase must include Microsoft Office Suites, Adobe Creative Suites, QuickTime and Java Runtime Environment.

A majority of students in the program already own laptops and for those who do not own a laptop, rentals will be available.

The A.Q. Miller School puts a lot of thought in how to ensure its students will be prepared for a future in their selected careers. Guaranteeing the correct technology is in place is a responsibility of the technology committee.

According to the chair of the technology committee, Dr. Tom Hallaq, the committee “focuses on technological advances… used within the [A.Q. Miller] School of Journalism and Mass Communications.”

Hallaq said the committee understands the importance of technology and how students look to technology to further their education.

However, he added, with a limited budget that comes from the Instructional Fees Fund, large updates to the technology are difficult to acquire.

The budget available to the committee is based off the previous year's enrollment to the A.Q. Miller School, which has been averaging $20,000 per semester.

Hallaq said the budget “takes care of a lot of day-to-day technological needs. He added when significant upgrades in technology are needed, it’s often difficult to take care of.

Despite having a limited budget, Hallaq said the committee looks forward to bringing new technology to the journalism program.

Hallaq said providing for a generation that is fast-paced, he understands that students will always be looking for something new when it comes to technology.

"Journalism will always be trying to catch up with technology." - Teryn Carmichael
By Brandon Fait

Papers are shuffling, ties are being adjusted. Two students broadcasting the Kansas State University football game are smiling as the director yells, “On in 3, 2, 1. Action.”

One of the two students behind the desk is Tanner Barth, a junior in journalism and digital media with an electronic focus from Holly, Colorado. Barth’s passion for sports has been responsible for his past accomplishments and his future aspirations.

Barth played baseball, football, track and field and also wrestled for Holly High School. However, the one sport that Barth always succeeded in was baseball.

Currently, Barth plays first base for the K-State Club Baseball team and his passion for sports not only burns on the field but in the classroom and professional world as well. In three years at K-State, Barth has earned many accolades for broadcasting sports events.

In 2014, Barth was awarded the Sportscaster of the Year from 91.9 The Wildcat and has undertaken the role of sports director.

To get more experience, Barth also works for 1350 KMAN in Manhattan as a sports broadcaster.

To add to his resume, Barth was awarded first place in play-by-play from the Southeast Broadcast Society.

In 2014, Barth earned the Kansas Association of Broadcasters Student Broadcast award alongside former K-State student and now alumnus John Forsee.

“I believe that a few keys to my success was working hard and never turning down an opportunity that was presented to me,” Barth said.

Barth said he genuinely loves to broadcast and to him, it’s not work but rather something he does out of passion.

“My favorite part of broadcasting is getting to experience the gameday atmosphere, and I also enjoy bringing that atmosphere to my listeners on the air,” Barth explained.

By Ryan Haxton

Walking through Kedzie Hall, there is a sense of greater diversity than ever before. The A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications has taken on the complex matter of working to diversify the school with several efforts gradually showing results.

Enrollment of undergraduate students in spring 2015 shows 18 percent minority students and 61 percent female. This number has grown since fall 2006 when the enrollment was 10.85 percent minority students and 53 percent female students.

“Diversity matters because it’s what makes up the world. We are a small part of a very big puzzle. To me, diversity brings knowledge. People need to know that there is more to the world then just what they experience at home or at school,” said Jasmine Johnson, junior in public relations.

More diversity in the classroom allows for students from all backgrounds to improve self-awareness, promote creative and critical thinking and prepare students for a life in a more global society.

“We are teaching students how to function in a multi-cultural world, made up of people from different backgrounds and different viewpoints. You don’t have to agree with everything that you hear in life, but you need to recognize and appreciate the differences of opinions and background. As communicators your audiences need to see themselves in your products that you create,” said Sam Mwangi, associate professor, A.Q. Miller School.

Increasing diversity can be seen in various ways at the A.Q. Miller School. Diverse Mass Communicators is a student group that aims to provide professional opportunities for diverse students and to promote cultural diversity in mass media.

In addition, classes are offered to students such as MC 531: Media, Race and Social Change, MC 572: International Mass Communications and MC 612: Gender Issues in the Media.

These courses are offered for students to learn more about diversity issues in their respective fields.

“I think we are doing pretty well, in terms of bringing in people who bring a diverse voice to our school. As the faculty adviser for the group, DMC is made up of students who are from multi-cultural backgrounds,” Mwangi said. He said he is pleased with the School’s diversity.

He added, “There is always room for improvement.”

Mwangi said a group of JMC faculty members are currently working on a Diversity Plan for the A.Q. Miller School and are updating and expanding the plan from 2006.
By Ana Carolina Santos

Alix Bilip was born in the sun-kissed country of Cameroon, Africa. However, she now makes the Sunflower State her home while attending Kansas State University.

There were two factors that helped Bilip decide to come to K-State. The first was the K-State purple, one of her favorite colors, and the second was the state's sunflower. Ever since Bilip was a child, she said she considered the sunflower to be the flower of happiness.

Bilip said she considered various aspects when she started looking for U.S. universities to attend. These aspects included a nice place to live and an inexpensive and secure location with balanced weather.

Bilip said she found all of those at K-State by "Googling" it.

She said she was glad to see the courses were well described and straight to the point, so she decided to put K-State as her first option.

She arrived in Kansas three years ago with a bachelor’s degree in journalism and mass communications from her home country and graduated again last May, this time from K-State.

She described getting her bachelor’s degree accepted by K-State as a struggle because of converting her scores to the American grading system.

At first, she said she learned English in Cameroon because even though her home country is officially bilingual, most of the population speaks French instead of English.

"I’m just going to learn and bring the best out of me."

Bilip said she wanted to be just like any other U.S. student. She wanted to feel at home, to know the vocabulary her classmates used and be able to blend in.

She applied as an undergraduate student, but said she was advised by the JMC faculty to “be confident” and apply for her master’s degree.

She is currently a graduate student studying strategic communication, as well as a graduate teaching assistant, and she believes it is all because of how welcoming the faculty is.

For Bilip, life as a K-State student is really different from what she was used to in Cameroon.

She believes it is easier to have high grades here, where there are not a thousand students in the same class.

“You have everything to study, so there is nothing that inhibits you except your will to do so,” she said.

She recalled one time when she scored a perfect grade in one of her classes in Cameroon. The professor made the thousand students who were there clap for her because it was a record.

“It was so embarrassing,” she said.

At K-State, Bilip said she was given the opportunity to improve her skills.

The Sunflower State gave her happiness, she says, and she is really proud she chose to stay at K-State and enjoy the purple pride.

Bilip said she now feels more confident with her skills, her English and herself.

She is not sure what she will be doing in the future, but said she does want to work in the communication field.

“I’m just going to learn and bring the best out of me,” she said.
**K-State experienced by foreign eyes**

By Ana Carolina Santos

Although students describe their experience away from their home university as a semester-long vacation, international journalism and mass communications students at Kansas State University take their studies seriously. There is a lot to do around Manhattan, but there is also a lot to learn.

When Karina Icaza graduated from high school in Paraguay, there was not a doubt in her mind where she would attend college. She came to K-State four years ago and will be graduating in May 2015.

One of Icaza’s favorite things about K-State is the faculty. Icaza said being able to develop relationships with professors and communicate with them, having smaller, more personal classes, is something that does not happen in public universities in Paraguay. Icaza said when she first came to K-State, she thought she was going to have to take certain classes, like her friends back home.

As it turned out, she said she was able to choose her own path and decide what she was interested in.

She decided on advertising and also chose art classes, to help stimulate her creative side.

“It’s not even comparable!” Icaza said.

For Emily Thompson, studying at K-State is definitely different from studying in Australia.

She says the students she has met here are “dedicated to their studies, whereas back in Australia, a lot of students only go to class when they absolutely have to, and even then, if they were offered a shift at work they would choose the shift over class.”

When it comes to classes, Thompson believes “the workload is a lot more, however the content is easier,” and it was something she had to adapt to quickly, since she only stayed at K-State during spring 2015, as an exchange student.

Students like Icaza believe that no matter if they are staying for four years or one semester, K-State allows international students not only to leave with new friendships and memorable experiences, but also academic knowledge.

She confirms it is certainly not a semester-long vacation.

---

**Costa Rica entertains, educates Wildcats**

By Ashlee Wolters

Some students only dream about studying abroad. However, it was a dream come true for journalism and mass communications students who embarked on a faculty-led study abroad seminar to Costa Rica during the January 2015 intersession.

The seminar was led by Assistant Professor of Public Relations, Dr. Barbara DeSanto.

The course allows students to explore the function of public relations in the travel and tourism industry. The class consisted of 12 Kansas State University students in Costa Rica and 22 students working online in the U.S.

“Studying abroad allows you to apply what you’ve learned in the classroom in an international setting,” said Leah Hill, senior in public relations.

Students in Costa Rica were divided into groups among tourism clients from Finca Agropecuaria Queveri (cattle-breeding farm), the bed and breakfast Rinconcito Verde, the museum Museo de Leon Ujarras and Chucaras Hot Springs.

“It was probably the best educational opportunity I’ve ever had. Partnering with another university’s public relations department gives students a new perspective within the field,” said Hill.

Karina Icaza, senior in public relations, worked with Rinconcito Verde, a local Costa Rican bed and breakfast.

“The place was gorgeous,” Icaza said.

“We fixed what they were lacking on the hotel marketing and gave her a manual on how to best utilize her social media and other future suggestions.”

“I made a lot of friends and contacts. I was thinking of working in the Costa Rica Jotabequ Agency, so this was a great opportunity to meet potential employers,” said Icaza.

“International experience tells employers you are willing to step outside your comfort zone,” said DeSanto.

Students in the country were free to explore the country over the weekends. Most students chose to travel to Costa Rica’s pristine, white sand beaches.

“I was with six other girls. I was the only one who spoke Spanish, so there was some misunderstandings on where the beach was. We ended up taking seven hours getting to the beach,” Icaza said.

DeSanto will lead a group of students in the Travel and Tourism course to England in the 2015 summer intersession.

