

4-1-2007

Inside Journalism

Columbia College Chicago

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Recommended Citation

Columbia College Chicago, "Inside Journalism" (2007). *Inside Journalism*. 77.
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inside journalism

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2007



Student TaQuoya Kennedy was among those covering Obama.

The COVERING HISTORIC SPEECH Obama Report

On a bone-chilling, brilliantly clear Saturday morning in February, a new-generation politician announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for President. The Journalism Department sent two undergraduates and 18 graduate students to cover U.S. Sen. Barack Obama's historic announcement in front of the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois.

Thanks to the resourcefulness of veteran reporters and faculty members Curtis Lawrence and Suzanne McBride, the Columbia College contingent scored



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MEGAN MCMANAMA

seven coveted press passes, including a "Traveling Press" badge, the same as worn by CNN's Candy Crowley, Hardball's Chris Matthews, the Washington Post's Dan Balz, the Chicago Sun-Times' Lynn Sweet and other pros students observed in action.

If elected, Obama would become the

first African-American president.

His unusual biography, including a Muslim grandfather, a Kenyan father he barely knew, a white mother, a childhood spent in Hawaii and Indonesia, a Harvard Law degree and a stint as an anti-poverty worker in Chicago has garnered international attention.

The graduate students also interviewed U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and dozens of ordinary citizens, some of whom traveled across the country to be there for the announcement.

Columbia journalism students (clockwise from left) Jessica Wylie, Ira Evangelou, Megan McManama and Paige Gray covered the event. Wylie's story was published in the Chicago Defender.

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- Reflections on change
- Rookie hits big time
- Students host forum

Students follow money, break stories, get published

BY DAN WEISSMANN

In "Covering Local Politics," a class offered for the first time this spring, Columbia journalism students have worked with the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, the state's leading money-in-politics watchdogs, to track the role of money in Chicago's 2007 aldermanic races.

Students have contributed their labor to the Illinois Campaign's first-ever database on Chicago's municipal elections—an extension of the Campaign's "Sunshine Database" which has long been the first stop for journalists and others seeking information on money in state races—and in the process learned enough about city

politics to write in-depth stories on aldermanic races.

"There's no way we could have accomplished what we've accomplished in terms of getting information out about the Chicago elections without the work of these Columbia journalism students," said Cynthia Canary, executive director of the Illinois

Campaign. "They're among the most talented and engaged students I've ever worked with."

By the end of Election Day, Feb. 27, student work had appeared online on the Chicago Reader's "Clout City" blog and on the Beachwood Reporter (www.beachwoodreporter.com), a web site run

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Express to Navy Pier

BY STACIE JOHNSON

It seems lately there's been a direct line between the Columbia College Chicago journalism master's program and Chicago Public Radio.

Over the last two years, WBEZ 91.5 FM (based on Navy Pier) has given top students from the writing-intensive public affairs reporting program an opportunity in public radio through its internship program — internships that have led to frequent on-air reporting by Rob Wildeboer '05 and Alex Helmick '06.

These two former graduate students, now working as freelancers for the News Department, say they have Columbia's graduate program to thank for getting them this far. And George Lara, Internship Coordinator for Chicago Public Radio, says he has been pleased with the performance of the Columbia College graduate students and encourages more applicants.

"The grads we are working with have a solid understanding of good journalism practices," Lara said. "They have an idea of what good reporting should be like, and have a good sense of news and researching. They know their stuff."

Wildeboer said after he graduated from Calvin College with a degree in Philosophy, History and Theology, he was working temporary jobs, "mindless" assignments during which he would often listen to National Public Radio (NPR), new to him since he grew up in Canada. "I thought, 'I could do that,' but I had no experience in journalism. I felt I needed credibility."

He later worked as a human resources specialist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, but still had the journalism bug. He met



FILE PHOTOS

Alex Helmick, Stacie Johnson and Robert Wildeboer are working at Chicago Public Radio.

with Dr. Norma Green, director of Columbia College Chicago's graduate journalism program, and began taking two courses. By the time they were over, he was hooked, and devoted a year and a half to completing his Master of Arts in Journalism.

His first WBEZ internship in 2004 was for the station's newsmagazine, *Eight Forty-Eight*, which led to another six-month internship with the News Desk.

"And I have been here ever since," Wildeboer said. "Two and a half years later, I am freelancing full-time and filling in for the court reporter on the criminal justice beat," an assignment he relishes because it includes politics and law, as well as an endless supply of characters.

Columbia College's graduate program gave him not only a footing in journalism, but also made him more conversant on public affairs issues, including the complex and colorful local political scenes, he said. Wildeboer won an Edward R. Murrow award for his coverage of the World Series in 2005.

Alex Helmick, '06, a native of Vienna, West Virginia, was a business consultant on strategic planning and conflict resolution issues when he decided he wanted to pursue a journalism career. Helmick had already had a taste of newsgathering while working on *The Highlander* newspaper at Ohio Valley University, where he received his B.S. in Psychology. He then earned a master's degree in Business Psychology from the

Chicago School of Professional Psychology before enrolling in the public affairs reporting master's program.

"I thought the program would teach me how to be a reporter. I felt like I had the writing ability, but I needed an environment to grow and learn," he said.

He said he got just that and more. The program requires students to act as beat reporters and write on deadline with accuracy and clarity. But the most valuable aspect the program provided, Helmick said, was working with teachers who were currently or had been working journalists.

"About a month into the program I got an internship with Chicago Public Radio, and I've been here ever since," said Helmick. "I grew into my role as a radio reporter, and now I love the medium."

Helmick is an independent producer for the News Desk, and coordinates newscasts for NPR's *All Things Considered*. He has sold several pieces to NPR in addition to his on-air reporting for 'BEZ, with stories on sports, business and general assignment, as well as features.

Soon to join my comrades into alumni status, I am now an intern with Chicago Public Radio. I started working on special projects with Andrew Wenzel, producer of the global affairs program *Worldview*.

I knew that I wanted to work with Chicago Public Radio in some capacity, before I even thought about a graduate degree in jour-

nalism. I fell in love with the global affairs program *Worldview* and knew that I would want to do that eventually — shed light on international issues.

I applied to Columbia's graduate journalism program a few years after receiving my undergraduate interdisciplinary degree in Political Science, Sociology, Humanities and English from North Central College and then traveling abroad working on advocacy projects and photography essays.

I knew that I loved to write, but learned quickly that I didn't want to devote most of life to writing policy and research papers. So, I figured, "Why not journalism?"

While working as a clerk for an intellectual property law firm, I completed my first year of the program.

At this point, I decided to apply for an internship with Chicago Public Radio.

This internship combined with the coursework have turned me into a true journalist, one who is still learning but getting better every day on the fundamentals: how to report, write on deadline, write simply, edit copy, build a beat and tell a story.

Since beginning my internship last summer, I have been a fellow with *Eight Forty-Eight* and an intern with *Chicago Matters*. I recently received the McCormick Tribune Foundation Intern Scholarship, which will afford me the opportunity of working directly on news and features with 'BEZ staff.

Columbia Chronicle award stash grows

BY CHRIS RICHERT

The Columbia Chronicle enjoyed another banner year at the Illinois College Press Association's annual awards ceremony. On Feb. 27, 2007, the newspaper took home 20 award plaques and certificates.

Co-Editor-in-Chief Hayley Graham won first place in the in-depth reporting category for her piece headlined "African American Decline Bewilders College Officials."

