

# spig news

**Fall 2015:** *The official newsletter of the AEJMC Small Programs Interest Group*



*Analisa Novak/Central Connecticut State University*

**CCSU SPJ President Lawrence Clark and Vice President Analisa Novak play “News Jeopardy” to celebrate News Engagement Day.**

## News Engagement more than a trend

SPIG members draw their students into celebration

**By Carrie Buchanan**  
*John Carroll University*

**S**tudents across the country were tweeting and posting about news on Instagram and Facebook, visiting local news media, playing “News Jeopardy” and doing on-the-street interviews Oct. 6 in honor of the second annual News Engagement Day.

Initiated by former AEJMC

president Paula Poindexter in 2014, the day was celebrated in almost 50 states this year and the organizers’ dream of seeing the hashtag #newsengagementday trend on Twitter was achieved at several points during the day.

A number of SPIG members participated with their students that day, so we gathered their ideas and comments for those who might like to participate next year when the day rolls around

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**Pam Parry**

### head notes

## ‘Dalton-Landon’ is how we’ll say ‘service’ now

**By Pam Parry**  
*Eastern Kentucky University*

**T**he Small Programs Interest Group was born in the 1994-1995 academic year. Founders Terry Dalton and Kim Landon petitioned AEJMC in 1994 to initiate this new group.

Once they succeeded, the newly minted SPIG would have a presence on the 1995 program at the AEJMC annual meeting, according to Landon, who recently conveyed our history to me.

Without these two academicians, there would be no SPIG.

That’s why, at the 2015 meeting in San Francisco – 20 years after our first official program – SPIG honored Dalton and Landon by naming a service award after them. The Dalton-Landon Foun-

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**SPIG online:** [aejmc.us/spig/](http://aejmc.us/spig/)

**SPIG’s TJMC journal:** [aejmc.us/spig/journal/](http://aejmc.us/spig/journal/)

## spig profile

# Students, books among joys of new SPIG Head Pam Parry

**W**hat is your current primary job title and employer and what subjects to do you teach?

I am an associate professor of communication and the faculty adviser to Eastern Kentucky University's chapter of PRSSA. I teach public relations and journalism courses.

**Tell me an interesting fact about you.**

I was the fifth starter on the No.1 ranked women's basketball team in the state of Missouri when I was in high school. We went 26-2, with our largest margin of victory being 90-10 against one team. The coach took the starters out early so not to run up the score, but when we got close to a school record, he put us back in. Although we lost at the state tournament, it was a fun year for someone who stands 5'2" tall.

**What was your first job?**

My first job was working for my brothers, Mike and Bob. They are four years and three years older than me, respectively. They mowed several yards in the neighborhood where we lived, and they paid me \$1 a yard to trim or clip around the trees, bushes and other obstacles in the yards. I was about 9 or 10 years old. Eventually, they took better paying jobs, and I inherited the lawn mowing service, which I did throughout high school. Around that same time, my brothers got a paper route, and I also helped them with that. My fascination with newspapers began when we used to go to *The Rolla Daily News* to get our



Jack Zibluk/Southeast Missouri State University

**Pam Parry after officially taking the reins of SPIG during the annual business meeting at AEJMC in San Francisco.**

newspapers and I saw the press running. I was fascinated by it.

**Tell me about your education.**

I am a 1981 graduate of Rolla High School in Rolla, Missouri, where I was born and raised. I left Rolla and drove two hours across the state to attend the University of Missouri's School of Journalism in Columbia. I graduated in 1985 and went to work for a religious newspaper in the state of Missouri. I enjoyed the work so much I earned a master of religious education degree in 1988, and I went to Maryland to be the associate editor of a religious newspaper. After working in journalism and public relations for a while, I decided I wanted to go into teaching. So, I earned my master of arts in communication from American University in Washington, D.C., in 1997 and began adjunct teaching and eventually earned tenure

in 2005 at Belmont University in Nashville. I earned my doctor of philosophy degree in communication, with an emphasis in public relations and media history, from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg in 2013.

**What was your dissertation topic and what is your current research focus?**

My dissertation topic was the public relations strategy of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. My primary argument is that Eisenhower is this nation's most transformative public relations president - not because he was the best practitioner of it but because he did more to transform the profession than any other U.S. president. The dissertation was converted into a book, and it was published in October 2014 by Lexington Books, an imprint of Rowman & Littlefield. It is titled,

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## spig profile

# Parry series examines women

**PROFILE:** Continued from page 2

*Eisenhower: The Public Relations President.*

The publishing experience went so well that my acquisitions editor asked me to consider editing a book series. After some consideration and leg work, I am now co-editing a book series with my dissertation chair, Dr. David R. Davies, on *Women in American Political History*. The first book in the series, titled *Press Portrayals of Women Politicians, 1870s-2000s: From "Lunatic" Woodhull to "Polarizing" Palin* by Dr. Teri Finneman, is scheduled to be published in November 2015. At least five more titles are to follow, including one by me. I am writing a book tentatively titled, *Eisenhower and Gender: Changing the Face of Politics*, to be included in the book series in 2018 (an estimation).

Additionally, I just signed a book contract with Rowman & Littlefield to co-edit a book tentatively titled, *Female Counterparts: Gender, Equity and Survival in the Academy*, with my ECU colleague Dr. Sherwood Thompson. I will be the second editor on the project, which is still in the works.

### What do you like about your job and your workplace?

The students. They keep me motivated, optimistic and forward-thinking. I love ECU students – their passion, curiosity and vivaciousness are infectious – and my best hours in the day are spent in the classroom.

### Tell me something about your personal life.

I am a happy single woman, who loves to spend time with my nine nieces and nephews. They are my greatest joy. I also like going

to movies or bingeing on Netflix, reading biographies and watching sports, particularly the NFL. I also like to golf and play tennis.

### What other significant achievements have you had?

Probably the most exciting thing for me – as a political junkie – is when I appeared on C-SPAN. I spoke last spring at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library about my Eisenhower book, and C-SPAN taped it and later aired it. I've watched hours of C-SPAN, and I found it gratifying that my dissertation led to a book, which led to me being featured on a C-SPAN program.

I also look fondly on my nearly five years in Washington when I covered the U.S. Congress for Baptist News Service, and occasionally got to cover the U.S. Supreme Court and the White House, including participating in a roundtable interview with then-President Bill Clinton in the Oval Office. While in Washington, I also was able to freelance for *The Baltimore Sun* and "The McLaughlin Group" television show.

