

cmci now

THE INAUGURAL EDITION OF THE COLLEGE OF
MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION MAGAZINE

Fall 2017



College of Media, Communication and Information
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

4 Improving media
for children

6 Understanding the
power of fake news

18 Harnessing data
for social good

From a strong foundation, we embrace what's next



Founding Dean Lori Bergen

“The only constant is change.”
—Heraclitus (c.535 B.C.–475 B.C.)

As dean of a new college, I'm incredibly lucky to observe the opportunities that emerge from change. It's not that there aren't challenges—there are. But change has brought us to a place where the possibilities truly outweigh these challenges.

As we enter our third year as a college, enrollment of new undergraduates is up 30 percent. We've received \$3.4 million in research grants since the college's inception. And other plans are moving ahead for new teaching and lab space for the college—including a new studio space in downtown Boulder, where the Strategic Communication Design master's is housed, and a new campus virtual reality lab that will open soon.

I'm so delighted to introduce *CMCI Now*—our college's print and digital magazine—with stories about students, faculty and alumni who are up to the challenge of change. From an alumnus who consults with Pixar on issues of race and gender to the entrepreneurial student who co-founded an online business, our students, faculty and alumni are reimagining and redefining what it means to be communicators and problem solvers.

In this new college, we have the best of both worlds: the opportunity to create something new with the accompanying excitement and energy of new programs and faculty, as well as the benefit of a strong existing foundation from the Department of Communication and the former School of Journalism and Mass Communication. For an overview of the college and faculty, take a look at “What Is CMCI” (Page 40) and “Faculty Now” (Page 20).

I'm thankful for the support from the university, our donors and industry partners—which comes in many forms—and for the faith that students and parents have placed in our ability to shape tomorrow's leaders.

We may be only 2 years old, but we have more than 18,000 alumni, and we would love to hear from you. We need your expertise as we plan mentoring programs, develop advisory boards and build industry partnerships. Send us your updates, follow us on social media, attend one of our many events and let us know when you plan to be in the area. And, enjoy this first edition of *CMCI Now*.

Warm regards,

Lori Bergen

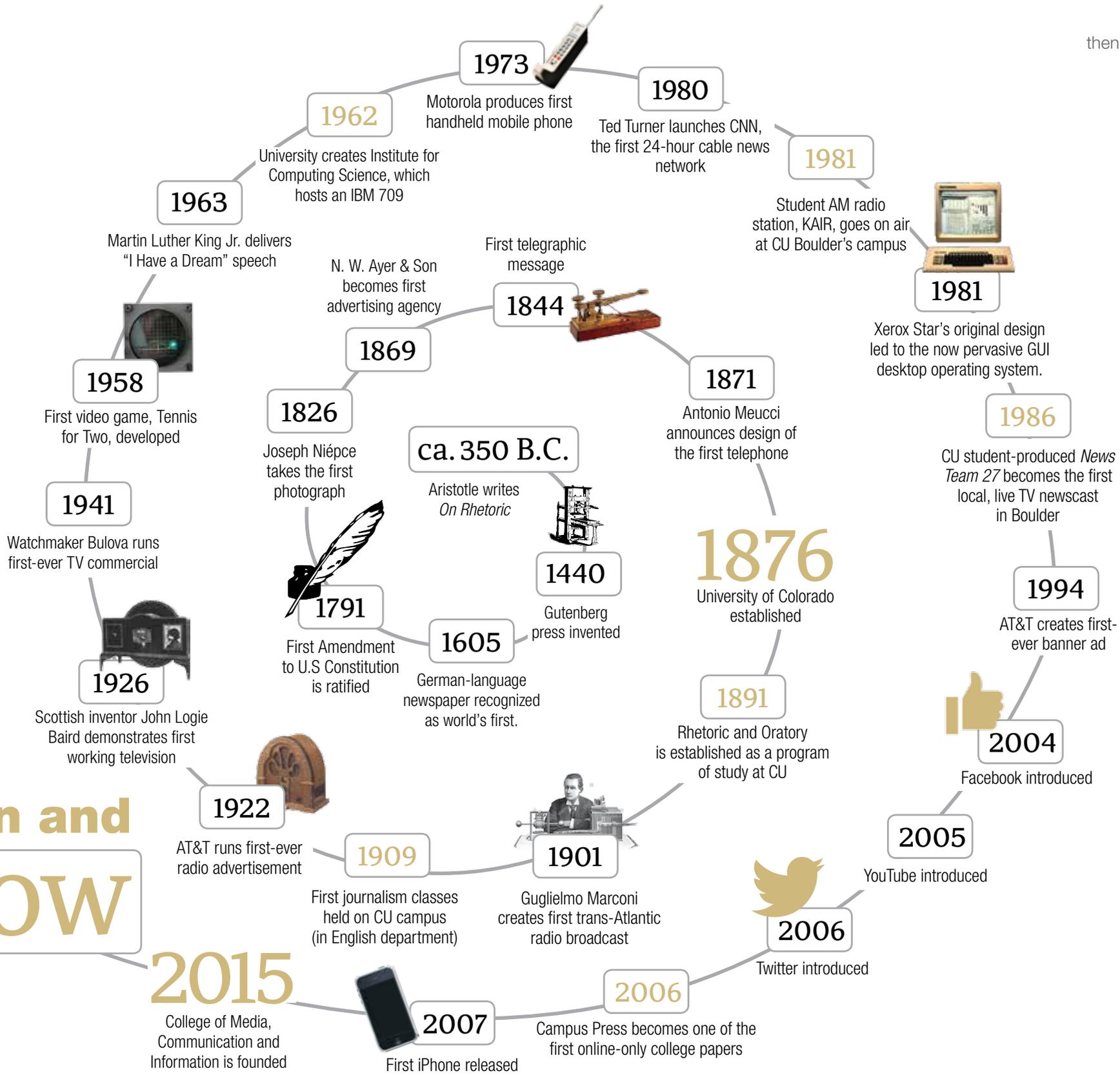
Founding Dean, College of Media, Communication and Information

about the cover *Soho London 2* is from Mark Amerika's “8-Bit Heaven” series. He captured modern views off the internet of street life in cities such as London, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo that were manipulated through an 8-bit filter. The resulting images are reminiscent of old video games. Wall-sized versions of the series were recently on display at the Estudio Figueroa-Vives in Havana, Cuba. Amerika, who is founding chair of CMCI's Inter-media Art, Writing and Performance Program and was recently named a Distinguished Professor, has exhibited his art internationally. Learn more at markamerika.com.



The “8-Bit Heaven” series on display in Havana, Cuba.

then and now



Introduction to Media Practices students ventured outside the classroom to the Downtown Aquarium in Denver to experiment with 360-degree photography. For more 360 views, see Under the Dome on Page 11. Photo by senior Chloe Carroll.