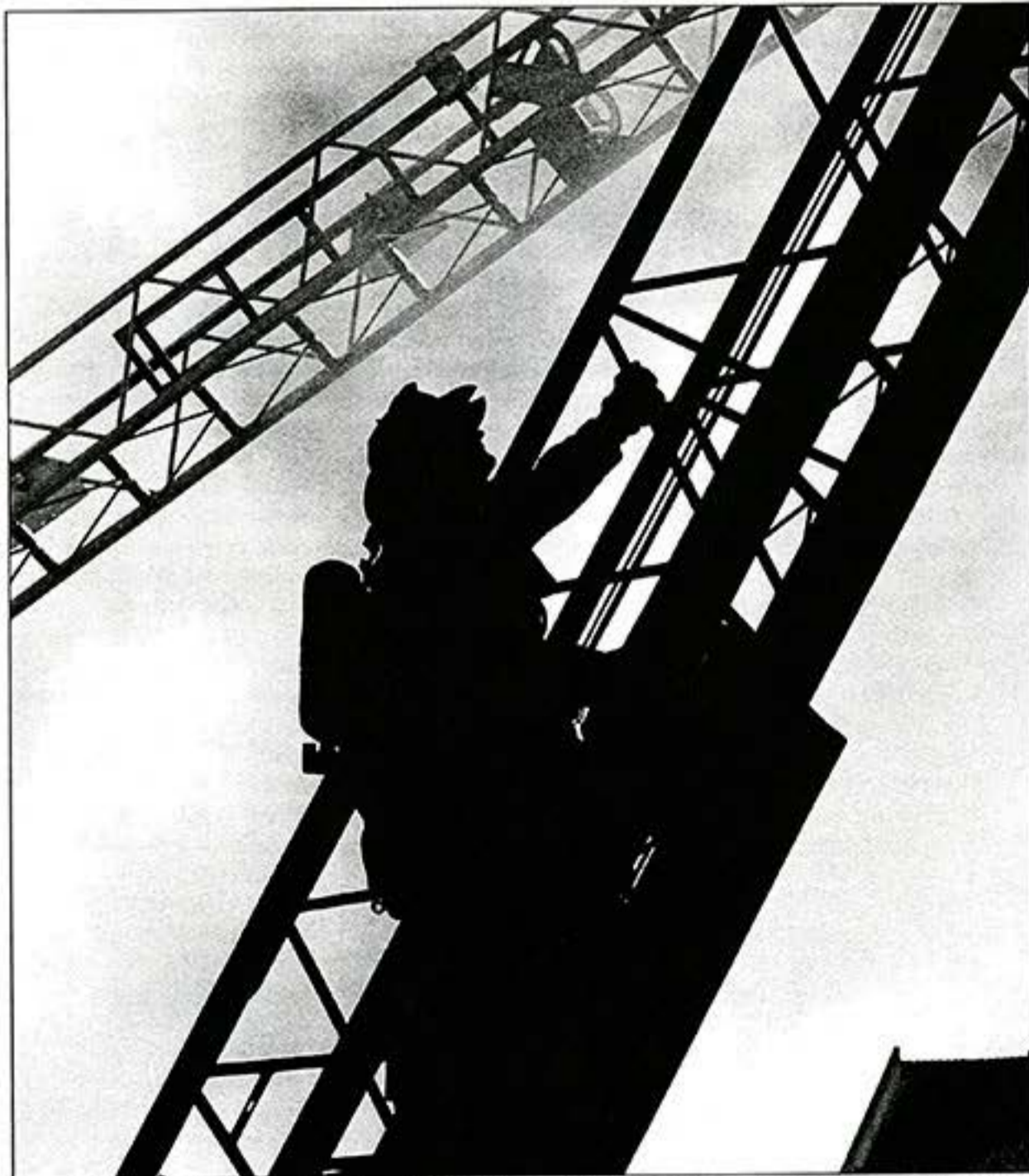
Four photographers won for a photo essay on the dramatic and

devastating fire at the Dexter Building on South Wabash, which closed nearby businesses, the EI and even, briefly, the college, as firefighters worked to extinguish it.

The Columbia Chronicle is eligible for two types of awards. The open division is in competition statewide with daily and non-daily papers. In some categories, the Chronicle competes with only non-daily college newspapers that print more than 4,000 papers each week. This year, the staff won six open-

division and 14 circulation-specific awards, including first places in in-depth reporting, photography and design.

In addition to the awards ceremony, the staff attended the conference to participate in workshops, hear presentations from professional journalists (such as Tribune and Sun-Times music critics Greg Kot and Jim DeRogatis who broadcast their public radio show "Sound Opinions" from the conference) and network with potential employers.



Chronicle staff photographer Mauricio Rubio won Best News Photo in the ICPA contest for this photo of the Dexter Building fire.

IN THE NON-DAILIES LEVEL:

printing more than 4,000

1st place, **Hayley Graham**, In-Depth Reporting

1st place, **Michael Jarecki, Mauricio Rubio, Andrew Nelles**, Photo Essay

1st place, **Mauricio Rubio**, News Photo

2nd place, **Mauricio Rubio**, Sports Photo

2nd place, **Eric Davis**, News Photo

2nd place, **Mark Byrne**, Feature Story

2nd place, **Josh Covarrubias**, Feature Page Design

3rd place, **Michael Jarecki, Mauricio Rubio, Andrew Nelles**, Photo Essay

3rd place, **Jennifer Fischer**, Feature Story

3rd place, **Campus Staff**, Front Page Design

3rd place, **Brent White and Chrissy Mahlmeister**, Sports Feature Story

3rd place, **Josh Covarrubias**, Feature Page Design

3rd place, **Tiffany Breyne**, Sports Column

Honorable Mention, **Editorial Staff**

IN THE OPEN LEVEL:

1st place, **Chronicle Staff**, Special Supplement

1st place, **Josh Covarrubias**, Full-Page Advertisement Design

3rd place, **A&E Staff**, Entertainment Supplement

3rd place, **Chronicle Staff**, Special Supplement

Honorable Mention, **Mary Kroeck**, Critical Review (other than film)

Honorable Mention, **Chris Gallevo**, Full-Page Advertisement Design

The online edition — <http://www.columbiachronicle.com> — won a second place award.

Seminar offers multimedia ideas

Journalism educators from around the country were chosen from many applicants to convene at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies last month for a seminar on convergence, including the Journalism Department's Teresa Puente.

"This was an incredible opportunity to learn about the latest trends in new media," Puente said.

The journalists of tomorrow must be able to work in print, broadcast and online, she said.

During the four-day seminar, participants examined the latest projects at big newspapers like the New York Times and small papers such as the Naples (Fla.) Daily News.

Traditional print reporters are working in teams to create multimedia projects online. This includes shooting photos and video as well as recording sound to build packages for the web.

"Our students need to learn the new media in order stay competitive," Puente said.

She said Columbia's Journalism Department is developing a plan to incorporate more multimedia skills across the curriculum.

Other professors agreed that teaching new media should be included in the curriculum. Walakkamol Changkamol, a Humphrey fellow this year at the University of Maryland, plans to take what she learned back to her students in her native Thailand.

"This has been a very good chance for me to learn how Americans teach journalism," she said.

James D. McJunkins, assistant professor of mass media arts at Clark Atlanta University, said he learned about the latest software applications.

