



NORTHERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY

FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES NEWS

SUMMER 2021

CAPS Becomes the Communication and Media Studies Department (CAMS) Department of Theatre and Dance Created

On September 20, 2019 the NMU Board of Trustees approved an Academic Affairs restructuring plan that created four divisions within the College of Arts and Sciences. The Division of Visual and Performing Arts is now composed of a new combined School of Music, Theater and Dance, along with the established School of Art and Design. The Division of Social Sciences expanded to include: economics; communications, broadcasting and journalism; political science; and sociology and anthropology.

The Communication and Performance Studies (CAPS) department was split into two separate departments. According to Provost Kerri Schuiling, "this was all done to create efficiencies, enhance collaboration and facilitate cost savings over time."

The large CAPS department had contained many different components over the years. Through its historical legacy of 50 or 60 years, Professor Jim Cantrill said there had been a great deal of growth. The varieties of "speech," as it was formerly called, included broadcasting, theater, public relations and performance.

"They were compatible, and this had worked, but there really was a desire to have the theater and dance kind of carve out their own little identity, their own niche," Cantrill said.

The new department formed is now known as the Department of Theater and Dance, led by Assistant Professor and Forest Roberts Theatre (FRT) Director Bill Digneit.



"This change was prompted by two things, those being 'solid thinking' on Provost Kerri Schuiling's part, and ideas from the faculty in theater and dance themselves," Cantrill said. "It really was one of those top-down, bottom-up kinds of things."

Although the former CAPS department was reduced by about half the number of students and faculty, Cantrill assured students that it was an amicable parting. The two departments are still co-located in the Thomas Fine Arts building, and there remains

a great deal of collaboration and camaraderie.

"This change was prompted by two things, those being "solid thinking" on Provost Kerri Schuiling's part, and ideas from the faculty in theater and dance themselves."

In addition to theater and dance breaking off to its own department, public relations was moved to the College of Business. The communications and multimedia programs remain in the former CAPS suite located in Russell Thomas Fine Arts building. However, it has

since been renamed the Communication and Media Studies department (CAMS).

Written by:
Akasha Khalsa



<https://www.facebook.com/NMU-Communication-and-Media-Studies-101426194759539>

OUTSTANDING GRADS

Leah Danielson of New Brighton, Minn., has been named the Communication and Media Studies (CAMS) 2020–21 outstanding graduating senior.

Earning a 3.95 GPA, Danielson exhibited a high-level of leadership and mentorship with her peers in courses such as small group process and research methods. She served as both a campus-wide tutor and a CAMS department tutor.



In argumentation, Danielson's project on solar advancement in Marquette generated interest from the City Commission and a personal phone call consultation with the mayor. She was chosen as one of 10 students to travel to Cuba for a faculty-led study abroad trip. Her research on the role of revolutionary leaders and their rhetoric in the collective mindset of Cubans is being submitted for a regional conference presentation.

Cassidy Jankowski and **Sarah Jepson** both had outstanding GPAs, both had been producers for Public Eye News, and they were involved in professional media such as producing shows. Therefore the 2020 broadcasting outstanding graduate award for CAMS went to both Cassidy Jankowski and Sarah Jepson.

GRAD SPOTLIGHTS

Jess McIntosh double-majored in German Studies and Communication Studies. After graduation, she'll be the Graduate Residence Director at Mississippi State University, along with earning a fully funded Master's in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education and Student Affairs. Congratulations, Jess!



What are your favorite moments as an undergrad at NMU?

My favorite moments would be the opportunity I had to be a resident advisor in Hunt Hall. I met some incredible people there. Being an RA allowed me to create, shape, and strengthen communities with amazing students across campus.

What are your favorite moments as an LLIS student?

The people I met in my courses really stands out to me. I feel like every course was loaded with great students and faculty who were rooting for my success. The students that I have met through my courses have become some of my closest friends, and I looked forward to seeing them in class every day.

GRAD SPOTLIGHTS

What will you miss most about being an NMU student?

I will miss the NMU community the most. I think I am going to miss how friendly, and warm people are. It is going to be difficult to transition to another university and have to make new connections, but I hope that the place I go has a similar welcoming vibe as NMU does. That is something that I value about Northern.

What is your favorite place to visit abroad?

I have only been abroad to a few places, and I wish that I could say anywhere in Germany or Austria! I will say, however, that my favorite place to visit abroad is Florence, Italy. I absolutely loved going there and am hoping to go back in the future.

If you were given the opportunity to travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Berlin, Germany! I was planning on studying abroad there last semester, but it ended up not working out. I know that I will get there eventually, but that is definitely the place that I would love to go.

If you met an incoming student, what advice would you give them?

I would remind them that if they are feeling nervous their first few weeks of the semester, that others are feeling the same way. It is okay to lean into that awkward feeling. Sometimes, that can be the best way to make lifelong friends. I would also let students know that it is completely okay to not know what major they want to be. I added German Studies as my second major my junior year, and still graduated in four years! There is no set timeline for your success, just go at your own pace.

Erika Flint of Negaunee, MI, excelled in her academics, earning the highest GPA in her cohort. In addition to scholarly work, Erika has participated in the Public Eye News student newscast, produced a video for the local Head Start program with the NMU A/V Club, and volunteered for the Special Olympics. She has supported fellow students through actions such as tutoring and creating a Facebook page to give students and alumni a better opportunity to network.



As a part-Cherokee Native American, decorated Air Force veteran, first-generation college student, wife and mother, Erika bridged worlds via speaking engagements and other opportunities to tell her life experiences to campus groups, and to share what she learned at NMU with outside communities. Erika has also been deeply involved with the Disabled American Veterans, where she has held officer positions and served in numerous outreach events.

GRAD SPOTLIGHTS

Rayna Sherbinow of Manistique, MI, exhibited superior performance in her academics, achieving one of the highest GPAs in the broadcasting program. Outside of the classroom, Rayna has been a productive journalist for The North Wind student newspaper and the NMU-AAUP website, contributing high-quality research and writing to help strengthen NMU's community and reputation. She also has been a long-time member of the NMU Quiz Bowl team, helping defend NMU's honor against rivals such as Michigan Technological University. Rayna is a lifelong advocate of Bay Cliff Health Camp, and has spent several summers working with the kids who attend the camp.



2020 GRADUATES

BS Communication Studies

Anna Bailey
Madison Blom

BS Multimedia Production

Joe Biron

Communication Studies

Gianna Ferraro
Riley Figueroa
Latrell Giles
Holly Glover
Drew Harbrecht
Chelsea Havenor
Alana McLeod
Laurel Paputa
Jill Selesky
Mitchel Slattery

Media Production and New Technology

Mikkel Gill
Connor Heibel
Adam Rifenburgh
Angie Turnquist

Multimedia Production

Christine Charette
Cassidy Jankowski
Sarah Jepson
Lucas Malnor
Kayla Pederson
Caleb Riedel
Cameron Ryman

2021 GRADUATES

Communication Studies

Peter Anderson
Clare Bastian
Leah Danielson
Madison Hummel
Jasmine King
Jessica McIntosh
Riley Morley
Kelly Richards
Devontae Stine
Elizabeth Vitale
Heather Vivian
Hannah Wilder

Media Production and New Technology

Davante Wade

Multimedia Production

Adam Diaz
Erika Flint
Anne Ludwig
Travis McCloud
Max Stevens
Jillian Wurmlinger

Multimedia Journalism

Nathaniel Jacobs
Rayna Sherbinow
Alexis Stalker

CONGRATS GRADS

Watch a congratulations message from faculty member, Mark Shevy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPFI5O-4EoNc>



DEPARTMENT NEWS

Arts and Media Collaboration Brings NMU Student Performances to Campus and the World

By Mark Shevy

A historic media production milestone was reached this year as Communication and Media Studies (CAMS) Department students took the controls of cutting-edge video and audio systems to live stream performances for NMU's School of Music and Theatre and Dance.