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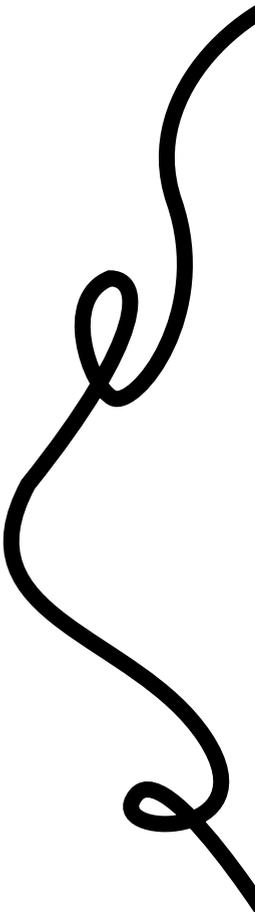
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An **alumnus** strives to influence **pop culture** and improve superhero toys for his **daughter**

POP ACTIVIST

By Stephanie Sue Cook (M'Jour'18)



As Christopher Bell (PhDMediaSt'09) draws on the whiteboard, his raised arm reveals a tattoo: "Wit beyond measure is man's greatest treasure."

The quote, as Bell's students in Cultural Criticism: *Harry Potter* can explain, is a motto for the house of Ravenclaw.

To some, an entire college course dedicated to *Harry Potter* may not seem academic. Bell, who is a consultant for Pixar, writes books about popular culture and is an associate professor of media studies at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, argues that there is more going on than people may realize.

"I'm showing students how to take a piece of media—how to take a media text—and use that to make sense of things that are really happening in the real world," he explains.

This is how Bell approaches every aspect of his work. He thinks critically about the deeper messages people receive when interacting with media and, in turn, uses media artifacts to discuss social issues that might otherwise be awkward to navigate.

"He completely changed my views of this world," says Grace Gatto, a former UCCS student who took several classes with Bell. "He taught me more real-life knowledge that I could take away and apply to the real world than any other teacher I have ever had."

Bell's pop culture interests are vast, but, since becoming a father, much of his research examines race and gender issues in relation to children's media and toys.

"I do activist research," Bell says of his role advising Pixar creators. "This is the culmination of what I've always tried to do with my research."

The animated film *Coco*, which is set to premiere in November, will mark the first project he has worked on for Pixar. His relationship with the company formed after his 2015 TED talk, "Bring on the Female Superheroes!"

In the video, Bell uses his own experiences shopping for his daughter to discuss the lack of female superhero merchandise on toy shelves and explore the effect on children as they play and learn about the world.

The video went viral, earning more than a million views to date and igniting an online conversation about how toys are marketed to children. One of those viewers, an executive at Pixar, invited Bell to speak at the company's headquarters, which led to his role as a consultant.

As Bell's industry work gains traction, he remains dedicated to his students. Last July

he earned the inaugural Popular Culture Educator of the Year award in the higher education category at Denver Comic Con. For Bell, helping students learn through the films, television shows and books they love is a nod toward his own journey as a student. Bell's mentors helped him find his niche in pop culture research while earning his PhD in media studies at CU Boulder. "Once I was doing the work I wanted to do, and found professors who supported that, I was able to really take off," he says.

Bell sees his work not just as research, but as a personal mission to improve the way children watch, play and interact with media.

"I'm trying to get that agenda accomplished," Bell says. "That agenda just happens to be making media better for my daughter and, by extension, making media better for all of her friends and for all of the other kids like her." ●



Pixar consultant Christopher Bell worked on *Coco* after an executive saw his TED Talk on the effect of media on children.

"I'm showing **students** how to take a piece of **media** . . . and use that to make sense of things that are really **happening** in the **real world**."

Taking on fake news

CMCI faculty fight fake news on multiple fronts.

Fake news sites are the Hydra of the internet: take one down and two more grow back. At CMCI, faculty are tackling the monster from multiple angles.

Assistant Professor Chris Vargo uses big-data analytics to understand how fake news influences the broader media agenda. This year, Vargo analyzed millions of news articles across all types of media and found that fake news websites had about twice as much influence on the media landscape as fact-checking websites did in 2016.

Vargo is surveying about 1,000 social media users to find out whether certain types of people are more likely to spread fake news on social media.

“Then we’ll be able to talk more about the why—or at least the how—which will help us better understand this fake news phenomenon,” says Vargo, who teaches in the Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design.

Because fake news is a multipronged problem, the solution requires cooperation across industries.

In the journalism department, faculty members recently joined a working group of computer scientists to explore technologies, including apps and plugins, that can help consumers assess the quality of news they are reading.

For journalists’ part, the task is to focus on the “guts” of reporting, says journalism department Chair Elizabeth Skewes. As the industry continues to expand into the high-speed realm of online and multimedia storytelling, journalists must remember not to take shortcuts when it comes to traditional best practices.

Another key strategy is continued public outreach and improved media literacy.

Media studies and journalism faculty are developing a program to train middle and

high school teachers in media literacy education strategies.

“The Media Literacy Lab will serve as a learning space for students and faculty to explore innovative media literacies and incorporate them in a transformative teaching experience,” says Nabil Echchaibi, the media studies department chair.

Last spring, Mei-Ling McNamara, an assistant professor of journalism who is working with Echchaibi on the Media Literacy Lab, gathered industry experts and media scholars for a public conference called Reporting in the Age of Alternative Facts.

CMCI invited the public to attend a series of free panels, as well as a keynote speech by Joe Sexton, ProPublica’s senior editor and a 25-year veteran of *The New York Times*. Having spent decades in the ever-changing journalism industry, Sexton’s advice to future members of the press was simple: “Embrace two qualities: stamina and humility.”

#(w)HolyMedia

Media studies PhD student Ashley Campbell discusses religion and culture in her @wholymedia podcast.

What do Marvel's Thor, the horror film *The Conjuring 2* and Donald Trump's inaugural speech have in common? According to CU Boulder PhD candidate Ashley Campbell, the answer is religion.

In her podcast, *(w)Holy Media*, Campbell discusses all the ways religion is hiding in plain sight in American culture.

"Even if you aren't religious, it still impacts your everyday life," Campbell says.

In the U.S., a group called "nones"—people who say they have no religious affiliation—are now more numerous than Catholics or mainline Protestants, according to the Pew Research Center. But while many Americans no longer consider themselves religious, people are still attracted to spiritual messages in different ways.

This is the idea behind Campbell's podcast, and behind her work as a research fellow with CMCI's Center for Media, Religion and Culture, which conducts groundbreaking research and promotes innovative teaching at the intersection of religion, media and public life.

One focus at the center is public scholarship, says Associate Professor Nabil Echchaibi, the center's associate director. Campbell's work discussing religion in ways that are accessible to nonreligious people is important to that cause.

"The point is to try and make the academic study of religion more digestible to nonacademic and nonreligious scholars," says Campbell, who holds master's degrees in journalism and divinity. "It's about the ways religion participates in our everyday lives."



FindTheFlu

Using data from Twitter, information scientist @mjp39 improves the way we track epidemics.

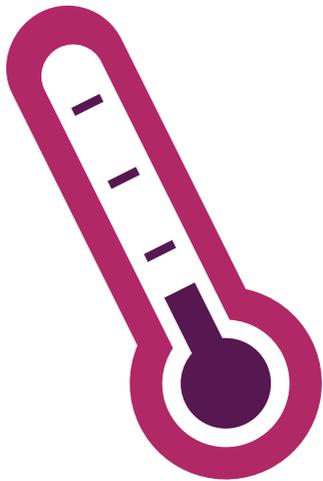
A little bird is tipping researchers off to the next flu outbreak.

