

THE WEST GEORGIAN

PRESENTS



40TH ANNUAL



WHAT'S INSIDE

TRADITIONS

Media Day: 40 Years of Tradition
By Kayla Henderson, pg. 2

MEET OUR PANELISTS

- Ashley Bush**
By Amanda Clay, pg. 3
- Kiersten Pace**
By Jannette Emmerick, pg. 3
- Amy Parrish**
By Trevor Gonzales, pg. 4
- Madison Murphy**
Alanna King, pg. 4

MEDIA DAY NEWS

- Hard Work & Dedication: First Ever Student Showcase at Media Day**
By Taylor Blessett, pg. 5
- Film and Video Production Degree Introduced at UWG**
By Brittany Mersfelder, pg. 5

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- On-Air Personality Dalton Browning Rocks WOLF Radio One Final Semester**
By Alex Amos, pg. 6
- Crisis Averted: UWG's PR Concentration Readies Students For Anything**
By Kayla Henderson, pg. 7
- And We're Live: Nosheena Embreen Leads WUTV As News Director**
By Lemuel Mbuinga, pg. 7

TRADITIONS

MEDIA DAY: 40 YEARS OF TRADITION

KAYLA HENDERSON
Editor-in-Chief

Since 1982, Media Day has focused on student success and preparing students for the workforce beyond the University of West Georgia. This year’s event brings students two days of guest panelists, interactive workshops and networking opportunities. Formally known as the Department of Mass Communication, the SCFM owes much of its continued success to the innovators who laid the foundation. The late Dr. Chester Gibson was a long standing faculty member at UWG starting in 1971, serving as a faculty member of the Mass Communication department and later the department chair for over 30 years. Under his leadership, Dr. Gibson led UWG to create a national name for itself in debate with 27 National Debate Tournament qualifications.

In 1982, Dr. Gibson founded Media Day as a way to bring professionals on campus to meet students and network. Since then, Media Day has continued to grow as one of the largest on-campus networking events bringing in dozens of companies and organizations from across the state to meet exclusively with UWG students. After postponing the 2021 Media Day and hosting the event online, 2022 has brought Media Day back in full force. For the first time, Media Day will span over the course of two days. “We are excited to offer programming across two days for our students and in the future, we may evolve into a full Media Week,” said Dr. Brad Yates, Dean of the SCFM. “Our goal is to continue to grow and expand the op-

portunities for our students to become career-ready.” Dr. Yates began his career at UWG in 2000 and has since served as chair of the Media Day Steering Committee six times since. Within his 22 years at UWG, he has seen Media Day contribute to students gaining professional experience with internships and entry-level career positions in PR, broadcasting, journalism, telecommunications and film. “For me, the greatest impact that comes from Media Day is the fact that the event ignites a passion in students for their future careers,” said Dr. Yates. “Our invited professionals, who are typically UWG alumni, inspire our students and motivate them to pursue their career goals and work hard to break into the communication, film, or media industries.”

THE

WESTGEORGIAN

EST. 1934

Kayla Henderson

Editor-in-Chief

Brittany Mersfelder

News Editor

Amanda Clay

Health Correspondent

Kinadi Dill

Copy Editor

Jannette Emmerick

Feature Editor

Andrew Slay

Graphic Designer

Jada Carswell

Webmaster

Jackson Gamble

Social Media Manager

John Sewell, Ph.D.

Advisor

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA • @thewestgeorgian

MEET OUR PANELISTS

MEET OUR PANELISTS: ASHLEY BUSH

AMANDA CLAY

Health Correspondent



Photo Courtesy of Ashley Bush

It wasn't until she graduated high school and went to college at the University of West Georgia, that the UWG alumna and former *West Georgian* staff writer, Ashley Bush, narrowed down her writing interests to a career within corporate communications. Bush always knew that she wanted to be a writer and could see herself pursuing a career in writing. Following a semester at Mercer University, she transferred to UWG. She says the curriculum encompassed more aspects within communications which is ultimately what allowed her to find her passion. The variety of skills required for a career in public relations was what ultimately drew Bush into the subspeciality. "I was exposed to the beautiful concept that writing is only one piece of developing and delivering a message," said Bush. "I could strongly utilize my writing skills, but I could also use my other talents and the creative parts of my mind that included developing campaigns, graphic design, multimedia presentations, photography, videography and so much more." Bush was a staff writer at *The West Georgian* during her time as a student. She also interned with the Carroll County School System where she assisted the Director of