In terms of teaching, I was honored to be recognized with one of the top teaching awards at Belmont University in 2008, followed by SPIG naming me the Teacher of the Year in 2009.

### What are your personal or professional goals now?

In terms of personal growth, I

**"For me, SPIG represents collegiality at its very best within academe."**

always view myself as a work in progress. I want to do better and I want to be better. I have a sense of peace about my life, but I want to be somewhat unsatisfied with the status quo, so that I can challenge myself to do more.

My professional goals are to be the best teacher I can be and to produce the best book series that I can over the next few years.

### What leadership roles have you had in the AEJMC and the Small Programs Interest Group?

My AEJMC roles have all been within SPIG. I joined SPIG in 2001 and have served in several officer roles. In addition to being Head this year, I served SPIG as Co-Vice Head and I was largely responsible for the programming at the convention in San Francisco. Additionally, I was Teaching Co-Chair three times and a judge for the annual SPIG Teacher of the Year Competition once. I also have been the Secretary twice and a Research Co-Chair once.

### What goal do you have for SPIG?

For me, SPIG represents collegiality at its very best within academe. Those are not just words or platitudes. If we sustain that level of collegiality, then we will have fulfilled the goals of our founders, Terry Dalton and Kim Landon, who founded this organization in 1994.

### If you had to describe yourself, what words would you use?

I am warm, conscientious and often underestimated because I am self-deprecating. But I am strong, resilient and persistent. I love to laugh and spread kindness. I love meeting new people and connections are important to me.

## head notes

# SPIG eyes the future

**HEAD:** *Continued from page 1*

dation Award for Service recognizes SPIG members who have provided exemplary service to the organization. It will not be given annually, but only when SPIG members deem someone worthy.

SPIG members voted that the first recipient should be Richard D. Hendrickson, who retired from John Carroll University but continues to teach part time for JCU, UCLA Extension and Cal State Northridge. Hendrickson tirelessly and adeptly edited our organization's newsletter, and he has stepped down as of the 2015 annual meeting. It seemed both fitting and historically significant to honor him at this, our 20th year of annual meetings.

Dick, your contribution is immensely appreciated. There was no better way to convey that sentiment than for members to honor you as the first recipient of the Dalton-Landon Foundation Award for Service. Congratulations, friend!!!

In addition to recognizing our founders and one of our significant contributors, SPIG members adopted a proposal from the Head and Co-Vice Heads to adjust the

leadership of the organization.

The members voted to adjust the top three offices to create a succession of service and an executive committee. Previously, SPIG has had a Head and two Co-Vice Heads, and they were elected as people were available to serve. They did not automatically succeed to the next office, as officers do in some organizations.

Last year's Head and Co-Vice Heads – Wally Metts, Doug Mendenhall and myself – believed that it would help with continuity to have a Second Vice Head, First Vice Head, with each moving to the next job up the ladder the next year. Thus, when someone becomes Head, he or she will have been a Vice Head twice before ascending to that role.

Additionally, the members agreed to institute a new officer position of Immediate Past Head to help with continuity. Although incoming officers often would consult with a previous Head if needed, we created an officer role for the outgoing Head to formalize that practice.

So, SPIG now has an executive committee of officers, comprised of the Head, First Vice Head, Sec-



**Wally Metts completes his year as SPIG head with recognition from the incoming Pam Parry.**

ond Vice Head and Immediate Past Head. We believe this is really a nuanced approach to what we were already doing, but that it might provide stability and continuity to the officer positions. Members voted unanimously for this change.

You can see a complete list of the officers for 2015-2016 below and on our website at this link: <http://aejmc.us/spig/officers/>.

I look forward to working with each and every one of you in the upcoming year, as we continue the collegiality of our founders.

## spig leaders for 2015-16

### Head

Pam Parry, Eastern Kentucky,  
[pamela.parry@eku.edu](mailto:pamela.parry@eku.edu), 615-566-9918

### First Vice Head

Doug Mendenhall, Abilene Christian,  
[doug.mendenhall@acu.edu](mailto:doug.mendenhall@acu.edu)

### Second Vice Head

Sonya DiPalma, UNC Asheville, [sdipalma@unca.edu](mailto:sdipalma@unca.edu)

### Immediate Past Head

Wally Metts, Spring Arbor, [wmetts@abor.edu](mailto:wmetts@abor.edu)

### Secretary

Cindy Simoneau, Southern Connecticut State,  
[simoneauc1@southernct.edu](mailto:simoneauc1@southernct.edu)

### Research Committee Co-Chairs

John Jenks, Dominican, [jjenks@dom.edu](mailto:jjenks@dom.edu)  
Jackie Incollingo, Rider, [jincollingo@rider.edu](mailto:jincollingo@rider.edu)

### Teaching Committee/TOY Co-Chairs

Elizabeth Atwood, Hood, [atwood@hood.edu](mailto:atwood@hood.edu)

### PF&R Committee Co-Chairs

Michael A. Longinow, Biola,  
[michael.longinow@biola.edu](mailto:michael.longinow@biola.edu)  
Katherine Orloff, Hood, [orloff@hood.edu](mailto:orloff@hood.edu)

### Newsletter Co-Editors

Carrie Buchanan, John Carroll,  
[c.m.buchanan@mac.com](mailto:c.m.buchanan@mac.com) [Editorial Content]  
Doug Mendenhall, Abilene Christian,  
[doug.mendenhall@acu.edu](mailto:doug.mendenhall@acu.edu) [Design and Layout]

### Commission on Status of Women

Sandra Combs, Arkansas State,  
[scombs@astate.edu](mailto:scombs@astate.edu)

### Web site

Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State,  
[mitzi.lewis@mwsu.edu](mailto:mitzi.lewis@mwsu.edu)

### Listserv

Brian Steffen, Simpson College,  
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### Membership

Cindy Simoneau, Southern Connecticut State,  
[simoneauc1@southernct.edu](mailto:simoneauc1@southernct.edu)  
Michael Ray Smith, Palm Beach Atlantic  
University, [michael.smith2@pba.edu](mailto:michael.smith2@pba.edu)

### Social Media Co-Chairs

Jodie Gil, Southern Connecticut State,  
[gilj4@southernct.edu](mailto:gilj4@southernct.edu)

### GIFT Liaisons

Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan, [kcolley@txwes.edu](mailto:kcolley@txwes.edu)  
Mary Jean Land, Georgia College and State  
University, [maryjean.land@gcsu.edu](mailto:maryjean.land@gcsu.edu)

### Hot Topics Liaison

Jack Zibluk, SE Missouri State, [jzibluk@semo.edu](mailto:jzibluk@semo.edu)

### Commission on Status of Minorities

Lona Cobb, Winston-Salem St., [cobblowssu.edu](mailto:cobblowssu.edu)

### Special Promotions

Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan, [kcolley@txwes.edu](mailto:kcolley@txwes.edu)

## news engagement day

# Engagement fills social media

**NEWS:** Continued from page 1

again.

