Summer 2014

SCOOP magazine Summer 2014

College of Communication and Information

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SCOOP
Summer 2014

KICKIN’ IT with the NEW YORK JETS’ MICHAEL PALARDY

+ AWESOME ALUMNI
SEX WEEK TENSION
WEARABLE TECH

INSIDE:
SOCIAL MEDIA WEEK
UT LOOKBOOK PHOTOS!
VOTED KNOXVILLE’S BEST RADIO STATION 9 YEARS IN A ROW!

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SPECIALTY SHOWS★
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These 10 stylin’ students go beyond the power ‘T’.

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EDITOR’S NOTE

I’m the guy on the right
(And why our identity does matter)

Why Scoop?
This was the fundamental question of my semester. As my classmates and I toiled over first drafts, photo spreads and layouts, I kept returning to the simple syllable that distinguishes this magazine. In our editorial philosophy, we explain what Scoop is; it’s taken me months to understand why Scoop is.

At its core, you see, Scoop is an exercise in digging deeper. Identity is much more than surface tension, and everything from how you dress yourself (Five shades of orange, p. 25) to how you picture yourself (Snap Attack, p. 14) reveals something about the underlying substance that marks you for you. In a college that identifies with communication and information, the search for identity becomes more than public – it becomes a magazine.

Our staff unearthed stories of students, alumni, faculty and staff, reporting on their identities to learn more about our own. Whether they were about kayaking public relations majors (Outdoor Indoors, p. 20) or visionary television executives (Steady Freddy, p. 39), each story taught us something about how people define themselves.

“No one’s words are sacred.” It’s a quote that our professor, Dr. Elizabeth Hendrickson, likes to remind us of when we discuss headlines and revisions. It’s also one of many aphorisms that will remain in our heads long after she leaves UT this summer. She’s right – the words are never sacred, and I shouldn’t be so hung up on the title of the magazine. It’s a part of our identity, but the substance of CCI lies beneath the words on the cover.

So turn the page. Dig in.

RJ Vogt

SCOOP EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY

Scoop magazine is a magazine made for College of Communication and Information alumni, students and faculty that strives to keep its readers up to date with what’s happening around campus and at the University of Tennessee’s School of Journalism and Electronic Media, School of Advertising and Public Relations, School of Communication Studies and School of Information Sciences.

This is the reader’s magazine that celebrates CCI students past and present. We spotlight the faculty and other numerous ventures of CCI, including campus media outlets and organizations. In addition, Scoop keeps its eyes on media, always aiming to cover and uncovering the latest trends. We represent a college that is preparing students and alumni for a changing job market, and we will be there to explain how and why the world of communication is changing in an effort to best serve our readers.

More than anything, Scoop is exciting. We are motivated by our mission and we want our readers to be able to take the same pride in their work and the work of their colleagues. This magazine also functions as an educational tool for JEM students interested in magazine journalism and it celebrates all the exciting changes within the publishing industry. It’s an ideal time for a fresh outlook, and Scoop stands prepared to deliver all that and more.

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An International Mind

Dr. Peter Gross’s office offers a global smorgasbord of politics, press and professional passion.

Whether traveling to his native Romania or lecturing in Vienna, Dr. Peter Gross’s life and office are an expression of his international journey. After immigrating to the United States with his parents, Gross received his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in 1984 and entered journalism by happenstance. “My college advisors told me to take journalism classes for my English. I never went back,” Gross says.

Flash forward a few decades and many significant world events, and Gross now channels his passion for writing for the press and international communication through his directorship of the School of Journalism and Electronic Media at the University of Tennessee, a position he’s held since 2006.

His office walls and table tops tell the story of his countless lecture awards, grants, fellowships and training recognition, including the State of Romania’s highest educational honor, “The Order of Merit in Education,” Commander Grade.

Surrounded by his stacked book shelves, Parisian illustrations, Asian-inspired ornaments and other trinkets showcasing his experiences, Gross professes a Swiss-like neutrality. “Every country is so different and has such a specific culture. I could never pick a favorite,” he says.

While we’re similarly cautious to choose just one of Gross’s office objects to examine, we do wish to highlight a few of our favorite things.

- Sarah Stringfellow

1. HERKY COMPILATION
   “The University of Iowa mascot is the Herky [Hawkeye]. Many artists did their rendition of the Herky, such as The Herk or Marilyn Manherk.”

2. PETER’S LAWS
   “If you want to know about me, then just read my laws; titled ‘the Creed of the Sociopathic Obsessive Compulsive’.”

3. ROMANIAN FLAG
   “In 1989, my students gave me this flag to preserve their cause in the United States. It hung above a building in my hometown [Timisoara] and my students cut out the communist emblem in the middle. They wanted me to keep it safe, and I did.”

4. SOCCER POSTER
   “This poster is dear to me. It represents every soccer fan’s thoughts. Once you lose the ball there is nothing left in the world.”

5. PHOTOGRAPH
   “This is a picture I took in 1990 in my hometown. It is of a cathedral with wreaths surrounding the front of the building. The wreaths represented the 100 people that had died while participating in the Revolution [Romanian].”
When Morgan Neal (PR, 2012) started her job as the online and interactive media coordinator for Knoxville-based AC Entertainment, she was assigned a gray, corner cubicle. One year later, Neal has created a colorful oasis.

Neal helps manage social media content for the AC company brand along with events at the Bijou and Tennessee Theatres. She creates content for weekly newsletters, coordinates contests with local businesses and keeps all website information up-to-date.

Neal works in the AC office on Gay Street, an open space with cubicles strategically placed so no person is isolated. The light green walls are lined with concert posters, giving the room a casual feel. Neal says she loves the set-up—it allows her to communicate freely with her coworkers. She says the best part about her workspace is she’s encouraged to personalize it.

Neal keeps her knick-knacks and sentimental trinkets on the left side of her desk, and it features photos of her college friends and her fiancé. Behind those, her UT Alumni Association and Public Relations Society of America nametags hang on the wall. An Etch-A-Sketch, given to her from Elf the Musical management, is propped up beside a MailChimps figurine. Above that hangs a Bonnaroo poster.

The right side of her desk, however, is all business. Neal, a self-proclaimed “sucker for office supplies,” says she prefers those to be personalized. Her AC Entertainment work binders, notepad and day planner display her name. “Even though I work with social media, I still have to have a paper planner.”

The center of her desk is where the supplies are put to use. This space is outfitted with her laptop and one additional monitor, plus her go-to accessory, her Beats headphones, a gift from her sister.

“They’re really cool about everything here. I’m still trying to put my own stamp on it,” Neal says as she looks around her space. And she’s off to a great start. What was once a gray, corner cubicle is now a lively and personalized work space—just the way she likes it.

- Samantha Braley
Suzanna McCloskey can discuss floriculture, marathon training and the motivation of cookies in one florid breath.

Roses are red, violets are blue, on a weekend in Washington, DC, we know there’s lots to do. Fortunately, Suzanna McCloskey (JEM, 2012) was kind enough to talk with us. McCloskey works as a communications specialist at the Alexandria, Va.-based American Floral Endowment, a non-profit organization that helps fund floriculture and horticulture in the United States. Naturally, we wanted to know more about her unique, somewhat fragrant career.

What does a typical day look like for you?
Every day is different, but I guess today was pretty typical. This morning I worked on our quarterly newsletter, which we have in print and online. Then I tried to find the best printer for our annual report and I worked on some news releases. Next, I worked on our new website, which we’re building right now. (Our current website is just a little outdated for what we want it to be.) We’re moving to Wordpress, which is definitely more current and what most websites are based on right now. It’s also going to be mobile-responsive, which is a big thing right now.

What do you consider your career high point so far?
Over the past year we’ve been working to change our image from just a non-profit endowment to something fun and sort of cutting edge. We created a video with a public relations team and an animation studio that’s called, “Murder, Sex and Greed.” It’s not like anything a floral endowment has ever done before. It really ties in with what we’re doing in a fun, cute and ‘hip’ way. (I know people never say the word “hip” anymore, but I just did.) It’s about murder because we fund research that’s all about killing pests. It’s about sex because flowers smell really good, and it’s very romantic to give someone flowers. Greed because people that grow flowers—and we’re not calling them greedy by any means—but we want to increase profits for everyone. It’s animated. It’s about a minute long. It’s a very short, sharable YouTube video.

What aspects of your undergraduate coursework prepared you most for this?
I feel like I got a really good background taking CCI classes, and now I’m getting to learn even more about those things because I’m getting to apply them in my everyday work. I get to talk to scientists, researchers and university people, and then I boil down what they say into layman’s terms and practical articles that everyone can understand and make applicable to their lives. That’s something I did a lot in college that is translating really well now.

We have to ask, does your office smell good?
It does! Every employee gets fresh flowers every Monday, which is great! We’ve actually funded studies that prove fresh flowers and plants in the workplace make you more productive. It’s true though: fresh flowers and beautiful surroundings make you want to work harder! It’s pretty flowers everywhere, all the time. I have learned about so many flowers since I started working here. I really like dahlias, ranunculus, roses (because I’m a girl)...hmm, I love snapdragons. I just love flowers.

What are some other job perks?
I really enjoy getting to travel, which is interesting and fun for me. On the days I have to travel, which is generally only a few times a year for three or four days at a time, it’s around an 18-hour work day; but it’s so fun because I’m getting to go see our researchers, meet with our scholarship recipients and see the ways that what we’re doing in the office affects real people. It’s also nice to get out of your element and see new things.

How do you unwind outside of the office?
My favorite thing right now is that I’m training for a marathon. It’s going to kill me, but I’m going to do it. It makes me feel so much healthier and happier and more stable just to be active every day. Another hobby, on the opposite end of the spectrum, is that I really love baking. [Laughter] I really like cooking. Recently, I made a homemade cookie skillet. It was so delicious...and that’s why I’m training for a marathon.

Lastly, if you could give current CCI students a little piece of advice, what would it be?
Be open-minded. If you get the opportunity to join a club or organization in college that you think might not be exactly up your alley, try it anyway. Until you try something, you never really know if you’d like to do it professionally. I never explored the public relations side [of communications], but I really think it would have helped me.

- Marion Kirkpatrick
Palardy’s kicking regimen keeps him busy, but he did admit to binge-watching Friends in his free time.
Michael Palardy (CS, 2014) wanted only one thing when he graduated college: to be one of the 1.7 percent of college football players that go pro. His yearlong discipline of protein-packed meals and regimented workouts paid off when he was drafted by the New York Jets in May.