NMU's Multimedia Production program has been strengthening its relationships with the Music Department and the Department of Theatre and Dance over the years to create mutually beneficial collaborations for students of these programs. When COVID-19 prohibited audiences from attending performances in person, the collaborations kicked into high gear to bring the work, creativity, and talent of NMU students to audiences at home.

During the April 2021 NMU Jazz Festival, multimedia production students Erika Flint and Sarah Nelson became the first students to operate the new robotic 4K camera and video switching system in Reynolds Recital Hall. Parents and other Music Department affiliates sent compliments about the quality of the production. One parent was thankful that the recital hall finally had a system that could show how skilled and talented the music students are.

The video system was designed by a collaboration of Music Department Head Jeff Vickers; CAMS Professor Mark Shevy; and School of Music, Theatre and Dance Audio/Visual Supervisor Dan Zini. From the beginning, the plan was to showcase NMU's exceptional music program in front of the cameras while also creating opportunities for multimedia production students behind the scenes. More students will soon follow in the footsteps of Flint and Nelson.

The new video system includes four cameras mounted on the sides of the recital hall, and in an isolated control room, a joystick-style camera controller, video-switching software, and a device for encoding the video for live streaming on



Erica Flint (left) and Sara Nelson operate the video system in the Reynolds Recital Hall audio-video control room during the 2021 NMU Jazz Festival.

and uses the same Panasonic AW-UE150 4K cameras recently installed in the Detroit Symphony's state-of-the-art Orchestra Hall upgrade.



Sara Nelson (left), Adam Diaz (center), and Joe Sigourney were the video crew for the first-ever multi-camera live streams of performances from the Forest Roberts Theatre.

Accompanying the video system is a new audio system that

can have up to 30 microphones connected to a Pro Tools Digital Audio Workstation to create professional-quality music mixes. This is the same technology used in the CAMS Department production studios and computer lab, so that multimedia production students can adapt their skills from the studio to live performances. Students can also use recordings of concerts for post-production projects in audio classes or for individual work on their own time.

In all, Reynolds Recital Hall has implemented over \$80,000 of audio, video, and internet technology over the past few years, maintaining its position as a cutting-edge state-of-the-art facility. The timing could not have been better for providing opportunities for NMU students and sharing the beauty of NMU's music with the rest of the world during the social isolation of the pandemic.

Shortly after the Jazz Festival, the winter 2021 semester brought another historic collaboration moment. For the first time ever, performances in the Forest Roberts Theatre were live-streamed using a multi-camera format. The Spotlight Variety Show and North Coast Dance Festival brought students from the Music Department, Department of Theatre and Dance, and the CAMS department together for nightly rehearsals and live performances over a two-week period.

Dan Zini constructed a three-camera livestream system by placing CAMS Department field production cameras on tripods in the space where the audience would normally sit. Multimedia production students Adam Diaz, Sarah Nelson, and Joe Sigourney formed the camera crew for the two weeks, participating in rehearsals for the first half of each week and providing live camera shots for the second half.

At the end of the second week, Diaz and Sigourney, both former producers of NMU's Public Eye News broadcast, put their advanced skills to use by taking turns in the video director's chair and calling the camera shots. Compliments about the high quality of the production rolled in. The cam-

eras and livestreaming were only one part of a much bigger cast and crew, but like with the Reynolds Recital Hall, it shows how students, faculty, and staff from multiple departments working together can overcome obstacles to serve the community and create new possibilities.

Perhaps there is no better example of the power of interdisciplinary knowledge and experience than Dan Zini.

Zini originally came to NMU as an undergraduate with prior education and experience in computers, music, theatre, and media production. He graduated from the Multimedia Production and New Technology program (the forerunner to the current Multimedia Production program), as the program's outstanding graduating senior.

He returned to NMU in 2016 to earn his Master's degree and moved into his current position as the School of Music, Theatre and Dance Audio/Visual Supervisor. His interdisciplinary perspective has been central in bringing departments together to design technological upgrades and multi-use spaces, maximizing the use of equipment across departments, and facilitating collaborative creative projects.

Zini's specialized knowledge has been central to renovating the multimedia production studios in McClintock Hall. In 2016, Dr. Shevy and Zini discussed the need for a multimedia production space in which students could work more professionally with chroma key effects, compositing, lighting, dialogue, music, and sound effects for video and film. They also envisioned a creative space in which students and faculty could experiment with new technologies such as 360-degree video and spatial audio.

Such a facility would benefit not only multimedia production students, but also theatre students and faculty, who regularly used the CAMS recording studios for audio production. The facility could also be used to produce video and audio messages for a variety of other groups across campus and the community.

With this vision in mind, Zini took the lead in designing technological upgrades that would give the McClintock audio studios



Dr. Mark Shevy (left) and Dan Zini, M.A. working on expanding the McClintock audio recording studios into multimedia production studios.

greater multimedia capability. The CAMS Department, Department of Theatre and Dance, and College of Arts and Sciences shared in the cost of equipment and labor to start bringing the vision to reality.

As with the productions in Reynolds Recital Hall and the

Forest Roberts Theatre, the first big multimedia production in the McClintock studios occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When many other theatre programs around the world cancelled their productions in the Fall 2020 semester, the NMU Department of Theatre and Dance decided to innovate by attempting their first feature-length show in a multimedia format. They ambitiously produced an adaptation of "War of the Worlds," revised to take place in the Upper Peninsula. The story was especially meaningful in light of the pandemic.

The audio and video recording took place in McClintock Studio G while maintaining social distancing protocols. Actors stood one at a time in front of a green screen while the director directed from Chicago via video. Zini composited the video recordings together to give the appearance that the actors were in the same location at the same time, and Shevy created the sound design with custom-built sound effects. They pulled several all-night sessions in the final week before the scheduled online premiere.

Although time and budget constrained the quality of the final product, Zini and Shevy consider it a success that NMU safely produced a feature-length show during a pandemic using a new innovative process, completed it in a matter of weeks when such a project would normally take a year or more.

More important than that particular show is the fact that the McClintock studios had made its first large-scale voyage into multimedia production. There are plans for many more productions to come, especially as more renovations are completed.

A separate story would be needed to describe all of the McClintock studio renovations, but in short, Studio G has moved to an all digital system with a higher-power computer, new audio monitors, and the ability to record more audio tracks than ever before. It also has a green screen, lighting, and a video monitor for video work.

Studio F is also receiving a high-power computer, software, and new audio and video monitors with plans to equip it for multimedia audio production such as film scoring, ADR (voice overs), and spatial audio for 360-degree videos.

Studio E has been decked out with audio monitors and an interface where students can attach their own computer to record podcasts, drama dialogues, solo musicians, and other projects that don't require a lot of microphones.

COVID-19 precautions created a lot of multimedia production collaborations during the fall semester outside of the McClintock studios as well. Shevy and Zini produced videos for multiple concerts in Reynolds Recital Hall using the new video and audio system. The largest was the Fall 2020 Choral and Orchestra Virtual Concert, consisting of 27 videos in a playlist posted in the NMU School of Music, Theatre and Dance YouTube channel.

Dr. Shevy worked with Dr. Barbara Rhyneer to produce several 360-degree videos of NMU Orchestra performances. Multime-

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NMU Orchestra conducted by Dr. Barbara Rhyneer during a 360-degree video performance.

Media production student Jessie Sellisen assisted in several projects, including setting up microphones for the orchestra and assisting with a film shoot for a theatre video during sunrise at McCarty's Cove on Lake Superior.