"We had class discussion and social media assignments. Our campus SPJ chapter recruited and played News Jeopardy in the Student Center. Answer a question, get candy," said Vivian Martin of Central Connecticut State University. They also posted pictures on Facebook and Instagram to share these activities with the world.

Students in the entry-level journalism course at Stonehill College in Massachusetts were given a number of Twitter exercises to do throughout the day. These included requirements to tweet:

- a photo of people reading the campus paper,
- a photo of someone watching TV news,
- a news event of the day (with the link) and why people should care,
- a story from a newspaper site, a television site, a radio site and an online news site such as the Huffington Post or Politico, and
- one story about why journalism matters.

"It was a very simple, day-long assignment to encourage students to look at the world – and news – a little bit differently. The students seemed to enjoy it – especially when their tweets were retweeted by AEJMC," said Maureen Boyle of Stonehill.

"The goal was to get students to search out a wide range of news stories from different outlets, show how others are viewing the news and encourage students to engage in social media to spread the message."

At John Carroll University in Ohio, introductory television students in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and



Carrie Buchanan/John Carroll University

**JCU students and faculty listen and ask questions as reporters from the Northeast Ohio Media Group discuss their experiences in journalism, on a visit to the NEOMG newsroom Oct. 1 in observance of News Engagement Day.**

Theatre Arts produced a video of on-the-street (or rather, in-the-halls) interviews, asking fellow students how they get their news. The video is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/YEscvZhrnk8>.

Another group of John Carroll students visited the Northeast Ohio Media Group – the online news organization that has taken over the former *Plain Dealer* newsroom – a few days before Oct. 6, where they spoke at length to several reporters and columnists, including one of their own recent graduates. Pictures from the event were tweeted and posted by the students Oct. 6 with thanks to the journalists who shared their experiences on that day.

It was fitting for student journalists at *The Carroll News* that News Engagement Day fell on a Tuesday, their deadline night. So they posted and tweeted as they worked.

At Hood College in Maryland, "We did a Twitter contest. We asked students to pick a news story and tweet it. The student who received the most re-tweets with

the hashtag #HoodNED was to win a gift card to the college bookstore," said Donna Bertazzoni.

"We ended up with two students who were literally neck-and-neck with re-tweets so we honored them as first and second place winners and put a picture up on our Communication Arts program Facebook page."

As Boyle mentioned, students felt encouraged when their tweets were picked up and retweeted by the national News Engagement Day team. One such tweet, featuring a photo that was typical of the day's events, ended up at the top of the list of tweets on the national website. It features John Carroll senior Mary Ellen Riley and professor Sara Stashower, following the online action on a cell phone. It can be viewed at <https://instagram.com/p/8oTgjnHmWn/>.

Carrie Buchanan is an assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, near Cleveland, Ohio.

## teacher of the year

# Care and concern for students still part of DiPalma's success

By Mitzi Lewis

Midwestern State University

**S**onya Miller DiPalma expressed appreciation for SPIG when she received the group's endowed Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year award at the annual conference in San Francisco.

"My SPIG colleagues have been a source of encouragement, advice and a solid sounding board for research and panel collaborations. Your willingness to share your teaching and advising experience has not only aided my transition into higher education from the business world, but also helped me to become a better teacher and advisor."

She thanked Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller, for whom this endowed award is named, for approaching her at her first AEJMC meeting and inviting her to become a SPIG member.

DiPalma was also quick to credit her students, UNC Asheville's North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness and department colleagues, for being a part of her success.

Twenty-five colleagues attended the award luncheon at the annual AEJMC conference in San Francisco, including DiPalma's former chair, Alan Hantz, and her husband, Frank DiPalma. After the conference, DiPalma answered some questions about teaching.

**How did you become a teacher?**

I started as an adjunct in my late 20s, while working in public relations for the West Virginia Department of Education. I real-



Jack Zublik/Southeast Missouri State University

**Sonya Miller DiPalma receives the Ginger Rudeseal Carter Miller Teacher of the Year award from SPIG head Wally Metts at the luncheon in her honor in San Francisco.**

ly enjoyed the students and knew pretty early that I would hopefully make the transition from public relations practitioner to educator.

**Who inspired you?**

Ruth Butts, my elementary school teacher, is why I teach! I really try to display the kind of care and concern she had for her students with my students. Even though I'm not teaching elementary school, my care and concern for my advisees manifest in similar ways.

**What challenges do you think teachers and students face today?**

Time, resources and money.

**What is the single most important thing you've learned as a teacher?**

Less is more ... way more.

**What advice do you have for other teachers?**

Do not force feed the entire textbook. Again, less is more.

*Mitzi Lewis is an associate professor of mass communication at Midwestern State University and the keeper of the SPIG website.*

## keeping up with tech

# Academia.edu letting readers see what's in our ivory towers

By **Carrie Buchanan**  
John Carroll University

**T**he emails arrive daily – sometimes more than one a day. Someone from South Africa, India, Singapore, Finland, the United States or some other country has just searched for me on Google or Bing, they say, and found one of my papers on Academia.edu.

It's almost always the same paper: my January 2015 publication, "Revisiting the UNESCO debate on a New World Information and Communication Order: Has the NWICO been achieved by other means?" It was published online a few months before it appeared in print. That's when the daily emails started.

Most thrilling to me: In the past 60 days, at the time of writing, people from 16 different countries have visited my page. People from 47 additional countries have visited since I joined Academia.edu a few years ago.

Upon entering academia after a career spanning 25 years in journalism, then moving from Canada to the U.S., I naturally expected to lose my audience, or any large audience. A handful of people would read my articles, I told myself and my journalist friends. I would no longer be a quasi-public figure.

This is really different from what I expected, and it's thrilling. I know I'm not alone in this, either. How many of you are experiencing similar things since the arrival of internet analytics?