"We need to bring the students into the 21st century," McJunkins concluded.

Connecting with community

BY BARBARA IVERSON

Creating Community Connections - <http://creatingcommunityconnections.org> - is up and running, offering a unique opportunity for Columbia

College Chicago students, faculty and staff to jump into the world of online reporting and publishing. It is looking for stories, photos, audio and video about Chicago neighborhoods and topics, such as housing, the environment, transportation, politics and social issues.

Posting is simple. From your browser, go to <http://creatingcommunityconnections.org>.

Then go to "contribute" in the sidebar on the right. Select the kind of content you want to share. Follow the directions, including adding a "title" to your story or photo, and type or cut and paste your work into the online form.



Please take a moment to register before submitting a story, because we can't publish anonymous news stories, and this way we can contact the author if there are questions about the story.

We're also interested in photos, video and sound.

The stories will be edited for the site, but make sure your work is carefully proofed, accurate and ready to go when you submit it.

The site is sponsored by the college, J-Lab New Voices project and the Knight Foundation, so articles will get lots of national and even international

attention as we present the site at conferences and as J-Lab promotes its funded projects.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Suzanne McBride, smcbride@colum.edu, or Barbara Iverson, biverson@colum.edu.

News from the student clubs

FROM SPJ

On March 28th at 5:30 pm the Student Satellite CHC/SPJ club will present Marcus Riley and Zach Christman of NBC5.com in a discussion with students and members of Chicago Bloggers about the evolution of online media in Chicago.

The Student Satellite CHC/SPJ group is affiliated with the Society of Professional Journalists' largest professional chapter, Chicago Headline Club, and is open to all students. Membership in CHC/SPJ includes free admission to events, access to the job board, networking opportunities with local media, a 24-hour ethics hot-line and a chance to attend the national conference and interact with student journalists and media workers from around the country.

NBC5.com has an interesting project called "Street Team" that allows "citizen journalists" to blog and create short video work for the site. Some of their reporters have experimented with video blogging.

Chicago Bloggers is a local Meetup.com group of more than 100 bloggers that provides networking and training opportunities for local bloggers of all kinds. It has been meeting since 2005. Their site is <http://blog.meetup.com/351/>

The event will take place in the Converged Newsroom and Room 212. Light refreshments will be served. Contact Barbara Iverson for more information.

FROM RTNDA

Columbia College's Journalism Department will be represented at this year's RTNDA @ NAB convention in Las Vegas. (That's broadcasting-industry-speak for the Radio-Television News Directors Association and National Association of Broadcasters.)

Ray Fanning, acting director of Broadcast Journalism, and Omar Castillo, the department's computer lab supervisor and an adjunct faculty member, will be among those traveling to the show, which is considered the premier conference and exhibi-

tion for radio, television and online news. Participants will discuss the use of new media in the classroom, and learn about legal issues related to such matters.

FROM CCABJ

The Columbia College Association of Black Journalists has a lot going on this spring, especially as it prepares for a national gathering. The group is planning its second annual bake sale to make money toward sending some members to the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) Convention, which will be held in Las Vegas Aug. 8-12. The bake sale will be March 26-29 in the lobby of 623 S. Wabash from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Please come, both to show your support for the organization and to take care of your yearning sweet tooth.

The group also plans to start its own newsletter highlighting events and people in the Columbia Community. Look for it to become available in late March.

Newest journalism organization explores Latino news, culture

BY MONIQUE MEDINA

There is a new organization in town — HJC, the Hispanic Journalists of Columbia. With the help of journalism instructors Elio Leturia and Teresa Puente, this dynamic group came to life last November.

The organization is led by president Monique Medina; vice president Lizette Bernabé, treasurer Mauricio Rubio and secretary Lourdes Vázquez. This team has been working well together toward the group's goals: giving Hispanic journalism students a voice at Columbia College, promoting diversity and excellence in the media, and covering events that affect the Hispanic community.

During HJC's first event, in December, a panel of professional journalists provided career advice for students and shared their experiences in the journalism industry. At the group's next event, scheduled for March 12 in the journalism department's Convergence newsroom, Latino photojournalists will visit, sharing their adventures and discussing the importance of photojournalism.

HJC wants to expand the group, and welcomes all journalism students with an interest in Hispanic news and culture — not only those



OMAR CASTILLO

Columbia College Professor Elio Leturia (from left), CLTV's Carlos Hernández Gómez, Ofelia Casillas of the Chicago Tribune and Columbia Professor Teresa Puente offered words of professional wisdom at HJC's first event.

of Hispanic descent.

For more information, contact Columbia's journalism department at (312) 344-8900, or email hispanicjournalistsofcolumbia@yahoo.com.

"It's the beginning of something great that's going to open many doors for students. It will grow as an organization for years to come," said Bernabé, 22, a senior.

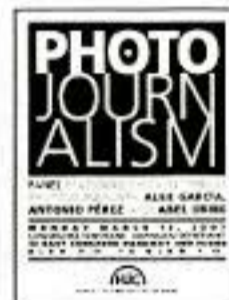
"It's a good organization to have because a lot of journalism students want to go into the Spanish-language media. This is a good way to broaden their horizons," said Vázquez, 19, a sophomore.

HJC event features alum Antonio Pérez

BY TERESA PUENTE

Antonio Pérez was among the photojournalists invited to an event organized by student members of the Hispanic Journalists of Columbia on March 12.

Pérez, a full-time staff photographer with the Chicago Tribune, earned a bachelor's degree in photography from Columbia College in Chicago in 1985. He has worked as



a photojournalist and documentary photographer for over 20 years.

"The most important thing I learned was that you get what you put into it. If one puts forth 100 percent and goes above and beyond what is required, college will give

you back double," Pérez said in an interview.

Pérez's photos have been exhibited at The Art Institute of Chicago, Smithsonian Museum, and the Wright Gallery at UCLA. His photographs have also appeared in such well-known publications as *People*, *New York Times*, *Chicago* and the *Chicago Tribune* magazines.

He enjoys participating in photodocumentary projects, as they challenge him to capture the uniqueness of a community and its people. His most current project was "City in the Year 2000." Alongside 50 other photographers, Pérez documented various events and images of the City of Chicago.

"Do what you love, but be ready to sacrifice. Be very patient and take constructive criticism. And last but not least: shoot, shoot and shoot," he concluded.

Class | STUDENTS AND POLITICS

From page 1

by former *Chicago Magazine* editor Steve Rhodes. The Feb. 26 issue of the *Columbia Chronicle* also featured six in-depth stories developed by students in the class.

► Cyril Jakubowski looked at feisty Chicago firefighter Nicholas Sposato's underfunded campaign against the powerful chair of the City Council's zoning committee, 36th Ward Ald. William Banks, who uses some of his plentiful campaign cash to make lease pay-

ments on the Jaguar that he drives around town.

► James Ewert focused on the cozy relationship between Democrats and Republicans in the Northwest Side's 41st Ward, home to the City Council's only Republican alderman, Brian Doherty—where ward committeeman and retired state representative Ralph Caparrelli had recently withdrawn \$400,000 from campaign funds raised for his legislative campaigns but had contributed only \$500 to Doherty's

nominal Democratic opponent. On Election Day, Ewert found the Democratic Party's ward office closed; as Ewert blogged for the Reader, the one person who knew where the ward committeeman was—out of town on vacation—was his Republican counterpart.