Sellisen and Shevy also produced a series of dance videos in collaboration with Kimber Schumann from Dawn Dott Dance Studios. The videos contained short lessons for young children as a way for parents to keep their children active while staying home during the pandemic.

The collaborations mentioned so far are only a selection of all the media production that CAMS students have done over the past year. For example, Hannah Smith produced promotional videos for the 2021 Lake Superior Youth Symposium, Davante Wade produced numerous videos for NMU Marketing and Communications, and Max Stevens travelled around the U.P. doing radio announcing for sporting events.

These individual projects are all in addition to the students who reached thousands of households through the Public Eye



Jessie Sellisen records Dawn Dott Dance Studios owner Kimber Schumann for a series of videos for young children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

News student newscast; student-run Radio X; the NMU A/V Club; WNMU TV & radio; NMU hockey, football, and other sports broadcasts; and internships through local radio and television stations and media production businesses.

With over 50 multimedia production and multimedia journalism students in the CAMS Department, there are always more projects in the works than anyone knows. One thing that can be known, though, is that whether in times of pandemic or prosperity, sunshine or snowstorms, they pull together to do good things. Through collaboration, they share voices and visions that enrich lives on the NMU campus, in local communities, and in the rest of the world.

Students' Band Doc to Air on WNMU-TV

NMU students in a previous advanced field production course produced a documentary on the Hungarian band Söndörgö which aired on WNMU-TV December 10, 2019. It featured



concert footage from the group's performance in Marquette in April 2019, interspersed with band member interviews.

"It was a great experience for the students in terms of both teamwork and their accountability to the project," said Professor Dwight Brady. "This wasn't just something they turned in for a grade that will be tucked away; it was aired on TV for others to see. WNMU-TV provided DVDs of the program as a premium for donations [of \$100 or more], so it was a real win to have a class project assist in fundraising for the station."

Students shot the documentary over two days. They interviewed the five band members shortly after their plane landed, then obtained footage of their concert the following night. The 55-minute production is music-intensive. It showcases Söndörgö's signature sound, which revolves around a mandolin-like instrument called the tambura. According to the band's website, the tambura is probably of Turkish origin and is used by Serbian and Croatian communities in Hungary.

"It was a great experience for me and the students to do the editing," Brady said. "We got to listen to their music over and over again. Your ears get tuned in to unfamiliar sounds and we developed a greater appreciation for how skillful they are and how good their music really is. Some of it is centuries old and came together from different dynasties that formed in that part of the world, but it's also a mix of different styles. The students interacted with the band members at length and asked about where they draw their inspiration from. It was a nice cultural exchange."

Bob Thomson, TV broadcast and operations manager at WNMU-TV, said the station periodically features student productions as part of its local programming lineup.

"It gives Northern students a nice outlet to show off their great work and, at the same time, it gives WNMU-TV a great show to share with our viewers," he said. "Our station relies heavily on NMU students on a regular basis to run cameras and assist with skilled positions like graphics and audio. We understand how important they are in production roles. And with Dr. Brady, they're learning other important broadcast skills, especially in field production."

New Broadcast Equipment for WNMU-TV and NMU Athletics

by Nicole Walsh



Anne Ludwig operating a camera

In January 2020, Northern Michigan University debuted a new mobile video production system at its Wildcat hockey series. The system not only enhanced the viewing experience for fans in the arena and viewers streaming the game remotely, but it also gave NMU students on the video crew experience working with professional-grade equipment.

Anne Ludwig a multimedia production and public relations double major at NMU who graduated this May, worked with NMU Athletics for four years. She was the the main camera operator during that period, but also held roles such as director, technical director, graphics creator, audio operator and floor operator.

"As a student employee, this system benefited me because I was using the same equipment I would be using in a professional production," said Ludwig. "This means that when I graduate, I will be ready for any professional jobs because of this experience. Working with this kind of equipment is something I can put on my resume and will give me an advantage when starting my career."

"The biggest thing that people can now see on the video board is the zoom capability of the new cameras," said Mike Lakenen, campus studios producer. "The zoom capability went from about 12 power to about 72 power. So, what it does is allows us to really focus on one person for different promotional events and give that person time on the video board. We have a pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) camera that's on the opposite side of the rink, which will be shoot-

ing a reverse angle of a lot of the game, giving us more angles than we've had before. We also have a wireless roaming camera that can go around with our promotions person so they can be almost virtually anywhere in the arena—even the concourse."

The original system included three cameras that were moved from the Superior Dome to the Berry Events Center and other venues on campus. Over time, the steady transport increased the wear and tear on the equipment. Those three cameras have been replaced and in the Berry specifically, there are a total of seven lenses in operation with the addition of the PTZ, wireless and two overhead cameras. The new system will stay at the Berry, reducing wear and tear.

"The cost of a system like this would retail for hundreds of thousands of dollars," said Lakenen. "However, we were able to combine vital pieces of new equipment with other equipment we currently have, and add used equipment from a vendor who specializes in broadcast equipment from around the country in order to leverage our dollars and allow NMU to enter into a total system for a fraction of the cost," said Lakenen.

The camera portion of the new system came from a company called Allied Broadcast Group, which sells used equipment from NBC Sports, ABC Sports and other entities. Its goal is to find equipment that can be repurposed.

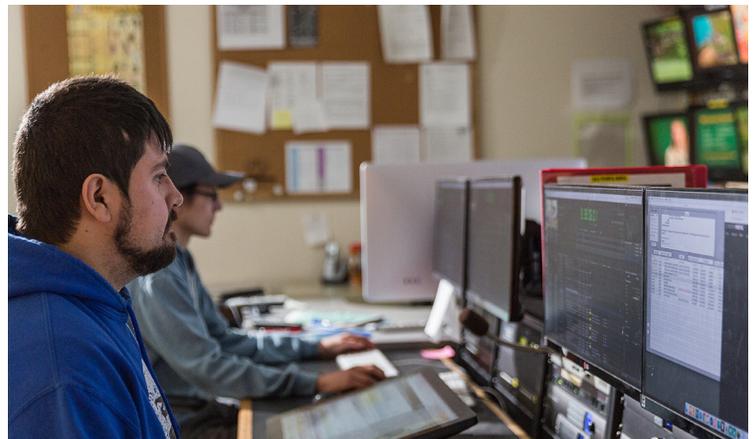
"It may not be good enough for Fox Sports anymore, but it is plenty good enough for us and a big improvement at a more reasonable cost," said Lakenen.

"As a student employee, this system benefited me because I was using the same equipment I would be using in a professional production."

Lakenen worked closely with Jon Stilson of Filmtools, who built the main console and cabinet for the equipment, to make sure

all of the pieces "talked to each other" in order to produce the best content possible. Stilson was eager to assist because of his personal connection to Northern. His daughter, Cam, is a sophomore and member of the lacrosse team.

The new mobile video production system added two more positions to the game-day crew, which now consists of eight students and two staff members.



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Musical memories: The history of Radio X

By Rayna Sherbinow

When George "Buzz" Young arrived at NMU midway through his college career, he was studying political science and sociology. He graduated in 1974 with a degree in broadcasting and a sociology minor. He switched his major thanks in large part to his time at WBKX, the campus radio station that exists today as WUPX, more commonly known as Radio X.

Young joined WBKX in 1972. As a DJ, his shift ran from midnight to 2 a.m. four nights a week. Anyone who tuned in could expect to hear a hodgepodge of music. Young played everything from Aretha Franklin to Alice Cooper.

In his senior year, he was promoted to program director, which made him responsible for deciding who and what made it onto the air. His role at the station may have changed, but his passion for music never faded, even after graduation. Young is now retired and lives in Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

"I was in the record business in Detroit for 16 years, including 10 years owning my own small, independent record store in Grosse Pointe," Young said. "WBKX prepared me in many ways by exposing me to different music."