Palardy clearly takes his training seriously. But it’s comforting to know that even the pros permit themselves a little late night television treat.

- Molly Spining

9:30 AM
I wake-up and usually eat eggs or cereal with orange juice or a banana – something healthy to get my day started. Then I’ll drive to campus and go to the [football team’s] weight room.

11:00 AM
I go to the gym for [about] two hours on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and my choice of Saturday or Sunday. I kick on the other days, so, Tuesday and Thursday and Saturday or Sunday. There are three days that I lift. Day one, I do upper body, then lower body [on day two], then full body [on day three] and day four is cardio. I’ll run three to five miles on the treadmill and call it a day, or sometimes I run sprints for 30 minutes on the track.

1:00 PM
I go home for lunch, and relax a little bit. Depending on my workout, I may take a nap. [For lunch.] I’ll cook chicken or steak and put it in a salad and have an oil-based dressing to keep it healthy. On the side, I’ll have a yogurt or banana or apple, and then I may have some bread for carbs. I’m not trying to put on a lot of weight. I probably consume 2,800 calories a day.

3:30 PM
I go back to kick. I have some high school kids that I give lessons to. So, I’m kind of coaching while I’m kicking as well. I’ll work with them and give them tips and pointers.

5:30 PM
For dinner, I usually cook a big meal. Eating a big meal usually makes me a little tired, so I may kick my feet up for a bit. Depending on what day of the week it is, I may go out with some of my friends or something. I’m kind of a homebody though.

10:00 PM
I’m probably in bed around 9:45 or 10, but then I’ll stay up ‘til 1:00 watching “Friends.” That’s my absolute favorite TV show. It starts at 11:00 and goes ‘til 1:00, and I’ll sit there and watch it. A guilty pleasure...
105 DAYS OF SUMMER

We are talking now of summer evenings in Knoxville, Tennessee. But this isn’t a James Agee book – it’s a Must List.

HIT THE URBAN TRAIL.
You don’t have to go all the way to the mountains to get active in East Tennessee. Knoxville is home to 1,000 acres of what Legacy Parks Foundation calls Knoxville’s Urban Wilderness. The main loop is 12.5 miles and the south loop system boasts 42 miles of trails. The paths are rated from easy to moderate and feature single track, dirt roads and greenway trails. Find maps and more information on biking, cycling and fitness classes on Outdoor Knoxville’s website: www.outdoorknoxville.com.

SPASH THE DAY AWAY.
Enrolled in summer classes? Catch some rays at the TRECS outdoor Aquatic Center for free (besides summer tuition, of course). If you bypassed summer courses, you will need to purchase a student summer membership to use UT’s facilities. A summer membership is $65.00 and grants access to the fitness and aquatic center from May until August. If you would like to pay-per-use, tag along with an enrolled friend. A guest pass will run you $10.00. Regardless, UT’s Olympic size indoor and outdoor pools can’t be beat in the summer heat. (Be sure to grab a smoothie at Smoothie King, you know, to stay healthy.) http://recsports.utk.edu/Programs/Facilities/trecs/

ROOT FOR THE HOME TEAM.
If you find yourself needing a sports lover’s fix, a 20-minute drive may do the trick. The Tennessee Smokies are Knoxville’s resident minor league baseball team. Smokies Stadium in Kodak hosts the team’s 60+ home games from April to August, so fitting one into your summer schedule should be easier than hitting a home run. Because the franchise is the AA affiliate of the Chicago Cubs, the Smokies have seen MLB stars such as Carlos Delgado and Roy Halladay come through their system. www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t553

UNCOVER THE ART AND MUSIC SCENE.
Take some time on rainy days to visit the Knoxville Museum of Art, located near World’s Fair Park. The museum is open to the public for free admission Tuesday through Sunday and features local art displays and various exhibitions year round. If it’s music you’re into, downtown’s free concerts will do the trick. Market Square hosts a series of concerts from May to June in Market Square every Thursday from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Jazz lovers can catch The Marble City 5 band every Tuesday in Market Square from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. www.knoxart.org

PUMP UP YOUR ADRENALINE.
A 150-acre theme park, Dollywood is packed with rides and attractions. To take full advantage of the park, visit Dollywood’s Splash Country, a 30-acre water park adjacent to the main property. You may want to plan ahead and save some money for a trip to Dolly Parton’s infamous theme parks because one-day admission will run you $58.00 for Dollywood and $47.00 for Dollywood’s Splash Country. Don’t forget parking costs around $10.00. If you just can’t get enough, a season pass for both parks costs $131.00. Visit Dollywood’s website for park hours and dates. Dollywood hours vary, but is typically open year-round, except in January and February. Splash Country opens in late May and remains open until September. www.dollywood.com

- Caroline Mullen
GET DRUNK AND BE SOMEBODY?

Try, if you will, to imagine the following scenario:

One minute, you’re at a party, crushing cans of Natty Light and shots of Fireball, singing along to Toby Keith’s eponymous song describing exactly what you’re doing.

Then your vision gets hazy and you feel like silly putty. Perhaps, your last memory of the evening is your host’s toilet bowl.

The next day, you can’t remember how the night ended, so you anxiously skim the @volblackout Twitter feed, hoping not to find out.

Unfortunately, this anecdote is a reality for many UT students. The Twitter account – which has approximately 10,000 followers – features photos of incapacitated (read: too drunk to function) UT students, all submitted by other students. To contribute a photo, one must send it to an anonymous address, and the receiver then uploads the image to the @volblackout Twitter feed. Though students are often unidentifiable, the feed and its basic premise concern campus police, the UTK administration and even local news stations.

In October, the University’s Safety, Environment and Education Center purchased a full-page ad in The Daily Beacon, advising students to stop sending in pictures. “The people portrayed on the site as being blacked out probably aren’t going to be the best candidates for future jobs,” the text stated.

But judging by @volblackout’s analytics, the attention only increased the onlookers. In the months following the ad, @volblackout gained nearly 3,000 followers, and The University of Tennessee Police Department remains powerless to stop students from posting. Because nobody knows who runs the account, officers are handcuffed.

To be fair, this debauched social phenomenon stretches beyond Rocky Top into SEC country, including similar accounts such as @BulldogBlackout, @VandyPassouts and @BamaBlackOut. And within the UT community, crowd-sourced content generates other anonymous accounts, such as @utk_crushes, a sly way to hit on friends and heartthrobs; @UTKGirlProblems, a nearly therapeutic public forum of complaints; and @UTK_Memes, a collection of quips overlaid on UT-specific photos.

But no account carries as much campus clout as @volblackout, perhaps because of it’s base-level news function; while the other handles operate as a communication network, @volblackout exists only to deliver the sometimes-chilling images of students out cold.

-R.J. Vogt

@volblackout had a little more than three times as many Twitter followers than both the student newspaper and the student government in February 2014, when this graphic was created.
Twitter in 2013, is so yesterday’s news. Enter Snapchat, the 10 seconds-or-less social sharing tool that’s commanded the collective attention of smartphone consumers as the must-app for creating and sharing content.

Oxford Dictionaries, ever the cultural barometer, announced the word “selfie” as its official, international word of 2013. But the act of photographing oneself and posting it to social media is hardly novel at this point. Whether to show off an exceptional hair day or goofy grin, every picture tells a story, no matter how fleeting.

“I use Snapchat to communicate with others because it’s more fun and creative,” says Dipti Patel, a junior in chemistry. “It’s also convenient when you’re trying to share something with friends. It’s faster to send a “snap” than a picture message.”

Indeed, according to a 2013 study by Sumpto, a company that measures college students’ social influence, more and more young adults and college students agree with Patel. Sumpto’s research finds that 77 percent of college students are using Snapchat to send and receive photos every day. So far, that number only continues to grow, permeating many facets of youth culture and experience.

“If anyone catches you snapchatting, you have to acknowledge it and make a joke. It’s less awkward that way,” says Daniel Robertson, a senior studying supply chain management.

Snapchat users can take photos of themselves or their surroundings and then decorate them with colored text or emojis. Once sent to their friends, the receiver can view the photo for up to 10 seconds. Then, poof, it’s gone forever, or so users hope.

Snapchat claims to keep user information and data totally private, but hackers have found ways to break in, sometimes stealing personal information or shutting down user’s phones. According to the technology news blog TechCrunch, 4.6 million usernames and phone numbers were posted online by hackers in January 2014, demonstrating a serious security loophole. Considering the app’s obvious vulnerabilities, it’s probably best for users to take their own precautions.

“I never send Snapchats that I would not send my parents,” says JEM student Rilwan Balogun. “Some believe Snapchat was created for sexual reasons and I am sure people use it for this purpose, but I can’t.”

Balogun’s stance inspired us to ask, what are the “best practices” for Snapchat use?

- Marion Kirkpatrick

We asked students to comment about their own selfie-taking...
It’s been a nail-biter, but next year UTK students will be able to declare a cinema studies major.

“I’m really excited about cinema studies becoming a major,” says Hallie Miller (JEM, 2015). “I’ll probably sign up for some classes even though I’ve already completed my cinema studies minor.”

Charles Maland, English professor and the J. Douglas Bruce Chair of English, says that the university has recently hired more cinema course instructors, and the digital shift has made teaching production classes easier and less expensive.

The new major will build on the existing minor, allowing students currently pursuing the minor to use all previous cinema classes toward a degree.

“Part of the attractiveness of the proposal was that we’re going to reconfigure courses already being offered to be more cinema studies focused instead of spending a lot of money to add a bunch of new courses,” says Maland.

The major opens new possibilities for students to pursue dual degrees in minimal time. JEM students, for example, could apply up to four non-JEM courses and then add six cinema studies courses to complete the major, according to Maland.

“I think making cinema studies a major will be a great benefit to the university,” says Miller. “We have tons of amazing filmmakers in Tennessee already and giving these local artists a place near their home to receive expert education about film will help advance Knoxville’s artistic film atmosphere.”

- Jessica Broyles
Liv McConnell is a curious person— in every sense of the word. She prefers the crackling imperfection of vinyl to the smooth precision of mp3s. She'd love to live inside an abandoned movie theater. And she cannot be found on any social networks, a fact she laughingly admits might be a little problematic for her future career (JEM, 2015).

"I'm pretty much through-and-through an old soul," says McConnell. "I cannot think of anything strictly modern that I think is superior to the old way of life."