Health practitioners, who typically depend on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to alert the public to outbreaks after the fact, could use social media to track the flu in real time, according to a CU Boulder researcher.

"The national levels in the U.S. are collected by the CDC, and, depending on how you count, that's delayed by one to two weeks," says Michael Paul, an assistant professor of information science and co-author of the new book *Social Monitoring for Public Health*. "With something like the flu—where the outbreak is fairly rapid and sudden—it can make a big difference in terms of preparation if you have that extra two-week notice."

Internationally, in places like South Africa, Twitter data can beat traditional tracking methods by a matter of months. In addition to tracking flu outbreaks, Paul and his colleagues mine Twitter comments and hashtags to see personal reactions to flu season.

"It's easier to use social media because, unlike tracking how many people have the flu, awareness of the flu is something that happens outside the doctor's office," he says.



Journey

to the Top of the Earth

CU and Norwegian participants in the Arctic Lenses climate journalism project navigate a glacier in the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard.



Story and photos by Tom Yulsman, director of the Center for Environmental Journalism

On a September day when I'd normally be in class,

I found myself with three graduate students in survival suits, speeding in inflatable boats through a fjord near Ny-Ålesund, Earth's northernmost community.

We had to dodge floating chunks of ice, some house-sized, which had calved from the Kongsbreen glacier a few days earlier. It was probably the largest such calving event ever observed from Kongsbreen, according to Kim Holmén, our guide from the Norwegian Polar Institute.

Thanks to humankind's emissions of carbon dioxide, the Arctic has warmed twice as fast as the rest of the globe. As this has occurred, many glaciers in Svalbard have retreated—Kongsbreen by more than three miles in 30 years.

But were we having to dodge icebergs because of global warming?

Not necessarily, Holmén cautioned. Glaciers like Kongsbreen naturally calve ice into the water. Journalists should be cautious about attributing a single, specific event like that to human-caused warming. Better to focus on longer-term trends, he advised.

"That's the struggle of science writing—getting the nuance of the science while still helping people understand how everything relates together," observes Cay Leytham-Powell, one of the CMCI graduate students who participated in the Arctic Lenses multimedia project.

To get to Ny-Ålesund, we first flew to Oslo. There, we boarded an evening flight to Longyearbyen, Svalbard's main town. Once aloft, dusk fell quickly.

And then, pure magic: Off the wing, sheets of green light billowed against a sapphire sky—the aurora borealis, almost at eye level.

As we dropped through the clouds on approach to Longyearbyen, we beheld another scene of ethereal beauty: treeless, snow-dusted mountains emerging from the mists as the almost black waters of a fjord became visible below.

"The most memorable event of the trip was flying into Longyearbyen and witnessing the northern lights, then descending through the clouds and seeing this wild landscape right before we landed," says Alex Pilnick, another participating student. "'This is the real deal,' I thought."

During our time there, Pilnick focused on capturing video. Leytham-Powell reported on archaeological research. And graduate student Kat Canada, our audio specialist, naturally headed off to a bar.

Not because she was thirsty, but to interview coal miners coming off their shifts.

Mining began on Svalbard in the 1920s. But it has declined as cleaner,

Alex Pilnick, at the time a student in CMCI's Media and Public Engagement master's program, shoots video in Longyearbyen, Svalbard's main town.



Center for Environmental Journalism Associate Director Michael Kodas during a trip in inflatable boats to a glacier near Ny-Ålesund, the world's northernmost settlement.



Cay Leytham-Powell, a student in the Media and Public Engagement master's program, on the shore of a fjord by Ny-Ålesund.



“This trip helped me appreciate nuance, and how to better inform my own writing.”

less climatically harmful energy sources have gained ground. Canada wanted to interview miners about the looming end to their way of life.

“I got to do this really impactful interview with a miner named Vince,” Canada says. His father and brothers were miners, too. Tragically, one of the brothers was killed when a beam crashed down on him.

From her interviews, Canada learned that “journalistically, you can’t approach something from a black-and-white perspective. And there are some underrepresented voices. We don’t often hear from people like Vince.”

Next, we flew to Ny-Ålesund, where scientists from 10 nations conduct research. The town comprises a few dozen buildings huddled by the fjord. Polar bears roam this area, so doors leading into the buildings are left unlocked—allowing you to dash to safety should a bear ramble by.

During a trip to a glacier with Chinese scientists, Pilnick felt confident his hosts would protect him. But when they climbed out of their boats, the leader said in broken English, “We forgot the polar bear gun.” He asked Pilnick whether he wanted to turn back. The answer was a definitive “no.” So they spent six hours trudging up and down the glacier, carefully avoiding crevasses while recovering data from GPS units used to monitor ice movement.

“No polar bears were spotted, unfortunately,” Pilnick says.

Or, perhaps, fortunately.

No polar bears were spotted the entire trip. But on the boat ride to the Kongsbreen glacier, we did spot reindeer browsing on tasty greens along the shore, and thousands of birds roosting on cliffs.

As we bobbed on the swells near Kongsbreen, Holmén stood confidently near our boat’s bow, a tall, imposing man with a salt-and-pepper beard flowing down to his chest. Atop his head was a pink and purple woolen cap.

“It was kind of like not real life—him balancing there in the boat with his big beard and weird hat, in command of the tides,” Canada says.

At one point, a slab of glacial ice splashed into the fjord, and climate change came up again. “He didn’t think we should make a big deal about one isolated event like that,” Canada recalls. “It shows that scientists have to be balanced, and they can’t always jump to a conclusion.”

We came away thinking this was good advice for journalists, too.

“This trip helped me appreciate nuance, and how to better inform my own writing,” Leytham-Powell says. It also helped crystallize her future: “I do want to write, I do want to use these energies in a way that can help solve these issues.” ●

Postscript

Cay Leytham-Powell got her wish after graduating in spring 2017: She landed a full-time job as a content creator for CU Boulder’s College of Arts and Sciences. Kat Canada was hired by *The Denver Post*, where she is doing editing and design. And Alex Pilnick launched a freelance videography business. He’s using video he shot in Svalbard to demonstrate his technical skills to prospective clients.

The Center for Environmental Journalism, founded in 1997, is celebrating 25 years, as well as the 20th anniversary of the renowned Ted Scripps Environmental Journalism Fellowship.

Go to colorado.edu/cmcinow/inthefield to view multimedia from the trip.

Photo credits, top left to bottom right: Mara Giulini, Regan Berver, Chloe Carroll, Trevor Borasio, Regan Berver, Kim Dohee.



Under the DOME

Filmmaker and instructor Pat Clark encourages students to think beyond the traditional screen. For his Introduction to Media Practices course, students produced images for projection onto the dome of Fiske Planetarium.

“While the technical training and specialized camera and software tools necessary for this project were an important part of the course, the real challenge was to think outside the traditional frame,” Clark says.

“As the demand for 360-degree content grows, this experience gives students a distinct advantage as media makers. Whether they are working in documentary filmmaking, journalism, art or any other visual medium, they now have a foundation for future creative endeavors.”