I do realize that many of my former colleagues, journalists as well as academics, are getting exposure and recognition they never would have antic-

ipated before the Internet. This trend has really picked up since I left my newspaper job in 2000. Today, journalists actually know where their readers come from and which articles they prefer.

A few details, for those who haven't experienced Academia.edu as yet. I was not allowed to post the actual journal article on my Academia.edu site, which is open to the public, but the journal's rules did say I could post the draft submitted for peer review. In the case of the NWICO article – but not most others I've had published – there was very little difference after the peer reviews because I'd submitted it to a conference beforehand and made significant revisions already.

Since the NWICO paper, as I call it for short, was published online in June 2014 by Telematics & Informatics, the copy I posted has attracted hits from all over the world to my Academia.edu site. That paper alone has had more than 600. The journal has ana-

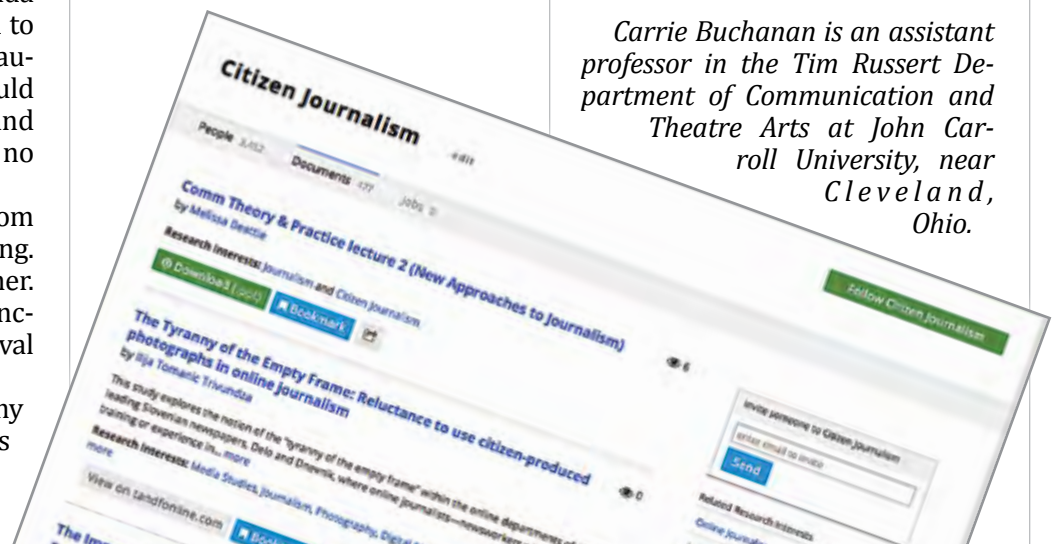
lytics too, and they say hundreds more have read the article in the places they monitor. It is, in my mind, an indicator of interest.

Another of my articles has had more than 100 hits and, because it was based on my dissertation, it attracted readers to that prodigious tome, which I naturally assumed would be read by about a dozen people. The dissertation is up to 125 views, as of this writing. I realize that these are just "views" and not people sitting down to read the entire thing. But it's more attention than I ever expected it to get.

Never would I have anticipated that people from such far-flung places would read my articles. Or that I would become internationally known – not just in the English-speaking world, but far beyond that – even if it's only to a few scholars who care deeply about the UNESCO battles from the 1980s.

As former journalists, I think we all assumed we were retreating to the ivory tower. What a surprise to find our readers are more far-flung and diverse than ever!

*Carrie Buchanan is an assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, near Cleveland, Ohio.*



## spig pre-conference

# Tips can help turn students into multi-faceted storytellers

**By Catherine Strong**  
*Massey University, New Zealand*

**D**igital storytelling educators know that success is more than simply teaching students how to point a smartphone. Some of the more challenging teaching issues were discussed at the AE-JMC 2015 workshop “More Than a Good Story: Methods for Teaching Digital Storytelling.”

Most of the 25 digital media educators at this workshop were fairly experienced, so the conversation could gloss quickly over the basic advice on latest hardware and cheapest software to use in the classroom. The session concentrated on how to help students plan, structure and complete quality digital stories.

Taking time at the beginning of the course to teach students the skill of preparation and project management is key to good digital storytelling, according to the workshop presenters. The second key is to get the students to buy into a large multimedia project as a professional production, rather than simply another student project.

A large class-wide project might have up to 60 interviews and 100 pieces of media, as did this year’s multi-media capstone at Cabrini College, titled “17.5 Million American Households are Food Insecure.”

“How do you get their buy-in? You do, because they know they will have a really, really good product at the end,” said Cabrini’s Cathy Yungmann.

Even before Yungmann’s course started, the students were notified of the topic, making obvious the need for heavy research and sub-



*Catherine Strong/Massey University*

**Presenters of the workshop on teaching digital storytelling from left, back row: Kathleen Webber, Jill Van Wyke and Cathy Yungmann; front row: Jack Zibluk and Dawn Francis.**



ject comprehension. Nonetheless, Yungmann admitted, some students resisted and said, “This is a course on food. I want journalism.”

The 13 students in the course did get onboard and put in the ef-

fort and professionalism needed for such a large university project. View the final website at [www.servingfoodsolutions.com](http://www.servingfoodsolutions.com).

One dynamic scheme used by Yungmann was to treat the classroom as a newsroom, in that students applied and interviewed for jobs in managing the project. One was the project manager, another set up the website, one was a fact checker, etc.

Google docs played a big part in the Cabrini project. Since all work was shared, students had a part to play in ensuring accuracy of ev-

See **STORYTELLERS** on page 9



## spig pre-conference

# Planning can be key to success

**STORYTELLERS:** *From page 8*

ery story. The shared drive also ensured students could see areas of collaboration in the newsmakers they interviewed.

Another Cabrini College digital storytelling educator, Dawn Francis, pointed out that it is easier to develop a productive team environment in Yungmann's year-long course, compared to a shorter, semester-long course. Their college also runs a series of shorter courses that develop the storytelling skills over a longer period. The students produce podcasts "right from the beginning" and they contribute to another social justice website each year.

"The toughest part we have found is to move from a topic to a story," Francis said. She suggested teachers show students how to analyze a topic to determine who is affected, which can lead to a sharper focus or angle.

Jill Van Wyke of Drake University agreed that ensuring students work as a team, and have a shared voice on a project is difficult and can be like herding cats. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pk7yqITMvp8>

She said her experience is that large, group-wide projects are difficult to complete in a semester, so she now does it as a capstone, which follows several semester-long courses that give the student the basic storytelling skills.