As she leans toward a mirror to reapply red lipstick, the antique locket around McConnell's neck hangs in the air, flashing under the soft lights of Nostalgia, a local vintage market. On campus, Liv's Bettie Page bangs and retro sensibilities are aesthetically exceptional. But immersed in Nostalgia's artfully cluttered aisles, McConnell is in her element. Here, time stands still. "When you lose touch with experiencing things just for that personal satisfaction that no one else will ever know about, you lose a part of yourself," she says.

For McConnell, a self-proclaimed romantic, vintage artifacts are never merely aged objects. They are vessels for memories. Perhaps, she suggests, an art-deco ring found in a consignment shop was formerly worn to a lavish Jazz Age party; perhaps it was a gift between lovers. The "mystery" of each antique is simply part of the appeal. "It's really fun to imagine and invent your own stories behind the antiques that you acquire," she says.

But McConnell also grasps the historical value beneath an antique's aesthetic. Her boyfriend, Jonathan Burkhalter, remembers spotting an attractive print during one antiquing trip. McConnell discovered that the print depicted the first female chef at a restaurant in San Francisco. "Not only can she spot something that looks beautiful, she can also tell you the story behind it," Burkhalter says.

This inquisitive spirit and eye for narrative seems to have driven McConnell toward journalism from an early age. Her younger sister, Erin, recalls Liv deciding to pursue a career in writing in first grade, leading her to eventually become the editor of her high school paper and the new Features editor for The Daily Beacon. "While we don't have the same taste in everything, she was the one who said 'Erin, define what you like. You need to find this out,'" says Erin.

McConnell's antique habit is also rooted in her upbringing. McConnell's grandmother owned the fully furnished guesthouse of a burned-down mansion estate, making "going to Nana's house" synonymous with stepping back in time, into a world filled with delicate, beloved "old things." At ten, McConnell began amassing her own antique collection. It started with pillboxes, Dresden dolls, and music boxes. Today, antiques dominate her eclectic, lovingly curated apartment.

As she strolls by Nostalgia's crowded shelves, McConnell pauses periodically to peer into cases crammed with jewelry. Reaching into a small bowl spilling over with vintage Valentine cards, she halts, picking up each Valentine lightly with careful fingertips. In a plastic bag grouping several pink and red cards, she strikes gold: a cluster of Valentines all addressed to one, charming Donald.  "Oh my gosh, these are from different girls," she gasps. "I think I have to buy all of these, if they're all for the same boy."

Valentines in hand, McConnell moves to a booth containing several baskets of vintage photographs, another of her favorite items to collect, especially wedding portraits and snapshots of casual nightlife. Later, at Four Seasons Vintage, McConnell picks a photograph of several maybe-30-year-olds having drinks. "I just love seeing pictures showing how similar young people are across generations..." she says. "In the end, people are just always looking to get their kicks. And that never changes."

Maybe, then, McConnell's seemingly contradictory love of journalism and antiquing is not so curious after all. She is a girl who loves a good story, whether it can be found in a picture, a person, or a blue Singer sewing machine— her most recent score.

"If you don't always want to know more things, see more things, meet more people— just soak up more about the world— then you're not really living," says McConnell. "I never want to reach a point in life where I'm satisfied with the amount that I know."

- Hanna Lustig
The idea of having an audience’s attention for two and a half hours is really compelling to me.

Most ten-year-olds would likely be fixated on the alien factor of the movie E.T., but Conner Harville (CS, 2014) only had eyes for Steven Spielberg’s director’s chair. That simple curiosity about the Oscar-winning director is now a feature-length fascination with movie making. And his 2013 trifecta of success proves his passion for film may be his greatest gift.

SETTING THE SCENE: 2009 - 2011
After Harville’s freshman year at the University of Tennessee, he spent summer 2010 studying film at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Last year, Harville submitted his short film “Aden” to Knoxville’s 54 Hour Film Fest, where it won best sound design and runner-up for best picture. It marked the first time Harville entered a film contest and the first time he won a film award.

INTO FRAME: 2013
In 2013, Harville was accepted into Creative Minds in Cannes, a program that brings students from all over the world to France, to work at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. While spending 15 days there, he collaborated with other aspiring filmmakers on a short film, networked with industry professionals and attended 21 film premiers.

Harville’s local reputation was also reinforced last year when he landed a meeting with Tom Satkowiak, UT’s associate media relations director, and pitched an idea for a series of UT basketball videos featuring five different players’ stories. There was no money in the budget for promotional videos, but Harville said he would do it for free if each film included “directed by Conner Harville” at the end.

The videos were a hit. On its website in Sept. 2013, NBC Sports referred to Harville’s Jeronne Maymon video as “one of the most ridiculously awesome promotional videos we’ve ever seen.” This was a proud moment for Harville, and the attention he received from the project has lead to other opportunities.

CLOSING CREDITS: NOW
He credits CCI for helping him learn how to navigate this emerging attention. “If you’re directing a movie, you’re talking to businessmen, hairstylists, costume designers, editors and actors,” says Harville. “Being able to communicate is essential.”

These skills are also required for Harville’s next chapter, which he says will include a move to either New York City or Los Angeles to continue pursuing a film industry career. His goal, steadfast and Spielberg-inspired, is to direct full-length motion pictures. “The idea of having an audience’s attention for two and a half hours is really compelling to me,” he says. “But I just want to tell a good story.”

As they say, to be continued...

- Cort Gatiff

Visit www.connerharville.com to watch Harville’s videos, such as his Jarnell Stokes’ promo video (pictured above), and to read more about his projects and find his social media presence.
The backstage energy before a fashion show rivals that of a locker room before a basketball game. The difference? Whereas athletes shout “Let’s go! Fire up!,” stylists and designers shout things like, “Let the ferocity consume you!” Kat Duff, Gage Talent Agency intern (CS, 2014), stands behind the runway stage at Knoxville Fashion Week shouting to models, “All right guys, feel it! What does your outfit tell you?” A moment later she’s off to check in on the next designer’s show, which is running five minutes behind schedule.

Here, the pace is slower and the attendees wear Old Navy jeans, not Christian Dior pants. But this does not discourage Duff, whose hometown, Kingston, Tenn., boasts more antique stores than stylish outfitters. In fact, Duff’s ambition is enough to trounce any perceived shortcoming about her being from a small town. “Vogue is like my religion,” Duff says. Although Knoxville lacks the high fashion scene of New York City, Duff found an outlet for expressing her stylish side.

“Yeah, you know, around here, paying more attention to fashion than football before a basketball game. The difference? Whereas athletes shout ‘Let’s go! Fire up!’, designers shout things like, ‘Let the ferocity consume you!’”

Kat Duff, Gage Talent Agency intern (CS, 2014), stands behind the runway stage at Knoxville Fashion Week shouting to models, “All right guys, feel it! What does your outfit tell you?” A moment later she’s off to check in on the next designer’s show, which is running five minutes behind schedule.

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“I’m really nice to see something that you’ve worked on get pulled off. It’s work and play.”

During her junior year as a journalism major at UT, Duff discovered Knoxville Fashion Week and, as any good journalist would do, she offered to cover the event for her class. Duff’s teacher politely suggested that she find another story. Not one to back down, Duff proceeded with her scheduled interviews and ended up with an interview herself at Gage Talent Agency.

Knoxville Fashion Week is the only event in Knoxville that celebrates the arts, music and fashion, Duff says, which is why she comes back every year. Her first semester as an intern at Gage consisted of mostly menial tasks, like working the ticket booth at Fashion Week. Now, one year later, Duff serves as the assistant and booking agent for the director of the agency, Jenna Colina.

On her first day at work this semester, Colina gave Duff the responsibility of finding a menswear designer for their menswear show. The next weekend, Duff left for Nashville to explore lesserknown shops to find a local designer. After talking with some locals, she discovered a design school graduate, Sophie Tess, with a full menswear collection. Naturally, she booked her.

Duff’s typical day, however, doesn’t usually involve spontaneous trips out of town. In fact, during Fashion Week, every day is different. In the months leading up to the shows, Duff spent the majority of her time recruiting new designers, finding sponsorships, booking venues and using social media. Since its inception in 2012, Knoxville Fashion Week has steadily expanded with more brands and models featured. And, as Fashion Week grows, so do Duff’s responsibilities.

In addition to Duff’s researching new designers,
preshow crisis management and general assistance, she also takes classes five days a week. Fortunately, she receives college credit for her internship with Gage. Before Fashion Week began on Wednesday, February 26, Duff finished all of her homework for the week by Tuesday, allowing her to focus on her real passion.

After her classes end at 3 p.m., Duff sheds her student-wear in favor of a fun, fashionforward look until six or seven at night when her duties at Gage end. But the costume change is not an inconvenience, it’s a perk. Duff is a fashion enthusiast.

Ultimately, Duff aims to work for a department store or a designer, like Vera Wang, in New York City. But until then, Duff is simply enjoying her local work in the fashion industry. “It’s really nice to see something that you’ve worked on get pulled off,” Duff says. “It’s work and play.”

- Molly Spining

1- Royal Peasantry channels medieval glam with this sexy, sweeping dress.
2- Kelly Jones and Diane Corey showcase their decorative, imaginative headwear.
3- Alexis Montclaire of Shattered Stitch Cosplay dubbed this look, “Three Eyed Raven.”
4- Leather and feathers from Kelly Jones and Diane Corey make for a fantastical combo.

1 2 3 4
She goes in through the outdoors

For Sarah Zimmerman, there’s class, and then there’s everything else under the sun.

Sarah Zimmerman (PR, 2014) embodies personal and professional harmony.

She can kayak down white water rapids and explore the dark, narrow passages of caves. But she can also drum up digital enthusiasm and potential participants for these excursions with potential participants.

Zimmerman’s outdoor and online talents converge in her work with The University of Tennessee Outdoors Program (UTOP).

Zimmerman cites a kayak session she attended at Middle Tennessee State University during her senior year of high school as sparking her interest in outdoors programs. She enrolled at MTSU and was a member of Middle Tennessee’s Outdoor Program her freshman year.

Having this opportunity to practice her skills in a safe environment gave her the confidence needed to make it down the river and have fun at the same time. It’s also helped her work her way up in the sport, and now, share her expertise with others.

After transferring to UT her sophomore year, Zimmerman enrolled in the Student Outdoor Leadership Education Program - an outdoor leadership class and instructor training course - to be eligible to lead program trips.