---

K-State students from Queveri Farm pose during the Travel and Tourism seminar in Costa Rica in January 2015, Photo courtesy of Gisella Fernandez
Fitzgerald and Fritchen have teamed up to create an in-depth, unique website covering K-State Athletics, as well as the only magazine in the country dedicated to covering the Wildcats. GoPowercat.com generates millions of page views each month, while Powercat Illustrated draws in thousands of readers from more than five different countries. Fitzgerald was the man who started it all with a leap of faith almost two decades ago. Fritchen was the loyal-friend-turned-colleague who was there at the start and just crazy enough to jump on for the ride.

Today, the two are local celebrities who have realized their dream in sports journalism by doing a little bit of everything.

The 1998 K-State football season was quickly approaching. Fitzgerald was the sports editor at the Salina Journal, but that was quickly going to change.

“I was interested in magazines and covering sports,” Fitzgerald said. “At some point, I got worn out by covering high school track and all that stuff. I wanted to focus on one topic.”

Fitzgerald had experience writing about K-State Athletics for magazines. In 1995, The Wichita Eagle sought him specifically for the purposes of starting a K-State magazine. When that project was sold off to a small company, and when sports editing started taking its toll, Fitzgerald started looking at other options, not at another outlet, but at his own.

The wheels started turning. Fitzgerald researched the landscape of owning his own company, pitched his ideas to investors and, on June 1, 1998, opened the doors at Powercat Illustrated.

Fritchen laughs when he says his colleagues thought he was foolish for turning down a full-time position at one of the largest daily newspapers in the Midwest region.

It was 1999, and Fritchen was preparing to graduate from K-State with a degree in journalism and mass communications with a print focus. He had been with The Kansas City Star as a K-State student correspondent for over a year. However, the company’s post-graduation job offer was covering high school sports in the Kansas City metro area.

“I told them ‘thank you’ for the offer, but I was happy where I was at,” Fritchen said. “That was met with some skepticism. They believed I was crazy for doing that, but I felt it was the right choice for me, for my family.”

Fritchen approached Fitzgerald before the summer of 1998 about contributing to the startup. Having seen his work at The Star and the K-State Collegian, Fitzgerald put Fritchen to work on the magazine and website for a year before Fritchen made the decision to try to go full time with the publication.

“I was really interested in pursuing GoPowercat professionally, and given my love for K-State, Manhattan and writing, I thought it was the perfect marriage.”

The start wasn’t glamorous, but then again, few startups are. The two worked

By Tate Steinlage
With an office in the heart of Aggieville, Tim Fitzgerald has seen more than his fair share of oddities. It’s not unusual to hear a “tap! tap!” on the glass on a Friday or Saturday night, only to be met by a 21-year-old college student who’s had too much to drink. Then, there are the 2 a.m. fights between best friends, lovers and strangers alike, as well as the music pouring out of every bar.

However, the most entertaining and memorable scene for Fitzgerald involved one of his employees and closest friends, D. Scott Fritchen, and a toilet. It’s a story Fitzgerald reimagines as he reflects on his career in sports journalism in the Little Apple. “We moved to Aggieville in 2000. We were painting the front of our office, and there was this toilet leftover from an old theater,” Fitzgerald said. “He (Fritchen) takes this toilet and puts it smack dab in the middle of our front lobby.

By Connor Hunt
On Jan. 22, 2015, President Barack Obama spoke at the University of Kansas and two Kansas State University students were able to cover the speech with press credentials in hand.

Joseph (Joey) Wenberg, senior in public relations, and Alex Khoury, senior in economics, host their own radio show, Bee Bops & Bureaucracy, every Sunday evening. Their show is part of the Wildcat 91.9 KSDB-FM radio station on campus.

“The KSDB-FM mission as a non-commercial educational station, is to provide opportunities for students in all facets of broadcasting. KSDB-FM participant, Joey Wenberg, takes advantage of gaining experience as exemplified by his reporting on President Obama’s Kansas visit for KSDB-FM,” said Vern Wirka, KSDB-FM chief operator and faculty adviser.

When hearing that President Obama was going to be speaking at KU, the students quickly looked to see if they could get press passes. However, they had missed the deadline to apply.

Determined to cover the event, Wenberg contacted the White House where he was redirected multiple times before speaking with someone in the communications department. Wenberg was given an email address to contact.

After sending over Wildcat 91.9 KSDB-FM information, and Wenberg’s and Khoury’s personal information, they received a reply confirming their press credentials.

“We were the only media outlet from K-State to cover President Obama’s speech,” Wenberg said.

After covering this event, Wenberg decided that he wanted to try and cover other events in the Midwest area. For example, Wenberg and Khoury received press passes to South by Southwest, a music festival in Austin, Texas that took place in mid-March.

At South by Southwest, Wenberg and Khoury had full access with no cover charge to all the events going on during the week.

During the spring 2015 semester, Khoury and Wenberg’s show received first place in the Public Affairs Programming category from the 2015 Kansas Association of Broadcasters.

The 1998 K-State football season was quickly approaching. Fitzgerald was the sports editor at the Salina Journal, but that was quickly going to change.

“I was interested in magazines and covering sports,” Fitzgerald said. “At some point, I got worn out by covering high school track and all that stuff. I wanted to focus on one topic.”

Fitzgerald had experience writing about K-State Athletics for magazines. In 1995, The Wichita Eagle sought him specifically for the purposes of starting a K-State magazine. When that project was sold off to a small company, and when sports editing started taking its toll, Fitzgerald started looking at other options, not at another outlet, but at his own.

The wheels started turning. Fitzgerald researched the landscape of owning his own company, pitched his ideas to investors and, on June 1, 1998, opened the doors at Powercat Illustrated.

Fritchen laughs when he says his colleagues thought he was foolish for turning down a full-time position at one of the largest daily newspapers in the Midwest region.

It was 1999, and Fritchen was preparing to graduate from K-State with a degree in journalism and mass communications with a print focus. He had been with The Kansas City Star as a K-State student correspondent for over a year. However, the company’s post-graduation job offer was covering high school sports in the Kansas City metro area.

“I told them ‘thank you’ for the offer, but I was happy where I was at,” Fritchen said. “That was met with some skepticism. They believed I was crazy for doing that, but I felt it was the right choice for me, for my family.”

Fritchen approached Fitzgerald before the summer of 1998 about contributing to the startup. Having seen his work at The Star and the K-State Collegian, Fitzgerald put Fritchen to work on the magazine and website for a year before Fritchen made the decision to try to go full time with the publication.

“I was really interested in pursuing GoPowercat professionally, and given my love for K-State, Manhattan and writing, I thought it was the perfect marriage.”

The start wasn’t glamorous, but then again, few startups are. The two worked
out of Fitzgerald's house for two years. It was a cramped space, but it was their space to produce Powercat Illustrated and, by December 1998, GoPowercat.com.

"He bought in. He saw what it could be and where it was going," Fitzgerald said of Fritchen.

"It all goes back to Tim's vision and what he wants for Kansas State fans across the country and the world," Fritchen said of Fitzgerald.

The two couldn't have picked a better season to kickoff Powercat Illustrated and GoPowercat.com. K-State started the 1998 season 11-0, climbing as high as No. 2 in the country before dropping out of the National Title race with a loss in the Big 12 Championship game.

"The timing was excellent," Fritchen recalled.

Their first season was a catalyst for what was to come. The website was under the Rivals.com umbrella, which was a division of Yahoo! and its multi-million dollar business.

It started out as a free service, as websites drew significant funding from ad revenue. When that changed, the website moved to a subscription-based model that is sold as either a stand-alone product or bundled along with the magazine.

However, Powercat Illustrated and GoPowercat.com have transcended the written word to meet today's media landscape, according to Fitzgerald and Fritchen.

The outlet posts videos from every game to go along with written coverage in the form of recaps, columns and analysis, as well as photos and weekly podcasts.

"Some subscribers would rather listen to the audio or see the video, whereas others' interest may be in reading my in-depth stories or all the recruiting content that we have," Fritchen said. "We try to provide a well-rounded product that covers all the different avenues. I think that's what sets us apart."

In many ways, Fitzgerald and Fritchen are the same people. The two work tirelessly into the wee hours of the morning be it at home or in the Powercat Illustrated offices.

Fitzgerald said there have been countless nights where the two sit across from each other with their office doors closed. With no contact whatsoever, the two type away to hit a deadline for the next magazine or a feature story for the front page of GoPowercat.com.

"I'm the perfect boss for D. Scott. Only people who are self-directed can work for me. I'm not a micromanager," Fitzgerald said.

"D. Scott has never been faulted for working. He's the opposite — you have to get him to go home. The man is not a healthy lifestyle. He goes all night on caffeine and at the end of it this brilliant writing comes out of it. In many ways, he's perfect for me," Fitzgerald said.

Fritchen feels that same sentiment for Fitzgerald.

"I couldn't really ask for anything more in a boss and in a friend...It's been an awesome journey and an awesome relationship."

-D. Scott Fritchen

"I couldn't really ask for anything more in a boss and in a friend...It's been an awesome journey and an awesome relationship."
Music or PR, which will he choose?

By Ashlee Wolters

He writes and performs his own music, has volunteered in Africa, interned in Los Angeles and is finishing up a bachelor of science degree. Senior, Chase Fortune, uses skills obtained from his public relations emphasis to promote his music.

Music has always been part of Fortune’s life. He said his home was filled with musical influences from a young age, and he comes from a family of performers.

“My dad is actually a Willie Nelson impersonator in Dallas, Texas,” Fortune said.

Fortune has been playing music since he was 10 years old and said his dad bought him his first guitar, and taught him how to play the bass. Later, Fortune learned how to play the piano, guitar, percussion and the didgeridoo, a wind instrument developed by indigenous Australians.

“I self-taught myself to learn by reading books,” Fortune said.

He said he has never received formal training on any of his instruments.

Before he became a solo artist, Fortune first performed in his family’s band, known as Fortune. He went on to perform with his high school jazz band. Fortune’s first live solo performance was during his sophomore year in high school when he performed in small, local cafes.