"We are trying to get 80 kids all at the same level with basic digital literacy."

She said the key to successful large digital projects is to take time to plan the project with the students. Show them the steps for determining the main angle, side angles and media usage.

Students don't usually know

how to select the right medium for the story, so the workshop team developed a series of slides for teachers to use in clearly outlining this to students (which is in the link at the bottom of this article).

Kathleen Webber of The College of New Jersey said their course project demonstrated the need for skills in being able to solve issues as they arise, as well as strategic thinking and planning. Their course project also identified that the curriculum needed more emphasis on interviewing skills.

Their students learned "to go see people, not just on email; also to have a Plan B."

Once the students work as a team and gather the data, the challenge is to develop the story, said John Zibluk of Southeast Missouri State University.

"It's difficult to move from the story idea to completion," he said. "The hardest point is the climax or turning point."

He suggested using examples to identify which interview, reaction or shot was used as a turning point in the script.

The five multi-media educators who led this workshop went further than simply talking about cooperation and shared vision — they also shared their resources, course outlines, and more at <https://goo.gl/6xKf7f>. Click on "AEJMC 2015 Digital" to see the presentation of this workshop.

*Catherine Strong teaches digital storytelling at undergraduate and graduate level at Massey University in New Zealand. While the cost and flight times to get from Wellington, New Zealand, to San Francisco was "immense," she says SPIG events like this workshop made it worthwhile.*

## Next year's AEJMC lineup from SPIG

With nine months till the 2016 AEJMC Conference in Minneapolis, there's plenty of time for changes and refinements, but here is the tentative lineup of SPIG-sponsored sessions — six conference panels and three roundtable/workshops for the preconference, as announced by SPIG Head Pam Parry.

The 2016 annual conference is set for Aug. 4-7.

### Panels

- Great Ideas for Teachers (GIFT), co-sponsored with CCJA.
- 10 Tech Tools in 10 Minutes, co-sponsored with CCJA.
- Hot Topics, co-sponsored with ETHC.
- Engaging Students with Community-Sourced Photojournalism, co-sponsored with VISIC.
- Teaching the Unteachable: Keys to Conceptualizing Long-Form Stories, co-sponsored with MAGD.
- Slow Journalism and Why It Matters in an Age of Instant Information, co-sponsored with MAGD.

### Pre-conference

- The Superman Syndrome: Pedagogical Techniques for Preventing Burn Out.
- Much Ado About Something: Getting Your Small Program Noticed
- Helping Undergrads Get Their Hands Dirty as Researchers.

## what we learned in san francisco

# Going Pro: Teaching students to step up their social media

By **Michael Longinow**  
*Biola University*

**L**ook out over your classroom. If students' heads are bowed, it might be they're asleep – or looking at a smartphone screen. The Pew Research Center, in April, released data from its Teen Relationships Survey, suggesting that 92 percent of teens go online daily, 24 percent describe it as “almost constantly,” and more than half are online several times a day.

Last year's “Social Networking Fact Sheet” from the Pew Center showed that among 18- to 29-year-olds, some 89 percent are social media users. That's compared with 65 percent of 50- to 64-year-olds.

It could be Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat. Most likely, it's a mixture. But our students are in a world that's rolling 24/7 and that beckons them to come and play, interact, explore. As educators, we ignore that reality at our peril.

The SPIG panel “Going Pro: Teaching Students to Use Social Media as Professional Communicators,” at the August annual conference in San Francisco, confronted social media head-on. In it, educators brought tips and techniques for harnessing students' love for what their phones can do.

The panel was moderated by Lisa Weidman of Linfield College, and panelists were Darren Sweeney of Central Connecticut State University, Kathy Previs of Eastern Kentucky University, Carol Zuegner of Creighton University and Yumi Wilson of San Francisco State University.

Most on the panel either made social media a tool in their cours-



es, or studied the ways social media inform media industries. Solutions came from courses in public relations as well as journalism, and many on the panel had experience using social media in media-related workplaces.

A common theme of the panel was that our students probably know their way around the social media universe better than we do — at least for the kinds of locations 20-somethings find interesting. So perhaps we begin there.

Facebook, derided by many teens and 20-somethings as a platform invaded by their parents (and maybe grandparents), is still a place where teaching and learning can happen. Wilson noted that Facebook can be a place to begin when looking for stories. Twitter also can be a place to follow journalists' leads as they tweet out breaking news and other tips. LinkedIn can be a place to network in ways that can help students find stories, but it can also help them track down sources for quotes and background information for stories.

Sweeney noted that in most newsrooms, news is “digital first,” and has been for several years. That's not a hard sell for students. What is a hard sell is that social media might be a bad fit – at least

in ways they typically approach it – for some businesses, non-profits and non-governmental organizations. Zuegner suggested getting students to study the client first.

When setting up research, it's good to get students competing with each other, Zuegner said. It can heat up the intensity as they nail down ways that social media can be a good fit for the client.

Previs lamented that textbooks on what this panel was about are hard to find. Change to social media defies the plodding cycles of most academic publishers. And, truth be told, experts at social media are better at using the Internet and crafting better algorithms than writing about what they do. Articles from places like Mashable can be as useful as any textbook, depending on the course.

Fun? Courses like this can be. But the notion of assessment hovered over the panel and Zuegner noted that words like “achievable,” and “measurable,” and “realistic” should still be applied to the freewheeling courses that would hitch wagons onto social media horsepower.

A key takeaway from the panel was that to teach social media well – as a tool adapted to journalism, public relations or communications theory – students' fingers or thumbs need to be on the keys. And faculty gain by charting the paths these students take to understanding where the keys have taken them.

*Michael Longinow is chair of the Journalism Department at Biola University in California and adviser to the campus newspaper, The Chimes.*

## what we learned in san francisco

# Panelists offer inspiration for teachers of religion reporting

**By Richard Hendrickson**

*John Carroll University, retired*

**J**ournalism textbooks commonly used on college campuses devote sections, if not whole chapters, to sports, business, tech, education and police reporting, but offer little or no material on religion reporting.

This was a key observation by religion writer Julia Duin to a panel co-sponsored by the Small Programs and Religion and Media interest groups at the 2015 annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Duin (pronounced Deen) has written five books, worked for five newspapers, taught journalism and just completed a year as Snedden Chair at the University of Alaska/Fairbanks.