She first worked at UT’s climbing wall front desk, but quickly progressed to teaching lessons. She now instructs and leads bike rides, hiking, caving, and rafting trips. Zimmerman says UTOP members do everything they can to be able to include everyone that wants to try something new - their mission is to get as many people outdoors as possible, regardless of experience level. Seemingly at odds, she says UTOP and the College of Communication and Information are natural complements. “I’m able to use my skills to help out with the program internally and externally,” Zimmerman says. For example, Zimmerman helps the program with social media such as UTOP’s Facebook and Twitter to spread the word about UTOP to other students. “The Outdoors Program is all about people,” Zimmerman says. “I apply the communication skills I learn in class to every trip I lead and every interaction at the Outdoor Center.”

Recently, she and director Benji Darnell began developing a new position for a Communications Coordinator at UTOP. The position will be responsible for all community outreach, social media management and trip marketing.

Zimmerman works between four to eight trips a semester in addition to her full-time coursework, but maintains that her time spent outdoors keeps her focused.

“The things I learn through my college help me succeed, and they help UTOP succeed as well,” she says. “Our participants and leaders step outside their comfort zones and push their limits to become a better version of themselves.”

To learn more about the University of Tennessee Outdoors Program visit recsports.utk.edu or find them on Facebook.

- Samantha Braley
Imagine computers “printing” out solid, three-dimensional objects just as easily as printing out a research paper. With a simple click of a button, an object that didn’t exist before suddenly materializes, ready for use.

No, this isn’t an episode of “Star Trek.” It is the very real power of 3D printers, which utilize a relatively new technology called additive manufacturing to create an item based on a digital model. During the past few years, 3D printers have made headlines as the future of manufacturing. Now, the University of Tennessee is plugging into the action.

Pendergrass Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine Library purchased a CubeX Trio 3D printer last June after Richard Sexton, head of the library’s technological support, suggested the printer as a beneficial research tool.

To many people, the mechanics of 3D printers seem difficult to comprehend. The process is, in fact, remarkably simple.

It all starts with an idea. First, figure out what object needs to be printed, and then create the digital designs using a special type of computer program that is compatible with 3D printers called CAD (computer-aided design) software. If you don’t know how to create the designs, you can use pre-made templates. “There are plenty of websites that have downloadable designs. That’s what we usually use,” says Sexton.

Next, send the design plans to the 3D printer, just as one might for a regular printer, and it creates the object in the printer tray using plastic as “ink.” “It just goes one layer at a time from the bottom to the top,” says Sexton.

Different printers can print objects using materials such as titanium, ceramics and stainless steel, which make the possibilities seemingly endless. Around the world, people have printed guitars, cameras, phone cases, clothes, kitchen appliances and even guns that actually fire. If you can think of it, someone has probably printed it.

One of the major benefits of 3D printing lies in its convenience. If you have the digital designs for an object, you can get it without worrying about shipping or dealing with large-scale production facilities. If the object isn’t exactly what you need, all you have to do is alter the designs and try printing it again, saving you time and money.

Graduate student Pelagie Favi, who is studying biomaterials and tissue engineering at UT, recently used the 3D printer to create a life-sized replica of a human mandible, or jawbone, for a project. “The printer worked well,” Favi says. “It easily created my object and helped further my research by bringing a new dimension to the project.”

Although 3D printers aren’t yet household items, Sexton predicts they will eventually find their place among coffee makers and washing machines. “This technology is going to become more and more pervasive as time goes on,” he says.

While we may be far from a “Beam me up Scotty” era, our current technological progress moves us closer to Trekkie life than we might think.

- Cort Gatiff

The 3D printer (top) in the Pendergrass Library has allowed students to even make iPhone cases (below.)
The invention of the Internet is arguably the greatest achievement of the 20th century. It has created economic innovation and a global community connecting nearly every nation on earth. The free market of ideas has given every website a chance to rise to the top – until recently.

Last January, a federal court ruled two of the FCC regulations dealing with net neutrality – the idea that Internet service providers (ISPs) should not discriminate between sites – as unconstitutional. No longer in place is the “no blocking rule” that forbade broadband providers from blocking lawful content, applications, services or non-harmful devices and competitors.

This rule was the most direct of the two FCC rules, and it acted as a safeguard against telecommunication providers charging more for accessing services such as Skype. Without such regulation, telecom providers could theoretically create an oligopoly where one or two ISPs control all of the telecom and Internet access in a given area.

The court also ruled the FCC’s “no unreasonable discrimination” rule as unconstitutional, and the effects of its loss are a bit more complicated. According to previous FCC regulations, fixed broadband providers had to provide equal speed of access to all websites. For example, Comcast would not be able to slow down videos streaming from Netflix. The ban was limited to exceptions for “reasonable network management.”

Critics of this ruling fear ISPs will start selling faster bandwidth to certain companies, or even start throttling the video streaming speeds of competitors. Though this isn’t likely to hurt your average Netflix viewer, the company’s reported $1 billion net worth means it can probably afford to buy more bandwidth speed if necessary. However, any new kids on the block might not be so fortunate.

“The big boys, the ones with all the money who want the priority, are going to try to dominate, any kind of streaming or any kind of internet,” says JEM assistant professor Michael Martinez. “Smaller companies aren’t going to be able to afford it.”

In other words, this lack of regulation could significantly decrease competition and disadvantage the next Netflix or Hulu, which could seriously hamper technological innovation.

Such fears seemed validated in April, when a proposal for new rules included a baseline level of service and ISP permission to charge content companies for preferential treatment. In the language of the proposal, only one safeguard remains – such wheeling and dealing is permitted only within a “commercially reasonable manner subject to review on a case-by-case basis.”

However, these regulations don’t necessarily equate to higher consumer prices. AT&T recently announced it will begin allowing companies to pay for the bandwidth consumed for using their services so that it will not count against the user’s monthly datacap. Although AT&T reports this policy will save customers money, it essentially impacts smaller competitors that can’t afford to subsidize their customers’ data usage.

But perhaps all the recent broadband brouhaha is little more than legal lip service. According to JEM professor Ben Bates, the FCC’s rules about net neutrality are seldom enforced.

Yet poor enforcement doesn’t equal uselessness. It’s possible the threat of previous regulations kept ISPs in line, and the loss of that threat could lead to more profit-making actions on their part. And in that scenario “someone” will end up paying more for Internet service, and that person could be you.

FOR THE LATEST FCC RULINGS:
http://www.fcc.gov

– Eric Brackett
“Wow” moments, such as the first time driving directions were beamed from space to a GPS system, drive the consumer electronics industry. Apple’s unveiling of the iPhone in 2007 was “wow”-worthy. Remember the thousands of techies who lined up outside Apple stores, just for the opportunity to buy an iPhone the day of its release?

This year, tech giants like Samsung, Google and Sony are working toward creating the next “wow” moment in the emerging field of wearable technology. Current devices range from eyewear with the functionality of a smartphone in Google Glass, to Huggie’s TweetPee, which clips onto a baby’s diaper and sends an alert to a parent’s phone when it’s time for a change.

Google Glass may be the device most likely to replicate the iPhone’s initial coolness factor on first use, but those wearing a pair look about as cool as a mall cop on a Segway. Its $1500 price tag and limited availability also mean that consumers are unlikely to have a chance at hands-on time with Glass anytime soon.

Fitness trackers currently account for the biggest share of wearable tech sales according to a 2014 Nielsen poll. These devices record a user’s movements and work in conjunction with a smart phone or tablet to chart information on physical activity and sleep quality.

Whether wearable tech is a major step forward for mobile computing, or a fad waiting to flop, is debatable. The devices on the market now only offer a taste of what’s possible; potential applications are nearly endless. The gear below covers the spectrum of what’s available now:

- Chris Flowers

**Headgear**

Beats headphones and Google Glass have made impacts on both the tech and fashion worlds, but master’s candidate in Sport Psychology, Skylar Jewell, says GoPro’s line of rugged head-mounted cameras will enhance academic research in his field.

“We’ve been able to gain a first-person perspective into how athletes at various levels view their sports, not just the elite levels,” says Jewell. “These observations will become part of research that will benefit athletes.”

- Chris Flowers

**Fitness Trackers**

With dozens of models available from both large and small companies, fitness trackers are the wearable tech market’s fiercest battleground. Misfit Wearable’s Shine differentiates itself with its ability to attach to nearly anything through its magnetic clip, though the standard wristband is also included.

- Chris Flowers

**Smartwatches**

The limited screen size afforded to a device worn on the wrist means smartwatches serve as companions to smartphones rather than replacements. Their primary use is as a notification and screening system for incoming calls, texts and emails. Sony’s SmartWatch 2 sends alerts with a surprisingly strong vibration, and gains functions in the app store like the goofy ability to display what a phone’s camera is capturing. Invaluable for selfies.

- Chris Flowers

**YOUR CONNECTIONS**

The tech industry’s next major battleground may be your body.

- Chris Flowers
Once-powerful video rental giant Blockbuster announced this year that it’s closing its remaining stores due to its inability to keep up with streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon. But Blockbuster is only one of a number of companies to fall victim to the digital revolution and America’s textbook publishers may be the next in line.

One person who has embraced the digital revolution is Professor Jim Stovall who has tasked one of his classes with the creation of a digital textbook using iBook Author. Stovall says that digital textbooks offer a more convenient and interactive experience for students and thinks that they are ultimately the future of education. “There are probably good reasons to say stop or slow down and, you know, people who get out in the middle of traffic and say stop or slow down they get run over because we’re not going to pay any attention to those [people].”

Another interesting example of a school embracing digital textbooks is the University of Maryland’s plan to create open-source digital textbooks. This program has support from some UMD students and professors, but it is still a difficult undertaking due to how time-consuming it is to get the project off the ground. However, if this project takes off, it could eventually be crowd sourced and funded which could significantly reduce the cost and workload required to create these textbooks.

One of the strongest arguments in favor of digital textbooks is that they will be cheaper for students. However, the price difference is still a small one and that may account for the low number of student adopters. According to study done by Bowker Market Research the average price of a print textbook is $65 whereas a digital copy of the same book would be $61. A four-dollar difference may not be enough for students to give up the familiarity of a print copy.

The official statistics neglect a fact that Hollywood and the music industry have already learned buying something isn’t the only way to get something from the Internet. A study by the Book Industry Study Group, released in July of 2013, found that 34 percent of college students admitted they pirated textbooks. This is a 13 percent increase from 2010. If the textbook industry wants to stay afloat, it will need to find some way to counter piracy, but the fact that Hollywood has yet to grapple with this issue indicates it may be an uphill battle. If Hollywood hasn’t figured it out yet, there isn’t much hope that the textbook industry will.