Trends in music come and go, so it's no surprise that the music that was popular while Young was at NMU isn't the same as today's hits. Today the station is operated by a staff of four students, and over twenty DJs contribute to its nonstop programming.

Of course, Radio X maintains a strong focus on music. Some of the station's staff, even host their own shows.

"Mine is 'The Carnival of Chaos,'" Emery said. "And I like to play EDM, so electronic dance music, and heavy metal."

"I think it's excellent that NMU continues to have a student radio station at a time when some other universities don't see the value in it," Klim said.

Klim joined WBKX in 1971, one year after it began. He spent several years there, including half a year as the station manager in 1974. He values his time at the station immensely. "The music was wonderful, the camaraderie was just great and the experience, the practical experience, was like nothing

else," Klim said. "And it provided a good foundation, along with the academics, for launching a career."

The students at WBKX had almost complete control over their programming. Klim says record companies would

frequently send in sample albums, and the station's staff would decide which music to play. However, students didn't always agree about which music was best, as Young recalls from his time at the station.

Although Radio X is similar to its predecessor in many ways, there are a few key differences. First, records are largely a thing of the past. The station

now relies on digital streaming.

Secondly, some content that was broadcast in the 70s wouldn't make it past the censors today. One example is streaking, which Merriam-Webster defines as, "to run naked through a public place." Young says streaking briefly crazed American campuses in 1973 and NMU was no exception.

"I remember one night announcing that any bona fide streakers if they wanted to come up to the studio, I'd interview them," Young said.

Several students responded to the offer and showed up for interviews completely naked. In retrospect, Young acknowledges that the trend was bizarre.

Between changing standards and COVID-19 restrictions, there is no room for streakers at Radio X today. All of the staff and DJs abide by rules put in place by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). They may not use profanity or air explicit content, including certain music.

For non-musical programming, Raasch says there are a few rules to keep in mind. Sexual and anatomical statements, calls to action and defamation of character are all forbidden on the air.

The station wasn't always subject to the FCC's rules. In the 70s, the term "campus radio station" was much more literal. The signal was broadcast via carrier current transmission and it could only be heard on campus.

"The signal was carried to the dorms through the electrical grid, so our audience was almost exclusively in the dorms," Young said.



Klim also recalls the limitations of carrier current. He says the signal was carried through wires buried beneath the buildings, which is why it couldn't be heard outside of NMU.

"At the time it was really the only opportunity for college music in the area," Klim said.

When the station started in 1970 they chose the call letters WBKX. Young said this was done to mimic a popular radio station at that time, WABX in Detroit. In 1993, NMU's student radio station applied for a license from the FCC and began broadcasting at 91.5 FM. However, the FCC forbade them from identifying as WBKX. Thus, the station adopted its current call letters, WUPX.

With the switch to FM radio came a wider reach. Listeners were no longer limited to NMU's campus. Eventually, the station began streaming online, meaning anyone with an internet connection could tune in.

The technology has improved over the last half-century, but the station's goals have remained largely unchanged. WBKX's first station manager was Mike Kinoshian, who now lives in Los Angeles. Kinoshian was the station manager during his senior year at NMU, from 1971 to 1972. When he was appointed by the university's radio board, he had some simple goals in mind.

"First and foremost, I wanted our audience exclusively of Northern students, administration, faculty, and staff to hear an entertaining, informative product of which they could be pleased," Kinoshian said. "For the WBKX staff, my mission was for them to have fun every second they were inside the station and recall the experience with the utmost of positivity. It was essential to me that each person – regardless of their ultimate career path post-graduation – could realize they were part of a winning team that helped make a difference."

Klim hopes students cherish what Radio X has to offer, whether it be programming streamed online, or in person social events held after the pandemic.

"I would take as much advantage of that opportunity as possible," Klim said.

Past and current station managers Joe Raasch and Julia Emery emphasize that the station is not limited to those pursuing a career in broadcasting. Emery is a forensic biochemistry major. Raasch is now majoring in communications, but that wasn't always the case.

"When I first started here I was an outdoor recreation major," Raasch said. "That is the complete opposite of any sort of broadcasting imaginable."

Emery has some words of encouragement for any students who may have doubts about joining the station.

"If I can do it, and Joe can do it, and that's not our major, you can do it as well," Emery said.

NMU Offers Creative Solution for Chinese Student



An NMU student from China is "studying abroad" in her home country this semester. Yaqing Li had rejoined her family last spring as concerns about COVID-19 intensified, and she has not been able to return to Marquette because of lingering travel bans. Through creative intervention by Northern and one of its study abroad partners, Li is able to maintain her immigration status and continue as an NMU student while enrolled at a prestigious university that most Chinese students would not typically have an opportunity to attend.

"We were able to land on a great solution through flexibility and our International Programs staff going above and beyond in responding to this student's predicament," said Steve VandenAvond, vice president for Extended Learning and Community Engagement. "Even though she is not with us this semester, she is doubly excited about when she can come back to campus because of the help she has received. This is Northern at its best, but it is not unusual. The student-centered approach is what sets this university apart from others."

Li hails from Taiyuan, in Shanxi Province. She attended NMU's former English Language Institute for two semesters as a student of Xinzhou Teachers University. She said the positive experience developing her language skills, personality and creativity motivated her to enroll at NMU in fall 2019 as a double major in multimedia production and art and design.

"My country has a very different education system," she wrote in an email. "You can't choose your favorite major at will unless you have a high score in the college entrance examination, because our major and school are linked to the score. Because of this, I did not choose my favorite major in China, but NMU gave me such a chance, and I like the peo-

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ple here very much, they are very friendly, so I decided to join the big family of NMU after careful consideration."

After Li returned to China amid concerns about the virus and potential travel implications, she attempted to complete the fall semester online, but ended up withdrawing.

"The outbreak has honestly overwhelmed me," she wrote. "I read different social media and news every day, trying to get more comprehensive information. My first reaction was to be very worried about my friends in the United States. Secondly, my study makes me feel anxious. Even if I can take classes online, it is very different from in-person classes. I also want to meet real people. Moreover, due to the network restrictions in China, I cannot use the Google or NMU system frequently and fluently, which greatly reduced my learning efficiency and even prevented me from completing the course normally."

She was thinking of taking this winter semester off, but expressed concern over how it would impact her immigration status and grade-point average. Lila Isleib, study abroad and student services coordinator, said she and International Programs director Diana Vreeland realized Li was struggling.

Around that time, NMU study abroad partner ISA and its partner The Education Abroad Network reached out to Isleib to suggest a way to possibly avoid losing students because of travel restrictions. They had connections in different countries and could create study abroad programs that would allow students to attend classes in a more convenient time zone and earn credits transferable to U.S. universities.



Virtual Reality at NMU

Check out the video highlighting efforts to incorporate virtual reality in NMU programs.

<https://youtu.be/yZPG-ZLFP8i8>



Earth Week



Anderton's Earth Week 2021, which was named after the late John Anderton, former head of the NMU Department of Earth, Environmental and Geological Sciences, was held in Mid-April.

One of the many organizers of the events this year was John O'Bryan, who is finishing what he called an "individually created degree" in climate advocacy at NMU. O'Bryan has been an intern with the NMU Sustainability Advisory Council, but his involvement with Earth Week is part of an independent capstone course of climate advocacy with Professor Josh Ewalt in the Communication and Media Studies Department.