She said this lack of coverage contrasts with the fact that America's biggest leisure pastime is religion and more Americans attend religious services per year than attend all sports events combined.

The Associated Press in 1994 did a story on how people spend billions on religion but only millions on sports in their spare time, she said.

"Religion is one of the most difficult of the specialty beats but, considering the events of 9/11 et al., it seems imperative that journalists know this beat," she said. "However, there are specialty religion (reporting) courses only in a handful of schools," including the University of Missouri, University of Southern California, Columbia and, until recently, the University of Maryland. Duin taught such a course at the University of Alas-

ka last year, but it was a one-time thing.

"One reason why may be that basic textbooks, ranging from Mencher to *The Missouri Group*, don't cover the topic," she said.

A second panelist, Stephen Perry, associate dean for academics at Regent University in Virginia, offered strategies for bringing faith and people of faith into story topic selection and reporting.

He said journalists writing about social issues such as gay marriage, for example, could reach out to local clergy for the religious connection. Instead of writing, "These people don't like it and they are religious," a reporter can help readers understand the religious concerns.

"It's not a horserace," Perry said. "There are real people involved here. There are ways to ask about it so you will understand things from a religious perspective, such as how does the church view love for a person who believes he is gay? What is the issue with regard to sin or loving your neighbor?"

He noted that stories published in places like the *Washington Post* and *Times of London* reported that scientists discovered fossilized skeletons of snakes that appeared to have hind legs.

One such fossil was called *Najash rionegrini*. A reporter should have learned that *Najash* was the Hebrew word for the snake in the Garden of Eden. If the scientists made this connection, a reporter should obviously note this and relate it to the biblical account, he said, in which snakes were condemned to crawl on their bellies

after leading the humans astray. (Genesis 3:14).

Panelist Michael Longinow of Biola University in California talked about how cross-cultural approaches help faculty and their students bring religion into real life on campuses that are increasingly diverse in ethnicity and religious lifestyles. He said he teaches a course that pushes students into journalistic encounters as part of a cross-cultural competency.

SPIG Head Wallis C. Metts Jr., of Spring Arbor University in Michigan, moderated the panel and brought in examples from his own writing, teaching and work with students to craft an approach to religion journalism that he described as holistic, people-centered and approachable. His topic, "Inspiration Writing is Not the Same as Religion Writing and That's Fine," stressed the legitimacy of teaching students to write faith narratives.

The panel, titled "Putting Religion into the Nut Graph: Ideas on Transforming Religion News into Vital News in the Small Journalism Program," had another irony to match the lack of textbook chapters on the subject. It was Sunday, the last day of the San Francisco conference, and the audience was very sparse.

*Richard Hendrickson is a longtime SPIG member, retired from John Carroll University and still teaching at JCU, UCLA Extension and Cal State Northridge. He was not able to attend this panel but put together this account from email and telephone interviews with the panelists.*

## what we learned in san francisco

# High-impact education takes on a do-it-yourself approach

*"Experiential education is a process through which a learner constructs knowledge, skill, and value from direct experiences."*

– Luckmann, 1996

**By Carrie Buchanan**

*John Carroll University*

Innovative, experimental, creative ideas for teaching just kept on coming at the SPIG-CCSD panel "High Impact Practices & Experiential Learning: Maximizing Students' Education" on Saturday, Aug. 8.

The four panelists presented an array of teaching ideas unified by a common approach: All involved hands-on, do-it-yourself projects that teach students by having them do something, rather than reading or listening to lectures.

**Field trips:** "Field trips are a big part of what I do," said Michael Ray Smith of Palm Beach Atlantic University. "I'm in Palm Beach, the most affluent zip code in the United States, and the City of Palm Beach is right next to our university."

For example, Smith takes his students to the beach, but with a twist. An expert on beach erosion and quality accompanies them. Students examine the kinds of environmental issues beaches face. They take pictures. And, best of all, "It was fun for them," said Smith.

**Investigate your college:** Smith introduces his students to Guidestar.org where they can get tax information and other documentation on nonprofits. They use it to check out their own university. They examine the college's tax returns, Form 990. "It's very complicated – bring in a business prof



to explain it," he suggested. Compare the current year to previous years, or their own college to others. Often, he added, Guidestar lists the highest-paid people. "It's quite eye-opening."

**File an FOIA request:** Gregory Adamo of Morgan State University uses this exercise in his media law class, but also notes that it's important knowledge for those in student newsrooms, such as the campus newspaper and radio station – which leads to his next idea.

**Build on college media as a learning space:** Student media face some of the same issues as professional media, such as getting information from difficult sources; dealing with the supposed firewall between news and advertising, or the challenge of whether to run a controversial advertisement. Adamo is writing a book on best practices in using student media and other types of experiential learning, including ways to assess student learning in these non-traditional situations. He recommended a couple of online resources to help with this:

Rubistar, which helps teachers make rubrics, is easy and free to use. It's designed for K-12 teachers but readily adaptable to university level work, he said.

The American Association of Colleges & Universities' VALUE Rubrics, which provide ideas about important learning outcomes to assess, as well as criteria for assessing them. For example, campus media are prime learning spaces for leadership and teamwork, which are among the skills that many universities state as learning goals. Yet how often do we manage to measure them in traditional courses?

**Creating rubrics:** Tamara Welter of Biola University had her class work together to develop rubrics to assess websites and mobile apps. This was a multi-step process: First, they used resources she gave them to learn how professionals evaluate websites. Then, they visited a select group of sites and evaluated them.

For part two, they found a partner and together they listed traits that they noticed on these websites, both positive and negative. They combined forces with another group and consolidated their lists to seven general traits that could be used to evaluate websites. The group created a numeric scale and a table, entering their descriptions for the criteria into the table. Voila, a rubric was born!

But that wasn't the end of it. Part three required each student to use the rubric to evaluate a website. When finished, they discussed their conclusions. If some ratings seemed way off, they had to figure out why and re-evaluate their rubric.

Part four involved reviewing other teams' rubrics. As a class, they agreed on final criteria use-

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## what we learned in san francisco

# Students learn more by doing

**IMPACT:** *Continued from page 12*

ful for the evaluation of websites. Then they used the final rubric to evaluate their colleagues' websites.

"This works in a small class," Welter added with a smile. "I've had students tell me, 'I didn't know how hard it was to be a teacher,' (and) 'I didn't know how hard it was to grade.'"