“I dove into my music more in college,” Fortune said.

Fortune now performs live in Wichita, Kansas, Los Angeles, California and Manhattan, Kansas. He has performed at Auntie Mae’s and Kite’s Bar and Grill in Aggieville.

He is a one-man band and orchestrates his set single-handedly.

“(During) my live show I like to combine a lot of different instruments all into one thing and create a really big sound with just one guy. I have a loop station, put all my instruments into it, track it and loop each instrument. I play a piece on an instrument then, loop it,” he said.

Fortune has written 40 songs as well as two albums, “Today” and “Poison in the Well.”

His “Poison in the Well” album is published on the commercial music streaming service, Spotify.

Fortune said he loves music, but he wanted to find a major that he had a passion for and could be good at.

“Music is my number one career choice, but I wanted to have a back-up in something else I was passionate about,” Fortune said. “I’ve always wanted to do something with music, but I know plenty of guys who go out and try to do music. Often it doesn’t work out for them, and they end up working at Guitar Centers for the rest of their lives.”

Fortune said he is launching a new campaign where half of the proceeds made from iTunes downloads and shows will go toward supporting education programs in Uganda, Africa.

He said the donations will help pay for children’s books and tuition.

Fortune is currently looking to further his music career and has been offered a communications job with Tom Shoes, a footwear company, in California.

Professor uses $2.5 million grant for research project

By Ryan Haxton

On top of teaching in the classroom, Associate Professor Nancy Muturi has also stepped into a new environment and has taken on the task of working in the evolving field of health communication.

Muturi serves as the communication specialist on a Kansas State University team that was awarded a $2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.

The five-year study, which began in 2012, aims to improve children’s eating habits in rural areas with a focus on ethnic minorities.

The grant was awarded to K-State in partnership with South Dakota State University and Ohio State University.

All three universities collaborate in research and then implement the efforts in their own respective states and universities.

“We are trying to engage these communities instead of us telling them what to do. We are trying to get the community to come up with ideas that will actually fit and work within their own cultural context,” Muturi said.

Muturi and her team of five graduate students and one undergraduate student launched a campaign in two predominantly Hispanic communities in Meade County, Kansas.
Graduate Program continues to grow

By Kelly Myers

"K-State’s program is perfect because I gain valuable experience in research and in the field” graduate studies, Bethany Quesnell said. The A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications Graduate Program is a growing and collaborative part of Kansas State University and works to engage students on a professional, personal and academic level.

For Quesnell, a Master’s Degree means a “higher education and knowledge.”

The areas students can specialize in for a Master’s Degree are Advertising, Public Relations and Journalism.

The Graduate Program also collaborates with public health and is interested in partnering with the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility. Professor Nancy Muturi said the Graduate Program wants to make NBAF “one of our collaborators.”

NBAF is a bio containment facility that will be built adjacent to Biosecurity Research Institute on K-State's Manhattan campus. The facility will be used to study foreign animals, emerging and zoonotic diseases.

While NBAF will attract scientists to the Manhattan area, journalism will also avail from the addition.

Most important to Muturi and the other professors of the Graduate Program, students need to “determine an area of interest in terms of careers” and then “can look for courses outside the department” (to enroll in) after completing the required courses. “It all depends on what the student is interested in,” she said.

Before students can enroll in the Graduate Program, a handful of requirements must be met. Muturi said the graduate school requires a 3.0 grade point average. Students must also take the Graduate Record Examination. The GRE allows potential students to “demonstrate they can read, reason and understand basic mathematics.”

In addition, students must have graduated with a bachelor’s degree from a four-year accredited college or university. After these steps are completed, students are eligible to apply for the program.

Once a student is enrolled in the Graduate Program, the following tasks need to be achieved in order to earn a Master’s degree. First, students need to complete 30 credit hours in the A.Q. Miller School. Students are allowed to take one or two elective courses outside of the academic world I would not otherwise have,” such as “teaching, doing research and editing for several professors.”

Muturi and the graduate faculty are still aiming to make the Graduate Program the best it can be.

Funds are also important to the program. Muturi said, “If we had more money to support [students], we could help them graduate faster.”

The Graduate Program not only focuses on graduating with a Master's degree, but also enriching the lives of students.

“I feel more included in the community of the A.Q. Miller School, as well as the larger K-State community,” and “have gained valuable experience,” Quesnell said about her experience with the Graduate Program.

The official launch of the campaign was a follow-up to one year of baseline research conducted by the team. The team looked at family lifestyles, access to healthy foods and what children needed to be more physically active.

“We spent the first year actually just doing research and finding out what the communities were like. Once we got the research, we shared the findings with community leaders. We told them what we found in their communities,” Muturi said.

In September 2014, the K-State team and community members took part in a large kick-off event that focused on fun events and activities for the community. The event was designed to excite the kids and took several weeks of planning by the team. To make this campaign successful, K-State students along with Muturi went to the communities for the kick-off event.

“At this point, we actually got students excited about participating in the campaign throughout the year. We got students to sign up to be leaders and in turn empowered the youth to take the leadership. We had more than 100 students sign up and enroll to be a part of the project,” Muturi said.

Currently, the team is staying in contact with community leaders. The communities have taken charge and address issues regarding their youth. The communities are given $5,000 and are allowed to do anything that will help improve the livelihood of the area’s youth.

Muturi said the changes could be environmental changes of the community, nutritional behaviors, school meals and changes within families and the food provided to children. The evaluation process begins September 2015. Muturi plans to continue her leadership in the evaluation process and hopes to publish the team’s findings for other communities across the country to use.
**Nature brings joy**

By Mason Swenson

Imagine a scenic view where you can’t see any man-made structures for miles, but you have the chance of seeing a herd of bison, native plants and wildlife.

There is a vast area located in the Flint Hills of Kansas, just south of Manhattan that offers such a view. It is the Konza Prairie.

“My dream job is taking happy tourists on little nature walks,” Joye Gordon, public relations professor, said with a grin.

Gordon is a docent for the Konza Prairie Biological Station, which is owned jointly by the Nature Conservancy and Kansas State University.

She mainly focuses on adult groups, but also works with guests of K-State and school groups. She said several visitors who come to see the Konza Prairie aren’t from Kansas, or even the United States.

Gordon’s passion for the environment also flows over to her work life.

She said she also plans on writing a book titled *Communications for Environmental Science, a Practical Pro Earth Guide.*

---

**Chef Adams**

By Mason Swenson

Cooking in Professor Bill Adams’ house became a necessity to him when he was growing up.

Adams’ dad couldn’t cook anything except fried eggs, and his mother had a stroke, which left her unable to prepare meals for her family. Adams said because of this, his mother decided all the kids were going to learn how to cook.

Adams smiled recalling his first dish he learned to cook was macaroni and cheese. Although his favorite cuisine to enjoy is Thai, he said he cooks a lot of Danish, German and Southwest food.

“I usually cook when there is somebody to cook for,” Adams said.

Potluck dinners occur in Kedzie Hall, and Adams said he always contributes some of his homemade food items – many from family recipes.

Looking back on his years of cooking, Adams’ favorite meal that was served in Kedzie Hall was a Louisiana Apple Tort made with green and red tabasco sauce.

Recently, Adams made a spiced apple jelly, for the journalism faculty.

---

**Professor chugs along local railroad as car host**

By Mason Swenson

“All Aboard!! Welcome aboard the Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad. We are on our way to Enterprise, Kansas.”

Many students and faculty in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications have hobbies. However, not many people can tell you all about the local excursion railroad in Abilene, Kansas, at least not as much as Steve Smethers, the A.Q. Miller School’s associate director for undergraduate studies.

Smethers volunteers for the Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad, built on the old tracks of the Rock Island Railroad, which served Kansas until 1980 when the line went bankrupt.

He became involved in this hobby through a casual conversation.

Glenda Purkis, director of the Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau, was at Kansas State University recruiting interns for various tourist sites in Abilene, including the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, the Dickinson County Heritage Center and other locations.

While talking to Smethers, Purkis heard him mention that he loves trains and that he planned to go to Baldwin City to ride the excursion train there. She extended an invitation to Smethers to become a car host for the Abilene and Smoky Valley Excursion Train.

“[Steve] is very enthusiastic and a delight to work with,” Mary Jane Oard, director of the Abilene and Smoky Valley Railroad said. “I think he really enjoys visiting with people.”

The distance between Abilene to Enterprise is six miles one way. Traveling by train takes about 35 minutes. The excursion train only travels at 5 to 10 miles per hour.

“You have the time to recite a lot of history about Abilene, Dickinson County, the railroad and transportation in Kansas in that time,” Smethers said. “(I am) one of those tour guys who you run into who can tell the entire history of the railroad.”

While on the train, Smethers takes tickets, is a car host, visits with passengers and answers questions.

“[My favorite part] is being able to bring new passengers in touch with the history of this state,” Smethers said. “I think it is important that people understand just what the railroad did to build Kansas.”

According to the Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad’s website, regular passenger trains run from May through October on Saturdays and Sundays, and train rides cost $15 for adults and $7.50 for kids 3-11. Tickets can be purchased at the depot in Abilene.

Don’t forget to get your ticket punched by the car host.

Photo by Mason Swenson

---

**Update Magazine | Spring 2015 Page 14**
By Mason Swenson

Not many students or faculty of the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications can say they have driven a race car around a Figure 8 track.

Your guesses are also probably wrong as to which faculty member has accomplished this feat. Birgit Wassmuth, director of the A.Q. Miller School, is the one.

Wassmuth said her husband was working on a book on the history of stock car racing and was researching women in racing and women track owners. Her duty was taking the photos that would accompany the book.

Wassmuth, who grew up in Germany, became interested in the world of American stock car racing from then on.

For the book, the couple was able to visit Dale Earnhardt Sr.’s pit stop and garage as guests. It was during a race at Charlotte Motor Speedway Wassmuth gained her personal connection with racing.