► Allison Riggio's scorecard—with sketches of 11 out of the 12 candidates for the 15th Ward's open aldermanic seat—ran at beachwoodreporter.com under the headline "The Fighting 15th."

► Jessica Pearce's story about Scott Waguespack's attempt to unseat 32nd Ward Ald. Ted Matlak found a spot on *Creating*

Community Connections, a new web site created by Columbia faculty Suzanne McBride and Barbara Iverson.

"I thought the stories were really well done," said Canary. "I thought that they really captured a flavor for the elections that I don't think the mainstream press was capturing. And they did a really nice job of juxtaposing local color and detail with hard numbers."

The class, taught by adjunct instructor Dan Weissmann and full-time Columbia faculty member Len Strazewski, met twice a week for the first half of the spring semester, wrapping up on March 12.

ELECTION COVERAGE 2007

Reflections on change

COMMENTARY

BY PAIGE GRAY

Change, even the possibility of change, motivates us. It touches the most basic, human part of us—man or woman, black, white, Republican or Democrat—all of us.

That is why on a bitterly cold Saturday morning thousands of Americans stood and waited for hours. They waited, despite frozen toes and numb fingers. They waited to hear the possibility of change for America.

The political landscape of our country has left citizens angry and apathetic. Even as a young, educated graduate student, the past years have made me feel powerless in a country where the people supposedly hold the power.

But for the first time in my life, I experienced an overwhelming sense of patriotism that frigid morning in Springfield. I experienced the sensation of approaching change watching the faces of the crowd and in the words of presidential candidate Barack Obama.

"I know I haven't spent a lot of time learning the ways of Washington," Obama told the audience and the many cameras focused on him. "But I've been there long enough to know that the ways of Washington must change."

The excitement and enchantment that surrounded that morning remains indescribable: a rush of adrenaline mixed with chills and tears. I could not believe my eyes welled up.

As a journalist, I am required to remain unbiased, fair and equal to all sides. This is not a promotional spot for Obama. This is advocacy for change and advocacy to be a part of that change. Amidst the masses, I could finally understand the language upon which this country is based.

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare,



Barack Obama

MEGAN MCMANAMA

and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

The United States thrives as a nation because of the right we have to proclaim our beliefs, express our ideas and to rally when change becomes necessary. The current political climate—with deep chasms between red and blue states, Democrat and Republican—is evidence of a revolution that must take place. Obama represents just one path for possible change. And isn't that the great thing? There is more than one path to change; we have a choice.

Whether you support Obama or not, this is a time for Americans to celebrate the many fresh and veteran faces offering themselves for consideration as President. This year, little girls and children of color (other than pale Caucasian) can believe they might grow up to be President. People seem to care, something obvious in the crowd that gathered that morning. And, as history has proved, when people care enough, anything is possible.

Paige Gray is a graduate student in the journalism department. She received her Bachelor's Degree in English from Indiana University in 2005, where she was editor of the English department's undergraduate website, The Fine Print. She also worked as a reporter, columnist and copy chief for the Indiana Daily Student. Before moving to Chicago, she wrote for an arts and entertainment publication, Tipp-C, in Indiana.

Covering big stories

COMMENTARY

BY CYRIL JAKUBOWSKI

As a rookie reporter, you cover anything that gets thrown your way. Whether it's a fire, a new building development or the occasional city council meeting, you have to do the job. Each bone that falls on your plate gets bitten into. There are no such things as small opportunities, because even the smallest assignments turn into great things.

But every dog has its day. Opportunity flew my way when the Journalism Department sent me to Springfield, Ill., to cover Barack Obama's presidential announcement.

Sure, this is college journalism, but the trick is to not treat it as such. You have to become a professional in college. Learn the trade. Do the job. When it comes to sharpening your teeth as a future reporter, nothing beats experience.

My mission was simple: Go to the capital (in this case, the historic Old State Capitol) and cover the announcement by U.S. Sen. Barack Obama's (D-Ill.) that he was running for president. I have never covered anything this big as a reporter, so I didn't know what to expect.

Despite the Amtrak train running late as it always does, I did my best on the day of the event to fit in with the army of media professionals that descended on the town like a pack of rabid vultures. I wore a tie.

Springfield looks like a micro version of Washington, D.C.—only without the press corps, the president or, apparently, a night life. It's the type of town that has six major streets, conveniently called 1st through 6th.

The crowds that came out to support Obama were a determined bunch. The streets were littered with hand-warmers and empty coffee cups. And despite the cold, children sat on their parents' shoulders and waved "Obama 08" signs as if it were the Fourth of July.

While anchors with microphones resembling lollipops were



y no small thing

feeding their reports to headquarters miles away every 15 minutes, I stood in the designated press area with my fingers frozen, clutching a Panasonic recorder, cursing. A historic event was happening, and there I was, pondering the quality of my leather gloves. But despite weather pains, the job needed to be done. Somebody (namely, Columbia's Journalism Department) was paying for the hotel room.

Talk is cheap, they say. But as a reporter I have learned to talk to anybody and leave no stone left unturned.

There came a point after Obama left the stage when I stood in awe in front of massive crowds, people passing left and right, leaving, and I needed to talk to somebody. Running around and shoving a recorder into people's faces takes practice—especially when 17,000 people are trying to leave—but I did it anyway. Ultimately, names and ranks mean little when it comes to the stories people have to tell. Why did each of these individuals make the trek in zero-degree weather, early on a Saturday morning? I made sure I spelled people's names right. Oh—and I listened.

And as I sat in my hotel room later, writing the story, trying to file on time, the thought of reporting on something of this magnitude became immense. I was glad I had the chance to be a part of it. Opportunities like this make all the difference. They make one feel alive—and they help put everything into perspective.

Cyril Jakubowski is Commentary Editor of the weekly Columbia Chronicle. You can read his commentary online at www.columbiachronicle.com. He transferred to Columbia College in Fall 2004 from the University of Illinois at Chicago and immediately joined the college's new student workshop, where he said he wanted to write opinions. Journalism faculty members insisted he learn so-called "straight" news reporting first, but eventually he ascended to his current role and dream—writing and publishing his own opinions and soliciting those of others in the college community.



MEGAN MCMANAMA



ABOVE Faculty members (from left) Curtis Lawrence, Suzanne McBride and Tom Laue planned the three-day trip.

LEFT Students applied classroom reporting lessons in a professional, competitive setting.



MAURICIO RUBIO

Challengers to 2nd Ward Alderman Madeline Haithcock at a forum sponsored by the Columbia College Chronicle and Journalism Department are, left to right, Larry Doody, Bob Fioretti and Kenny Johnson.

Students plan forum

Columbia College Chicago journalism students are closely following the City Council elections during the Spring semester, with a special course, forum and planned debate.

The college is in the 2nd Aldermanic Ward, represented by Madeline Haithcock. After results of the Feb. 27 primary were tabulated, however, Haithcock received only 20.43 percent of the votes cast and will face a run-off April 17 against the top vote getter, Bob Fioretti, a personal injury lawyer who received 28 percent.

Fioretti was one of four challengers to Haithcock who came to the college on Jan. 29, the day before registration closed for the February primary, for a forum sponsored by the Columbia Chronicle newspaper and the Columbia Journalism Department. Haithcock and another candidate sent their regrets. James H. Ewert Jr., City Beat editor of the Chronicle, helped organize the forum and was one of the questioners. He is now working with colleagues and faculty to arrange a debate between Haithcock and Fioretti before the April election.