Kaden Webb

Junior, information science

In his internship with Frontier Airlines, Webb combined two of his passions: math and aviation.

“I’m a business intelligence analyst. I have a variety of data sources, whether it be our booking data, luggage, membership loyalty, flight fuel, revenue or weight load. I check those for different insights that help executives make decisions.”

BEYOND



The Pathways to Excellence Summer Intensive workshop prepares incoming CMCI students for academic success in media and communication. Students produce advertising campaigns and multimedia projects, receive math and writing instruction, and tour newsrooms and ad agencies. Pictured above are freshman journalism major Christina Robben and sophomore strategic communication major Ian Lee. Photo by junior journalism major Kaitlin Pickrell.

the classroom

Student ad airs on Pac-12 Network

Sweaty palms, jitters, nerves, adrenaline—in college they happen whether you're about to step into an arena, onto a stage or into a make-or-break final. How well you manage and prepare for those quiet, anxious moments often determines success during the main event.

The Moment Before: That's the title of this year's CU Boulder Pac-12 commercial, which airs during each Buffaloes football game and on the Pac-12 Network.

For the high-profile TV spot, the university asked its own advertising students to pitch ideas.

"We all had jitters because stakes were high, but I think I speak for everyone when I say we were prepared," says Ben Rindels (Advert'17), one of the four students who pitched the concept as part of the Portfolio class offered by CMCI's Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design.

"We took a step back to ask, 'What are the moments that we enjoyed in college, and what are the best moments at CU,'" says team member Carolina Dangelo (Advert'17).

During their research, the team watched other Pac-12 commercials and noticed that many of the ads were interchangeable.

"If you look at most other colleges' commercials, you can replace that college's name with any other school," says Jacob Glazier



(Advert'17). "What they don't really touch on is what makes them unique."

The final product—produced by the university's central communications office—was a universitywide collaboration, with a music student composing the score, and CU students and faculty members participating as actors.

The ad highlights parallels between the techniques athletes use to win games and the techniques students use to earn honors.

"We wanted to create a metaphor about preparation, muscle memory and repetition—things students do that are like athletes," says Rachel Wood (Advert'17).

For these students, it was a touchdown right before graduation.



Caitlin Finn
Junior, communication

After growing up near the heart of the entertainment industry in Studio City, California, Finn returned to the Golden State as a production intern for *CONAN*. Her responsibilities as an intern ranged from tracking down costumes all over Los Angeles to occasionally filling extra audience member seats during live tapings.

"It's very unpredictable, but that's what makes it fun. Every day is something different."



Audrey Rodriguez (right)
Senior, journalism

Rodriguez has held a string of internships and jobs in the sports journalism and communication fields. For her latest endeavor, Rodriguez is assisting with public relations and social media for the Denver Broncos.

“Getting to sit down and interview U.S. gold medal Olympic gymnast Laurie Hernandez at my Hispanicize event internship in Miami was by far the most memorable experience I have had yet.”

Hello? Shipping container doubles as global phone booth

Last April, a golden shipping container appeared on the brick plaza by Folsom Stadium. For a month, students, professors and community members streamed in—some for 15 minutes, others for a class—to face a life-size, technology-enabled screen and talk with strangers on the other side of the world.

More than 500 people from CU Boulder and the community struck up conversations with people in similar high-tech shipping containers—or portals—in Erbil, Iraq; Mexico City, Mexico; Kigali, Rwanda; the Gaza Strip; Herat, Afghanistan; and other locations.

Nicoli Bowley (Comm’17), participated in a two-hour talk with three college students in Kigali who formed MyStory, a social organization that uses stories to inspire, connect and enable young people. “Although we come from such different backgrounds, they’re 20-year-olds just like us. It was kind of like talking to friends across the world,” says Bowley, who initially wondered what they would talk about for two hours. “It flew by.”

BoulderTalks, a CMCI center, sponsored the project as a way to promote dialogue and connect with communities around the world.

Sara Cooley, a journalism major, talked with three students in a refugee camp in Erbil as part of Assistant Professor Leah Sprain’s communication class, Discourse, Culture and Identities. She appreciated a fuller glimpse of the lives of people in the refugee camps and found it to be “broader than a lot of what is covered in the news.”

Managed by Shared Studios, the portal installations were created in 2014 by artist Amar Bakshi, whose work focuses on how to integrate technology into environments across distance.



(Top) An external view of the portal.
(Bottom) Dean Lori Bergen and a group of students participate in a conversation with community members in Mexico City.
Photos by Glenn Asakawa (Jour’86).

Entrepreneurship 101

When Nathan Moses (CritMedia'17) and Jake Hurwitz (Bus'17) met, neither predicted they'd wind up as business partners. Two years later, the online video series they created as students, Eyesight Collective, has been voted one of the top startups to watch in 2016 and 2017 by Built in Colorado. The site aims to help student entrepreneurs gain business skills from industry leaders.

Since graduating, they've made the business a full-time venture, launching a private beta for Startup Vault—an online course for aspiring entrepreneurs—while expanding services on the Eyesight platform.

“We identified that throughout this country there are millions of kids

that truly struggle with talking to adults, talking to business people and progressing their business careers,” Hurwitz says.

As the company's chief executive officer, Hurwitz flexes his business sense and networking skills. Moses, the chief creative officer, is the multimedia content producer and produces videos for the site's online courses.

The pair hope their venture will help future students start successful businesses.

“It's getting kids out there and helping them meet the people they need to meet to push their ventures forward,” Moses says.

Independent excellence

In March, the news website CU Independent—formerly known as the Campus Press—continued its four-year streak as the best digital-only student publication at the Society of Professional Journalists Region 9 Mark of Excellence Awards.

In addition, CU Independent was honored last December by the Associated Collegiate Press as one of four college news sites to receive the 2016 Online Pacemaker award, the pre-eminent award for collegiate journalism. This was CU's first time winning the award after being named a finalist in 2015.

“This award is a huge testament to how hard this staff works on a daily basis,” says Xandra McMahon (Jour'17), CU's former editor-in-chief. “For years we've been pushing our creative limits, and this win validates all that hard work.”

McMahon, along with CU Independent colleagues Charlotte Bowditch and Jordyn Siemens, earned the best online in-depth reporting award for their piece, “Manipulative ministry's controversy deepens as former members speak out.” Fellow staffer Dani Pinkus earned the award for best online opinion and commentary for her lifestyle column.



Nate Huey (self-portrait)
Senior, critical media practices
and media studies. Media
production assistant for the CU
Environmental Center.

“Working on media production for the Environmental Center is a stunningly ideal way for me to raise awareness and practice the skills I've learned in my classes.

I can see my work here preparing me for a life in environmental media.”

News outlets turn to News Corps



Alexandra Janney assists with live fact-checking during 9 News Denver's local election coverage.

“It teaches you how to dig deeper,” says Alexandra Janney.

From fact-checking presidential debates to analyzing data on gun crimes, CU News Corps puts students on the front lines of investigative journalism.