Communication and Media Studies Department Mission

Our Mission: The disciplines represented in the Communication and Media Studies (CAMS) Department share a focus upon understanding how messages are used to manage relationships with others in contexts ranging from "one-to-one" to "one-too-many," using personal, public and mass-mediated channels of communication. Although the goals for different majors may flow from specific arenas and methods of social interaction or performance, graduates of CAMS programs share a fundamental appreciation for what it means to live in a symbolic world, to engage in life-long learning, and acquire a suite of skills that can be transferred to a wide array of career options. Thus, students majoring in CAMS learn to critically examine the role communication plays in daily life, to embrace the multicultural foundations for human discourse, to work in teams as well as independently regarding the application of communication concepts to practical situations, and to use what they have learned in the practice of civic engagement.

Please reach out to the department with news and ideas.
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Ending The Stigma

By LANA WILSON
Athletics Diversity & Inclusion Intern
NMUWILDCATS.COM



The conversation on mental health has long been cast aside, especially in the world of sports. Athletes are supposed to be strong and opening up to share one's emotions often comes as a sign of weakness. Mitchel Slattery, then a junior on the NMU Hockey team wanted to change that mindset and let people know, "it's okay to not be okay. You are never alone."

Having faced personal struggles throughout his young adult life, Slattery made it his mission to help athletes know it's okay to open up about their issues both in and out of their respective sport. In sports like hockey, those of high physicality and strength, individuals are often taught by society to suppress feelings they deem weak. What was once an internal battle for the Lino Lakes, Minnesota native, has turned into a passion to help others.

"I want to help athletes in general. athletes who are struggling. That's my biggest goal," Slattery said.

Wednesday, January 29, 2020, marked the 10th anniversary of "Bell Let's Talk", a Canadian "dedicated to moving mental health forward in Canada, 'Bell Let's Talk' promotes awareness and action with a strategy built on 4 key pillars: Fighting the stigma, improving access to care, supporting world-class research and leading by example in workplace mental health," as stated on their website.

Using the power of social media, the "Bell Let's Talk" campaign has grown exponentially over the course of a decade where more than 1 billion people worldwide have participated and upwards of \$100 million CAD has been raised towards mental health initiatives.

Slattery, a communications major with a minor in gender studies, hopes to one day open a company dedicated to helping fellow athletes with their mental health and removing the stigma.

"I think both "Bell Let's Talk" and concussion awareness organization Headway Foundation are great ways to help raise awareness and try to lift the stigma. I think more people in the last few years have begun talking more about it, especially professional athletes and that helps set the path for the younger kids coming up which is huge too," Slattery concluded.

Although just one person, he knows he can make a difference erasing the connotation associated with mental health.

First Place for NMU Broadcasters

BC 310 Sports and Special Events students won first place in the Michigan Association of Broadcasters Student Broadcast Awards College Television Sports Announcing Team category: "NMU v. WSU Football" – Max Stevens, Nate Jacobs, Luke Delaney, Sarah Tuggle.

2020 Great Lakes Media Show

The FCC exhibited at the 2020 Great Lakes Media Show hosted by the Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB) in Lansing, MI, March 3 – 4, 2020. Broad-

casters play a crucial role in keeping their communities informed and that often includes providing valuable consumer protection information.

Alma Hughes of the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau shared information on robocalls, spoofing, and how to avoid becoming a victim of telephone scams.



Alma Hughes (FCC) and Luke Delaney (NMU) discussing radio regulations.

Gender and Sexuality Studies

Congratulations to Micah Morley! Micah just graduated

with a major in Communication Studies and a minor in Gender and Sexuality Studies. You can see some of Micah's fine work by following the link to his 2021 Gender Fair project: "Inequalities at the Intersection of Gender and the Environment." <https://nmu.edu/.../files/2021-01/Morley-GC.GN495-Zine.pdf>



NEW FACULTY

Joshua Ewalt

received his B.S. from Northern Michigan University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He previously worked as an Assistant Professor at the University of Utah and James Madison University. His teaching centers democratic deliberation and the use of communication as a way to both analyze and work against historic power relations.



His primary line of scholarship concerns space, place, and material rhetorics. He has published over 15 peer-reviewed essays and book chapters in top Communication journals and edited collections, including *Communication Monographs*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, and *the Western Journal of Communication*. He is most happy to be back in the Upper Peninsula, where he loved to hike and fish as an undergraduate student.

Cynthia Thompson

is a native of Louisville, Kentucky. She worked as a radio newscaster and reporter while attending the University of Central Missouri, and has lived in the Marquette area since 1988. Many will recognize her as having been a reporter at WLUC-



TV, co-anchoring the 6 p.m. TV6 Early News and News Extra as well as hosting Upper Michigan Today in the 1990's and beyond. Taking a hiatus from the daily broadcast world, she held freelance jobs in marketing, media relations, public relations, and adjunct communications instruction. In 2010, Cynthia went back to the world of local news, serving as the news director and main anchor for ABC10 News Now at WBUP-TV. In 2014, Cynthia was named News Director and 6 p.m. main anchor at WJMN-TV with the responsibility of launching a news operation at the CBS-affiliate in Marquette. She retired from the news business in 2019, where upon she was hired as an adjunct instructor at NMU, teaching broadcasting and speech courses in the CAMS Department. Beyond all that, she loves motorcycling with her husband Frank! Cynthia is now in a 1-year term position in CAMS and is loving the change in careers.

Rebecca Budesky

graduated from NMU as the outstanding Communication Studies senior in 2014. She was awarded a teaching assistantship and received an M.A. from Oregon State University with a focus on communication processes and



ecosystems and society in 2016. She went on to teach and complete her PhD coursework at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry academic cognates in environmental communication and participatory processes. Along the way, Rebecca co-authored articles in the *Journal of Family Communication and Human Dimensions of Wildlife*. She gave several presentations at regional or national conferences in the communication discipline. In early 2021, she was hired by NMU to serve as a content editor HDgov, a web-based clearing house for social science approaches to the human dimensions of the environment sponsored by several federal agencies in partnership with NMU, a position that she will continue to hold while serving as a term instructor in CAMS. Rebecca is thrilled to return "home" along with her two pet rabbits as she teaches lower- and upper-division courses in the department and hits the trails on a regular basis.

FACULTY RETIREMENT

Pat Jerome

At the end of the Winter 2021 semester and 38 years of teaching at NMU, Pat Jerome retired. He was an associate professor who taught many of the communication courses over the years. He researched, wrote, performed, produced and edited the 42 minute production of "The Rhetoric of Social



Movements." The production provides a historical case study of social movement persuasion and illustrates the use of music as rhetoric.

"I was highly motivated to contribute to expanding students' minds and enriching their knowledge. It is one of the most rewarding things I have experienced and has been a large influence in shaping who I am."

Film Explores U.P. Teams that Played the Packers

They toiled in Upper Peninsula mines and mills, but on weekends, the muscles forged by the sweat of their labor would be on display against some of the NFL's finest football teams. This rich deposit of U.P. football history is being unearthed in a new television documentary titled *Linked to Legends: The U.P. Teams that Played the Packers*. The film by Northern Michigan University Professor Dwight Brady debuted on WNMU-TV.

Brady is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker who has produced numerous documentaries on topics ranging from grey wolves to green energy. This was his first historically driven project.