"I wanted to set up the debate because I wanted to get students directly involved in the election," Ewert explained, "and, in a way, force the candidates to address the concerns of the ever-growing student constituency

in the 2nd ward."

"As a journalist, I can't interject my opinions on voting and elections, so the forum offered me a chance to side-step journalism and act as an actively involved citizen and student instead."

Among the issues raised at the forum were how best to spend "menu money," \$1.32 million allocated to each of Chicago's aldermen to essentially use as they see fit for their wards; how the candidates would work with the growing demographic of students and senior citizens; the ban on skateboarding on city sidewalks and greater accountability of and access to public transportation.

In one of his questions to the candidates, Ewert noted that many students get around the urban campus quickly and cheaply via skateboarding, and wondered if the ban on boards in business districts could be lifted. The question seemed to catch some of the candidates off-guard, with one commenting that he had never been asked about it before, but they all promised to look into the matter.

In the audience question round, candidates were queried about "big-box" (giant stores like Wal Mart and Target) business wages, school improvement, food bans (foie gras, trans-fats), student voter apathy, traffic congestion and the GLBT community.

New hires strengthen support for students

The Journalism Department has two new staff members on board, expanding its ability to respond to and anticipate students' widely varying needs.

Sara Fiedelholtz, an accomplished journalist and adjunct instructor in the department, replaces longtime adjunct Columbia faculty member Billy Ferguson, who retired as department tutor in December at the age of 80. She began in her new position in January, and has been helping undergraduate and graduate students in a range of ways, from working on grammar to polishing projects to crafting a story pitch.

"I really enjoy teaching, and this has provided me with the opportunity to get more involved with the students at Columbia," says Fiedelholtz, who has a range of journalistic experience, from feature writing for the *Chicago Sun-Times* to founding *thinkbox strategies*, a creative strategy and publishing firm. She sees her role as department tutor as a way to help "not just the students who are doing very well or struggling, but also for people who just might need some extra attention, or help with a larger project. Sometimes the professors are very busy — and let's face it: Everyone needs an editor. This way, students have another editor to rely on."

Fiedelholtz is glad to have the additional interaction with journalism faculty and staff as well.

"I'm very, very impressed with the department, and the guidance and opportunities they provide for the students," she says. "It's a very professional program, and it absolutely prepares students for their careers."

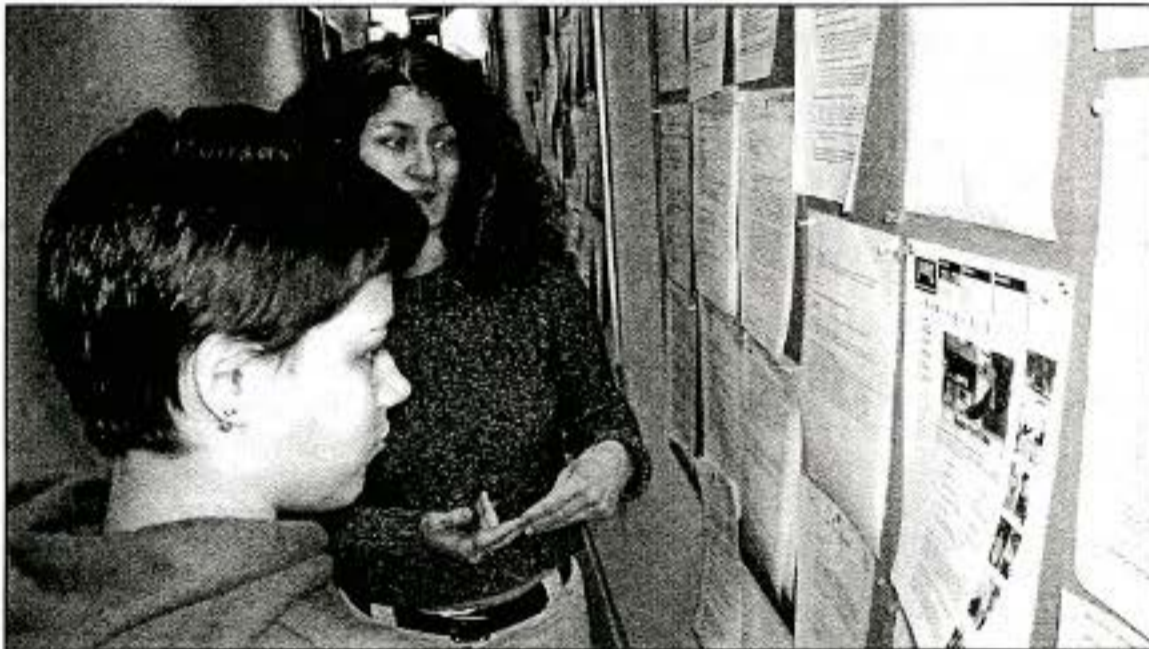
To that end, the department has strengthened its hand in helping students gain professional experience by hiring a full-time Internship and Special Projects Coordinator. Jennifer Halperin, an adjunct faculty member and experienced reporter, edi-

Contact Fiedelholtz at 773-472-0798 or sfiedelhol@aol.com. She has office hours in C-201B on Mondays from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and Wednesdays from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Halperin can be reached at (312) 344-8994 or jhalperin@colum.edu. Her office is C-201A.



AARON OWENS

Respected veteran journalist and educator Sara Fiedelholtz is the department's new tutor.



AARON OWENS

Senior Jessica Pearce, left, was chosen as one of the "best undergraduate students in the country" to attend the summer Institute on Political Journalism. The intensive eight-week program in Washington, D.C., is based at Georgetown University. Here, she confers with the department's new internship coordinator, Jennifer Halperin.

tor and editorial writer, started in this position in February. She will help advise print and broadcast students — both undergraduate and graduate — on how to obtain internships, help them get academic credit for them, and work on strengthening the college's ties to local, regional, national and international media outlets.

"I've always tried to be a professional 'matchmaker' of sorts, directing students or young journalists to potential jobs, so this seemed like a great career fit for me," says Halperin, who has started

using her contacts in the field to place Columbia students in internships. "I've been impressed with Columbia students' energy and enthusiasm, and their recognition of just how crucial internships are for aspiring journalists."

Halperin says she has also been impressed with the places that current and past students have interned, from Crain's Chicago Business to Chicago Public Radio to MTV.

Journalism students can get credit for internship experiences if they have 60 credit hours and a 3.0 grade point average.

Nancy Day, department chair, said Halperin and Fiedelholtz are "both dedicated professionals who bring terrific mentoring and professional experience...I encourage all students to make use of their guidance."

Time Out Chicago hires three graduates

TAQUOYA KENNEDY

Martina Sheehan was only three days away from moving to Canada when she got her job as a writer with Time Out Chicago, a weekly arts and entertainment magazine. She says Columbia College gave her the tools she needed to bridge the gap between academics and real world journalism.

Sheehan came to Columbia to earn her second Bachelors of Arts degree. She earned her first B.A. (English) from the University of Wisconsin, which she found was not a direct path to an interesting job. On the advice of a friend, she explored Columbia.



"JC Gabel was a big influence in my choice to go to Columbia," Sheehan said. "He's since started his own magazine [Stop Smiling]! The skills he had, he got directly from Columbia."

Sheehan graduated from Columbia in 2001.