Each semester, graduate and undergraduate students in the Department of Journalism capstone course complete in-depth reporting on a key Colorado issue in partnership with professional news outlets.

For students who have only submitted coursework in the past, the class offers a stepping-stone into the world of professional journalism. Last year, producers and editors at 9News Denver, *The Denver Post* and Public News Service worked with News Corps students to publish professional print and multimedia work on themes including crime and political fact-checking.

“It’s exactly what I wanted to do in journalism, which is do my own stories and actually get them published,” says Deepan Dutta (MJour’17), who worked on several of the projects as a graduate student.

In addition to employing traditional journalism practices, students in the course master new and emerging styles of reporting.

For the fact-checking project, students embraced explanatory journalism: a form of reporting and writing that goes beyond recounting facts and adds context and first-person expertise. Wading

through the murky waters of political accusations, students interviewed expert sources while conducting their own research on ballot measures, candidates and key issues. The result was a series of fact-checks centered on the 2016 election that, rather than simply marking claims as true or false, told readers why they should care.

For the gun dialogue project last spring, students used data analysis techniques to report on trends and other noteworthy findings in state and government crime reports. Students also wrote feature stories illuminating the human element behind local crime statistics.

“It teaches you how to dig deeper,” says Alexandra Janney (Jour’17), who worked on the political fact-checking project during her senior year and recently served as a business reporting intern at the *Boulder Daily Camera*.

This fall, students are focused on multimedia storytelling, writing articles and crafting short-form documentaries about a range of local topics.

“News Corps helped me get to know the state on a more intimate level,” says graduate student Emma Gibson, who moved to Colorado from New Mexico and published audio and print stories through Public News Service during the gun dialogue project. “We were researching and writing about officer-involved shootings, and I wrote about some of the worst days of my fellow residents’ lives. It was a powerful experience.” ●

Scripps family supports student investigative news with \$2.5 million gift

A \$2.5 million gift from Bill and Kathy Scripps will allow a specialized student news course, CU News Corps, to produce journalism in partnership with professional media organizations into perpetuity with the establishment of the Scripps CU News Corps Endowment.

Bill and Kathy became supporters of CU News Corps after their son, Willie (Comm'15), fell in love with the CU Boulder campus and enrolled in CMCI. Their daughter, Shelby (Comm'17), attended the college, as well.

"We were introduced to the concept of News Corps in its early stages and liked the idea of students gaining hands-on experience for reporting and news gathering," Bill says. "We started with a small gift, and increased that as we saw the success of the program."

After an initial gift of \$100,000 in 2012 for equipment, annual support from the Scripps family has been instrumental in the growth of CU News

Corps, which operates as a news outlet, providing package-driven, long-form journalism to professional media organizations on issues that impact Colorado.

This year, the program has a new partnership with Colorado Public Television to deliver a one-hour prime-time program of original content for viewers along the Front Range. Additionally, it continues to work with *The Denver Post*, Public News Service, the *Colorado Independent* and the *Daily Camera*.

"In this rapidly changing media environment, CMCI offers a great opportunity for students to keep pace," Bill says. "We thought it would be appropriate to endow News Corps so that it will be around for perpetuity."

The family, who love Ralphie and enjoy attending football and basketball games together, also have been generous supporters of CU Athletics, the Esteemed Scholars program and the Center for Community.



From top left to bottom right: Bill, Willie, Kathy and Shelby Scripps.

Supporting CMCI

As a new college, the College of Media, Communication and Information has a number of financial needs, including student scholarships, program support and facility improvements. Donations to the CMCI Dean's Fund provide the greatest flexibility to meet these needs. Alumni and friends can also direct their support to specific programs by visiting giving.cu.edu/CMCI. Through your investment, CMCI can attract exceptional students and faculty and become a leader in our ever-changing information society. Every gift matters. **Please consider joining the CMCI Dean's Leadership Society.**

Dean's Club

Contributions of \$1,000 to \$2,499*

- Recognition in *CMCI Now* magazine
- Dean's insider news
- Annual appreciation lunch
- Invitations to special events

Dean's Circle

Contributions of \$2,500 to \$4,999

- All of the above, plus
- CMCI-branded recognition gift

Dean's Cabinet

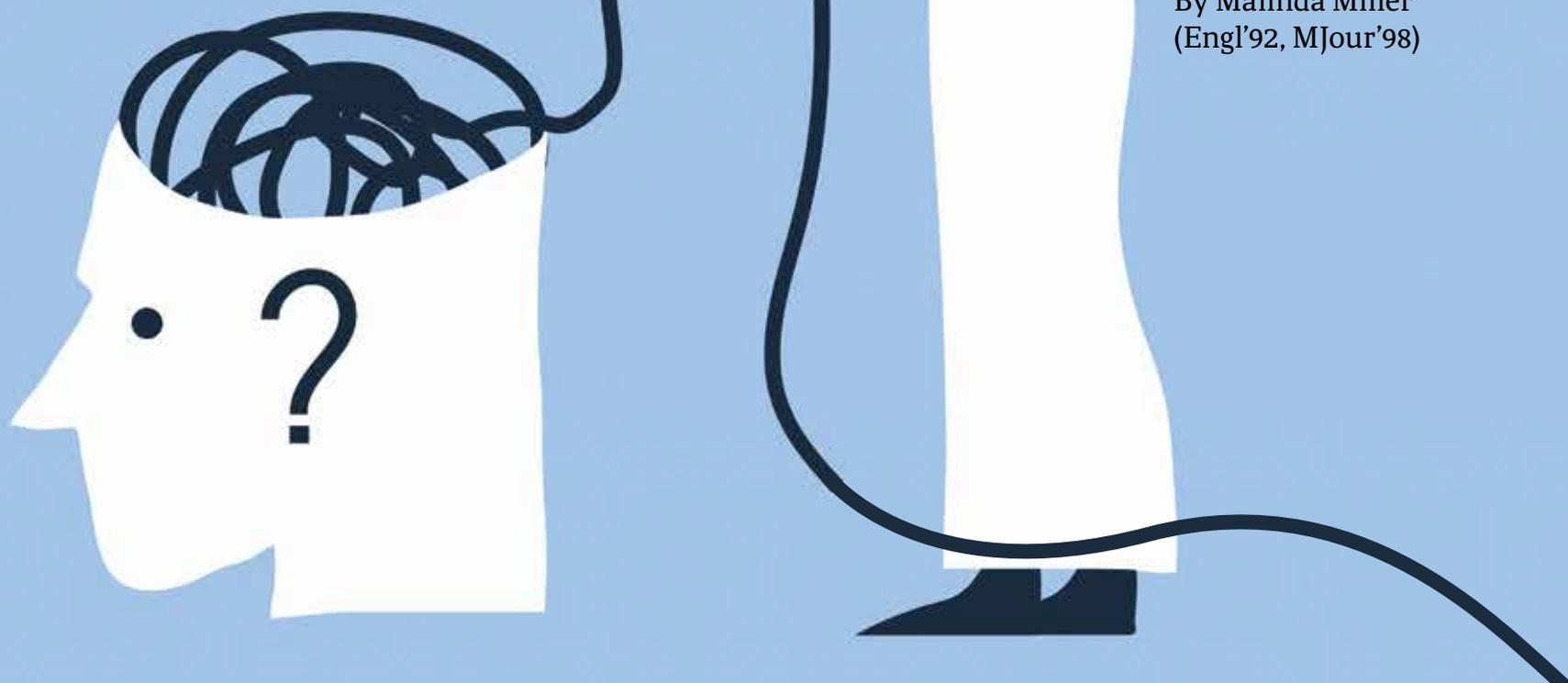
Contributions of \$5,000 and up

- All of the above, plus
- Opportunity for one-on-one meeting with the dean

*The CMCI Leadership Society recognizes cumulative giving within one fiscal year (July 1 to June 30).