After this event, Wassmuth met with Mary Green at Sunshine Speedway in Pinellas Park, Florida, and Kathy Slorah of Dallas County Speedway in Adel, Iowa, and asked questions about racing.

She said Slorah finally asked, “If you’re asking, you probably want to.”

Wassmuth said her reply was, “What do I do?”

“You don’t practice. You just do it,” Slorah told her.

Larry Conklin, Slorah’s boyfriend at the time, built cars. And in Wassmuth’s words “builds good, strong cars.” Wassmuth’s husband got together with Conklin and arranged for a car for Wassmuth for her 50th birthday.

Wassmuth said she went to race three weeks later.

“As insane as it was, it was awesome,” Wassmuth said with a big smile.

The races took place in Adel, Iowa, at the Dallas County Fair Grounds. Wassmuth raced the Figure 8 track.

“During the race, there is no room for nervousness,” Wassmuth said, “(the race requires) total focus.” Wassmuth placed fourth in the Powder-Puff Division race.

“It [racing] has always been in me. You can’t take that away,” Wassmuth said. “I was introduced to a whole new culture of sports and camaraderie.”

During Powder Puff race, Wassmuth leaves competitors in rear view mirror
Baltrip leaves The New York Times to find her home at Kansas State University

By Tate Steinlage

A strong copy editor can pinpoint where a change needs to be made in a story even when it doesn’t make sense to the writer. Each alteration is made with care, not whimsically, with the story’s best interest in mind.

No one understands this better than Kimetris Baltrip. A copy editor by trade, Baltrip pinpointed a change in her own life nearly a decade ago. The decision made little sense to those around her at the time she said. In fact, she believed that to those on the outside, it was a step backward.

But like a good copy editor, Baltrip made the alteration with care, not whimsically, with her own best interest in mind. Her marks usually made in red pen, this time, came in the form of a two-week notice.

Baltrip was leaving The New York Times. She was leaving the one-on-one interviews with the likes of Bill Cosby, Puff Daddy and the mayor of New York City. She was leaving behind the media capital of the world — the bylines, the recognition, the paycheck.

Her colleagues asked why. But for Baltrip — or Dr. Baltrip as they came to find out — the question why was the easiest part. “Because I know who I am,” she said. “Being a reporter is awesome, but it’s not the core of my being.”

The New York Times and Baltrip met over dinner in 2003. Baltrip was a full-time employee for the Houston Chronicle, but her passion was always education. After earning a college degree, Baltrip went back for graduate school. She then completed her Doctorate of Education from the University of Akron and entered the teaching field in Texas. After three years, Baltrip said she felt compelled to leave education to do hands-on journalism work.

“I never felt adequate as a professor because I had never been in the industry,” Baltrip said. “I just felt like the best professors are the ones who can draw from their industry experiences and bring that into the classroom.”

Her first hands-on experience came at the Chronicle editing local, regional and national stories. Though she was no longer officially in education, Baltrip remained close to her profession, regularly leading workshops and speaking to college students.

One specific speaking engagement sent her to Louisiana. It was there, Baltrip ran into an editor at the New York Times. He invited her to dinner and she accepted. However, she said working for the New York Times was not discussed.

That changed months after the encounter. Baltrip received a life-changing email one day at her desk in Houston. It was from the editor, and it simply read, “You interested in working for the Times?” She said it was a no-brainer.

Four days and a stack of stories stood between Baltrip and a position at the New York Times.

Unlike her experience at the Chronicle, in which she was given Associated Press style problems to see if she was suited for the job, Baltrip was handed a folder with seven or more stories needing editing. For four days, seven hours at a time, Baltrip went through the folder, contemplating where commas should go and if words needed capitalizing according to AP and New York Times standards.

“You can’t help but to wonder sometimes if you’re getting it right,” she said. “The pressure of knowing that there’s a New York Times editor who’s going to look at it when all is said and done, and that determines your fate, whether or not they will invite you back.”

She was invited back as a part of the New York Times’ intermediate copy program, which was designed to help copy editors move up through the ranks. At the outlet, copy editors are often reporters too, so Baltrip began working on the education desk. In three years, she moved up the ladder, from education to obituaries to business to metro, the hardest desk to write for, according to Baltrip.

“You’re on at the New York Times,” she said. “After being in industry for two years — only two years — I’d jumped to the New York Times. That was exciting.”

But after those three years, education came calling again.

An adviser/teaching position opened at Kansas State University in 2005. After mulling over her options, Baltrip accepted the position and gave her two-week notice at the New York Times.

“My goal was to stay in industry a total of five years,” Baltrip said. “I wanted to put in a strong three years at the New York Times, but I wanted a position that would give me the best of both worlds. I liked the ability to live vicariously through my students. To teach, because that’s who I was created to be, and being able to be an adviser and coach students through production is just so much fun. When I saw this position at K-State, I said, “Oh my gosh. It’s the perfect position.”

Her passion, she says, was always education, not the New York Times. Those close to Baltrip, including her mother Theresa, knew that well before she left home for the Big Apple.

Baltrip accomplished her goals and more. She believes she experienced industry in a way only a few will ever experience in their lifetime. That experience, now at K-State, is being used to teach a new generation of journalists what is expected of them after college in the real world.

“I think what I learned is how these people aren’t playing, and how high their standards are,” Baltrip said. “I try to have those types of standards in my classroom. For some students, it makes my classes a little demanding, but I have to. I know what the competition is out there and what the demand is out there.”

According to Theresa, that statement is why her daughter left the New York Times. “It’s desire to help others, that’s what motivates her,” Theresa said. “She has a love for helping other people, especially young people like students. She instills value systems into them to get them where they want to be.”
Amateur radio gives unique experience

By Shana Baker

In a small room inside Seaton Hall, a student and a faculty member from the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications are still enjoying the art of amateur radio (a.k.a. ham radio).

James Copeland, freshman in journalism and mass communications and faculty member Vern Wirka have combined their interest with some engineering students to continue a club that has been at Kansas State University for 88 years. The Amateur Radio Club began in 1927 as a Military Affiliated Radio Service with the task of sending messages to soldiers. Today, the club is simply known as the Kansas State Amateur Radio Club and allows any K-State student, staff or faculty member to join. The club is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission and holds the call sign, W0QQQ.

Wirka is an extra class licensed amateur radio operator W0VMP, who has been with the club for four years. As the station manager, Wirka makes sure the equipment remains operational for people to use and helps bring new ideas to life. Wirka explained how his hobby of amateur radio has helped him in his career and in life.

“It really opened the door for me in so many different ways. And it has also enhanced my skills in a lot of different ways. This includes people skills, management skills, leadership skills, as well as the technical skills,” Wirka said.

Radios, both hand-made by students and produced from factories, fill room 401 of Seaton Hall. On the roof located next to the room sit three different types of antennas that allow the radios to connect to people from all over the world.

Copeland serves as president of the Amateur Radio Club and is a general class licensed amateur radio operator KD0ICP.

“In amateur radio, you can learn a lot about electronics, and that’s kind of the field I’m going into, which is broadcast engineering,” said Copeland. “I’ve been a ham radio operator since I was first licensed in 2009. Just through that, I’ve learned a lot about the different radio systems, both some visual systems and the regular voice systems.”

Copeland explained that amateur radio is not only a hobby for him, but it is also a form of emergency communication when all other communication systems fail.

“There are natural disasters all over the world every day and amateur radio is always there as a backup source of communication,” Copeland said.

He added that when an earthquake hit Haiti on Jan. 12, 2010, people first found out about the natural disaster through an amateur radio operator. He had his amateur radio hooked up to a car battery. Due to the destruction of power lines and telephones by the earthquake, amateur radio became a resourceful communication device to alert other countries for aid during this time.

The Federal Communications Commission recently released the total number of amateur radio licenses distributed in the United States. The number, as of the end of 2014, is at a record-breaking high of 726,275 radio licenses.

“It’s just a great way to be able to learn and be able to give something back as well, and that comes in the public service,” said Wirka.

“That’s what the Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations talk about. We do serve in the public interest, and it is an opportunity to be able to give something back in terms of passing on information to the next generation about communications in general.”

Golf drives public relations student

By Shana Baker

Golf is what brought Scotland Preston, senior in public relations, all the way from Mountainside, New Jersey, to the mid-western town of Manhattan, Kansas. Golf has been a huge part of Preston’s life and continues to play a role during her college years.

“The challenge of golf just really drives me,” Preston said. “You can always get better.”

Preston says she inherited the love of the sport from her parents. Both her mother and father played golf in college, and her father is currently a head golf professional. She started learning the sport at the age of 3 and began competing in tournaments when she was 9.

“These were usually like little nine-hole tournaments,” Preston said. “I eventually started playing in 18-hole tournaments and building my way up locally, and then statewide and then nationally.”

Kristen Knight, the head coach of the K-State women’s golf team for the past 20 years, said she has seen Preston as a valuable asset to the team.

“She’s a great team member. She’s highly organized, she puts a lot of time and effort in getting better and improving. That may sound like something obvious, but it’s very important to have in a team member or student athlete,” Knight said. “She does everything that is asked of her, she does it with a smile on her face, and she’s a great student. She’s respected very much by myself and her teammates.”

The K-State women’s golf team practices at Colbert Hills Golf Club in Manhattan. While practicing, the team will be on the golf course practicing techniques such as putting, chipping and driving.

Not only is golf an important aspect of Preston’s life, so is public relations.

“I’ve always loved to write. I was Open Option my first year, and then I started taking some mass communications classes,” Preston said.

“One of my teammates was public relations, and she kind of guided me to it and told me, ‘I love it! You might like it too!’”

Preston hopes to combine golf and public relations after college someday. For now, Preston does not know if she will go pro, but she does hope to stay in athletics.

“I think it’s a great lifetime sport and even if you are not competing you can still enjoy it,” she said. “It’s just a great sport, and it’s a great family sport too.”
Men take 'a cappella' to new octaves

By Danielle Shearin

Cadence /kədنس/ noun: a unique group of 18 Kansas State University men who sing a cappella music, including barbershop, do wop, Disney and many other genres.