Public Relations. These experiences allowed her to develop strong relationships with her community; relationships that she holds to this day. "I supported their director of Public Relations in building communications for the various stakeholders within the system," said Bush. "I was also able to see the early years of 12 for Life [one of Southwire's most notable partnerships with local school systems] from the educational partner side of the program. It was because of this internship that I decided that the media and community relations aspect of communications was my ultimate dream job. "The summer before my senior year at UWG, I interviewed for and was offered an internship with the Corporate Communication department at Southwire," continued Bush. "Upon graduating from UWG in 2011, I applied for and was offered a full-time position as a Communication Specialist for Southwire where I built upon my previous responsibilities and began, not only writing and editing the newsletter, but also coordinating, scripting and executive producing for company video projects." Just 11 years later, Bush hasn't looked back. Today, she serves as Director, Communications and Giving Back at Southwire. Pri-

or to her current position, Bush has held many other roles at the company from communication specialist and company spokesperson to media relations representative. She currently serves on the UWG Alumni Board as the fundraising task force chair as well as the UWG A-Day steering team for the past four years. Her advice for students seeking to pursue a career in corporate communications is to develop strong writing skills, build and sustain strong relationships in the field and take time to acquire business acumen. "Building relationships builds trust and to be a successful communicator you need to be a trusted source of information," said Bush. "This applies no matter what realm of communications you represent and, honestly, can also apply in a much broader sense of leadership. To do this, it takes time. You must invest time in getting to know people, in listening, in simply checking in to say hello." "The important thing is that you work to establish or build these relationships when there is no "ask" or pressure - in advance of any particular need or crisis," continued Bush. "That way, when the time comes and one party needs support from the other, you have established trust and rapport."

MEET OUR PANELISTS: KIERSTEN PACE

JANNETTE EMMERICK

Feature Editor



Photo Courtesy of Kiersten Pace

Alumna Kiersten Pace to participate as a panelist in this year's Media Day. Among the guest speakers for the event and several other alumni speaking at the panel, Pace currently serves as the Marketing Manager at the University of Alabama. Pace graduated from UWG in 2019 with a Bachelor's in Mass Communication and returned shortly after for a Master's in Business Administration graduating with her MBA in 2021. Pace recently took a job with the University of Alabama and after spending years as a student and intern. She looks forward to reuniting with the UWG community to share her own wisdom and experience within Mass Communication. "I remember when I was in my undergrad and I was working for the Mass Comm department, we spent months getting ready for Media Day," says Pace. "It's such a big deal that the department does. I am excited

and honored to come back and be a part of it. I even remember getting my first internship at Media Day." Pace's academic experience at UWG built her career background and the foundation of discipline for her current position in Marketing. "Everything I learned at West Georgia literally prepared me for this job today," says Pace. "Even the [subjects] where I said 'I will never use this' —I have. "Everything that I learned at West Georgia has helped me get to the point where I am today," continued Pace. "I can truly and thoroughly say that they instilled me with the knowledge and skills to succeed in the job that I'm in right now." For Pace, marketing management brings every acquired skill and practice accumulated from her time at UWG. "My job consists of running [University of Alabama's] social media ac-

counts," says Pace. "I create advertisement content using [programs] like Canva, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop. I come up with social media campaigns, I write newsletters and press releases," continued Pace. "I'll take pictures and I'll record videos: anything that I can use and make social media posts or put on our website. I also keep our website up to date. Basically anything that has to do with digital marketing or communication is what I do." Mass Communication embodies interdisciplinary studies, integrating language, creative writing, graphic design, mathematics, business management and many other fields. "The only advice I have is to make sure that you are well versatile," says Pace. "Make sure to be well versed in mass skills. There is not one job that doesn't require you to know a little bit of everything."

MEET OUR PANELISTS

MEET OUR PANELISTS: AMY PARRISH

TREVOR GONZALES

Health Correspondent



Photo Courtesy of Amy Parrish

This year’s University of West Georgia’s Media Day is Chief Marketing Officer and Managing partner of Rhythm Communication, Amy Woodward Parrish. Parrish has been involved in the industry for over 20 years, starting in the field of journalism before moving to media and public relations. Parrish’s career began while she was in college and wrote for her college newspaper. “I went to the University of Georgia, writing for The Red and Black,” said Parrish. “While there, I heard about an opportunity with a local cable news station. They were wanting to start a television spotlight to talk about local businesses.” Her experience with The Red and Black led her to become a reporter for the cable news station. She did business spotlight interviews called “Athens Around Town”. “Because of [my experiences], I interviewed for a paid internship with NBC news and got it,” said Parrish. I was a producer for the NBC Atlanta Bureau, an international bureau that would send news stories to New York.” Though she ended up as a