- Eric Brackett

UNPACKING THE DIGITAL TEXTBOOK DEBATE

TABLETS on the table

The largest iPads for Students Program is a billion dollar initiative by the Los Angeles school district. The plan called for iPads for 650,000 students in late 2014.

Superintendent John Deasy cites the initiative as a way to give his students, most of whom are from poorer families, access to the same technology as students from wealthier families.

But after some students hacked the security measures that prevented them from accessing social media sites such as Facebook, the L.A. school district confiscated all of the iPads. No timetable has been set for their return, but officials have said they are working with Apple to implement a solution.

However for educators, perhaps the larger consideration resides in whether the tablet’s educational possibilities outweigh the disadvantages of potential distraction.
When was your last visit to the College of Communication & Information?

Make plans to visit this fall. **November 15, 2014**
CCI’s Annual Tailgate Party
3 hours before the Kentucky Game

How can you get your name on The Wall?
Contact Patrick Powell, ppowell@utfi.org
Rachel Zoe, celebrity stylist to stars like Kate Hudson and Jennifer Lawrence, was virally quoted via Instagram and Twitter as saying, “Style is a way to say who you are without having to speak.”

If you were to take a walk around the University of Tennessee’s campus on an average day, what type of person would you see along the way? A first time campus visitor could probably guess a few things about the style culture of UT. Although an original ensemble can be hard to spot on campus, it doesn’t mean that UT doesn’t have style. UT’s collective style showcases three characteristics: comfort, identity, and lifestyle choices, and there’s nothing wrong with that.

Style lasts forever, so style-on, UT.

— Theresa Vongkhamchanh
PRACTICAL MATTERS
“I dress for what I do. I snow board, I wake board, I rock climb.”
Andy Weber
Kinesiology

STYLE STAR
“My style icon is Rihanna. People see a bit of me when they see what I wear.”
Erinnesse Drake
Hotel Tourism and Retail Management

FRESH PRINCE
“I like to put random combinations together, like I would put a blazer on with some tennis shoes and wear it in a stylish way.”
Cullen Johnson
Computer Engineering

HOMEMADE STYLE
“Relaxed, comfortable, and kind of farm girl.”
Sally Jernigan
English Literature
TOUGH STUFF
“I like to keep it simple with a t-shirt or tank top, depending on the weather.”

Allen Vongkhamchanh
Business Exploratory

CLASSIC COMFORT
“I think it’s very feminine and kind of playful. I like to play with color, and even when I’m dressed up, I still like to be comfortable.”

Jesse Reed
Chemical Engineering

TRADITIONAL PREP
“If you look at what I wear now as opposed to 50-60 years ago, I don’t think it would be too different.”

Larry Cheng
Sport Management and Political Science

SPORTY SPICE
“I base what I wear that day on the workout I do.”

Lauren Mitchell
Nutrition
The students who planned UTK’s 2014 Sex Week were defunded, badgered and publicly condemned, but they’re still talking about it – perhaps louder than ever.
THE DEBUT OF SEX WEEK

Rader says after the 2013 funding announcement, she forced herself to remain “emotionless” and simply defended Sex Week’s “core” ideals.

Just hours after the cuts were announced, private donations and pledges of support poured in, circulating a student petition, a kickstarter fund, and social media fever. Widespread outrage from both sides lifted the story into the headlines of media sites Huffington Post, The Nation, and NY Daily News. In those first days, Rader and Clark gave a seemingly endless stream of interviews, including one with Bill O’Reilly.

For the SEAT members, it was an organizational crisis. Kevin Brown (PR, 2015), another member of the “Sexecutive Board” understands both the necessity and futility of planning for disaster.

“Public Relations as a job is equal parts preparation and reaction,” says Brown. “While you can plan for certain events, it’s impossible to be prepared for every situation.”

Rader says support came from around the nation and the group regained $7,000 in funding to keep the event on schedule. Rader says during and after the events, the organization received no complaints.

BRINGING SEXY BACK

Ten months later, as SEAT prepared the Sex Week 2014 program, the headache returned, Monday February 24, when House Joint Resolution 661, sponsored by Tennessee representative Richard Floyd, condemned Sex Week and its organizers. The Tennessee State House of Representatives passed the resolution 69-17. The resolution did not call for legal action, but merely expressed legislative distaste. But unlike last year, UT administration stood in solidarity with the students of Sex Week, with Chancellor Cheek and UT President Joe DiPietro publicly expressing support.

For Jordan Achs (JEM, 2015), who aided in the creation and distribution of promotional materials for Sex Week 2014 and sat on the Sexecutive Board, the political attacks hit home. Growing up in a small Midwestern town, Achs witnessed the consequences of poor sexual education. She says that there, birth control is a taboo, justifiable only to regulate menstrual cycles. Achs says she did not know where to find condoms or an abortion clinic near her hometown.

“A lot of kids were having sex at my school; it was very apparent,” says Achs. “Probably half of the girls in the grade above mine were pregnant before graduation. I saw everyday how it affected my peers’ lives.”

Ach’s estimates her graduating class was approximately 40 students. Such instances gave impetus to Sex Week. “Issues of consent, sexual health and sexuality are very real for students here,” says Achs.

Returning with money backed solely by the University Programs and Services Fees Funding Board, Sex Week is now a household name. What was once a lecture series is now a veritable brand, complete with memorable event titles, punchy promotional materials, and an iconic tagline

Sex Week promotion in Fort Sanders.
“Let’s Talk About IT.” The clever names that draw students to events, however, also draw disparaging remarks; “How many licks does it take,” a discussion on oral sex, angered many state politicians. Four hundred fifty students came, but so did criticism from what Rader calls “local non-students.”

“My target demographic is 18-22-year olds,” Rader says. “And they like clever names. My target demographic is not a 55-year old white male straight republican Christian senator in Nashville. And I can’t gear my marketing toward him just to make him happy.”

A story by Fox reporter Todd Starnes, for example, reduced Sex Week 2013 to an excuse to bring a lesbian bondage expert to UT. Although all inaccuracies reported in the media are corrected through phone call or email, Rader says these revisions are almost never published. Yet, student organizations, evidenced by numerous co-sponsorships, seem to understand the value of Sex Week. This year, Cru, the Women’s Coordinating Council, Black Cultural Programming Committee, Hillel, Central Programs Council, and Film Committee are helping to support Sex Week financially. Several Greek organizations are offering “points” to members who attend Sex Week events.

“Issues of consent, sexual health and sexuality are very real for students here,”

—Jordan Achs (JEM, 2015)

Programs with Purpose

Throughout the week, SEAT members handed out condoms, flowers, candy and mini-schedules of events.

“A story by Fox reporter Todd Starnes, for example, reduced Sex Week 2013 to an excuse to bring a lesbian bondage expert to UT. Although all inaccuracies reported in the media are corrected through phone call or email, Rader says these revisions are almost never published. Yet, student organizations, evidenced by numerous co-sponsorships, seem to understand the value of Sex Week. This year, Cru, the Women’s Coordinating Council, Black Cultural Programming Committee, Hillel, Central Programs Council, and Film Committee are helping to support Sex Week financially. Several Greek organizations are offering “points” to members who attend Sex Week events.

Sex Week support is now as interdisciplinary as the university’s course catalogue. To wit: Rader is a graduating Haslam Scholar who will be attending UC- San Francisco for her master’s in Global Health Sciences. Clark is an Honors Ambassador, an SGA senator and an executive member of the Central Programming Council, and a future surgeon.

The Future of Sex Week

Now a household name, Sex Week reprised its eye-catching colors, logo, and slogan in its promotions for this year’s event. But with greater visibility came greater public relations responsibilities.

“I don’t think we’ve changed the branding at all, but the public has shaped its image,” Rader says.

Last year, redemption came largely through Facebook and Twitter. Taking note, the 2014 PR team took great pains to curate their online persona. “We have stirred up a lot of attention, so it is important that Sex Week tries to stay as professional and informed as possible,” Brown says.

Promotions, too, are growing in size and reach. The Sexiest Vol Competition is a new addition, driving students to their Facebook page to vote for the most attractive of 28 competitors. So, too, is a promotional video featuring students performing dance choreography to a parody of Justin Timberlake’s “Sexy Back.”

Interactions with media, though, have proved complicated. As a CCI student, Achs is no stranger to the pitfalls of misinterpretation. “Scandals get readers, and one wrong word can really wreck whatever image a group tries to make for itself,” Achs says.

The “scandal,” however, appears unfounded. The same drag show that raised eyebrows drew approximately five hundred attendees. As a senior graduating in May, Rader’s desire to establish Sex Week as a “sustainable, permanent annual program for UTK students,” is stronger than ever.

The state-mandated public school curriculum promotes abstinence as the sole means for avoiding sexual risk, per TCA 49-6-1304.

“If we had comprehensive sex education in middle schools across Tennessee, there would be less of a need for Sex Week,” Rader says. “In a perfect world, Sex Week might not even be needed.”

—Hanna Lustig
Conroy (JEM, 1951) was a writer for the Washington Post for more than 30 years. She worked as a foreign correspondent in Switzerland, Belize and Austria. Conroy was also the first female journalism graduate from UT.

Sarah Booth
Conroy

They’ve earned media power and cultural currency from career success. Here is our shortlist of inspirational journalism industry influencers.

HARD NEWS heavyweights

Monica Langley

Langley (JEM, 1980) made a swift ascent from managing editor at the Daily Beacon to senior special writer for the Wall Street Journal. Ever since, she’s served as the newspaper’s preeminent writer of the page-one profile, often highlighting presidential candidates and key newsmakers. With a New York Times best-seller under her belt and a law degree from Georgetown Law School, it’s no surprise that Langley was recognized as one of the nation’s most exceptional women in media in 2009.

Wendell Potter

Potter (JEM, 1973) began his career as a Press-Scimitar reporter in Memphis, Tenn. He then moved to Washington, D.C. to work for the Scripps Howard News Bureau covering the White House, Congress and Supreme Court. He then worked as a public relations executive for Cigna, one of the largest health care companies in the United States. Potter is considered an expert on United States private health care industries. He regularly lobbies Congress concerning private health care and contributes a column, “Ask Wendell,” to the Huffington Post.

John Noble Wilford

Wilford (JEM, 1955) began his career as a medical reporter for the Wall Street Journal and a science and space news writer for Time. From 1965 until he retired in 2008, he was the leading science and space writer and editor for the New York Times. He is known for his coverage of Apollo 11, and has received two Pulitzer Prizes: the first, for his coverage of science in 1984, and the second in 1987 for his work with the Times covering the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster. He is the author, editor, or co-author of ten books and only the sixth person in his story to receive an honorary doctorate from UTK.