To learn more, visit colorado.edu/cmci/donate or contact cmcigiving@colorado.edu.

un tan gling **data**



A professor's
curiosity leads
to a new area of
nonprofit research

By Malinda Miller
(Engl'92, MJour'98)

For information science Assistant Professor Amy Volda, the path to founding a new area of research started with a conversation about index cards.

She was finishing her PhD in computer science at Georgia Tech in the mid-2000s, and a friend was telling Volda about her work at a Phoenix, Arizona, nonprofit.

“She commented that when clients walked in the door she had to look up the services they were eligible for on an index card.

“Wait, did you say index card?” Volda recounts asking.

She was amazed that eligibility for services was still tracked in such a manual way. Her curiosity piqued, this became her research focus for the next decade as she moved through the ranks at several universities.

At each institution, Volda and a team of postdocs and graduate students collaborated with local nonprofits on issues including food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and homelessness.

“We try to diminish the burden of data and increase its power in the work,” she says.

Their efforts established a new area of research—philanthropic informatics—using information science to investigate how data is applied in the nonprofit sector.

“In the culture we live in, data speak and are powerful,” Volda says.

But organizations are under tremendous pressure to collect more and more data—often with disparate requests from private foundations and federal and local governments—without technology that fits their unique data needs or the resources to manage a high volume of data.

Many nonprofit organizations can't report on the total num-

ber of individual clients they serve or present a holistic view of services. “Executive directors can't productively reflect on the organization's work because they either don't have the data they need or it is too fragmented,” Volda says.

At an HIV/AIDS clinic in the Midwest, Volda found that staff are required to track data for clients based on the funder of each service. Since they provide testing, housing, a food pantry, substance abuse treatment and legal consultation, “an individual client could have up to five separate paper files depending on the services accessed.”

Lehn Benjamin, an associate professor of philanthropy at Indiana University, is working with Volda on several projects and says that “while we know the technical is layered with the social and political, I still expected the process of mapping these data systems to be straightforward. It's not.

“As we mapped hundreds of data points, countless forms, several databases and reporting flows, I realized these systems reflected the evolution of the public policy field and the sunk costs in technology that proved suboptimal in the long run.”

In the short term, Volda and her colleagues have several methods to help clients sort out data. One is to create a data map to show how information flows, where it goes, and then identify duplications and alternatives.

They also work with frontline staff to create data diaries—logs of all time spent entering data—to help executive directors understand the data demands frontline staff confront.

In the long term, Volda and her team are establishing ways for nonprofits to have a voice in policy and building a foundation to develop technologies that fit the needs of nonprofits.

“They shouldn't have to fuss,” she says. “The technology should work seamlessly. It should support the mission and not stand in the way.” ●

“We try to diminish the burden of data and increase its power in the work.”

Faculty now

Updates from our all-star faculty of professors, researchers, producers and innovators

Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design

Professor of Practice Mindy Cheval is the interim director of CMCI's CommRAP program and recently developed and taught a semesterlong course on sexual assault communication.

Professor of Practice Jennifer Colman joined the faculty this fall, having spent the previous six months teaching at CU Boulder and working as a freelance brand strategist for ad agencies in New York and San Francisco.

Professor of Practice Jeff Curry joined the faculty this fall and is driving an initiative to broaden contemporary art in Boulder to include design, technology and creativity from industry and academia.

Professor of Practice Dawn Doty is the faculty adviser for CU's PRSSA student chapter and helped the chapter raise money to attend its first national conference this fall in Boston.

Assistant Professor Jolene Fisher published three articles exploring issues of digital games, gender and international development.

Chair and Associate Professor Harsha Ganga was elected vice president of the American Academy of Advertising (AAA) for 2017–18.

Associate Professor Glenn Griffin joined the faculty this fall after leading the undergraduate advertising creative program for six years at the University of Alabama.

Assistant Professor Toby Hopp published several research articles examining the factors influencing online political incivility.



MASTERING DESIGN

Every aspect of the new studio space supporting the Strategic Communication Design master's program was designed to be adaptable. Located in the heart of downtown Boulder, the space can be turned from a classroom into a photography studio, event space or even a walk-in art installation, with images projected across vast, blank walls. In courses like Design Sprints, students create products, services and experiences for clients including Uber, Allstate Insurance, Microsoft and ESRI, among others. From the tools students use to the lessons they learn working with industry leaders, SCD is a graduate program designed to evolve at the pace of the globally connected creative economy.

colorado.edu/cmci/aprd/ma/stcm

Associate Professor Seow Ting Lee published a paper on health information seeking in *Health Communication* and presented three papers at the 2017 International Communication Association's annual conference.

Professor of Practice Dan Ligon, an awarded-winning, 25-year veteran of the advertising industry, joined the faculty in 2016.

Associate Professor Kelty Logan published research regarding the phenomenon of social media fatigue and the implications for advertisers.

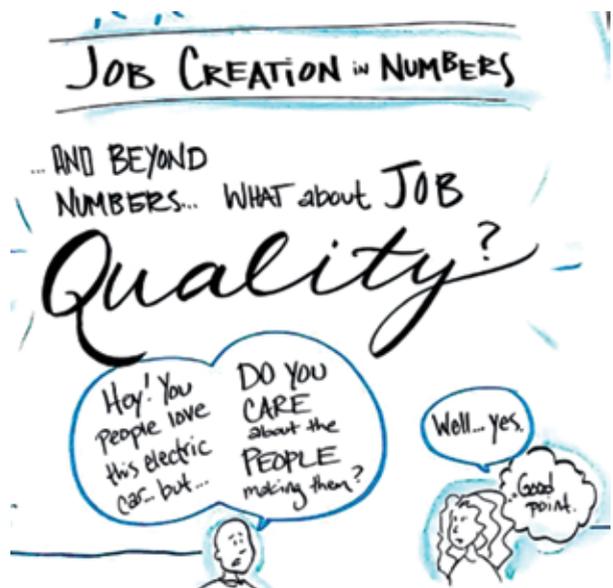
Assistant Professor Erin Schauster conducted research on emerging trends in advertising and public relations (in press) and published an article on the ethical implications of these practices.

Associate Professor David Slayden launched the strategic communication design master's degree program and serves as the executive director.

Professor of Practice David Smail accompanied the college's Young Ones competition finalists to New York and orchestrated the Dairy Show's return to the Dairy Arts Center.

Assistant Professor Chris Vargo published articles in five top-tier communication journals using computational social science and big-data analytics.