journalist and loved it, Parrish wanted to be more creative with her work. Her previous experience in journalism and hard news works to her advantage in marketing and PR knowing how to package a story. “I really do enjoy the creative process which is why I went from journalism to PR,” said Parrish. “I was advised by a friend in public relations that I might enjoy telling the story from the corporate side and being more creative versus a news angle. Instead of doing hard news stories, I am able to use my creative side of telling the story more.” She has been working for Rhythm Communications since 2003. The company is an integrated marketing firm based in Atlanta that is led by public relations efforts. The primary focus for Rhythm Communications is to harmonize a business by ensuring all of the marketing needs are synchronized with the pulse of the marketplace. Rhythm focuses on many resources to help a business. Their services include strategy, public relations, digital marketing, event management, social media, marketing collateral,

advertising, entertainment and sports. “We do everything from day-to-day media relations, messaging and positioning for clients, all the way to fully integrated events,” said Parrish. For a client, we did a listening and education tour, a town hall, discussing new business propositions to a town, and creating new jobs.” In 2020 and 2021, Rhythm Communications was awarded “Best Public Relations Firm in the Atlanta Metro Area” by Expertise.com. She believes creativity is limitless in the professional world. “Being a hard-news journalist may not be for everyone but with the ability to write, communicate, visualize, create, and cultivate, those skill sets work in just about any environment,” said Parrish. “The gift of writing has been lost along the way in a lot of areas of business. Do not hold yourself back, social media is a key piece of the future. “The best advice I could give is to realize the skills you gain in journalism, specifically news, are transferable to other career options in the field,” continued Parrish. “Do not limit your thinking when it comes to searching for jobs and opportunities.”

MEET OUR PANELISTS: MADISON MURPHY

ALANNA KING

Contributing Writer



Photo Courtesy of Madison Murphy

Many college students see graduation as a stressful beginning to their futures. One UWG alumna, Madison Murphy, tackled this stress head-on to set herself up for success in her future career. Murphy graduated in May of 2020 with a degree in Mass Communications, a Public Relations concentration, a marketing minor and an advertising certificate. She was active on campus during her college career as a Kappa Delta, orientation leader, PRSSA president and writer for *The West Georgian*. Her current role is as Marketing Coordinator at Colony Square in Atlanta for North American Properties. When Murphy started at UWG in 2016 as a freshman, she had no idea what she wanted to do. She explored a marketing major and eventually switched to public relations which she believed offered a bigger opportunity for creativity. Murphy credits an on-campus internship for unveiling a passion for writing. “My first internship was at the University’s Marketing office,” said Murphy. “I went into the interview not even knowing what

I had applied for and it ended up being a writing position. It ended up being really great and I found out I was passionate about writing and won a lot of awards for the things I wrote while I was there.” Her extracurricular activities and relationships with staff at UWG put Murphy a step ahead of her peers. “Some of my biggest takeaways were some of the things I learned in PRSSA,” said Murphy. “We had a lot of really great workshops, resume building and [being told to] talk to my professors.” “A lot of students didn’t take that seriously, but I did. I would schedule meetings with Taylor Byrant and Kelly Williams,” continued Murphy. “I would sit down with my resume just to get professional opinions and advice, even if it wasn’t classwork related.” Murphy credits those conversations to her outstanding resume and her professional connections today. “It might be scary to go sit in your professor’s office for 20 minutes and have them critique your resume but to me that was really beneficial,” said Murphy.

Murphy left UWG well-equipped for her future career, completing internships with the Four Seasons Hotel, the Candler Hotel and other big name hospitality industries in Atlanta. Even with her experience, the journey to her current position wasn’t what she expected. “My first job out of college was doing marketing out of an oral surgeon’s office and that wasn’t what I wanted to be doing,” said Murphy. “I was absolutely miserable at work and I hated it. “About six months in, my old internship supervisor recommended me for the job I’m in now,” continued Murphy. “[The workforce] is definitely different than what I thought it was. You think it’s gonna be so glamorous and fun and sometimes it is, sometimes it’s not.” When reflecting upon her time at UWG, Murphy wants students to know that hard work does indeed pay off. “Take every single opportunity you can find to gain experience,” said Murphy. “Out here, they don’t care about your GPA or what you majored in. All they care about is your experience.”

MEDIA DAY NEWS

HARD WORK & DEDICATION: FIRST EVER STUDENT SHOWCASE AT MEDIA DAY

TAYLOR BLESSETT
Contributing Writer

The School of Communication, Film and Media has created the first Student Showcase event to take place during this year’s Media Day. The Student Showcase will allow students a chance to present their portfolios and projects of work on display for students and professionals.