Cadence President David Anderson defines the men as a “group of dapper dudes singing some solid tunes and preserving a tradition of a cappella music.”

Founded in 1998, the group encompasses students from all schools within K-State and welcomes all males from freshman year to their graduation. Currently, two students in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications serve as officers. Alongside Anderson, Darrington Clark is the business manager for Cadence.

Clark handles a majority of the behind-the-scenes work including scheduling, budgets and organizing the end-of-semester concerts.

Clark is a senior in the Journalism and Digital Media sequence. During his junior year, Clark was the music manager. He selected music for the group and lead rehearsals and performances.

“I am most interested in pursuing news anchoring and broadcast news in a major market such as New York or Chicago. I am a double major in broadcast journalism and theater, so the ideal situation would be the ability to pursue jobs in both fields,” Clark said.

After working at Bergman Elementary School in Manhattan for two years, helping the school with public relations and communicating with parents, Anderson, a fifth-year senior in public relations, plans to use his degree to make a difference in children’s lives.

“I know I’d love to work with or for a children or youth organization in some capacity. Whether it’s doing PR things for a school district or even running an after school program or youth camp, I just feel like that’s where I’m being called,” Anderson said.

Although Anderson said he was always interested in a cappella music, he sang and participated in other vocal groups such as The Headliners at Butler Community College’s feature Show Choir.

After transferring to K-State, Anderson said he wanted to continue with his passion for music and singing.

“I happened to meet a couple members of the group from the previous year who invited me to auditions, and I guess the rest is rock and roll history,” Anderson said.

Clark said he was involved in small vocal ensembles in high school, but Cadence is the first established group he has sung for.

“I loved the group instantly because of the warm, friendly atmosphere I was surrounded with when I was accepted. Over time, I began to find even stronger reasons to love Cadence, mainly because it is such a diverse and eclectic group of people with the same common goal of entertainment,” Clark said.

The group searches for competitions but in the Midwest, there are few and far between.

Clark recalled a Cadence competition called Mile High Vocal Jam in Denver, Colorado, but said his freshman year at K-State was the final year Vocal Jam was held.

Cadence currently travels performing gigs, but also performs locally around the Manhattan area and K-State community. A recent performance took them to Kansas City.

“For both men, Cadence is more than just a vocal group. “By far, my favorite thing about Cadence is just the chance to get together with a few of my best bros at the end of the day and make some truly amazing music. It makes it all worth it,” Clark said.

“We have a variety of majors that students are in, but the stress from classes is common among us,” Clark said. “Being able to meet for an hour a day each week and seeing the problems each member is dealing with float away as we sing together is probably my favorite Cadence thing.”

“We’re always available for hire and love performing for almost anything and everything. Anyone interested in booking Cadence can email us at cadence.ksu@gmail.com. We’re also on Twitter and Instagram (@CadenceKSU) so our adoring fans can keep up with us on a more regular basis,” Anderson said.
Cheer team boosts strength, endurance

By Jessie Pearson

Alex Roberts, senior in public relations, really wanted to be Willie the Wildcat for his last year of college. He had to let that dream go when tryouts landed on the same weekend he needed to finish final projects and study for exams.

When head cheerleading coach Dannielle Ruoff found out why Roberts had missed tryouts, she made him a deal. Even though he couldn't be Willie, he could be a part of the cheer team if he made it through boot camp in August.

After four days of nine-hour practices in the indoor practice facility during the August heat, Roberts became a part of the Kansas State University cheer team.

"As far as my expectations go, I might as well have not had any, because anything I thought was way off," Roberts said.

Roberts describes the practices as brutal. The cheer team has weights and conditioning practices three times a week, three-hour cheer practices twice a week and an optional open gym practice one night a week.

Joe Cronn, the cheer team's weights and conditioning coach, is also a strength and conditioning coach for the K-State football team.

"He destroys people for a living. I think he drinks our tears for breakfast or something," Roberts said with a laugh.

Even Kelsey Wolf, senior in public relations, who has been involved in tumbling and dance since she was 5 years old, said she didn't know what to expect when she tried out to be a K-State cheerleader as a freshman.

"When I tried out for the team, I didn't really know what I was getting myself into, because I didn't really realize all the extra stuff and all the work that would go into it," Wolf said.

Wolf tried out and made the cheer team all four years of college.

"I really liked to perform, so tumbling and dance were definitely right up my alley," Wolf said.

Unlike Wolf, Shelby Wallace, senior in public relations, doesn't enjoy tumbling as much as she enjoys stunting.

"I'm not much of a tumbler," Wallace said. "For some reason, that scares me. Me standing on the ground and flipping, that freaks me out. But if someone wants to flip me in the air, I'm fine with that."

Wallace, who has also been on the K-State cheer team for all four years of college, said cheerleading is a lot more involved than people tend to think it is.

Besides cheering at games and enduring long practices, the K-State cheer team is also involved in community and university outreach.

Roberts said he has had a blast during his first and only year as a part of the K-State cheer team. He thinks this year has allowed him to grow as a person, develop a "make it better" mentality and believe in himself.

Dual-degree offers ‘best of both worlds’

By Jessie Pearson

Sagan Scates is outgoing and passionate. During her freshman year, she stumbled upon the public relations page of the Kansas State University website, and she knew she had found a major to fit her personality. Scates is now a junior in public relations.

"I wanted to learn how to give a voice to my passions," Scates said.

"To me, that was PR."

Before she decided to study public relations, Scates wanted a solid foundation in her Christian faith. She studied at Manhattan Christian College for two years through the college's Dual-Degree Program.

The Dual-Degree Program allows students to pursue a biblical education at MCC in conjunction with nearly any of the programs at K-State. The vision of MCC is that every graduate is prepared and motivated to "penetrate the world with the gospel of Christ regardless of his or her chosen profession."

"You can kind of get the best of both worlds and really be able to have that well-rounded education that maybe you couldn't get just from going to K-State or get just going to MCC," Jenny Tatman, A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications academic adviser, said.

MCC offers both associate and bachelor's degrees to students in the Dual-Degree Program. Scates graduated from MCC with an associate degree in general studies in May 2014.

"The knowledge that I have learned through my classes at MCC will be something I use every day for the rest of my days," Scates said.

For Julia Hood, sophomore in pre-journalism and mass communications, the Dual-Degree Program is a great way to get a solid foundation before starting full-time at a university.

"I feel like going right into K-State might have been a little overwhelming," Hood said.

Hood said starting at MCC allowed her to explore career options, as well as her faith. She has been able to create friendships in a smaller community, while being able to study Bible and leadership at MCC, she said.

"It's a great package for a Christian to really explore what they want to do and their passions," Hood said.

Hood is currently working toward an associate degree from MCC in Bible and leadership.

Scates feels good about not having to choose whether to get a religious education or a secular education.

"I feel like I am getting the best of both worlds with knowledge about the Bible, my Christian faith and how to be a Christian leader, as well as gaining the knowledge of a secular degree," Scates said.
India trip highlight for Sturgis

By Miranda Phipps

For journalism and mass communications students, volunteer work is probably not thought of as part of their curriculum. But for Kylie Sturgis, volunteering is part of the experience.

Sturgis is a junior in public relations and has a minor in nonprofit leadership.

The Staley School of Leadership Studies offers a focus where students can learn how to work in a nonprofit. She said they do not have to do a lot of volunteer work, but it is encouraged.

“I’m the president of the Nonprofit Leadership Student Association, and we try to learn about nonprofits with service,” Sturgis said.

She said that nonprofit students are required to get an internship with a nonprofit, which is sometimes not easy to find.

Sturgis has already completed her nonprofit internship requirement.

She said she looked for internships online involving her passions of women empowerment and India.

She also started learning Hindi two years ago, to prepare for a trip to India.

“Over the summer, I moved to India. I worked for a rural nongovernmental organization called EduCare India the entire summer,” she said.

“It was definitely challenging. I had a lot of friends who went over there, but I had a very different experience than they did, which was great,” Sturgis said.

She said she’d go back in a heartbeat.

“My friends primarily stayed in bigger cities like Delhi, or Mumbai. They have a lot of western influence that I didn’t necessarily have.”

“I primarily did public relations for the organization, but one of the cool things is they focused on all different things, such as the environment, just sustainability in general, women empowerment, health and education,” Sturgis said.

Recently, Sturgis has started working with the USO at Fort Riley doing social media and public relations.

She also went on an alternative spring break last year to Chicago, working with the Boys & Girls Club. Sturgis said the Boys & Girls Club was the most rewarding experience for her.

“Chicago is a very interesting city, and working with the Boys & Girls Club, I worked with girls ages 8-14 years. They were fun, but they were very challenging,” she said.

“People can sign up, even if you’re not in the Staley School of Leadership Studies, and do [this],” Sturgis said.

“I encourage people to do it before they graduate.”

After being involved with so many different organizations, Sturgis sees herself working for an organization that helps people and better the community.

“But we’ll just have to see where that goes,” she said.

Retirement center becomes new home

By Jessie Pearson

Senior Kelly Iverson and junior Katherine Curtis look and act like normal college students, except they are living in the middle of Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community this semester.

Both students are taking research methods in digital ethnography with Dr. Michael Wesch, associate professor of anthropology. In this class, students learn to use digital technology to specifically show how people living in Meadowlark Hills view society. As journalism and digital media majors, Iverson and Curtis are getting involved in what they call “immersive journalism” by working with their classmates to produce a video game.

“It’s just a different way of telling a story without just showing people,” Iverson said.

“You’re actually allowing them to unfold the story at their own pace.”

In a digital representation of an apartment within Meadowlark, players of the video game will be able to pick up artifacts that allow them to hear audio memories and unlock other artifacts.

“You really think about the little tedious details and all the components that can play into storytelling,” Curtis said.

“We’re working with each other more and not trying to compete [with each other].”

Students in the class have the option of moving into a retirement community, but are not required to live there. Iverson and Curtis live at Meadowlark Hills for free and are given a monthly stipend to spend within the retirement community.