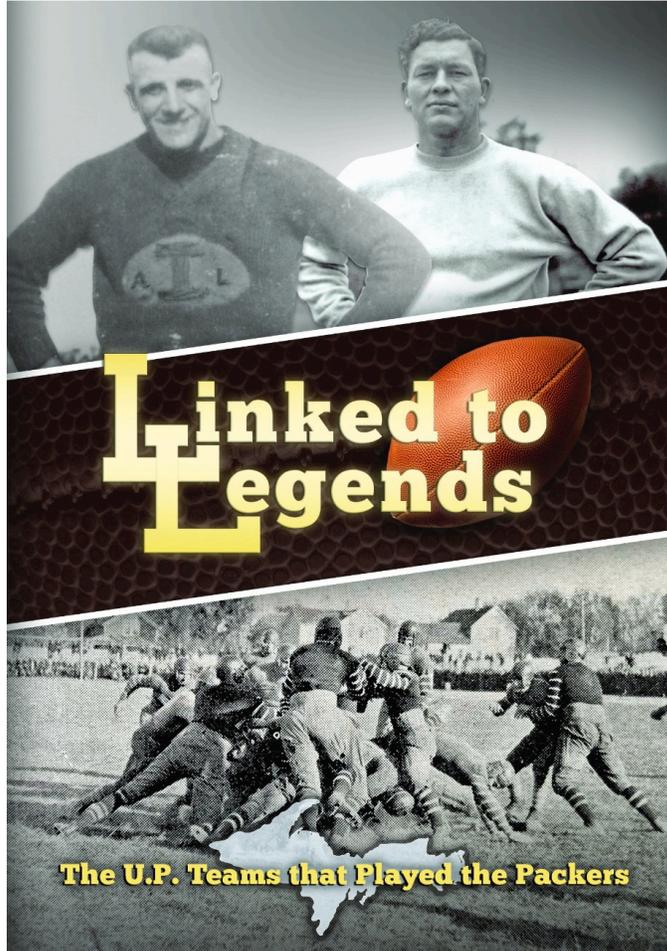
"When I was a kid growing up near Manistique, the local Ford dealership would give out Packer pre-season booklets," Brady said. "In addition to player profiles, the booklets had the scores of every game from each season. As I studied these old records, I noticed the Packers had played teams from the U.P. It was a fascinating discovery for an 8-year-old Yooper, and as we reach the centennial mark for these games, it seems like the right time to highlight this history."

The documentary focused on U.P. athletes who played for and against the early Packers, along with other U.P. players who made their mark in the first decade of the NFL.

"The historical link of the U.P. town teams with the Packers is really quite remarkable," said Brady. "The Packers' very first game in 1919 was against a team from the U.P. Their first road game was that same year against the Ishpeming/Negaunee All-Stars, and the Packers' first Thanksgiving Day game was against a team from Iron County in 1920. The



Ironwood and Bessemer teams from that era also played the Packers and other NFL teams in the 1920s."



Brady's interest in football took root on Dec. 31, 1967, when he watched the Packers defeat the Dallas Cowboys in the Ice Bowl.

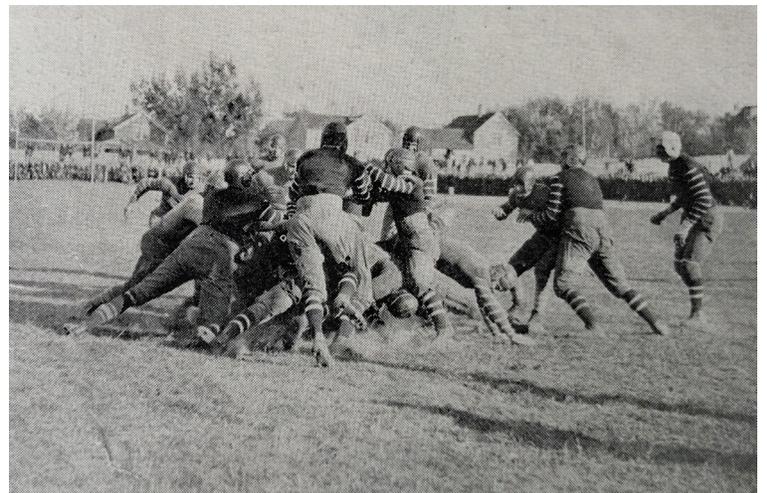
"I was 7 years old, sitting on the edge of the couch screaming at our little black and white TV for Donny Anderson to get out of bounds to stop the clock as the Packers made their final drive," he said. "Moments later, Bart Starr snuck over the goal line for the win, and I was hooked on Packer football for life."

While he never achieved his childhood dream of playing for the Packers, Brady would go on to earn All-U.P. honors as a running back and lead the Mid-Pen Conference in rushing his senior year at Manistique High School.

"This project was a great opportunity to combine my interest in football and documentary filmmaking along with my love for the Upper Peninsula," said Brady, who received a Grace H. Magnaghi U.P. Research Grant through the NMU Foundation to support the project.

The documentary included interviews with descendants of the early Packers and of players from the U.P. "town teams." It also featured NMU alumnus and former NFL coach Steve Mariucci, who is now an NFL Network analyst, as well as Packers' team historian Cliff Christl and Tony Nagurski, the son of NFL legend Bronko Nagurski.

Linked to Legends debuted on Nov. 28, 2020 on WNMU-TV. Watch the film's trailer at: <https://linkedtolegends.com/>



FACULTY ACCOLADES

Potter Receives Online Teaching Award

Sara Potter, a continuing instructor in the Communication and Media Studies Department, is the recipient of Northern Michigan University's 2020-21 Excellence in Online Teaching Award.



Potter's nomination stated that she has become her department's "go to" resource for web-based assistance, especially during the shift in delivery modes prompted by the COVID-19, and has consistently upgraded her online teaching skills through professional development and scholarly research.

"While I have been teaching online for five years, this particular year has not just been the most exhausting; it has also been the most rewarding," Potter said at the close of 2020. "It demonstrates that despite everything being thrown our way, a virtual environment can be just as rewarding and connective.

"What is wonderful about teaching communication during this time is that the work they are doing in class can directly and immediately impact their lives, make their relationships more rewarding, build confidence in the ability to engage in civil discourse, participate collaboratively in group processes, and navigate speaking and listening skills in online environments. In light of COVID and everything that we are going through separately, by developing this connection through a supportive, creative classroom environment that

centers communication at its core, we can find a new way forward, together."

Since 2016, Potter has taught more than 25 online courses. She has employed a variety of delivery methods: synchronous, which meets virtually on a specified schedule; asynchronous, which allows students to view a presentation and/or material on their own time; hybrids, a combination of in-person and online learning; and flipped classrooms, in which students review new content on their own and apply and discuss it in the classroom.

Potter is also credited for embracing Ernest Boyer's "scholarship of teaching" in analyzing her educational objectives and outcomes. That has resulted in a continual evolution of the courses she redesigns in light of emerging instructional technologies and strategies, the conference papers she has presented and her ability to adapt to the pandemic.

She said she views her students as active participants in their 'build your own adventure' learning environment, rather than passive receivers of information.

"When translating much of what I do in the face-to-face classroom to the online learning environment I emphasize connection and care at the center of what I do. Students need to be connected to each other, connected personally to the material, connect the material to their lives outside of the classroom, have content that is connected to both the past, present and future of the discipline, and build a trusting connected relationship with me. This year, that seems more important than ever."

Potter holds a bachelor's degree in communication science from Monmouth College and a master's in instructional communication from Illinois State University. She is a doctoral candidate in the rhetoric, culture and theory program at Michigan Tech.

ALUMNI STORIES

Graduating Senior Lands USGS Job

Allison Opheim graduated from Northern Michigan University May of 2020 with the assurance of a new job as a communications and public affairs contractor with the U.S. Geological Survey in Fort Collins, Colo.

She said working for a federal agency fresh out of college might have seemed a daunting prospect at one time, but she now considers herself fully prepared, thanks to the confidence and competencies she gained at NMU.

"Northern gives students the flexibility to select their own path," said Opheim,



a native of Oshkosh, Wis. "It's about much more than going to class. My professors were very supportive and I had so many opportunities to get involved and apply my interests through extracurricular activities and internships. All of that combined to make me ready to step into a role that might have seemed overwhelming before. And I'm leaving with the belief I can go out into the real world and make a positive impact."

Opheim received a bachelor's degree in public relations with a minor in pre-law.