"Columbia was really preparing," Sheehan said. "I really felt like it was a direct route to getting a job and that's what I was concerned with. I wanted to get the skills, get the experience and get a job!"

Sheehan built her knowledge and developed clippings while she was a student from working on The Columbia Chronicle and Echo Magazine.

Sheehan managed to find a job just three months after graduating from Columbia with a small public relations firm. Then she got what she calls her lucky break — a job working at Illinois Now, a state travel and leisure magazine. Sheehan was there three years before state budget cuts forced the magazine

to close. She was offered a job with the same company in Canada. Just before deciding, she got a call from Time Out Chicago.

Sheehan said she'd wanted to work for Time Out ever since she heard that it was coming to Chicago. When she applied, it took so long for them to respond that she'd almost given up on the job. Sheehan applied for various postings online, but after hoping and waiting she got "the perfect job offer."

"You have to be tenacious and keep at it. Build your portfolio while you're waiting on that perfect job," she said.

Chronicle experience invaluable

Former Chronicle staffer Chris Gallevo began his artistic career as soon as he was able to pick up a pencil — drawing cartoons and superheroes. He used Columbia College to help polish his talent, passion and portfolio. Now Gallevo works as an advertising designer and production artist at Time Out Chicago.



Gallevo began working at Time Out Chicago in June 2006, just six months after graduating from the Graphic Design Program at Columbia. He started out at Columbia College as an interactive multimedia major, but later found his fit in graphic design. His first job in the field came from Columbia's own newspaper.

"Working at the Columbia Chronicle was the biggest factor in getting hired here at Time Out," Gallevo said. "A lot of the stuff that I did [at the Chronicle], I'm doing at Time Out. So had I not worked there, I really don't know what I'd be doing now."

Gallevo gained notice as an artist when

he won the Paula Pfeffer-Cheryl Johnson-Odim Student Political Cartooning competition. The Columbia Chronicle hired Gallevo shortly after, in December 2005, as a weekly cartoon artist.

"It's about enjoying what you do. There's such a unique feeling when you see something printed out and think, 'God, I did that!' ... The money is going to follow your passion!"

Gallevo credited excellent teachers at Columbia for being inspirational and said they helped him gain an edge in a competitive career field.

"The teachers in the Graphic Design Program have been working in the field for a really long time. So they're really great at giving you that real world experience," he said.

Tenacity pays off

Craig Keller grew up in Naperville, Ill. in what he calls a creative family. His interest has always been acting, arts and theater; and now he gets paid to write about what he loves. Keller is senior editor for Time Out Chicago. He began working at Time Out Chicago in November 2004, after being recruited before its launch in June 2006.

He started out as a features editor but later was promoted to senior editor, overseeing seven sections of the magazine: theater, classical theater, books, comedy, music, sports and the "around town" section.

Keller started out at Columbia in filmmaking, but after delving into acting and fiction writing, he found his place in the Journalism Department. After graduating, he began his career as an intern for Adweek Magazine. Then he went on to his first job as an entertainment writer, for Lerner Newspaper.

He later moved on to North Shore Magazine. Finally, before being recruited by Time Out, he worked as features editor at Chicago Social Magazine. During those career transitions, Keller also worked as a freelance writer for Chicago Magazine, The Reader and The Chicago Tribune.

Keller said Columbia College did an excellent job of preparing him to be a journalist and to work in the real world.

"It's not all about lectures, it's about gaining that real world experience and getting those real-world connections," he said.



AARON OWENS

Telling a story visually

Detroit Free Press award-winning designer and illustrator Rosa Elizabeth Castellanos offered a presentation on image-making and visual journalism on March 5. Castellanos explained how to visually interpret information that is gathered journalistically, and presented the work she has done for the Asbury Park Press, San Francisco Examiner and the Detroit Free Press.

Castellanos' background in visual communications allows her to produce effective information packages. "We need to practice effective teamwork in the newsroom," she said. Elio Leturia, who was hired to improve the visual journalism literacy of students, invited Castellanos to campus.

Notes from the faculty

Professor **Sharon Bloyd-Peshkin's** recent published work includes "Lake Effect" in the April issue of *Chicago* magazine. This narrative feature story chronicles two kayakers' ill-fated attempt to cross Lake Michigan in October, 2006. Like all good adventures, it's the story of small problems compounded. An equipment failure, a change in weather, plus one small, nearly perilous bad decision turn an appealing challenge into a life-threatening ordeal. She also wrote two travel stories for the March 4 issue of the *Chicago Sun-Times*: one on Naples, Florida and one on Sanibel Island, Florida.

She will be presenting two talks about the craft of interviewing at the upcoming Columbia Scholastic Press Association convention in New York, which is attended by high school students and teachers from around the nation.

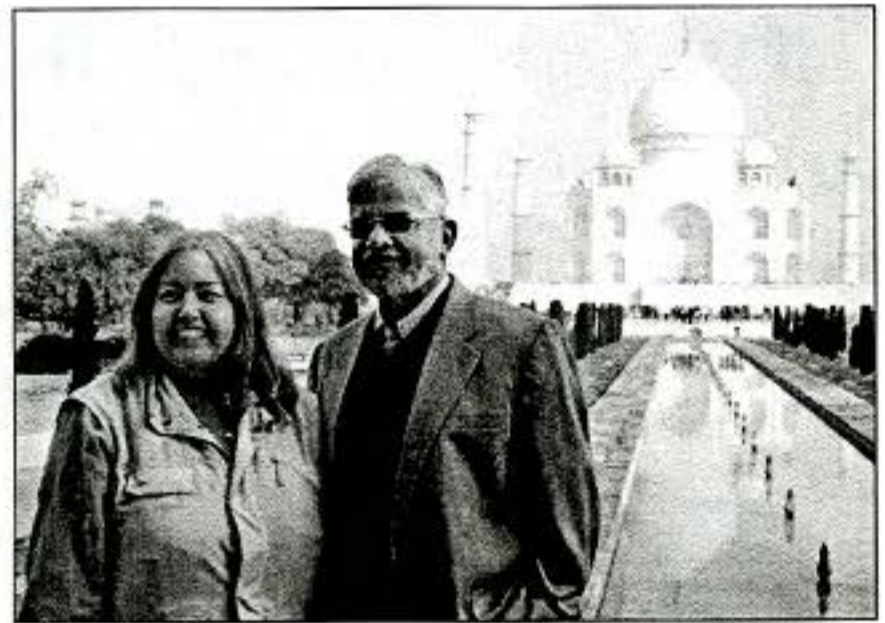
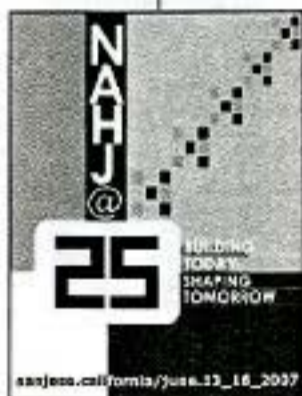
Professor **Elio Leturia** is working as a National Association of Hispanic Journalists planning committee member for the organization's upcoming convention, scheduled for June 13-16 in San Jose, California. This convention marks the 25th anniversary of the association. Leturia

designed the logo and poster for the convention and will be leading the visual journalism track again this year. Leturia also has had several pieces published in *El Comercio* of Lima, Perú, the magazine *Somos* in Perú, the daily tabloid *RedEye* and *Hoy*, the Spanish newspaper of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Adjunct faculty instructor **Chris Courtney** has taken his visual journalism skills beyond the classroom, spreading the word of Alternative Storyforms to newsrooms and groups across the country.