The Student Showcase allows for students to have a live portfolio that they can not only show organizations but also gives those same organizations an insight on the talent that each student has. Professionals share

their work and display their talents and the growth that they have made throughout their time of being a professional.

Kelly Williams, professor at UWG, who serves on the Media Day Board for Media Day, encourages students to show their talents at the Student Showcase.

“We want our students to have an opportunity to not just network but to show what they are interested in,” says Williams. “Students are allowed to show their projects whether it be a really cool film or any other project that the student may be interested in. This is their chance to show it off.”

Student work eligible for submission included film, video and audio works that were career related, for internships or even personal works. Students could also create poster-presentations

to display print related work.

“It is also cool for the students and organizations to see what the professionals have prepared and it allows for everyone to really connect within their talents and their work,” says Williams. “Professionals can bring projects that they have been working on and share what they are also interested in, so this event allows everyone to contribute.

“We are hoping for the Student Showcase to be a conversation starter amongst professionals and students to talk about their work and make those connections,” continued Williams.

“This is a good opportunity for everyone to show up and present their talents and abilities and at the end of the day, as teachers, we just want to be able to create more opportunities for our students.”



FILM AND VIDEO PRODUCTION DEGREE INTRODUCED AT UWG

BRITTANY MERSEFELDER
Contributing Writer

The School of Communication, Film and Media has introduced the Film and Video Production degree which allows students interested in pursuing a degree in film an entirely hands-on approach in learning.

“What was then a department is now a school,” said Deon Kay, Associate Dean and Associate Professor for the School of Communications, Film and Media. “Film is a very skill intensive discipline. We want [the degree] to provide students with a pathway to go deeper into the film discipline.”

This degree has its

own pathway with nine classes being skills intensive while the other three are technical. Students in this degree will still have to take classes such as media law, media ethics and so on.

“We have a concentration in film and video production which is still within more like a mass communications degree,” said Kay. “With the understanding that some students would like slightly more breadth in their studies.

“[The degree] is for those students who would like to go deeper into filmmaking,” continued Kay. “There is a degree program

in addition to the concentration. We created a degree program that has more required skills and specific classes that students need to take in order to graduate.”

Between the two options for film, neither is better than the other; rather it solely depends on what the student wants for their ideal career path.

“It depends on their career aspirations,” said Kay. “We have had many successful graduates come through the concentration who probably would have benefited from being in the degree program.”

Photo Courtesy of UWG

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



ON-AIR PERSONALITY DALTON BROWNING ROCKS WOLF RADIO ONE FINAL SEMESTER

ALEX AMOS

Contributing Writer

Photo Courtesy of Dalton Browning Training (WIT) program.

As he nears his graduation date in the summer, Dalton Browning reflects on his best and brightest moments with WOLF Radio and how the station has positively impacted his career.

Since joining WOLF Radio, Browning has developed a captivating and energetic on-air personality known as Dalton James, for his current show, “The Crate.” The show has won several awards including Best Community Outreach, Best Listenership and the Waylin Show of the Semester Award. The show has integrated the rock genre towards its audience, which was one of Browning’s goals in light of his metalhead roots.

“I don’t feel like rock gets the appreciation that it deserves because it has so many negative connotations that go along with it,” said Browning. “Because it’s not popular, everyone believes that rock just doesn’t exist, despite it being such a backbone for music today.”

Being an on-air radio personality can have its challenges when speaking to large audiences of strangers. However, Browning has found

comfort in expressing himself behind the mic with his colleagues.

“Being able to be yourself and able to show your most genuine self is my favorite part about radio,” said Browning. “I can go on air and be ADHD, I can joke around and I can talk about the things that I really enjoy talking about without the stigma in the back of my head about how I look or if I come across in a certain way.

“For me, radio is just my voice, my thoughts and being able to have conversations,” continued Browning. “I feel like being able to communicate with one another matters more than anything.”

Though Browning has successfully learned the ropes of being a radio show host, he has received tremendous help from his executive staff members, Shawn Isaacs and Michael Tucker.

“Nothing compares to the amount of effort and determination that members of The WOLF—specifically Shawn and Michael—put into the station,” said Browning. “Shawn and Michael care about the students who come into the Wolves In

Browning has always had a special place in his heart for radio and the people who support the industry.

“They have a passion for radio and they want to make sure that everyone who comes through these doors leaves with as much knowledge, training and preparation to go against the biggest names in radio,” said Browning. “I know for a fact that If I were to get a job with Rock 100, iHeart-Radio or another big name station, I know that I would be successful.”