"The USGS is headquartered in D.C., but the focus in Colorado is on social science," she said. "I will be helping to manage an expansive database that

allows agencies at the national, state and local levels—from the National Park Service to the DNR—to share what they're working on related to research and participation in conferences and events. My position is still being defined."

As a student, Opheim completed an internship in NMU's Marketing and Communications Office, where she launched the "What Makes a Wildcat" video series and assisted with various digital marketing channels. She also secured a past summer internship with the National 4-H Council in Washington, D.C., helping high school students identify issues and develop talking points to deliver effective messages to representatives and senators on Capitol Hill.

Her extracurricular activities also included organizing NMU's TEDx talks for the past two years. Opheim participated in the NMU Honors Program, Student Leader Fellowship Program, house government for the former Halverson Hall and the Student Law Forum. Through the Honors Program, Opheim was awarded a Lundin Summer Research Fellowship.

"I worked with PR professor Jes Thompson to put together an easy-to-use toolkit for any science organization, large or small, on using social media to raise funds or self-advocate," Opheim said. "PR professor Tom Isaacson was also helpful. I met with him when I first came to Northern because I was interested in PR's emphasis on fostering long-term loyalty to organizations and he shared information about the curriculum, related extracurricular activities and what some alumni are doing in the field."

Opheim said she would like to attend law school at some point in the near future, but in the meantime is eager to embark on her new adventure with the USGS.

Grad Helps Cannabis Company Build Brand



Frisk during his recent visit to NMU.

Michigan is on the cusp of explosive growth in the cannabis marketplace, with the first recreational dispensaries scheduled to open in early 2020. Northern Michigan University alumnus **Brandon Frisk** is in the thick of this fast-paced and highly competitive industry. The Ishpeming native recently

joined Green Peak Innovations (GPI), the state's largest vertical medical marijuana license holder, as a brand specialist.

"Michigan's been a caregiver state for the last decade, but there had not been a lot of thought put into packaging and marketing," Frisk said. "Five years ago, it was hand-slapping labels on products and selling them at medical provisioning centers. But with recreational marijuana looming, there's a new focus on packaging and marketing that will really distinguish a company from its competitors. It will be interesting to see how that will play a role in separating brands because the marketplace is insanely competitive."

"The biggest challenge, working with a new company and in a relatively new industry, is that you're building all of the internal processes that a lot of people take for granted. It's both difficult and exciting because I get an opportunity to enact change in the organization every day."

Frisk and two GPI colleagues visited NMU's campus to open a dialogue with representatives of the nation's first four-year medicinal plant chemistry program. They participated in a panel presentation on careers, innovations and trends in Michigan's evolving cannabis industry.

The GPI delegation also attended the Nov. 1 dedication of the new Shimadzu Analytical Core Laboratory for Medicinal Plant Sciences, which gives NMU undergraduate students access to cutting-edge instrumentation and technology applicable to numerous career options in the industry. The expanded lab space was necessary to accommodate the program's enrollment, which surged soon after its debut. Green Peak Innovations (GPI) also has experienced massive growth, Frisk said, vaulting from 10 employees to 220 in about 18 months. The company is seeking to add 50 more to its ranks, according to a news story on a GPI career fair planned for Nov. 7. GPI is based in Windsor Township, southwest of Lansing. Frisk is charged with raising awareness and visibility for the company's two main brands: Skymint retail, which operates four dispensaries and plans to open 20 more; and North Cannabis Company wholesale.

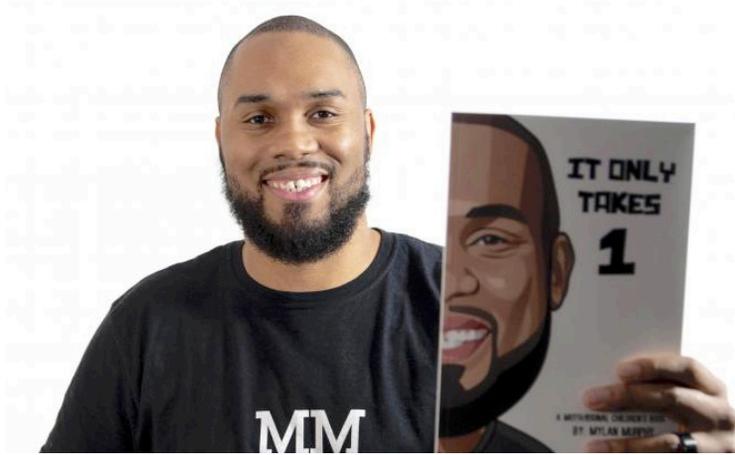
Frisk has seven years' experience working in digital content creation, public relations and social media management, focused on increasing consumer engagement and driving brand awareness. He previously worked in another burgeoning industry: craft breweries. Frisk was a marketing specialist for Michigan's largest, Bell's Brewery, and assisted with the company's Escanaba division, Upper Hand.

"I see a lot of parallels between the two industries on the wholesale side of things, especially as recreational cannabis comes online," Frisk said. "As a history buff, I did lots of research into how beer companies evolved once prohibition was lifted. I see lots of opportunities to learn from that moving forward in the cannabis space. We need to move strategically and very quickly in an industry fully opening its doors for the first time. It's really a race to the space. Those who get there first and have a quality product will have a huge advantage over the competition."

Frisk graduated from Northern in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in entertainment and sports promotion.

"What's really nice about my time at NMU is that it prepared me for an array of opportunities that might come my way. When I was undergrad, I had no idea the recreational cannabis space would become legal or exist at all. I've been able to find a groove and niche based on the holistic learning I got in the communications and marketing field."

Alumnus Publishes Motivating Children's Book



Six years ago, NMU alumnus Mylan Murphy posted a photo caption on Facebook that stated "It Only Takes 1"—as in one person, place, thing or opportunity to change someone's life. That is the guiding principle that has propelled him to personal and professional success in the face of challenges since he was a teenager. Now it is also the title of his first self-published children's book, which even features an illustration of Murphy in a Wildcat basketball jersey.

"I've always wanted to inspire and empower people through my life story," Murphy said. "I had already been doing motivational speaking for several years, and this book gives me another outlet for reaching people outside of speaking. The rollercoaster of ups and downs I've experienced has been extremely humbling. People relate to the obstacles I've faced, and they're intrigued by how I've overcome adversity to achieve different heights in life. I feel I've done a lot at my age, but there's so much more I want to do."

Murphy said one of the biggest obstacles he confronted was at the age of 13, when his parents divorced. While still reeling from the disruptive change to his family's dynamic, he started his own clothing line in eighth grade to help support his mom financially. He designed shirts and sold them to friends and family in his hometown of Akron, Ohio.

In addition to his entrepreneurial skills, which continue to evolve, Murphy also exhibited notable talent on the basketball court. Numerous Division I and II programs recruited him, but rescinded the offers when he severely injured his leg. It was one unexpected phone call—from the coach at Northern

Michigan University—that brought him to Marquette on a full basketball scholarship. The 6'9" center was on the roster for two seasons before his focus shifted to life after basketball.

"Every part of Northern—the education I received, the people I worked with, the opportunities presented to me and the environment —shaped me into the person I am today," Murphy said. "I went in as a young kid just looking to play basketball and left as an educated man with a plan and vision for my life. That's why I serve on the alumni board now. I feel like that phase of my life was so pivotal, it's only right for me to give back to the place I love so much and hold close to my heart."

The first-generation college student earned a bachelor's degree in entertainment and sports promotion in 2012, served as an intern and graduate assistant in the NMU Marketing and Communications Office and completed a master's degree in training, development and performance improvement in 2014. Murphy also continued entrepreneurial ventures on the side. He started a niche magazine that highlighted collegiate student-athletes, not only for their athletic achievements, but their goals beyond sports.