His primary goal at recent Society of News Design functions in Orlando and East Lansing was to encourage designers to begin generating ideas, while gatherings in Davenport, Iowa, Detroit and Jacksonville, Fla. have focused more on the art of collaboration in newsrooms.

When he isn't on the road, Courtney is design director at *RedEye*, which recently expanded its circulation at by 50,000 copies (150,000 daily). The publication was named to Editor and Publisher's annual "10 That Do It Right" list in 2006, and recently captured five notable awards including a Silver Medal from the



COURTESY NORMA GREEN

Columbia Professor **Norma Green** stands with Arun Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, at the Taj Mahal, one of several sacred sites they visited during a 20-day study trip to India over semester break. Green, who is teaching *Diversity in the Media: Covering Religion* this term, was part of 30-member Global Exchange Gandhian Legacy delegation from the Americas, Europe and the Middle East that visited places important to and projects inspired by the man considered the father of Indian Independence.

Society for News Design, which draws international entries.

Adjunct faculty member **Tom Hudson** was awarded a National Press Foundation fellowship in October 2006 to attend the Seminars for Business Journalists at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. Each year, the foundation awards two fellowships to print and broadcast journalists to attend these seminars, which concentrate on corporate governance, accounting principles and financial markets. Hudson is the host of the nationally syndicated financial TV show "First

Business Morning News."

Noah Isackson, an adjunct print journalism faculty member, profiled Jeffrey Jordan, a high school basketball player at Loyola Academy who is the firstborn son of basketball legend Michael Jordan, in the March issue of *Chicago Magazine*. "Heir Jordan" outlines some of the inevitable complications that stem from being the child of a sports hero and cultural icon.

Adjunct broadcast journalism faculty member **Steven Lattimore** is managing editor of *KatrinaToday* — www.katrina-

The future of news

Columbia College Journalism Chair Nancy Day and Medill School of Journalism Dean John Lavine were interviewed for a *Chicago Tonight* segment called "The Future of News" that aired on WTTW-11, the major public television station in Chicago, on Jan. 17.

Under Lavine, Medill is emphasizing "integrated marketing," while at Columbia College

Chicago, the Marketing Communication and Journalism departments are separate.

If you integrate the disciplines, argued Day, "you dilute both."

The segment examined the many recent changes in the economics and delivery of news. Producers taped at both campuses, Northwestern in Evanston and Columbia in the South Loop. The announcer told viewers that

both schools are addressing how to educate students "for the media marketplace of the future." Northwestern has 650 undergraduate journalism students, compared to 718 journalism majors at Columbia as of Fall 2006.

It is "a time of profound change," Day said, one Columbia students are educated for as critical thinkers able to generate and focus story ideas, report them accurately and present them across media platforms. Lavine

and Day agreed that consideration of audience is important, but they disagreed on the priority audience should receive. To Lavine, it's Number One. Day questioned where the line is before you get to "pandering" and "entertainment," versus the critical news citizens need to make informed decisions.

The show also took viewers inside a Northwestern computer lab where engineers have designed robot news. The affable professors supervising the project

today.com — a new media outlet aimed at keeping Hurricane Katrina evacuees around the



Steven Lattimore

connecting individuals with agencies and services that can help them return home.

Adjunct print journalism instructor **Natalie Moore** will speak at The National Writers Workshop scheduled for June 2-3 in Portland, Oregon. The workshop is being hosted by the Oregonian in cooperation with the Poynter Institute, with a goal of bringing together a community of writers who want to improve their craft. In addition, in late February, Moore and Natalie Hopkinson read from and discussed their book *Deconstructing Tyrone: A New Look at Black Masculinity in the Hip-Hop Generation*

http://cleispress.com/book_page.php?book_id=176. They spoke to a room of nearly 40 at the new library on 63rd Street in an event co-sponsored by the Illinois Humanities Council and the Institute for the Study of Women and Gender in the Arts and Media at Columbia College Chicago.

said robots "could put us all out of jobs."

Day emphasized that original reporting is still crucial, requiring curious, intelligent, persistent (human) reporters, whether people get their news from the Internet, television, radio, newspapers, magazines or some medium not yet invented. Otherwise, the content is just endlessly recycled light news, too often about celebrities.

In addition to Day, Columbia Chronicle co-editor-in-chief

country up-to-date on information from New Orleans. The site publishes stories about evacuees and their lives since Hurricane Katrina, and has a goal of



BARBARA IVERSON

Adjunct faculty member **Natalie Moore** had a book-signing recently at a Chicago Public Library branch in Englewood.

Adjunct Faculty **Bryan Smith**, senior editor at Chicago Magazine, has been nominated for both Writer of the Year and for excellence in reporting from the City and Regional Magazine Association. A story he wrote for the February 2006 issue called "Playing 4 Keeps" has been selected for Best American Sports Writing of 2006.

Professor **Rose Economou** produced a film on Jane Addams that is now shown to all visitors at the Jane Addams Hull House Museum. She also was awarded a sabbatical to research and produce a documentary multimedia project on food safety, federal policy and minimum risk.

Hayley Graham was interviewed. She told WTTW producer Jinna Yun that she feels Columbia College Chicago has prepared her well for a journalism career, with its emphasis on hands-on learning and internships.

Graham is a Reporting on Health, Science and the Environment major. You can see excerpts from this program at our website: www.colum.edu/undergraduate/journalism

Len Strazewski reappointed faculty liaison to Trustees

The Columbia College Board of Trustees has asked Journalism Professor Len Strazewski to continue serving for another year as the faculty representative.

"Len has been an important participant in our board meetings, and in the two committees on which he serves," says board chairman Allen Turner. "He brings not only a faculty perspective to the issues we consider, but also his professional credentials in business management, and a journalist's eye for detail."

The 2006-2007 academic year is the first one in the college's history with a student and a faculty member, albeit non-voting. Both are from the Journalism Department; senior Annie Kelly will be graduating.

"This first year of faculty participation on the board was an experiment," explained Turner. "Len has proved that the concept is a good one, and we're looking forward to another year of his involvement."

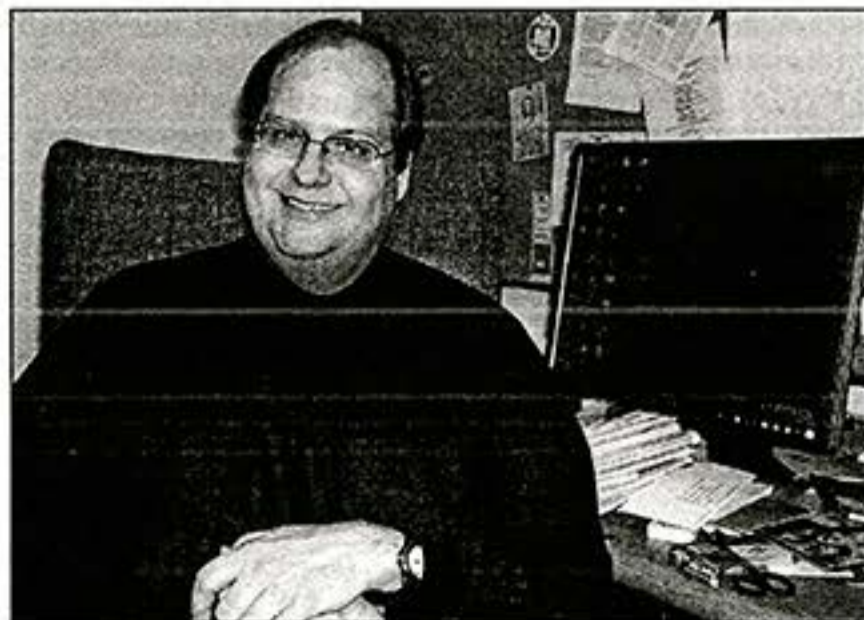
Turner, who began his law career in 1961, joined the firm of Pritzker and Pritzker in 1965. He has a long history of engagement in Chicago's arts community as a philanthropist, an administrator, creator and performer.

