

# the monthly memo

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## ***Bugeja to address Alabama conference***

By Matt Neznanski

Remaking community journalism in the digital age is the focus of a University of Alabama/Anniston Star Knight Fellowship conference in February at which Greenlee School Director Michael Bugeja will be a key speaker.

The conference is the first in a planned annual event designed to discuss the issues of the emerging influence of digital technology on community journalism.

"This is an important conference—a national dialogue, really—about the future of newspapers in a technological age," Bugeja said. "Chris Waddle and others associated with the conference plan to continue the dialogue after this event. They are to be commended, along with the *Anniston Star*, for their focus on community journalism."

Waddle is director of ComJ, the University of Alabama's new community journalism master's program housed at the *Anniston Star*.

In the fledgling program, classes are held at the newspaper. While students aren't employees of the paper, the hope is that by surrounding them with professionals focused on community journalism, a sense of dedication to the community will evolve.

"We feel that mass communication has suffered the tortures of the damned," Waddle said. "We're sorry to see the big networks, broadcast radio, the movie and music industries going through the shudders and trepidations of the digital age, but we have a responsibility to our heartland journalists."

Bugeja's book *The Interpersonal Divide* is critical of digital technology's tendency to separate people from each other. At the same time, it highlights the need for good journalism in the information age.

"More than anything in these complex times,

readers require fact-based information about their hometowns and regions so that they can make intelligent choices on local issues," Bugeja said. "This conference promises to strengthen our ties with the local audience, and I recommend it for publishers and educators."



Michael Bugeja

Bill Monroe, director of the Iowa Newspaper Association and president of Greenlee School Advisory Council, said in the past decade a new focus on community journalism has arisen within his organization.

As rural communities have changed, he said, the advertising base for local newspapers has suffered, limiting their access to qualified journalists.

"The first sign of trouble we heard from our community newspapers was that they were losing advertising. As Main Streets were closing, more and more of the decision-makers aren't here," Monroe said. "Also they weren't attracting enough qualified people."

To help develop the talent already in place at small papers, the foundation began offering workshops and seminars for professional journalists working in rural areas, he said.

Community journalism struggles are a daily issue for Steve Mores, publisher of Harlan Newspapers, which publishes the *Harlan Tribune*, a twice-weekly, 4,200-circulation paper in west central Iowa.

Readership for local coverage is steady, Mores said. The paper has expanded its online presence to serve people who winter outside of Iowa, has developed niche publications, and prints smaller

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## news

# Geske earns research award

Greenlee School Associate Professor Joel Geske received an Iowa State University Research Excellence Award for his dissertation work, which was judged to be among the top projects at the university.

The awards honor students whose research accomplishments are among the top 10 percent at Iowa State in overall quality.

Geske received a full pass on his dissertation last semester, a study of the differences between reading from paper, cathode ray tube computer monitors or liquid crystal displays. His doctoral work was completed through ISU's College of Human Sciences.

Research award nominations are submitted to the graduate college by department each semester.



Joel Geske

Recipients are specially recognized at graduation and departments may also include a cash award.

## Bugeja named judge for journalism awards

Greenlee School Director Michael Bugeja was selected to serve as one of 43 judges for the Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Awards.

Since 1953 the Scripps Howard Foundation has recognized the best work in journalism with the awards, which recognize excellence in 17 categories, including editorial writing; human interest writing; environmental and public service reporting; investigative reporting; business/economics reporting; Washington reporting; commentary; photojournalism; radio and television journalism; college cartooning; web reporting; and editorial cartooning.

The awards also honor distinguished service to journalism education and the First



Amendment.

Cash prizes are \$10,000 per award. The Ursula and Gilbert Farfel Fund provides a \$25,000 prize for investigative reporting.

Other judges include: Beth Barnes, director of the University of Kentucky School of Journalism; Del Brinkman, journalism dean emeritus at the University of Kansas and University of Colorado; Bill Burleigh, chairman of the E.W. Scripps Company; Phil Currie, Gannett's senior vice president of news; Terry Hynes, dean of the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications; Eric Newton, director of journalism initiatives for the Knight Foundation; and Janet L. Robinson, president and CEO of *The New York Times* Company.

## faculty news

### Women increasing in Indian newsrooms

In a country where only 38 percent of the women are literate, it's not surprising to find the number of women in the professional workplace to be relatively low.

In a recent study, David Bulla, assistant professor in the Greenlee School, found that while the numbers are still low for women working for Indian media outlets, those are increasing.

Bulla, whose wife, Kalpana Ramgopal, is a former feature writer for an English-language Indian publication, had heard stories from his spouse about the low numbers.