A major highlight of Murphy's Northern experience was being one of 30 students nationwide selected for the United States Olympic Committee F.L.A.M.E. minority leadership program. He spent a summer at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs before working the 2012 London Summer Olympic Games and the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games.

Murphy returned to his hometown of Akron, where he is the owner of OriginTD Innovative Digital Media. He continues to motivate others through speaking engagements and has even addressed inmates at a maximum-security prison.

He said publishing "It Only Takes 1" was a challenging and long process, but a sacrifice worth making to deliver my message. Within the book's pages, Murphy writes that the number one thing he teaches kids is this: "People may doubt what you say, but they will always believe what you do." He dedicated the book to his mom, who died from breast cancer in August.

"She was always my number one fan, no matter what I did in life, whether it was sports or entrepreneurial ventures. She always said that when I was born, she knew I was going to be different—a special kid who'd make an impact. Everything I've done in life has been the result of what she taught me and what we went through personally. She would love this book and be so proud of it. I only wish she would have had a chance to see it."

Murphy has shared the book with his 6-year-old son, Braxton, who enjoys looking at the illustrations of a familiar face while learning to read. "It Only Takes 1" is available on Amazon and his website, MylanMurphy.com.



Settles' Career Comes Full Circle



Northern Michigan University alumnus Mike Settles has "found his way home," returning to the Upper Peninsula and WNMU Public Media after a 24-year absence. He is the new producer and host of Media Meet, the Ask the... series featuring experts in such areas as law and medicine, and other local content.

The 1984 broadcasting graduate went on to work for WLUC-TV in Marquette and later as a senior producer/director at WNMU-TV. In 1996, a career opportunity lured Settles away from Marquette to Columbus, Ohio.

"What was I thinking?" Settles said with a laugh. "Not long after making that last Mackinac Bridge crossing, I started second-guessing my move and would continue to do so thereafter."

While in Ohio, Settles produced programs for WOSU-TV (PBS), served as a Kiplinger Fellow in Ohio State University's School of Communication and worked 17 years as a public information officer for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

He said he learned a lot and generally enjoyed life as a Buckeye, but a void quickly developed that he was unable to fill.

"It came down to wanting a 'Superior' quality of life, both in terms of where I live and who I associate with," says Settles. "I longed for the life I had when I lived and worked in the Upper Peninsula."

In August of 2020, Settles was perusing the Indeed job listings and was stunned to find a vacancy at WNMU. Calling it serendipity, he successfully made the pitch to return to U.P. television.

"Hiring Mike wasn't the hardest call we've ever had to make," says Bob Thomson, WNMU-TV Broadcast and Production Manager. "When he was last here, Mike produced multiple Emmy award-winning programs and was a total team player. So, now that he's back, we are excited to see what's in store for local television production. It really is a win-win."

Alumn Joins Midland Online Media Company

Communications professional Ron Beacom ('82 BA) is the new managing editor for Catalyst Midland, an online media/news company that shares stories of people and their businesses or organizations making positive changes across the region.

Beacom is also a freelance writer for the *Midland Daily News* and the producer/host of *Second Act: Life at 50 Plus* for WDCQ-Delta College Public Media (PBS). This "second act" of his career follows his retirement after 27 years as manager of Midland Community Television (MCTV) and library communications for the City of Midland. Beacom also previously worked as a producer at network TV affiliates in Marquette, Toledo, Ohio, and Rochester, N.Y.

"I think it'll be exciting to work in this [way]," he said in a Catalyst Midland Q&A on his managing editor appointment. "It's still journalism, but our vehicle is the internet. That's where everything's been going for a while, so that'll be interesting just reaching people through that. Because I've done television, I freelance for print, I did radio way back when; they all tie into the internet now, but this started as an internet venture. I think that'll be exciting."

Beacom was co-producer of the WDCQ documentary *Breached! The Tittabawassee River Disaster*. He has also done some communications work in the mental health area for Creative 360 and the Midland Area Community Foundation. He has applied his NMU major in broadcasting and minor in general speech throughout his career.

"While I was a student at the high school, I was involved in forensics, high school plays; I started announcing at the football games over the P.A. I've always enjoyed writing. [...] Like most people in journalism, I think, I just have a natural curiosity — asking a lot of questions to try to learn more about people. So, when it came time to pick a major for college, I went to Northern Michigan University in Marquette. I chose broadcasting, and that's how it got me on a roll from there."



Alumnus' Record Store Featured



NMU broadcasting alumnus Jim Gleason (BS '90) was recently featured in a newspaper profile of his Radio Wasteland Records store, which opened in 2017 in Midland. Gleason turned a long-time collecting hobby into an entrepreneurial venture. He sells new and vintage vinyl while working to replicate the 1970s and '80s atmosphere of people listening to music playing on a turntable while thumbing through records.

"I had always been a record collector, went to stores in Ann Arbor and East Lansing," said Gleason in the *Laredo Morning Times* spotlight. "Through college, I kept buying records here and there. After I got my job at TV6 and could afford it, I got into the more serious side of buying records. When we moved here, I cut my collection in half. In 2016, I started selling some records online. My family suggested that I should open a record store." Radio Wasteland Records, like many businesses, was closed for several weeks because of COVID-19.

"The closure was not a fun experience to make it through, but we did make it with curbside service and appointments," Gleason said. "A bunch of people still discovered us through the closure and have supported us. In times of stress and change, for some people, music is an important part of their lives. Being a vinyl record store, we provide an avenue to give people something for that part of their lives. Music is essential, even if record stores aren't."

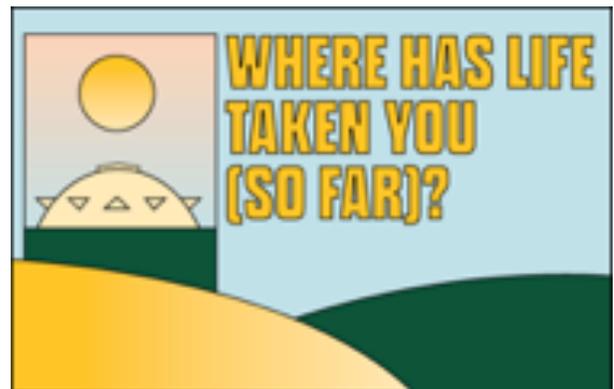
After working in front of the camera at WLUC-TV6 in Marquette, Gleason served as a professor in Delta College's broadcasting program before starting his own business.

Amer Mansoor

Since graduating from NMU with a degree in Communication Studies, Amer Mansoor has been going to medical school and just recently found out that he was matched into General Surgery residency at Garden City Hospital in Michigan. Amer recently reached out to our faculty professor Sara Potter stating "you were my academic advisor for Communication Studies and I always looked up to you as a mentor and wanted to make sure you knew! I still remember my first day of class in SP 100 Public Speaking. I really appreciate everything you and the Communications department did to guide me in undergraduate." According to Amer, his goal is to settle down in the Upper Peninsula as a physician once he finishes his residency training.

Gianna Ferraro

The Communication Studies graduate is the gallery manager and event coordinator for Graci Gallery in Marquette. She is hosting many fun events in Marquette from May through October of 2021, including 1st Thursdays Art Walk, pop-up art sales, and a smaller replication of Art on the Rocks (due to the cancelation this summer). Stay up to date on all of the events, and hopefully attend with friends and family. Check out the first issue here: https://www.canva.com/design/DAEcnCOZt9k/8E75LGvsM4k-zmnl_WNVBg/view?utm_content=DAEcnCOZt9k&utm_campaign=design-share&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink



**What are you doing?
Did NMU help you get there?
How can we support you now?
And what can we do better for
current and future Wildcats?**

Let us hear from you!

caps@nmu.edu