Iverson, likes Meadowlark Hills because it is innovative in long-term care for its residents. She said they try to make it “feel like home as much as possible. We are always talking about how people here aren’t waiting to die,” Iverson said. “They’re just living their life day by day.”

Living in the retirement community has helped Curtis see how many other things she can do with her life, she said. “Living here definitely gives you a very different perspective on life,” Curtis said.
K-State student interns in New York City

Little Apple to Big Apple

By Courtney Nance

“The whole experience was my favorite part. Honestly, I loved the environment, the people, everything,” said Connor Hunt as he sat on the edge of his chair, glowing as he remembered his summer internship. “I don’t even have a least favorite part of the internship because even though it was unpaid, the networking opportunities are totally worth it.”

Hunt traveled to New York City at the beginning of summer 2014 where he interned for 10 weeks for Epic Records under Sony Music Entertainment. It was there he was given the opportunity to work with Meghan Trainor, famous for her song “All About That Bass” along with other artists. Hunt also was able to see how “The Today Show” works.

Hunt’s opportunity to go to “The Today Show” stemmed from his motto while interning: “Say yes to every opportunity that comes your way because you’ll never know who you’ll get to meet through that experience.”

“Every Wednesday that binder went to the head publicist. I had to go into their meetings and basically say, ‘this is what’s going on, this is what you need to know, this is the important stuff.’ I also had to have a digital copy that I sent to them, and they would send this out to the whole company.”

Another responsibility Hunt had included sending tickets to different journalists in various cities. “I was in charge of sending tickets out so journalists could go write reviews of any of Epic’s artists who were on tour,” he said.

As a journalism and mass communications student, Hunt is required to do at least one internship before graduation. Hunt said the process to find an internship can be strenuous.

“Luckily, Hunt’s mom knew someone from college and was able to point him in the right direction.

What started as a small connection ended in a cat and mouse game of emails, phone calls and interviews that landed Hunt in New York City doing what he loves.

“I kind of had a connection with someone at Sony Music,” Hunt said.

“My mom was in journalism and went to college with someone who works there, and they hadn’t talked in years,” Hunt said. He said his mother didn’t even have his contact info.

“All I knew was his name, and that I wanted to be in New York. I reached out to him on LinkedIn, sent him my resume, and he said, ‘yeah, I’ll send it to HR,’ and my resume just trickled down from there.”

Although the internship was unpaid, Hunt said he loved every bit of it.

“There were times I was doing tedious intern work like clipping stuff, but I loved the environment and everyone I worked with. It was a great experience. There was never a day where I thought, I wish I wasn’t here.”

Hunt is originally from Overland Park, Kansas, and is currently a senior in public relations at the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications with an outside interest in geology. He will graduate in May 2015 with plans to move to New York.
Fort Riley welcomes two interns, gives training

By Danielle Shearin

“There is a certain level of excitement I hear in people’s voices when they realize I am a student from K-State,” said Cheyanna Colborn, a senior in public relations at Kansas State University.

Now an intern for the Fort Riley Garrison Public Affairs Office, Colborn was part of the Military Public Relations class offered in fall 2014.

“Military PR class skills and employ and refine them. I may be prejudiced more than a little, but we say Fort Riley is a great place to train soldiers. It is also a great place to train the next generation of military public affairs professionals,” McGee said.

Having always been interested in the military and military history, Schaadt found the internship to be the opportunity he was looking for to get in the field and try it out.

Schaadt has taken photos, written cutlines and short stories, traveled to the field to cover high-tech weapon systems and covered hand-to-hand combat training sessions.

Colborn’s interest has only increased since the first live-fire Field Training Exercise she attended as part of the Military PR class she took from Deb Skidmore.

After the field training, Colborn connected with McGee, sharing her desire to work with the military.

“In Cheyanna’s case, she had already submitted articles to us for use in the newspaper and had an enthusiasm for cross purposing products to various audiences so that more people would hear about the soldiers, civilians and families at Fort Riley,” said McGee.

Colborn said she has found a way to serve her country with the abilities and skills she has learned as a journalist and a student in the Military PR class.

“I want to do military PR as a civilian worker post graduation,” Colborn said.

As a guest speaker in the Military PR class, McGee met both of these students.

McGee encouraged them to “have a passion, and follow it. Learn how to do everything in the career plan, but be an expert in the one thing you have the most passion about.”

Universal Pictures taps into student's talents

By Miranda Phipps

A Kansas State University Wildcat was given the opportunity to work alongside major film industry, Universal Pictures, to promote upcoming feature films around her college campus. Tana Akers, a junior in journalism and mass communications, is a Campus U representative for Universal Pictures.

Last semester, Akers was contacted by Universal Pictures to help market the industry and its movies. There was no long hiring process or need to travel and after confirming her interest with Universal, Akers was sent an internship manual.

“I’m kind of like a satellite intern. All my work is from emails and stuff,” Akers said.

Tom Hallaq, assistant professor for A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, is Akers’ university adviser.

“As an adviser, I advise ways [students] can get unique internship experience outside the boundaries of a classroom,” Hallaq said.

Hallaq believes she will do well in marketing movies. Her first assignment was to market the movie, “Unfriended.”

Along with marketing through social media, Akers said she spread the word through 91.9 KSDB Manhattan on Fridays from 5-6 p.m.

Akers said this internship deals with marketing, which is not her specific field of study.

“Marketing is highly important, and it will certainly help [Akers] gain a better understanding of the entire process of film making,” Hallaq said.

Though she is a “nontraditional” intern now, over the summer Akers said she could have a chance of having a more “traditional” internship experience.

“The best intern for Campus U has the opportunity to go to California for another Universal internship,” Akers said. She is hoping to be the lucky person.
ROTC students put journalism degrees to use in their future military careers

Air Force, Army learners at K-State

By Danielle Shearin

Although the Air Force Reserve Officers’ Training Corps was established between 1920 and 1923, it is still a highly rated program available at Kansas State University. Cadet Capt. Renee Douglas joined the program two years ago and then decided to join the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

“I chose my major based on what I thought I would be good at in the Air Force,” Douglas said.

Douglas has currently been working on incorporating what she has learned in the A.Q. Miller School into her position as the wing Public Affairs Officer.

“I am working on creating a public relations plan for the wing and working on promoting events and helping with recruiting. I am also doing a lot in internal communications for the wing and will be creating a writing guide and cadet book.”

Douglas commented on how the Miller School paralleled what she learned in ROTC.

“I was able to take a Military PR class last semester taught by Deb Skidmore. It was great to take a class that relates to exactly what I want to do. Deb worked at Fort Riley for 30 years so it was great to learn from her experience,” she said.

Similar to the AF ROTC is the Army ROTC. Initially called Student Army Training Corps, ROTC dates back to 1863 when the university was first founded. Cadet Morgan Moxley has taken on the tradition of Army ROTC for the last four years. She comes from a military family, but said she never anticipated joining.

“I tried it my freshman year, I got really involved in the program and loved it,” Moxley said.

“I am in public relations, and I chose PR because I love working with people and the idea of managing information between a business and individuals,” she said.

In her battalion, Moxley has been the PAO and said she has been able to incorporate a great deal of what she has learned in the Miller School into the ROTC program.

“Not everyone is able to write, and it’s so important to be able to correctly do that. They actually have a functional area in the Army called Public Affairs which is the equivalent to public relations. There are also journalists in the Army. I’m not going into anything journalism related right away in the military, but I know that I have a passion for writing, working with people, and I know how to have a crisis management plan because of my PR classes. I definitely think that’s something that I can carry on with me as an officer,” Moxley said.

Neither of the women plan on using their journalism degrees right after college, but hope to use what they have learned and adapt their careers to their degree later on.

“The way the program works, you don’t exactly get to choose. Career fields are assigned based on the needs of the Air Force,” said Douglas about AF ROTC.

She is waiting to hear whether she will be assigned to one of the rated career field assignments which could include flying positions, pilot, combat systems officer, remotely piloted aircraft or air battle manager. If she doesn’t retire from the military, Douglas said she sees herself working in a public affairs setting or doing something with government PR.

On the other hand, Moxley looks forward to being a quartermaster officer, which is a position in logistics.

“Hopefully, later on I can incorporate my public relations major, but I know that I will be writing memos, papers and probably newsletters as an officer. Also being able to speak for an organization to different individuals is PR,” Moxley said.

For students considering ROTC, Douglas said, “There is a lot of paperwork, and the program can be complicated, but it’s worth it.

You go through a lot to get to the other side of Field Training, but when you are going through the same stuff you get really close with other cadets. I will be friends with these guys for life.”

“I’m a big advocate for ROTC. It has made me a better student, a leader, and it gave me more responsibility than the normal college student,” Moxley said.

“This program gives you responsibility, not just for school work. It gives you cadre and other cadets to lean on and if you like to challenge yourself this program is definitely for you,” Moxley said.

Both cadets said ROTC and the A.Q. Miller School challenges them educationally and enhances time management skills.

The women said the programs parallel each other and the skills and assets learned can be reflected in both fields of study.
Internships abound at Disney World

Allie McBrien operates her way through college program

By Courtney Nance

Allie McBrien is a junior studying public relations at the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications at Kansas State University. McBrien interned at Disney World in Orlando, Florida, with the Disney College Program from January to August 2014. McBrien worked around 30 hours a week at the parks, staying only five miles from Disney’s property.

“I usually woke up around 11 and worked 3:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. every day. I operated the ride, helped guests with disabilities and handed out ‘launch cards’ along with checking heights and what not,” McBrien said.

She worked at “Mission: Space,” a simulator thrill ride at Epcot. McBrien had to wear a costume to work every day as part of her job and as a way to simply get into the park.

“You have to show up to work in costume, or you have to have a specific ID to get in. They have great security,” McBrien said.

“People commented on how much they loved our costumes all the time. It was basically a space suit. There were vents in the pants and shoulder pads because of the Florida heat.”

Not only did the job take some getting used to but so did the weather.

“It started getting warm so quickly. It shocked me a little because I went to the beach in February. It also made me remember coming here as a kid,” McBrien said.