Sarah Booth
Conroy (JEM, 1951) was a writer for the Washington Post for more than 30 years. She worked as a foreign correspondent in Switzerland, Belize and Austria. Conroy was also the first female journalism graduate from UT.
Paul Finebaum

Paul Finebaum (Political Science 1978) has been called “King of the South,” the “Oprah Winfrey of college football” and the “Voice of the SEC.” He began his career as an investigative reporter for the Birmingham Post-Herald. He broke into the world of sports reporting as a guest commentator on the Mark and Brian Radio Show in Birmingham, Ala. A few years later, he had his own show, which became the highest rated sports-talk show in Birmingham. In 2001, this Memphis-native started the Paul Finebaum Radio Network, where he hosted a show syndicated by Sirius XM Radio. In 2013, he was hired by ESPN to appear regularly on its newly created SEC Network, and in 2014, he’s publishing a book, My Conference Can Beat Your Conference: Why the SEC Still Rules College Football, with fellow UT grad and ESPN reporter, Gene Wojciechowski (JEM, 1979).

While Finebaum graduated with a political science degree, according to Tennessee Today, at an alumni event at ESPN headquarters he said “It was the classes I took in the College of Communication and Information and my experience working at the Daily Beacon that helped me to develop the skills that got me where I am today.”

Gene Wojciechowski

Salinas, Kan. native, Gene Wojciechowski (JEM, 1979), began his career as a reporter covering college football and basketball. After graduating from UT, he began reporting for newspapers like the Chicago Tribune, Dallas Morning News, Denver Post and the Los Angeles Times. He has written a novel, About 80 Percent Luck, as well as many non-fiction and co-authored works. Currently, Wojciechowski writes for ESPN and ESPN The Magazine.
The Ida B. Wells project hopes to lift her memory from the footnotes of history and into today’s conversation.

Chances are, you don’t know who Ida B. Wells is. And that’s what The Ida B. Wells Project is all about: an ongoing effort among faculty and students at the University of Tennessee to commemorate her legacy and her contributions to journalism and American life. JEM assistant professor Amber Roessner is spearheading the project and hopes to preserve Wells’ memory and generate a dialogue among scholars in the fields of journalism and history.

“She’s the bridge between the 19th century abolitionist movement and the 20th century civil rights movement,” Roessner says. “She is an excellent prism through which to learn and engage in the African-American freedom struggle and with the 21st century struggle for social justice and equity.”

The project began in the fall, when Roessner’s communication history students compiled primary and secondary sources to create a website called the Ida Initiative. Through the Ida Initiative, Wells’ investigative tips and public relations techniques were incorporated into the curriculum, allowing students to learn about her in the process. After the website’s launch, the next phase...
of the project was to utilize panels to establish scholarly dialogue about Wells. One such panel was included in last year’s Annual Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. The symposium’s purpose, to share research pertaining to mass media, crime, sensationalism, free speech and media during this time period, incorporated Wells’ personal experience and works to showcase the media’s representation of race.

The panels allow scholars to present new research about Wells in a contemporary manner. In addition to the permanent website and panels, Roessner would like to host a conference at the university in 2015 highlighting Ida and Beyond, and eventually publish a volume of scholarly research about her life, work and legacy.

So just who was Ida B. Wells?

Famous for her influential and fearless written critiques of lynchings, Wells was an uncompromising suffragist and advocacy journalist during the post-Civil War period. Wells began her literary war on racial discrimination in Memphis, Tenn., when she took the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Company to court for refusing to let her sit in the first car of the train and forcing her into the smoking or “Jim Crow Car.” Though Wells won the case in the lower circuit courts, the Supreme Court reversed the initial ruling, which only added flame to her fury. In 1892, Wells’ three African-American friends were brutally lynched by a mob for the success of their People’s Grocery Company because of its direct competition with the nearby white grocery store.

These struggles and personal strife provided Wells the tools needed for no-nonsense activism and the passion to create controversial works such as, Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in all its Phases, which exposed the errors in many lynch charges. Wells wrote in her autobiography, “I felt that one had better die fighting against injustice than to die like a dog or a rat in a trap.”

Born and raised below the Mason-Dixon line, Wells faced persistent backlash from the Southern white community for her intense muckraking and investigative reporting of these injustices; in 1892 an enraged Southern white mob destroyed her office at the Free-Speech and Headlight in Memphis. Wells’ infamy in the South eventually led her north to Chicago, where she continued to fight against social injustice. She later became a founding member of the NAACP.

For Wells, much of life was spent disturbing Southern norms and fighting prejudices. She was thus marginalized in the history textbooks making it difficult for students and scholars to learn about her social and political heroism. Through her legacy, the Ida B. Wells Project hopes to provide an example of a true and fervent democratic journalist.

Roessner says the Ida B. Wells Project is a prism through which students and scholars can engage and learn about African-American history.

CHANCES ARE, YOU DON’T KNOW WHO IDA B. WELLS IS. LEARN.

IDA B. WELLS

- Born into slavery in Mississippi in 1862
- A founding member of the NAACP
- Established the first black women’s suffrage club in 1913
DEVELOPING NETWORKS

Social Media are ubiquitous, and each year CCI brings together experts and students to talk about the potential and pitfalls of life online.

Consider for a moment the international reach of social media. According to Facebook, at the end of 2013 there were 1.23 billion registered Facebook users worldwide. Twitter cites an average of 5,700 Twitter posts each second. And those are just two social media options. Seventy-three percent of online adults use at least one form of social media platform according to 2013 data gathered by Pew Research.

Social media are now embedded into our culture and are continually changing the way we communicate, connecting people around the globe faster than you can say “update.” While we have access to more rapid communication and information exchange than any other humans in history, with great power comes great responsibility. And this is the case with social media where one digital misstep can impact your life in a very real way. But, as the saying goes, big gambles also come with big opportunities.

The successful navigation of this technological environment is the cornerstone of the College of Communication and Information’s Social Media Week, and, from March 31-April 3, 2014, students and faculty plugged into the discussion.

VOLUNTEER SPIRIT

CCI’s third annual Social Media Week might be considered an expanded and polished version of its first Social Media Week, a two-day event in April 2012 that was funded with help from two alums who wanted to find a way to give back to their school. Adam Brown (Adv, 1994), then the executive director of social media at Dell, and Ed Patterson (PR, 1989), then senior director of public affairs for Cox Enterprises, donated funds earmarked for digital and social media programming.

“These two alums recognized the importance and influence of new media,” says Dr. Courtney Childers, an associate professor in the School of Advertising and Public Relations and chair of the committee in charge of organizing Social Media Week. “They had a vision and wanted to help equip students with the tools required to be successful in this rapidly growing field.”

GAINING FOLLOWERS

The first Social Media Week featured 10 sessions and was scheduled in the days before the Knoxville Social Slam, and included presentations by social media experts from corporations like Scripps Networks Interactive and Dell Inc. One year later, in 2013, the second Social Media Week added a third day of presentations, and 2014’s Social Media Week expanded to a four-day event.

“We’re trying to expand our reach as much as possible,” Childers says. Her expansion strategy is simple. Bring in accomplished speakers to present on diverse subjects. There should be something for everybody, says Childers.

This year’s Social Media Week lineup was diverse in retweet-able topics. Interested in politics? Knoxville City Mayor Madeleine Rogero and Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett discussed social media’s place in the political arena. Want to learn about how a nationally-known reporter uses social media? Chris Geidner, legal editor at popular news and entertainment site BuzzFeed, was here to talk about just that. For the sports lovers, Paul Finebaum, one of the top radio sports talk show hosts in the country, delivered the keynote lecture about his successful career and the impact of social media on sports discourse and commentary.
It marked the first time Finebaum had been in a UT classroom since graduating in 1978, an olive branch in what had been an estranged relationship.

Karen Robinette, CCI’s annual giving and alumni relations coordinator and a member of the Social Media Week planning committee, says one of the goals is to bring back as many alumni as possible. “We like to recognize our alumni who have gone on to be successful in their fields,” she says.

A sampling of the CCI Alumni who participated in 2014’s Social Media Week include Morgan Neal (PR, 2012) of AC Entertainment, Jessica Henderson (JEM, 2012) of Innovative Learning Solutions, Zac Ellis (JEM, 2011) of Sports Illustrated, Mark Murdock (JEM, 1997) of Bandy Carroll Hellige Advertising, Gracie Blackburn (PR, 2008) of ESPN and Ryan McGee (JEM, 1993) of ESPN. “It’s nice when students can see someone who used to be in their shoes doing exactly what they want to be doing,” says Robinette. “It helps students see the opportunities that are out there.”

Social Media Week brings in leading industry professionals to share their knowledge with students and the community, but Childers and other CCI educators actively integrate social media platforms every day in the classroom. Childers teaches an elective course on social media management for brands and corporations. She says most students have personal Twitter, Facebook or Instagram accounts, but she hopes to teach students about the power of social media from a brand’s perspective. She also makes her students keep a blog, because, in a job interview, a quality blog could mean the difference between getting the job and being unemployed.

Each school within CCI has its own Twitter account as well. JEM assistant professor Nick Geidner, who operates the @UTJEM Twitter account, says Twitter helps start conversations about the industry with students and gives CCI a chance to interact with professionals and people in the community. “It can help with recruiting, too. “Someone from UT class of 2018 followed me, and I realized she was a senior in high school,” says Geidner. “I was able to tweet, ‘Congratulations, we’re looking forward to seeing you in the fall.’ That personal touch goes a long way.”

GOOD, BAD AND UGLY

One of the goals of Social Media Week is to help users be more cognizant of what they’re posting online, and how it could impact them positively or negatively, says Childers. “Things can suddenly take off and it can be life changing in a matter of minutes or hours. It’s a very powerful tool that takes some planning and strategy,” she says.

Chris Geidner, BuzzFeed’s legal editor, a speaker at this year’s Social Media Week, discussed some of the benefits and drawbacks of social media use in an interview conducted over the phone. “The biggest thing that social media did is it completely eviscerated the easy lines between public and private lives,” Geidner says.

In order to mind those boundaries, Geidner says that students must understand that the Internet is always changing. He says too many companies are trying to control the Internet, an impossible feat given the fluidity of the Internet.

In an attempt to preemptively avoid embarrassing social media faux pas, some corporations implement social media guidelines for employees. But Geidner says this is the equivalent of being told what you can and cannot do on your Friday night: it should be obvious.