Some advice for those tackling this project: Time management is key, she said. It can take more time than you have allowed. To avoid that, be ready to "guide them to consensus." For example, "You need to already have in your head some of the criteria that you think should be included, and guide them towards the essential ones."

**Learn a Tool to Teach a Tool:** Another idea from Welter, this involved evaluating a new app or tool such as Snagit, a web capture application, which she actually got a grant to evaluate with her class.

"It's important for communication students to consider new and innovative tools," she said. And teaching something is the best way to learn to use it. So she had them make a PDF video guide to show people how to use Snagit — but that was just the beginning.

Then, each student had to find another app or tool and develop a video guide or YouTube video, teaching people how to use it. Finally, they viewed each other's how-to videos and PDF guides and evaluated them.

"After completion, I have a collection of resources," she said. "Also, students have cemented into their skill set the tool they chose to teach." They also "cement" their knowledge of the technique they chose to make their how-to guide: either a step-by-step PDF guide or

an instructional YouTube video.

A bit of advice from Welter for those who plan to use this assignment: Put down some guidelines and give them some direction, she said. And "have it worth some real weight in the course." It's more work than it might seem.

**Service-learning trip:**

Welter's students did a service-learning trip to Haiti, where they worked with Haitian students to develop a mini-course in photography to share with others, spreading the learning further after the visiting group had left.

"We record a video so they have it to refer back to," Welter said. The video will be used to teach children to take photographs, know what is valuable and newsworthy, and write captions. This experience involved some language skills as well, since people spoke both English and Creole. Some of those involved in the trip were language teachers.

Ed Madison of the University of Oregon took his class to Cuba, where they used video to prepare profiles of a sculptor, a dancer and several other individuals.

**Digital magazine:** Madison and his students have won awards for *OR Magazine*, one of the first college publications in the country to adopt an iPad format using Adobe's Digital Publishing Suite, back in 2011. He played a video documenting the project, which is online at <https://vimeo.com/130385504>.

<https://vimeo.com/130385504>.

The magazine's quality, its technological innovation and the program's ability to get students off campus to explore Oregon have invigorated student learning and attracted new students to the program, according to Madison and the online information about the project. There is more online at <https://uoregon.edu/or-magazine>.



Madison's advice to others attempting this type of project is to "get out of the way" and allow students to lead. Their enthusiasm and ideas will more than compensate for some possible confusion if things are not perfectly organized.

"Create a culture for experimentation" by empowering students to be leaders, he urged. "Be willing not to have every answer."

*Carrie Buchanan is an assistant professor in the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, near Cleveland, Ohio.*

## what we learned in san francisco

# Student advisers share advice for moving publications online

By **Carrie Buchanan**  
John Carroll University

**P**iles of campus newspapers sitting in the newsstands, unread, while students get their news from social media: Is this the situation on your campus?

If so, Toni Albertson of Mt. San Antonio College in California has a possible solution. Scrap the print edition and cover campus news using the medium your audience is actually using. For her students, this meant Twitter, plus an online magazine on the publishing platform “Medium.”

The turning point in the switch to online-only was the coverage her students did of the 2014 Santa Barbara slayings, Albertson told the audience at an Aug. 6 AEJMC conference panel, “Advising Student Media.” They produced three pages of stories after a killing spree near the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara, which is also near Mt. San Antonio.

When Albertson asked her classes what they thought about the student newspaper’s coverage, she was shocked to learn most students had not read it — and furthermore, they didn’t plan to.

“I’ve already read about it,” was a typical response. Accustomed to the instantaneous news universe of Twitter, they had little use for a paper that came out days later.

When Albertson and her campus newspaper staff started polling students, they discovered most were getting their news from social media. Asked where they would look for news if a water main burst on campus, most responded, “Twitter,” Albertson told the AEJMC audience. A few said they would turn



to the college’s website.

This led the campus newspaper staff members to ask each other, “What if we just stopped all our print?” That question and the “yes” answer it drew have greatly increased involvement in the student newspaper, Albertson said. That higher involvement — more students and more hours — means that problems that had been anticipated, such as finding reporters to staff assignments at odd hours, were easier to overcome.

The Mt. San Antonio program tried a couple of different online formats before settling on a dual system that has become the new normal, Albertson said. Now, all the community college’s news coverage is done using Twitter and the handle @SAConScene, which can be found online at <https://twitter.com/SAConScene>.

For ongoing stories, SAC on Scene’s red SOS logo is attached to tweets so people will know to look for more. Sometimes, those turn into longer stories that are featured on the program’s other publication, an online magazine called *Substance* on the publishing platform Medium. This is the second part of the new system and a way to accommodate the longer stories that students produce.

Medium agreed to host the new

student publication after meeting with Albertson and others from the former student newspaper, she said. “Sometimes, all you have to do is ask.” *Substance* magazine can be found online at <https://substance.media/>.

Inspired by a presentation at last year’s AEJMC conference in Montreal by Jim Sernoe and Mitzi Lewis, Albertson said she and her students launched a successful Kickstarter campaign to fund the new magazine’s start-up costs.

Analytics readily available for the online magazine have shown that some *Substance* stories get thousands of readers. This has been tremendously motivating to the students, Albertson noted.

On Twitter, where there is also feedback from readers through “retweets” and “favorites” (recently changed to “likes” by the Twitter platform), which indicate which stories are being followed and enjoyed, students have been inspired to cover some off-campus, hyperlocal news in the surrounding community, Albertson said.

Students are required to promote their stories on social media, Albertson added. “I require every single student to find a minimum of 12 people who would be interested in their story.”

Overall, this has meant students had to work harder, both on reporting and on getting the word out once their stories were published online. But that hasn’t been a problem, Albertson said.

“We are delivering campus news to our audience on a platform they use and understand,” she said, and the feedback has invigorated stu-

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## what we learned in san francisco

# Buy-in from students a must

**ADVICE:** *Continued from page 14*

dent journalists. “New attitude, new culture.”

Cindy Simoneau of Southern Connecticut State University, another panelist, said her program has not made the jump to online-only, but SCSU does have a website for the student newspaper.

“We still have print, and we still have a following for print,” she said. Students often like to have real clippings to show potential employers. They also need one or more longer, investigative stories.

It’s important to get to know each student who is working at the campus publication and ask the question, “What can we do, here, to get you where you want to go?” Simoneau said. “As I approached my students, I discovered someone who wanted to write entertainment had been assigned to sports.”