McBrien is not a stranger to Disney’s parks by any means.

“My family always went to Disney when I was younger. When I was in about sixth grade, we were at a park, and I saw on a guy’s name tag that along with his name, was his university instead of his hometown.”

The Disney College Program gives the students special name tags that show which university they are from instead of showing their hometown like other employees.

“I asked the guy about his name tag and he explained the program to me. I got so excited and as we were walking away, I told my Dad, I’m going to do that. He said, ‘yeah, okay, sure,’ but hey, I did it.’”

The application process was anything but short, simple or easy though.

McBrien explained the process.

“They have 20,000 people apply and about 5,000 actually get in. You submit an application through the website, then wait and complete a Web interview with questionnaires and at that point you either get a thanks for trying but no, or a phone interview. So I had a phone interview then waited some more.”

A month went by before McBrien got the exciting news.

When McBrien wasn’t working, she was utilizing her free Disney parks pass with her roommates and new coworkers and friends.

“You know how when you go on vacation, you start at 9 in the morning when they open and stay until 10 at night when they close so it’s a full day? For us, it was more like, wake up whenever, then decide which park we felt like going to that day. It was really relaxing because we didn’t have a schedule.”

Along with exploring the parks, McBrien and her roommates also ventured to Miami and various beaches.

“We went to Universal a few times when we got tired of Disney, then went to the beaches whenever we got a chance. One of my roommates is from Miami so we got to spend a weekend there too. It’s a completely different world from here (Kansas) but it was really cool getting to experience a different culture, even if just for a weekend.”

The program also warns the students about some of the less flattering parts of the job.

“The only downfall was repetitiveness but when you apply they warn you about that. They are constantly putting on a show so it makes sense. You can always mix it up with the other cast members though and make it fun.”

The Disney College Program did not let McBrien down though.

“The full time workers would say, ‘oh college kids come through here all the time, it’s no big deal, but Disney made sure to tell us, ‘No, you are important. You were chosen for this, we chose you, and we want to let you know we appreciate your hard work.’ They made a special effort to make us feel valued.”

Along with telling the students they valued them, the Disney College Program also closed an entire portion of their parks for them.

“There was a special event that the college program hosted in May called The Starlit Splash. They had it at the Typhoon Lagoon water park and closed the whole park for us. It started at 9 p.m. and went on until about midnight or so,” McBrien said.

This event was only open to the college program students and included a DJ on the beach which McBrien described as, “a massive beach dance party.”

“They had fireworks to music for us and all the rides were open. It was really fun,” she said.

After graduation, McBrien hopes to go back and work for Disney.

“I want to be in the public relations department for the Walt Disney Company. If you want a professional internship, you have to do the college program first to learn the values of the resort and the company in general. Now that I’ve done it, hopefully after I graduate I can do the internship.”

McBrien said she is passionate about the Walt Disney Company and wants to take her experiences from K-State to the ‘happiest place on Earth,’ Disney World.
Freeland said the event is one she enjoys because it allows her to applaud students who will go on to pave career paths of their own. "It means a lot," Freeland said. "I'm always gratified when students come back and talk to me, send me emails or give me calls. It's very gratifying to see them get out, spread their wings and fly."

The banquet included guest speaker, Tom Milbourn, who has served as a news anchor for FOX 11 News at WLUK-TV, Green Bay, Wisconsin, since 1994. Milbourn, who was born and raised in Manhattan, Kansas, began his career at KMAN at 15 with K-State football highlights and eventually, baseball broadcasts. He graduated from the university in 1968 in business.

"Even at a young age, we can develop roots that will last a lifetime," Milbourn said. "The funny thing about roots is that they can grow in more than one place. For us, it started in Manhattan. It's also been Madison (Wisconsin), Champaign (Illinois) and now Green Bay (Wisconsin)."

"It's what you as students are doing and will continue to do. Just keep in mind as you face the decision ahead of you that none are irreversible, and they will all offer you the opportunity to plant those roots."

Milbourn concluded his speech, which preceded the awards, with a simple message: "If there's one thing I can tell you, it's passion. Find something that you're passionate about and latch onto it."
Benjamin finds her new home as an associate dean

By Brandon Fait
For Dr. Louise Benjamin, the last year has brought big change in her academic career. Benjamin, a former journalism professor turned associate dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences, acknowledges that her new job is different than in-class teaching. Even though her duties and responsibilities have changed, her dedication to student learning has not.

In the fall of 2014, Peter Dorhout, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, contacted her one afternoon telling her that the position was vacant and asked her to consider applying. She did, and she says she feels fortunate to have been offered the job because she believes she can do good things for the school, college and university as an associate dean.

“It’s a very different job from in-class teaching, but my new job involves looking at teaching from a bird’s-eye view and realizing how programs work together.”

As part of her duties as associate dean of Academic Affairs, Benjamin explained that her job also requires her to make sure that students in the College of Arts and Sciences are getting the best education possible.

“My responsibilities are overseeing the undergraduates’ curriculum and expanding international programs, especially the Study Abroad Program or any experience that is going to help them in their careers. In other words, my responsibilities are anything related to curriculum and the academic underpinnings of the university.”

Benjamin said that while she enjoys her current position, she does miss teaching in the classroom.

“I really miss the interaction with students the most. It’s a lot of fun seeing the lights go on when somebody gets it. With this particular job, the fact that I have more of a bird’s-eye view allows me to help with preparation and make changes.”

She also said alumni have just as much impact on the future of students as she does maintaining the curriculum.

Out-of-state students enjoy K-State life

By Miranda Phipps
For several Kansas State University students, their road to becoming a Wildcat has been out of the ordinary.

Allison Thomas, a sophomore in public relations, said leaving Texas for K-State was not an easy decision for her.

“I started looking into K-State because I was eligible for a few scholarships there. I visited a few times to get a feel for it, but still wasn’t really sure where I wanted to go,” Thomas said. She said she also visited Louisiana State University and the University of Oklahoma.

“I definitely liked them a lot when I visited. For LSU, it was just too expensive and for OU, it just didn’t feel quite right,” Thomas said. Though K-State was the farthest choice from home, Thomas decided it was the college for her.

“K-State just really stood out to me. During my visit, they told me all of these things I could get involved in right off the bat, as a freshman,” Thomas said. But she said she wanted to look at the University of Nebraska too.

“They have a really amazing journalism program, but they told me I really wouldn’t be able to get involved until my junior or senior year,” Weers said. K-State’s faster pace for gaining experience was worth the extra tuition she had to pay according to Weers.

Alex Achten, a senior in journalism and mass communications with a focus in digital media, is an unusual out-of-state student. He was born and raised in Kansas City, but when he came to K-State, his parents moved West.

“He was here [in Manhattan] one summer, before my senior year of high school, and so my mom and I took a trip down to see him. While we were here, we drove by the college, and I just thought it was so beautiful,” Weers said. She had not heard of K-State before, but said visiting was eye-opening.

“K-State just really stood out to me. During my visit, they told me all of these things I could get involved in right off the bat, as a freshman,” Weers said. But she said she wanted to look at the University of Nebraska too.

“They have a really amazing journalism program, but they told me I really wouldn’t be able to get involved until my junior or senior year,” Weers said. K-State’s faster pace for gaining experience was worth the extra tuition she had to pay according to Weers.

Alex Achten, a senior in journalism and mass communications with a focus in digital media, is an unusual out-of-state student. He was born and raised in Kansas City, but when he came to K-State, his parents moved West.

“What happened was right when I came here [to K-State] my parents moved out to San Diego, and they have been out there through my whole college career,” Achten said.

“Because my parents have lived [in Kansas] within five years, I still get to pay in-state tuition,” Achten said.

“A lot of my family went here, for starters. My mom didn’t graduate here, but she went here for her sophomore or junior year. My dad did graduate from here. I had a couple other family members who came here, but didn’t graduate,” Achten said. Ultimately, K-State is where he wanted to go, he said.

“My heart was obviously at K-State, and I wasn’t really going to fight it,” Achten said.
Mary Erlanger

Mary Erlanger, 92, graduated from K-State in 1943, in Journalism and Mass Communications major. Upon graduation, Erlanger worked for The Topeka Capital Journal as a reporter for several years. As World War II progressed, she had a desire to do her patriotic duty for the United States. She moved to Massachusetts and attended Smith College Naval Program to become a naval officer. Erlanger also worked for Collier’s Magazine in New York, and CBS in Georgia, as a promotional writer. She lives in a retirement community in Redding, Connecticut, so she can be closer to her children.

ArLene Shoemaker Key

ArLene Shoemaker Key is from the graduating class of 1943. While at Kansas State University, she was on staff with the Collegian from 1941 to 1943. After college, she became the public relations assistant director at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, and she did public relations work at the corporate level in the fashion field in New York and Chicago. During the 1970s, she also became a ghostwriter.

Ken Jennison

Ken Jennison graduated in 1949 and currently resides in Salina, Kansas. He graduated in Journalism and Mass Communications with an emphasis in radio. After graduating, Jennison started working as a copywriter for KSAL in Salina. He then moved into sales for three years and became the assistant manager in 1964. He managed the station for 15 years.

After his work for KSAL, Jennison moved on to work for Eagle Broadcasting in Hays, Kansas. He worked for the corporation for three years. While at Eagle Broadcasting, he helped bring cable television to the area and put four stations on the air. He then moved back to Salina to work for KINA Radio Station and KSKG Radio Station for nine years until he retired.

After retiring, he was invited back to KSAL as the public service director for a group of stations in the Salina Media Group.

Jean Saum

Jean Saum graduated in 1952 and currently resides in Lakewood, Colorado. She graduated in Journalism and Mass Communications with an emphasis in technical journalism. After graduating, Saum studied public relations at Ohio University. From the age of 11 to when she graduated from K-State, Saum worked for the Rooks County Record. She wrote for this weekly publication. Later, she worked for the Hays Daily News in Hays, Kansas. She also worked for the Centennial Newspaper in Lakewood, Colorado, where she was an investigative reporter.