“The best rule for social media is just not to do anything online that you wouldn’t do in real life. Be smart,” he says. “If someone needs to sit you down to explain what you should and shouldn’t do, you probably don’t need to be using social media.”

Geidner says BuzzFeed has been successful because it embraces social media and exploits the benefits, instead of tip-toeing around the dangers of social media use. Geidner says readers are now able to find his Twitter feed and learn a little bit about who he is as a person, thus helping dissolve the barrier between public and private life.

“[Social media] enable people who care about a story to see that this is a story I have a deep understanding of, and it’s a story that I follow from day to day,” Geidner says. “It gives you the ability to find out more about someone and ask questions. It’s a big opportunity to interact.”

The challenging aspect of teaching social media is that we are in uncharted waters. No one knows exactly how social media platforms will continue to change the industry and impact the way we interact with one another. However, hosting events like Social Media Week and finding ways to incorporate it into the classroom is a good place to start educating students so they’re as prepared as possible when leaving UT. “It’s technology,” Geidner says. “You have to be responsive to how it’s changing and just go with it.”

- Cort Gatliiff

Top left, clockwise: JEM assistant professor Nick Geidner talks with his brother, speaker Chris Geidner, BuzzFeed’s legal editor.
When Abby Mullen (ADV, 2011) was a young child, she didn’t understand what the phrase “multiple sclerosis” meant. She only knew that her Aunt Libby couldn’t walk and needed a wheelchair.

Today, as the development manager for the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society’s mid-south chapter, Mullen understands exactly what that phrase means, and she makes a living raising money to fund research to end the disease.

Mullen orchestrates National MS Society fundraisers in Tennessee and neighboring states with event titles such as the Bob Mueller MS Celebrity Golf Scramble and the Bike to Jack and Back bicycle ride.

“I can honestly have one day where I’m calling parks or ordering port-a-potties or designing t-shirts, and then I can have a meeting with the CEO of Nissan – all in the same day,” says Mullen.

But Mullen says this daily diversity complements her own professional experience and highly organized personality. Mullen worked for Imagination Branding, a Nashville-based promotional marketing company, after graduation, and she attributes her sales ability to this profit-sect sector experience. Nashville networking led Mullen to consider an event-planning career, and she started applying for planning positions.

Mullen says the day the society contacted her inspired more than her curiosity. “When they told me it was the MS society, I had to check it out,” says Mullen, who started there in 2012. “And it’s been a perfect fit.”

Perfect fit, indeed. Her first time planning the “Bike to Jack and Back,” fundraiser – an event in which bicyclists ride from Franklin, Tennessee to Lynchburg, Tennessee and back over the course of two days - brought in more than $620,000 and included 1,000 cyclists. Mullen coordinated more than 200 volunteers for the event.

Mac McCabe, who has been involved with the ride since 2003, was one of those cyclists. The owner of Mac’s Harpeth Bikes, a Middle Tennessee bike repair shop, McCabe says the event is so big now in the biking community that he closes his business for two days. His team of 28 cyclists raised $10,000 in last year’s ride.

McCabe calls the cycling extravaganza one of the best charity events in Tennessee, and he credits Mullen for much of that success. “She brings a lot of enthusiasm to the table, and she’s really good at what she does – she does a great job of getting people excited for the event,” McCabe says.

Associate Professor Courtney Childers (AdvPR) says she also recognized such traits in Mullen, both in class and through her Ad Club involvement. “She always came to her Ad Club involvement. “She always came to class ready to learn and enthusiastic,” Childers says. “She was always a team player.”

Mullen now applies this collaborative prowess to projects she personally understands because her aunt, Libby Nash, was diagnosed with MS at age 26 and died at age 40. Mullen says she remembers being a child and promising her aunt that one day she would walk again. While Mullen’s memories are bittersweet, they no doubt helped fuel an inner-fire that helps motivate and mobilize those around her.

“I watched her struggle and my grandparents struggle,” Mullen says. “I knew that if I were to work for a non-profit, this was the realm I wanted.”

- RJ Vogt
Freddy James (JEM, 1996) remembers hearing critics chuckle when HGTV debuted on television screens across America in 1994. “A lot of people joked that it would be a network about watching grass grow and paint dry,” says James. Hardly. It’s now a network that averages 43 million monthly viewers during primetime (7-11 p.m.), and James has been employed by the network, which is now an international brand, for 17 years.

During this timespan, James rose from associate producer to his current position as senior vice president of strategic development and program integration at HGTV. But James’ consistent hard work is only partly credited for his position of leadership within the company. Audrey Adlam, vice president of communication and talent relations at HGTV networks, says James has a gift for seeing beyond the walls of the meeting room.

“Freddy has an excellent knowledge of our overall business,” says Adlam. “When he makes a decision, he is thinking about how it affects the entire enterprise. He’s a big picture thinker.”

At HGTV, James oversees product integration into the network’s shows to ensure the needs of advertisers are being met. When he isn’t working closely with the advertising team, James works with the digital team to develop a virtual experience app for HGTV viewers on the second screen.

The app is triggered by audio from the show. When your iPad is listening to the show, it can create an online or tablet experience for you. “It’s a little bit more of an opportunity for the viewer to lean in and participate,” says James.

Imagine predicting the outcome of a show like HGTV’s House Hunters, where home hunters tour three possible houses and make their decision as to which house they will purchase by the end of the show. While watching, you could participate in a poll to see if they guessed the correct house. This interactive experience, James hopes, will give viewers a chance to weigh in during the program, and engage in the show’s virtual community.

“I think now more than ever people want to do more than just sit back and watch a show; they want to participate and have a voice,” says James.

HGTV is pushing interactive frontiers in terms of broad engagement strategies and mobile uses. As its market grows to include younger viewers, the channel is working to appeal to a new tech savvy generation that is attached to its cell phones and tablets--dubbed, “the second screen.”

“With kids, they’re gonna expect it,” says James. “It’s not gonna be an added perk. It’s going to be their expectation.”

HGTV wants to make sure expectations are met for the millennial generation. Keeping up with the interactive experience is one of many ways HGTV is progressing towards the future of television.

As James says, “You have to be open-minded to the change and evolution of the way our business works. People who don’t evolve in this business, don’t last.”

- Theresa Vongkhamchanh
Phones ring perpetually in Casey Reese’s (CS, 2013) light pink office while she flips through her calendar and scribbles down dates, color schemes, and flower types. In her line of work, event planning, nothing is black and white—except maybe the wedding dress.

This Chattanooga native returned home after graduating last December to plan professionally, and the icing on her cake: her current boss introduced her to the business when Reese was in high school.

One might say Reese took a direct route to event planning, one that started her junior year of high school when she job-shadowed Morgan Holland, the owner of a local event planning company. Reese cites her days spent immersed in the company, Soirées: Weddings, Parties and Events, as influential and later, significant.

But Reese and Holland shared a community even beyond event-planning they both are CCI graduates. Holland (CS, 2005), also a Chattanooga native, began working with Soirées in 2006. Two years later she purchased the business, which remains successful. “Event planning was always something I aspired to do,” Holland says, “but I never dreamed I’d be running my own company by 25.”

While Holland was in the midst of managing Soirées, Reese was starting college as a Nursing major. Reese would drive home and volunteer with Soirées on her free weekends which turned into paid work. Those weekends proved seminal, leading Reese to change her major and follow Holland’s path.

But Holland says she witnessed Reese’s professional passion. “I could tell how much Casey loved it,” Holland says. “A lot of girls don’t understand the whole business, but she wanted to learn more about it.”

Today, Reese is the Assistant Event Coordinator at Soirées, and her job involves anything and everything that needs to be done. When Reese gets to work each morning, Holland gives her the day’s to-do list. Items include calling vendors, researching bands, looking up different center piece ideas, scheduling appointments, and contacting clients. In between such duties, Holland and Reese sit down with clients to hear their thoughts and pitch event ideas.

Reese credits her communications courses with helping her negotiate client relationships.

“Learning how to work with people and collaborate with people really helps me with this job because I work with so many different personalities every single day,” says Reese. “It’s important to know how to handle that.”

Reese says her favorite day on the job is helping with a client’s wedding when Reese and the rest of the Soirées staff get to see all their hard work pay off.

The team is responsible for setting up tables, laying the linens, dressing the bride, cutting the cake, and making sure everything is running smooth and stress-free for the families.

“A wedding is supposed to be the most memorable day of someone’s life,” says Reese. “Getting to help create that makes all the long hours and stress of event planning worth it.”

- Samantha Braley

PLANNING THE NIGHT FANTASTIC

Reese is calm, cool and collected.
And she handles all the little details for her clients’ parties — weddings, included.
Imagine a Shakespeare English class that uses video editing software to create movie trailers for modernized versions of Shakespeare’s works, nursing students who develop narrated public health powerpoints to share with communities or agriculture students who produce turfgrass podcasts.

Now project that mental image to the Studio in Hodges Library and you have some of UTK’s most exemplary creative assignments. Media Literacy Librarian Michelle Brannen (MS/IS, 2009) is helping UTK students navigate this creative new world where media-based projects replace writing final papers faster than you can say, “right brain.”

More specifically, Brannen orchestrates and leads workshops and programs that allow students to get hands-on experience with the library’s large array of media. She worked as Studio manager since its creation in 2001, and stayed in that position until July 2013, when she became Media Literacy Librarian.

Although she is now a technology professional, Brannen came to the University of Tennessee in 1994 as a School of Music graduate student, and in 1998 took a staff position in the music library. When the university offered Brannen an opportunity to help build the Studio, Brannen eventually switched her program of study to Information Science.

These days, Brannen develops media training workshops for UTK faculty, staff and students that include software programs such as Final Cut Pro X, InDesign and Photoshop. Brannen says she and other Studio colleagues hope to increase 3D offerings for UTK project use, and the facility is now home to a 3D printer. She says the biggest challenge is to stay on top of training and to anticipate what technology would be most useful to students. She finds this very important for Hodges Library as well as libraries across the nation.

Libraries are resources where students can go to learn about media and use this knowledge in their classes as well as future jobs. Brannen is extremely aware of the importance of tech knowledge. “There is constant talk on library forums about new media services,” she says. “Information and technology really go hand in hand. You have to have them together to work most effectively.”

In addition to her studio work, Brannen is the Learning, Research and Collections Librarian for the School of Journalism and Electronic Media. She recently helped the library’s Special Collections create a photo contest for students called the “Pick, Spin, Win” competition, which encourage students to take Photoshop workshops and access resources that allow them to repurpose vintage UT photography, and she hopes to develop future projects to allow students to be creative while gaining practical technology experience.