It’s a time-consuming process, Simoneau said. “I’m exhausted. Getting to know each one of them takes time. But it’s worth it.”

It’s also important to ensure that they enter, and win, awards. “There are lots of competitions,” Simoneau said. Getting students to submit entries is part of her job as adviser.

Pam Parry, of Eastern Kentucky University, described how she helped start a student-run public relations firm at her former university in Nashville. The firm did work for outside clients.

Her advice on attempting this kind of project included the need to get buy-in, ahead of time, from the administration and department faculty. “REAL buy-in,” she stressed.

“We had three faculty (working in the department) and I don’t think it was enough,” she said. They managed, but “half a dozen” would have been better. “Do not do

a student-run business unless you have the resources.”

One other bit of advice was how to handle the money. “Make sure your office administrator opens a separate account and follows written procedures about where the money goes,” she said.

A key recommendation from Parry was that students have to see some personal benefit from the business or they won’t be motivated to work hard. So they got part of the revenue.

“Thirty percent of the money went to the student who did the job, 70 percent into the account for the business,” Parry said, recalling from memory. Even then, some of the business’ money was used to fund student travel to conferences.

“Those of us who teach PR, we teach strategy. You need to use this to get this business going,” Parry explained. In her Nashville experience, she and her students spent the entire first year developing the corporate identity, logo, business cards, and other materials needed to promote the business.

“You need to educate people in the community about what students can do: make phone calls, do direct mailers, write press releases,” she said.

They also realized they would have to start out doing some things for free, on the understanding that clients would pay for later work if they liked what was done.

Her final bit of advice? “It’s a pain to try to collect money.”

The fourth panelist, John Hanc of the New York Institute of Technology, described himself as a



Carrie Buchanan

**Unread copies of *The Carroll News*, five days after distribution, are a depressingly familiar sight.**

more traditional student newspaper adviser, whose 18-year tenure in that job, from 1996 to 2014, was “the most rewarding thing I’ve done as a journalism educator.”

He joked that the title of his talk should be “You can’t write that. Well, you can, but I wouldn’t recommend it.”

Advisers play a number of different roles, he noted. The first is coach. There’s the classic role of writing coach: helping them identify, report and write stories. But what gets overlooked is

recruiting – something akin to the college football coach’s role.

“You’re not just thinking about this season. You’re thinking about next season,” which means always looking for the next generation of talent.

Advocate is the second role, Hanc said. “I told my students I had their backs, and I meant it.” This included overcoming the “alarming tendency” for faculty not to reply to emails, asking for interviews. “If they had a problem with a faculty member, they could come to me,” he said.

Resource is the third role Hanc mentioned. The adviser should suggest ideas, which sometimes involved forwarding them things they might take as inspiration, such as articles from mainstream media that they might localize and get reaction to. He also recommended “service journalism” or how-to stories.

Finally, although censor is not one of the roles, Hanc did suggest a role he called “pleader,” as in, “Please, please reconsider that.”

## member milestones

# Tenure, promotions & books

**Liz Atwood** earned tenure at Hood College, where she is an assistant professor of journalism.



**Atwood**

**Carrie Buchanan** earned tenure at John Carroll University, where she is an assistant professor of journalism.



**Buchanan**

**John Hanc**, associate professor for communication arts at New York Institute of Technology-Old Westbury, won silver in the exercise/fitness category of the annual Living Now Book Awards for his book, *The Ultra Mindset*, co-authored with Travis Macy. The book – subtitled “An Endurance Champion’s 8 Core Principles for Success in Business, Sports, and Life” – was published by Da Capo Press in April 2015. The Living Now Awards encompass a wide range of publishers – from majors like Harper, Penguin and Da Capo to self-published titles – and recognize the best in self-improvement/self-help books. The *Ultra Mindset* is Hanc’s 14th book.



**Hanc**

**Jacqueline Incollingo**, assistant professor of communications at Rider University and a new SPIG officer as research co-chair, won the 2015 AEJMC News Audience Research Paper Award for her paper “I’m a news junkie ... I like being informed ...! Uses & Gratifications and Mobile News Users.” The award, with an accompanying \$500 prize, was presented at the AEJMC Business Meeting at the annual confer-



**Incollingo**

ence in San Francisco. This was not Incollingo’s first award from SPIG. In 2013, as a Ph.D. student, she and fellow doctoral student Elia Powers won third place in SPIG’s paper competition for “Multimedia Journalism Professors on an Island: Resources, Support Lacking at Small Programs.”

**Mitzi Lewis** earned tenure and was promoted to associate professor at Midwestern State University.



**Lewis**

**Doug Mendenhall** completed his Ph.D. at the School of Mass Communications at Texas Tech University in December. His dissertation was *Comparing Levels of Incivility Across Religious and Political Blog Posts*. He has been promoted to assistant professor at Abilene Christian University.



**Mendenhall**

**James Simon** has moved to the New York Institute of Technology as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Simon founded the journalism program at Fairfield University in Connecticut, built it for 15 years, then served as interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences last year. At NYIT he will work with longtime SPIG member **John Hanc** of the Communication Arts Department. NYIT has campuses in Manhattan and Old Westbury, Long Island, as well as in China, Abu Dhabi and Vancouver.



**Simon**

**Michael Ray Smith** will be recognized by the nation’s largest journalism advisers group. The Palm Beach Atlantic University professor will receive the Noel Ross Strader Award from College Media Ad-

visers for his work in the field since 1988. The presentation is scheduled for Oct. 29 during the ACP/CMA National College Media Convention in Austin, Texas.



**Smith**

Smith advises Palm Beach Atlantic’s student publication, *The Beacon* and [readmybeacon.com](http://readmybeacon.com), which placed second in the nation for its online product in the Evangelical Press Association competition. The Noel Ross Strader Award commemorates a longtime University of Houston professor/administrator. To be eligible, one must be a full-time teacher/adviser in campus journalism who has exercised the principle of freedom of the press “at some risk to personal or professional welfare” or make a “major contribution to the graphic or other physical progress of a campus publication.”

Smith’s latest book, *7 Days to a Byline that Pays*, was published in August. SPIG members **Kay L. Colley**, **Paul Glader**, **Kyle Huckins**, **Michael A. Longinow**, **Wally Metts** and **Mia Moody-Ramirez** contributed. Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas published the book, as it did *The ABC List of Feature Ideas* in 2014.