Strazewski, who grew up in Chicago and graduated from St. Rita of Cascia High School and Northwestern University, earned two master's degrees, one in English from the University of Illinois at Chicago and another in Industrial Relations from Loyola University. He writes frequently for national, Chicago and business publications on technology, new media and employment issues.

Active in professional organizations, Strazewski is helping to organize the first meeting of the Association of Health Care Journalists of Chicago, which will be held in the Journalism Department at Columbia College Chicago on April 23.

"Serving on the Board has been a real eye-opener for me," Strazewski says. "As faculty, even serving on standing faculty committees, I was never before exposed to the depths of the College's financial management and long-term planning. Now, by attending meetings of the full Board as well as two important committees, I've seen the process at work, in all of its critical detail."

Strazewski sits on the Board's Marketing and Campus Environment committees.



AARON OWENS

Professor Len Strazewski's experience has been a benefit to the Columbia College Board of Trustees, Allen Turner says

From Columbia College to MTV

BY MICHAEL SHIRLEY

The day I left Memphis, Tennessee, for Chicago in August of 2003, I told my mother that by the time I graduated from college I would be working for MTV.

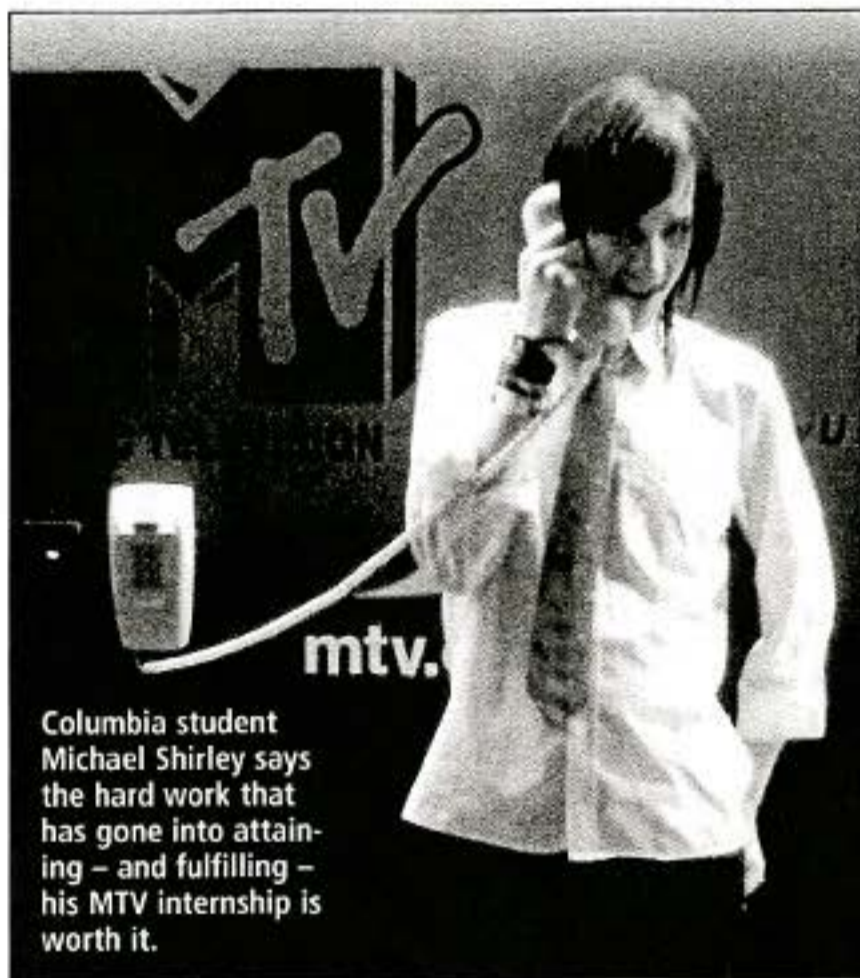
Well, it is four years later and I'm now in New York City doing just that, and I'm not even finished with college yet!

It's still so crazy to me. Just last month, I was attending my first week of classes of what I thought was to be my final semester of college. I was in my last class when I got a call from MTV telling me that the internship I had always dreamed of was mine.

When I had originally applied for internships two months earlier, I only applied at stations that were in the top of the music and entertainment markets – a move that went against conventional wisdom. Chicago had few internships or jobs for aspiring broadcast music or entertainment journalists, and I couldn't imagine my first journalism job out of college being in some tiny town either, working my way up as a big fish in a small pond. I would much rather try to start at the top and take it from there. So why not give it a shot while I'm young and still can?

I applied for internships at E! Entertainment, Style Network, MTV Los Angeles, and MTV New York. I got called back for second interviews at E! for E! News and from MTV New York for MTV Online. E! turned me down in the final round of internship selection, but I knew in my gut that MTV would want me. . . and they did!

I started work at 1515 Broadway on Valentine's Day



COURTESY OF MICHAEL SHIRLEY

2007 and every day has been more amazing than the next. Life as a little fish in a big pond is not bad at all! At work I do standard intern duties like fetch tapes and bring them to people by foot or cab, and pull time-codes of show footage for the web site. But I also get to do really important things like updating the TRL vote lists and rankings. I also get to check over the online channel's weekly schedule and make sure everything is accurate.

The best things about my job are that I get to write shows' summaries for the web site. If someone had told me a year ago that I was going to have my writing published on MTV.com the following year, I would never have believed them. I also get to

see celebrities just about every day, walking around the building like "normal" people, which is very cool. If you know who is coming in that day or just keep an eye out, you can always see a familiar face. It's pretty surreal.

I have learned a lot in these past few weeks, mostly about the way a major television outfit works both inside and out, but also about myself. This is the second time I've had to move to a huge city knowing no one and nothing about it, and both times I've been able to come out on top. I'm very proud of myself and also for what I've learned at Columbia College, which has enabled me to come so far.

The best advice I could give another journalism major, or any other student looking for an internship or job, is to ask for what you want. I met with my advisor, Paula Brien, for advice on how to snag this internship and she told me to tell them to give it to me. I was so shocked and thought I could never just tell someone to give me a job. Recently, I had been taught in Louis Silverstein's Peace Studies class to ask for what you want and it will manifest itself. That really rang a bell with me, so I did. Saying "Please give me this job" really says a lot about you. I really feel that was the deciding factor with me. If you have confidence and refuse to take no for an answer, you can do anything.

From Columbia to Condé Nast

Sahar Khan, a senior in Columbia's journalism department, is spending a semester in New York City interning at Condé Nast. Students can receive credit for such experience if they have completed 60 credit hours, and earned a 3.0 grade point average.



inside
journalism

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