Brannen says she most enjoys watching students learn how to use the programs, see them come back to the Studio and work on their class projects, and witness their success, be it a turf podcast or a video riff about Lady Macbeth.

Jordan Achs (JEM, 2015), a student library assistant at the Studio, has been working with Brannen for two and a half years. She says Brannen will go out of her way to help students get projects done, such as downloading new programs, making sure current programs are up to date and doing one-on-one consultations. “Sometimes she’ll even sit down with someone for hours and walk them through the program if they don’t understand the technology required,” says Achs.

Brannen is dedicated to providing information and technology in patient and accommodating ways. Achs says Brannen makes the best out of fluctuating situations. During renovations in the library last year, the Studio was packed into a tiny classroom. “We had live-feeds of animals on TVs on the walls, and she always made sure to give us breaks when we needed to see daylight since our temporary space didn’t have windows,” she says. Brannen also makes sure help is available in the Studio at all times. “She always asks how we’re doing and will walk through any weather imaginable to make sure the desk is covered when students may not be able to make it to campus,” Achs says.

- Emily Robinson
For college students, what could be better than spending a Friday night dancing in TRECS and raising money for kids battling cancer? Many students would say a lot of things—or so says Caroline Driscoll, a junior majoring in public relations and the vice president of participant relations for For The Kids @ UTK (FTK), a year-round, student-led philanthropic organization benefiting East Tennessee Children’s Hospital. However, the organization wants students to know this isn’t just a dance.

Since 1995, UT’s local chapter donated over one million dollars and volunteer hours to ETCH to improve the lives of the Hospital’s young patients and their families. However in recent years, Driscoll says, financial and service contributions have declined.

“Having the name ‘dance’ kind of played into it. We didn’t get as many male participants because they thought they’d have to dance all night,” said Driscoll.

This downward trend inspired FTK’s committee members to rename its main event, Dance Marathon, as For The Kids @ UTK, alongside other college chapters that support Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals around the nation. In reality, dancing is only one element of the 12-hour event, which also includes games and prizes. It’s not a marathon of dance—it’s a marathon with dance.

Moreover, the group’s new name reflects a renewed focus on the Hospital’s kids. “We never say they’ve battled anything,” she says. “We just celebrate who they are.”

In the past, children in treatment at the Hospital came in the morning for a family breakfast and events like the “Hero Walk” and the chance to ‘pie’ their doctor or nurse in the face with whipped cream. The group will keep such traditions and create others that honor the children in vibrant ways.

Driscoll says this year’s event, a superhero theme, includes a kid’s talent show, face painting and dance. “If you think about it, they are superheroes for everything they’ve done,” says Driscoll. “We’re glad that we have the chance to celebrate that.”

According to the American Childhood Cancer Organization’s (ACCO) 2014 statistics, cancer is the leading cause of death (after accidents) in children under 14. This year, ACCO estimates 10,450 children will be diagnosed with some variation of this disease. Because the cause and cure remains largely unknown, cancer continues to claim the lives of around 1,350 of those children annually.

The organization raises funds through ticket sales and in-kind donations, plus smaller events such as bake sales and percentage nights. All proceeds go directly to the Hospital and help patients and their families cover a variety of costs that include food and medicines not covered by insurance.

By the end of this year, FTK hopes to raise at least $55,000 for ETCH, a feat that could not be reached without hundreds of student participants donating both their time and money.

This year, they are also selling Miracle Balloons—paper balloons benefitting Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals—to sorority and fraternity houses and dorms. Each organization involved competes for the most donations, and the winner receives an ice cream party and points towards the Miracle Cup, a trophy given annually to the organization with the highest participation and most donated money.

But perks and prizes aside, Driscoll says she hopes participants discover the event’s main focus is most rewarding, and that they, like her, will develop a deep, personal connection with the kids. In addition to fiscal donations, volunteers from UT also make regular visits to the clinic to spend time with kids and try to brighten their day.

“It’s great to watch them enjoying their time and just having fun because they don’t always get to have fun,” she concludes. “A lot of places they go, they’re kids with cancer, but when they come to For The Kids, they’re just kids.”

- Marion Kirkpatrick
CASTING THE DIRECTOR

A hire must be made. A job is posted. A process begins.

You’re meandering down a CCI hallway with time to kill before your next class, so you glance at the nearby publication stands and pick up a copy of the campus newspaper, The Daily Beacon. Or maybe, if you’re a fan of poetry and short stories, you grab an issue of the Phoenix, the campus literary magazine. But what you may not realize is the assemblage and production of these publications happen right in this building.

For four decades, Jane Pope directed UT student publications. When Pope retired, the Office of Student Media started searching for a new director to guide the vision of both The Daily Beacon and The Phoenix.

As well as guiding the publications’ print and digital products, the director must effectively interact with students and balance student achievement with superior published work. This balance, with the guidance of a great director, will help involved students in their future careers.

In April 2014, UT hired Rachel Wedding McClelland as the new director, who says the process was straightforward and well-planned on her end as well. “There’s an incredible sense of camaraderie and collegiality within the UTK Division of Student Affairs, and I am incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to join this team of professionals,” she says.

The setting requires the director to work closely with students, teaching them about publishing and the journalism field. McClelland will also be a director in the division of student life, which Jeff Cathey says has a broader scope. She must help students navigate challenges and improve their experiences at UT, as well as oversee various other projects such as staff performance reviews and developing budgets.

Pope worked at the university for 40 years; Cathey hopes McClelland will remain with the university for many years. He says finding someone with the right “fit” is important.

“It’s also one of these times now to bring somebody in with some fresh perspective, and be able to change things up, bring some new ideas, and that’s also exciting,” says Cathey.

McClelland’s 10 years of higher education experience add to her qualifications for working with students. “Working with college students and having the opportunity to mentor is hands-down my favorite aspect of my job,” she says.

She finds UTK’s interest in improving its student media promising for the future of the program, as well as her involvement with it. “Because I am a strategic planner, I truly enjoy the process of defining problems and guiding my team toward solutions for improvement,” she says. “I look forward to being able to help raise the profile of UTK Student Media.”

- Emily Robinson

1. The first step in finding a candidate who was the right fit for the university was the position description. This was advertised on the Human Resources website as well as in national postings. Human Resources then collected applicant materials, which the search committee reviewed.

2. The committee, led by UT Associate Dean of Students Jeff Cathey, recommended a pool of candidates to come to the university for an interview. If travel logistics proved problematic, phone and Skype interviews were used.

3. Invested students, faculty, staff and alumni provided feedback about candidates’ fit and skill set. The decision was ultimately up to the reporting supervisor of the area, Dean of Students Maxine Davis.
The faculty of the University of Tennessee College of Communication and Information (CCI) provide world-class education, research, and innovative programming of the highest quality. Thanks to the generosity of alumni, friends and supporters like you, we are able to meet the challenges associated with preparing students to become successful communication and information professionals in an ever changing global society.

During fiscal year 2013 your investment provided additional resources for student scholarships, faculty support, visiting professionals, experiential learning, and diversity initiatives. Your private gifts have also led to much needed improvements in the College’s facilities including our state-of-the-art Converged Newsroom and Video Editing Suites.

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Sweet P’s BBQ & Soul House
Drs. Carol Tenopir & Gerald W. Lundeen
Tennessee Theatre
$1,000 - $2,499
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Dr. Neil D. Adamson  
Aramark Charitable Fund  
Tom & Diane Ballard  
Bistro at the Bijou  
Anne Holt & Kenneth E. Blackburn  
Bliss Home  
Constance P. Burnett  
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Covenant Health System, Inc.  
Douglas J. Institute, Inc.  
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Dr. Lisa Fall  
Fort Sanders Yacht Club  
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Nancy C. Gazze  
Dr. Peter & Vera Gross  
Hard Rock Café Corporate HQ  
Bruce & Mary Hight  
Historic Tennessee Theatre  
Karen Romer Isaac  
Donald W. King & Dr. Jose Griffiths  
John S and James L. Knight Fdn.  
K M R, Inc.  
Jeffrey H. & Christy Lee  
Jason Lovely  
S. Paul Lyle, III  
Wanda McMahan  
Drs. Sally J. McMillan & James E. Fields  
Meredith Corporation  
Midnight Voyage Productions, LLC  
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David R. & Lisa Mould  
Ooga Mooga’s Tiki Tavern  
Dr. Guiohk Lee Park  
Susan L. Patterson  
Peace is Possible...Knoxville  
Pellissippi State Technical College  
Pilot Corporation  
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Platinum Marketing Group  
Biddanda P. & Latha Ponnappa  
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James E. & Beth Rayburn  
Sassy Ann’s  
Scripps Financial Service Center  
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Steven E. & Lisa Spiro  
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Tea Garden Knox Inc.  
TEN-ER-SEE Properties, Inc.  
Tennessee Association of Broadcasters  
The Point  
TVEP/Earthfest  
Georgina Fry Vines  
Lewis V. Walker  
Well of Knoxville  
Martha M. Wilcox  
Dr. Patricia E. Wirth  
Deborah J. Woolley

$500 - $999
125 Jackson Partners, LLC  
Monica Abbott  
Ambition Tattoo  
Linda Bledsoe  
Carcam Enterprises, LLC  
Central Flats and Taps  
CIBER Research Limited  
Cruz A. Contreras  
Dr. Edwin M. Cortez  
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Shirley A. Hileman  
Sarah B. Holland  
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Jostens, Inc.  
Ryan & Erica McGee  
Northwestern Mutual Foundation  
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Pamela O’Connor  
Kelly Smith O’Hara  
Preservation Pub, Inc.  
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B. Curtis & Julie Rose  
Scarecrow Foundation, Inc.  
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Tennessee Valley A & I Fair  
Bunny Tharpe  
The Hearst Foundation
Adella S. Thompson  
Jack A. Topchik  
UT-Battelle L.L.C.  
Matt Ward  
Elizabeth Clement & W. Trael Webb  
Dr. Candace & Mark White  
Timothy W. Williams  
Susan & Steven L. Wyatt  
Dr. Hyun Jung Yun  

$250 - $499  
Erik Bledsoe  
Blount Avenue L.L.C.  
Jon B. Brock  
Paula Flora Casey  
Calvin Cassady  
Central Tavern  
Alice P. Chapman  
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DVC LLC  
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Dr. Sora Kim  
William Gary Kimbrel  
Monica Maples Kinsey  
Samantha Nicole Lane  
Christian Lange  
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Tennessee Stage Co., INC.  
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