Assistant Professor Erin Willis presented two papers on health communication at this year's Association for Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication conference in Chicago.



BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNICATION

When can communication heal political division and help us hear more diverse voices? In what ways are communication practices—speaking, writing, listening, sharing—vital to student success and empowerment? What forums are necessary to rise to the challenge of important yet controversial social issues?

Faculty from BoulderTalks, a center of the Department of Communication, address society's cultural crises, conflicts and challenges through research methods and democratic practices such as debate, dialogue and deliberation. Through dialogues at the Diversity and Inclusion Summit, storytelling with Pockitudes, and deliberation at the city of Boulder's Neighborhood Summit, BoulderTalks furthers communication and understanding of complex issues among people of all backgrounds.

colorado.edu/bouldertalks

Communication

Associate Professor John Ackerman wrote, revised and now has in-press three chapters in collections devoted to ecological and rhetorical justice.

Professor Karen Ashcraft had a productive sabbatical year during which she completed a collaborative book, drafted several articles and delivered international talks, all around themes of work, power and affect in the contemporary economy.

Associate Professor David Boromisza-Habashi became a tenured associate professor and vice chair of the Language and Social Interaction Division of the International Communication Association.

Assistant Professor Joelle Cruz joined the department and published her findings on social movements and indigenous organizing in postconflict Liberia.

Associate Professor Lisa Flores completed her term as director of graduate studies and received the Rose B. Johnson Article of the Year award, with co-author Christy-Dale L. Sims, from *Southern Communication Journal*.

Professor Larry Frey became the co-editor of a new book series on communication for social justice activism for the University of California Press.

Assistant Professor Laurie Gries gave a number of invited talks based on her award-winning book *Still Life with Rhetoric* and completed a forthcoming co-edited collection titled *Circulation, Rhetoric, and Writing*.

Instructor Ruth Hickerson delivered the keynote address, "Raising Awareness and Removing Barriers: Communication Practices That Foster Inclusion and Engagement," at the Rockwell Automation on the Move technology and trade expo in Denver.

Assistant Professor Jody Jahn began work on her \$346,000 research grant, received an Article of the Year award from *Management Communication Quarterly*, had top papers at both the National and International Communication Association conventions, and successfully passed fourth-year review.

Associate Professor Matthew Koschmann received a Fulbright Scholars Award to be a visiting scholar at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines for the spring 2018 semester.

Professor Tim Kuhn served as associate chair for the department's undergraduate program, published a book on working and organizing (with CU's Karen Ashcraft and University of Montreal's Francois Cooren), and was an associate editor at *Human Relations*, an international and interdisciplinary academic journal devoted to the study of social relations at and around work.

Still images from *Automorphic*, a work by Erin Espelie, co-founder of NEST.



NEW COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE HATCHED

The Nature, Environment, Science and Technology (NEST) Studio for the Arts will leverage two of CU Boulder’s greatest strengths—internationally renowned scientific research and the broad range of cutting-edge artistic practices—to connect academia with public-facing communities such as museums and galleries. The new initiative is supported by a \$750,000 CU Boulder Grand Challenge grant and led by Erin Espelie, assistant professor of critical media practices and film studies, and Tara Knight, assistant professor of critical media practices.

Over the next several years, NEST will work with campus units that combine artistic practice and scientific research to explore our common and disparate ways of observing, recording, experimenting and knowing. Central to this idea is developing new undergraduate courses and exhibits in coordination with campus centers, museums, galleries and labs.

Instructor Jeff Motter was part of a team at the Kettering Foundation that developed a National Issues Forum discussion guide on food access.

Assistant Professor Tiara Na’puti joined the department and received the Constance Rourke Prize Finalist Mention for the best article published in *American Quarterly*.

Associate Professor Phaedra Pezzullo published the fourth edition of *Environmental Communication and the Public Sphere*, became director of BoulderTalks and gave multiple talks on climate justice.

Assistant Professor Natasha Shrikant joined the communication faculty in August 2016 and is submitting research findings about communication and race in institutional contexts for publication.

Chair and Professor Peter Simonson was promoted to full professor, became chair of the department, and received CMCI’s Payden Award for excellence in teaching, research and service.

Senior Instructor Jamie Skerski led her Persuasion & Society students in pitching communication strategies to local and global brands, including Microsoft and Skatch Labs.

Assistant Professor Leah Sprain co-organized a symposium on energy democracy co-sponsored by BoulderTalks, the National Science Foundation, the National Communication Association and the University of Utah’s Communication Institute.

Associate Professor Ted Striphas became co-editor of the journal *Cultural Studies*, the flagship publication in that field, and delivered the keynote address at UCLA’s eighth annual Transforming Hollywood conference.

Professor Bryan Taylor published two essays on communication and security in the *Annals of the International Communication Association*, taught a new graduate seminar on rhetorical field methods and completed the new edition of *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (forthcoming, Sage).

Professor Karen Tracy completed her term as chair of communication and finished her third and last year serving on the VCAC, the committee that makes decisions about promotion and tenure.

Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curriculum and Programs Cindy White completed her second year as associate dean and participated in the national first-year college experience conference.



MORE THAN MAKING

Students in the Critical Media Practices degree program develop their personal style as they explore the expressive potential of media. They make media in order to connect to and know the world. And they create and think about media in new ways while learning critical perspectives that place media practices within a broad cultural and historical continuum of innovation. Last year, students in the department created projects covering a wide array of topics and media, including a soundscape of Boulder's Pearl Street Mall, an interview-driven social media campaign across multiple channels and a short film about three Syrian children in the Zaatari refugee camp.

Students can focus in three concentration areas (or they can build their own): documentary media, performance media and sound practices. Within these areas, students work with digital photography, videography, location sound, electronic music, web design, virtual reality and media installation.

colorado.edu/cmci/dcmp

Critical Media Practices

Assistant Professor Reece Auguste's *Stillness Spirit* is an experimental essay film about the largest private collection of African art in Colorado and possibly the third largest in the nation. The film is structured so that viewers may experience the collection as if walking through a gallery of African art.

Assistant Professor Betsey Biggs is collaborating on a long, minimalist, multimedia musical performance and film using time-lapse footage of glaciers, choral composition, field recordings and interspersed texts regarding the cultural changes wrought by global warming. Florida State University recently commissioned Biggs to create an installation about women and noise.

Chair and Professor Daniel Boord's film *Contigo* is included in the *Faculty Exhibition: 2017* at the CU Art Museum.

Instructor Eric Coombs Esmail premiered his latest media work at Anthology Film Archives in New York and expanded the educational, curatorial and fundraising activities of the nonprofit media organization Process Reversal, which he co-founded in 2012.

Assistant Professor Erin Espelie has completed two short films, *A Net to Catch the Light*, which had its West Coast premiere in June at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and *Automorphic*, which premiered last summer at the Mediamatic gallery in Amsterdam, Netherlands. She is co-principal investigator for a new initiative, the Nature, Environment, Science and Technology (NEST) Studio for the Arts.

Instructor Christian Hammons produced, directed and performed in *Tripod: Mead, Bateson, Bali*, a live, mixed-media documentary about the anthropologist Margaret Mead, her husband, Gregory Bateson, and their collaboration in Bali in the 1930s.