From there, she worked in government-related fields. She was the governmental affairs director of the Jefferson County Board of Realtors, then the press secretary in Washington, D.C. for Congressman Dan Schaefer from Colorado.

Saum returned to Jefferson County in Colorado to work as the director of public information.

Phil Young

Phil Young graduated from Kansas State University in 1959 with a degree in Technical Journalism. He went on to be a copywriter for Consumers Cooperative Association, now known as Farmland Industries, for 36 years.

During his life, Young worked in several aspects of communication including public relations and advertising, and he was published in several farm magazines as well as QST, an amateur radio enthusiast publication.


Donald Goering

Donald Goering graduated with his Technical Journalism degree in 1963. He moved to Iowa for the National Guard where he worked on a newspaper in Denison, Iowa.

Following that, he worked on newspapers in Emporia and Colby, Kansas. He and his wife then moved to Hugoton, Kansas. In 1975, they bought the town’s newspaper, the Hugoton Hermes. The couple ran the newspaper until about five years ago.

Edgar Chamness

Edgar Chamness graduated from Kansas State University in 1967 with a degree in Technical Journalism. He was also an editor for the Collegian, an editor for the university and was a photographer for the Royal Purple. During his career, he was a director of public relations in Wilberforce, Ohio. He is currently retired and enjoying time with his family, which includes two children and 13 grandchildren.

Connie Grafel

Connie Grafel graduated in journalism in 1969. While pursuing her degree, Grafel worked for the Collegian and on the advertising staff for a few of semesters, and also worked for the Royal Purple yearbook for three years. After graduation, she moved to Wisconsin for her husband’s job and later followed him to Pennsylvania. Eventually, they moved to Oberlin, Kansas, where she worked at the Decatur Area Chamber of Commerce. She retired in August 2014, and now she and her husband are farming in the area.

Loren Kruse

Loren Kruse graduated from Kansas State University with a Technical Journalism degree in 1970. At K-State, he worked for the Collegian as an assistant editor, a sports editor and a political editor. He also worked for the “K-State Agriculturalist,” which was first published in 1969. After graduating, he went to work at Oklahoma State University as a 4-H editor and later a science editor.

After his time at Oklahoma State, he went on to work for the Meredith Company for the next 36 years. For 26 years, he was the editor-in-chief of the “Successful Farming Magazine.” Now, Kruse is retired from the journalism scene and is enjoying being a farmer in Iowa.
Margo Vanover Porter
Margo Vanover Porter graduated in 1975 with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communications. Porter is currently doing freelance writing and editing. Her advice to current students is, "Be sure to get an internship. Establish a network of contacts and keep up with your classmates because they might land a prestigious job after graduation and can help you."

Jerry Schnacke
Jerry Schnacke graduated from Kansas State University in 1976. Schnacke started his broadcasting career at the Stuart Broadcasting Group in Lincoln, Nebraska. He worked for 17 years as a market manager for Hubbard Radio in Chicago until he departed the company in April 2014. iHeartMedia recently named Schnacke the vice president of sales for their seven broadcasting stations in the Chicago area.

Matt Hinkin
Kansas State University alumnus, Matt Hinkin graduated in December 1986 in Journalism and Mass Communications with a focus in sports broadcasting. Hinkin currently resides in Knoxville, Tennessee, and has for the past 25 years been the Channel 6 WATE TV as chief meteorologist. His best experiences at K-State include doing play-by-play radio for Manhattan High School football and basketball on KSDB, playing in the K-State Marching Band and singing in the KSU Chorale.

Phil Kellum
Phil Kellum is from the Kansas State University graduating class of 1998. During his time at K-State, Kellum studied electronic journalism at the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications. He was also involved with the Collegian as a reporter and was a part of the campus’s KSDB-FM radio station as a DJ from 1996 to 1998. Now, Kellum lives in Colorado and works for IMM as a direct response copywriter. He made this move in order to further his career and join some fellow Wildcats who are in the area.

Amie Kershner
Amie Kershner graduated in 2001 and currently resides in Washington, D.C. Her major was Journalism and Mass Communications with an emphasis in public relations, political science and women’s studies. A few months after graduating from Kansas State University, Kershner moved to Washington, D.C.

Kershner founded and currently runs AKM Consulting, which is a Democratic political fundraising firm based in Washington, D.C. Kershner was the campaign services director for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee in the 2010 election cycle. Her first paid political job was in 2002 when she moved from D.C. to work for an entity set up to support then-candidate for governor, Kathleen Sebelius.

Dena O’Dell
Dena O’Dell graduated as a nontraditional student from Kansas State University in 2010. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in social science with an emphasis in media relations. O’Dell worked as a reporter and lifestyles editor for the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle before her time at K-State. After this experience, she worked for more than seven years at the Fort Riley Public Affairs Office as a staff writer for the 1st Infantry Division Post newspaper, a public affairs specialist and assistant and acting editor for the newspaper. O’Dell has recently moved to Alaska to begin her job as a public affairs specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Alaska District at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage.

Candace L.T. Walton
Candace L.T. Walton is from the graduating classes of 2000 and 2010. She originally was in the master’s program at the A. Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications and later, decided to pursue her PhD. in counseling and student development. While at K-State, Walton was a part of KSDB and was also a faculty adviser from 1997 to 2005. Now, Walton is the assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Bellevue University in Nebraska. “I have one of the best jobs in the world working at what I love,” Walton said.

Kari Bolton
Kari Bolton graduated in December 2013 with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communications with an emphasis in public relations. Bolton currently works in the marketing and public relations office at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, Kansas. “Do as much as you can before you graduate and take opportunities while you have them,” she said. “Start looking for a job. The sooner the better.”

Kelly McHugh
Kelly McHugh graduated from Kansas State University in spring 2013 with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communications with a print focus. McHugh has quickly become a prominent freelance sports writer locally, regionally and nationally with published work at Sports Illustrated, the Associated Press, Sporting Kansas City, The Huffington Post, Niles Media Group, SportsXchange and more. McHugh regularly produces content for K-State Athletics and K-StateHD.TV. She is the lead writer for the K-State Sports Extra, which provides in-depth feature coverage of K-State Athletics. McHugh resides in Manhattan, Kansas.

Sean Frye
Sean Frye graduated from Kansas State University in spring 2014 with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communications with a print focus. While at K-State, he worked at the K-State Collegian for three years, including a role as the sports editor in fall 2013.

After graduating, Frye accepted a position in Parsons, Kansas, as the sports editor of the Parsons Sun. He has also been with sports media site Bleacher Report for two years. Frye has been an eight-time honorable mention writer for Bleacher Report, which reaches more than 51 million people per month in the U.S. alone. Frye resides in Parsons, Kansas.
The Update Magazine Class consisted of: (Left to Right), Shana Baker, Mason Swenson, Danielle Shearin, Tate Steinlage, Brandon Fait, Ashlee Wolters, Connor Hunt, Kelly Myers, Miranda Phipps, Amazing Instructor Deb Skidmore, Ryan Haxton, Jessie Pearson, Carolina Santos. Not pictured is Courtney Nance.

Photo courtesy of Cassandra Nguyen

Spring 2015 Update Magazine Staff

Shana Baker
Senior from Andover, Kansas, majoring in communication studies and minoring in journalism and mass communications.
“Writing is something that you will have to do no matter what career you plan on pursuing. So why not learn how to do it correctly?”

Brandon Fait
Junior from Delmont, Pennsylvania, majoring in journalism and mass communications.
“I just want to take the time to thank all of our alumni for everything they have done for the JMC School here at K-State. I firmly believe that I’m reaping the benefits from the JMC School because of the alumni who came before me. Best of luck to you all in your future endeavors.”

Ryan Haxton
Junior from Salina, Kansas, with an emphasis in public relations.
“To all alumni of the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, I hope you take the time and enjoy the work our class has put into informing you of the happenings of our school. I know from all of the students who we appreciate and are thankful for any way you give back to the School. Thank you for all you do.”

Connor Hunt
Senior from Overland Park, Kansas, majoring in public relations.
“Working on this magazine has been a great learning opportunity. I am excited to see what future JMC students do with the publication.”

Kelly Myers
Senior from Olathe, Kansas, majoring in advertising.
“Come back and visit the current students in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications. Students love hearing about your experience and appreciate advice and guidance you have!”

Courtney Nance
Sophomore from Wichita, Kansas, majoring in public relations.
“From our home in the J-school to yours. Thanks for reading ‘Update’. EMAW.”

Jessie Pearson
Junior from Meriden, Kansas, majoring in journalism and mass communications.
“You all are awesome! Best wishes to each of you in your careers! Keep dreaming big!”

Miranda Phipps
Senior from Olathe, Kansas, majoring in English with a minor in journalism and mass communications.
“I hope to be successful. K-State has given me many great opportunities, and I don’t want them to be for nothing.”

Ana Carolina Santos
Sophomore from Coimbra, Portugal, majoring as a journalism and mass communications foreign exchange student.
“You made a great decision graduating from K-State!”

Danielle Shearin
Senior from Chanute, Kansas, with an emphasis in public relations.
“I never really knew what I wanted to do until I came to K-State. I found the PR department and I fit right in. I’m lucky to call all these people my family.”

Tate Steinlage
Junior from Sabetha, Kansas, majoring in journalism and mass communications.
“Journalism has been an integral part of my life. I hope to give back through my career in the sports field, and display the values, work ethic and knowledge gained as a student at Kansas State University. My dream is to be a sports beat writer for a national publication, or work in the sports public relations field for a team.”

Mason Swenson
Sophomore from St. George, Kansas, with an emphasis in public relations.
“Thank you all for your constant support and giving to our school. It only improves the education experiences for me and the journalists after me.”

Ashlee Wolters
Senior from Olathe, Kansas, with an emphasis in public relations.
“Thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. It’s nice to see so many of you who were where we are as students and to see where you have gone professionally.”
As a senior graduating in May 2015, Reghan Tank exists Kedzie Hall one last time before starting her journalism career in Colorado. Photo by Mason Swenson