With graduation around the corner, Browning has many plans for the future, one of which is to pursue a career in radio broadcasting. His accomplishments and legacy will remain with the members of WOLF Radio.

“I wanted to give back to the music community,” said Browning. “I’ve always loved showing people’s music and I felt like those concepts went hand in hand. The hardest things to leave behind are the connections that I’ve made with some very powerful people who have encouraged me to go onto the next step in my career.”

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

**CRISIS AVERTED:
UWG'S PR
CONCENTRATION
READIES
STUDENTS FOR
ANYTHING**
KAYLA HENDERSON
Editor-in-Chief



Public Relations professionals fuel all communication, business, sports and entertainment. Students in the School of Communication, Film and Media PR concentration are leaving UWG prepared for the workforce after college through working with bluestone Public Relations Firm and the opportunity to work and join active organizations such as Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). “We prepare our students by giving more hands-on public relations assignments,” said Taylor Bryant, assistant professor for SCFM. “Students are creating everything from communication plans to PR campaigns with external clients. After our students gain foundational knowledge in public relations, many of our courses deliver content in a way that allows students to get real-world experiences at every level.” Taylor works closely with PR students for a practice-based approach to learning PR students can earn ex-

perience working at bluestone, a fully internal UWG PR firm. Bluestone works closely with corporations, governmental agencies and non-profit organizations at the university, local, regional, state and national level. Through the firm students earn valuable skills in strategic communication research and planning, media relations, image, brand management and social/digital strategy development right on the UWG campus. Real world experience that allows students to create their own projects, beginning at the research phase to final evaluations stage. “Our practice-based approach forces students to grow as public relations professionals,” said Taylor. “It’s rare that students interact with external clients and create deliverables that organizations use for their companies. “The experience our students gain from bluestone prepares them to better navigate workplace projects, obstacles and challenges before entering the field,” continued Tay-

lor. “Once they graduate, they are marketable as professionals which sets them apart from their peers.” Alongside bluestone, PR students have the opportunity to join PRSSA. The UWG chapter hosts special events, resume building workshops, speakers and volunteer activities on campus throughout the semester. “As a graduating senior this year, I was really looking for an opportunity to grow my resume with some PR related experience,” said Elisabeth Smith, Vice President of the UWG PRSSA chapter. “PRSSA offered not only to help build my resume and experience, but allowed me to gain closer connections and friendships with my fellow students and our advisors. “Being in PRSSA has given me a stronger drive in building my career after college and an overall deeper appreciation for public relations,” continued Smith. “I especially feel more confident in terms of applying to internships or jobs in the future.”

**AND WE'RE LIVE:
NOSHEENA
EMBREEN
LEADS WUTV AS
NEWS DIRECTOR**
LEMUEL MBUINGA
Contributing Writer

WUTV has been one of the blossoming programs in West Georgia. Since 1971, the program has given students experiences that have helped them transition well into their post college professions. Nosheena Embreen has worked at WUTV for three years and is now a senior who is graduating in May. After gaining experience within the program, Embreen was made the news director for WUTV General Manager Sonya Barnes. Embreen programs for the station and schedules what shows to be broadcasted. Embreen has gained a lot of experience which

has helped her acquire applicable skills from her time working at the station. “Since I’ve been at WUTV, the experience has been amazing,” said Embreen. “I’ve improved my communication skills, leadership skills and organizational skills. I’ve learned more from working with the station than my actual classes.” The television station offers students opportunities to produce, write, direct, edit and shoot programs that develop understanding for all aspects of television production. The hands-on experience is what helps students become more marketable to careers in the future. WUTV’s newscast is broadcast in the Carrollton area and School of Communication, Film and Media students have the opportuni-



ty to work with state-of-the-art equipment in the studio. “Before I joined, I wasn’t aware of how much actually goes into broadcasting,” said Embreen. “After I joined, I realized there is a lot you have to do in broadcasting. You also have to be really dedicated to what you’re doing. “There are some things in broadcasting that I have never learned before like camera operation or programming,” continued Embreen. “The more experience that I have, the more I can put on my resume which I can use for future jobs.”

Media Day Schedule

MARCH 8

9AM - PANEL SESSION 1

10AM - PANEL SESSION 2

11AM - MINI-COACHING SESSION

12:15PM - HONORS LUNCHEON

MARCH 9

10AM - NETWORKING & SHOW/CASE

12:30PM - TOURS (OPTIONAL)

1:30PM - ALUMNI SOCIAL