"You only have to go back 30 years and there were only a handful of women in Indian newsrooms," he said. "India is a democracy and women do have civil rights. But this remains a patriarchal society whose men dominant both economically and socially."

Just 10 years ago, another study indicated only 12 percent of newsroom employees were women.

But when Bulla and Ramgopal made a trip to India in 2002 and she took Bulla on a visit to her old newsroom, the Greenlee School professor saw a totally different story. The number of women working in Indian newsrooms is between 25 and 50 percent today, with some departments, especially features, reporting more than 75 percent.

"I would go into editorial departments and all I saw were women," he said. "I had always heard and read that women really weren't accepted into the newsroom so I wondered what was going on here."

That question was reinforced when Bulla returned to India in December 2004. He was there when the Indian Ocean tsunami hit.

"We were glued to the TV to see what was happening," he recalled. "We were watching the NDTV (English-language network) and there were nothing but women reporting. All this got me thinking and I wanted to ask not only how this happened, but since the women got their foot in the door how are they being accepted in the workplace and what was their probability of advancement."

The result is a paper that Bulla and Porismita Borah, who has since graduated from the master's program, collaborated on. "The Emergence of Women in Indian Newsrooms" was accepted by the



David Bulla

United Nations' International Research Foundation for Development World Conference on the Digital Divide, Global Development and the Information Society. The two presented the paper at a Kansas City women's conference and will submit it to the national conference of the Association of Educators of Journalism and Mass Communication.

In his study, Bulla found that the influence of foreign businesses, the impact of Western media messages and the emergence of the Indian women's movement have opened up the media industry to women.

"The increased presence of women in Indian newsrooms can be seen as India's attempt to fully develop its human resources, as well as women seeking self-actualization through their development of their careers in a substantial and powerful profession," he said. "Young women in India typically get two degrees and they will go work in a career they see as glamorous such as the media."

Bulla's study however indicates that while many Indian women start out in newsrooms, they will soon move on to other professions including public relations, law or Bollywood, India's highly successfully movie industry.

While in India, Bulla and Borah interviewed several women working in India's English-language media outlets. The study indicated that the women still face a glass ceiling that blocks their advancement into upper management.

## news

### Two Greenlee Council members to retire

Two Greenlee School Advisory Council members recently announced plans to retire from professional positions this year.

Deanna Sands, the newest member of the Greenlee School Advisory Council, announced her retirement as managing editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*.

Sands, who earned an M.S. at Iowa State University, was named to the council last year. She is also president of the Associated Press Managing Editors association, is a member of the American Press Institute's Editorial Advisory Board and sits on the Alumni Advisory Board at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Louis M. Thompson, Jr. will retire as president and CEO of the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI), a position he has held since 1982.

Thompson is a nationally recognized expert in corporate disclosure and governance and a long-time advocate of the investor relations officer's role with corporate boards of directors.

Thompson is Vice-Chairman of the Greenlee School Advisory Council and serves on the Dean's Council for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He received undergraduate and advanced degrees in journalism and communication from ISU.

Sands and Thompson said that their retirements will give them more time to work on behalf of the Greenlee School.

### Community subject of upcoming event

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community papers to pick up slack in its advertising base.

"We want to provide good coverage," Mores said. "We need people with a true journalism background to handle some of the ethical questions and just know how to cover the community."

The ComJ conference is designed to discuss exactly these questions, Waddle said.

"I think in the trade publications and many of the journalism schools, there's more emphasis on big journalism than on Main Street journalism. We want to turn that around," he said. "When you see your editor at the barbershop, your publisher at church, and a reporter at the Rotary Club, that has an impact, really a spiritual impact, that communicators are part of the community."

### Students win internships

Two Greenlee School journalism students have won prestigious internships with the Scripps Semester at Washington program and with the *Omaha World-Herald*.

Jared Taylor, news editor of the *Iowa State Daily* and a senior from Marion, Iowa, will be working with Scripps in Washington D.C. He is the third intern to be placed in the competitive program since the Greenlee School was named a partner school in 2003.

Kathryn Fiegen, who is in charge of training and recruiting at the *Daily*, will be reporting this summer for the *Omaha World-Herald*. Fiegen, a senior from Clarence, Iowa, is the first Greenlee School student chosen for the paper's internship-scholarship program, created last fall.

"Both of these internships are excellent," said Mark Witherspoon, faculty adviser for the *Daily*. "I'm particularly glad to see Omaha and the Greenlee School coming together to provide opportunities for students as well as staff."