Associate Professor Tara Knight received a CU Boulder Innovative Seed Grant for a sound planetarium project and is co-principal investigator for a new initiative, the Nature, Environment, Science and Technology (NEST) Studio for the Arts.

Assistant Professor Stephanie Spray is in postproduction for her feature-length experimental documentary, *The Immortals*, which she shot aboard the JOIDES Resolution, a scientific drilling ship funded by the International Ocean Discovery Program with National Science Foundation funding, over the course of 10 weeks at sea in the Indian and Pacific oceans.

Instructor Andrew Young wrote and edited an article in *Critical Studies in Television* on representing counterculture in *Peter Gunn* (to be published shortly) and developed a new PhD history course.



THE HUMAN SIDE OF DATA

A few years ago, a group of interdisciplinary computing visionaries set out to design an innovative information science department from the ground up. The result is one of the few programs nationally that offers a four-year degree in the discipline to undergraduates, and one with forward-thinking faculty with connections to Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Twitter, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and many more.

Information science blends computing with social science and the humanities for a hands-on, interdisciplinary education that investigates all aspects of human-data interaction. Students research how people and organizations interact with technology and information. They design apps, algorithms and user interfaces. They learn to collect, analyze and interpret data. Then they apply that knowledge to their secondary area of concentration to produce a project in, for example, bioinformatics, music informatics or wherever their interests take them.

colorado.edu/cmci/infoscience

Information Science

Professor William Aspray is writing a book about the history of urban legends (especially 9/11 legends), alternative political facts and mercantile rumors that harm businesses.

Associate Professor Lecia Barker is conducting research on beliefs about privacy of student data in learning management systems as well as teaching practices of computer science content.

Assistant Professor Jed Brubaker is examining how people share their lives through social media, collaborating with social media companies to make the internet a more compassionate place, and exploring what comes after the “user” in user experience.

Assistant Professor Laura Devendorf joined the faculty in January 2017 and spoke on the subject of “Design Futures” at the European Forum Alpbach in August.

Assistant Professor Casey Fiesler has been conducting empirical studies of internet research ethics and gave a TEDxCU talk in April on the subject of copyright and remix.

Assistant Professor Brian Keegan is a computational social scientist examining the structure and dynamics of emergent leadership within a Fortune 50 enterprise social media platform, as well as cross-cultural team formation processes in multiplayer online battle arenas.

Chair and Professor Leysia Palen is examining the generation of information infrastructures and the use of social media in extreme weather hazard events in projects that are funded by the National Science Foundation.





CYBER ARCHAEOLOGY

Most students learn about Apple-1—the computer hand-assembled by Steve Wozniak in Steve Jobs' parents' garage—in a film or history book. At the Media Archaeology Lab, students can experiment with a replica sitting right in front of them.

The lab, known as MAL, is home to one of North America's largest collections of still-functioning but obsolete tools, software, hardware and platforms. It serves as a place for interdisciplinary research and learning for students and faculty. Most critically, MAL provides students and researchers with direct access to milestones in the history of computing and digital literature.

Information Science, continued

Assistant Professor Michael Paul recently published a book about how data science and social media can solve new problems in public health.

Professor of Practice Rick Robinson is working on a series of talks on how ethnographic research has been adopted, adapted and applied in corporate and industrial settings to design and develop new products and services.

Assistant Professor Ricarose Roque is collaborating with public libraries and community centers to design and study experiences that meaningfully engage children and their families to imagine, invent and learn with new technologies.

Assistant Professor Danielle Albers Szafir is modeling how people interpret visual information to create more effective visualizations and augmented reality applications. She is constructing an interactive analytics system with aerospace engineering researchers to explore large image collections, which is funded by the U.S. Air Force.

Assistant Professor Amy Volda is studying how the demands of big data are affecting the clients and service provision of human service organizations.

Assistant Professor Stephen Volda is conducting a pilot study in collaboration with researchers at the University of Washington to learn how people with bipolar disorder and the members of their extended care networks use data together to track mood changes, identify triggers, and reflect on the effectiveness of medications and long-term clinical treatments.

Intermedia Art, Writing and Performance

Director Mark Amerika's work was featured in international exhibits, including *GlitchMix, not an error* in Havana, Cuba, and *Beyond GRAMMATRON: 20 Years into the Future* in London, England.

Associate Professor Lori Emerson serves as founding director of the Media Archaeology Lab, which houses North America's largest collection of still-functioning media artifacts from the early 20th century through the 21st century. She recently discussed the MAL at Ignite Boulder.



THE ULTIMATE TOOLBOX

As part of the Google News Lab University Network, CMCI academic departments have access to online training materials and in-person instruction for the entire suite of Google tools, which they use in various lessons and projects:

- In Fundamentals of Multimedia Reporting, Assistant Professor Ross Taylor uses Public Data Explorer to teach data visualization, and Professor Paul Voakes uses Emerging-Technology Verification to teach how to verify social media reports. Students also scout and demo Google News Lab tools to be used in data journalism, multimedia storytelling and verification lessons.
- In his Strategic Communications Analytics course, Assistant Professor Chris Vargo uses Public Data Explorer and Google Trends to teach lessons in data journalism.
- For an upcoming virtual reality project, instructor Pat Clark is using Google Earth to map and research officer-involved shooting locations.

Journalism

Associate Professor Angie Chuang, joining the faculty in August 2017, led training workshops at NPR in Washington, D.C., on source diversity.

Instructor Patrick Clark coordinated a high-speed-camera workshop sponsored by CMCI and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Senior Instructor Paul Daugherty leads the award-winning *CU Science Update* documentary series, which has a show in production about tiny satellites called CubeSats.

Assistant Professor Patrick Ferrucci published results of his research on how newsrooms are using web analytics and social media.

Instructor and Assistant Dean for Student Success Steve Jones entered his fifth decade of teaching at CU Boulder.

Associate Professor Hun Shik Kim became faculty director of the Certificate Program in International Media.

Associate Director of the Center for Environmental Journalism Michael Kodas' new book, *Megafire: The Race to Extinguish a Deadly Epidemic of Flame*, was released in August 2017.

Assistant Professor Christine Larson, joining the faculty in August 2017, was awarded a PhD in communication from Stanford University.

Professor Michael McDevitt explores the relationship of populism to journalism in his forthcoming book, *Where Ideas Go to Die: Anti-intellectualism in American Journalism*.

Assistant Professor Mei-Ling McNamara has produced a short documentary and articles on sex trafficking for the British news site The Guardian.

Associate Professor Kathleen Ryan was awarded the top prize for Documentary Feature for her film *Pin Up! The Movie* at the Bare Bones International Film Festival.

Chair and Associate Professor Elizabeth Skewes is examining media coverage of crime victims and is working on two papers related to coverage of Donald Trump.

Assistant Professor Ross Taylor, joining the tenure track in August 2017, led the fifth annual The Image, Deconstructed, a national, three-day immersive workshop on photojournalism.

Professor Paul Voakes is completing his term as president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

Professor Jan Whitt published the book *The Redemption of Narrative: Terry Tempest Williams and Her Vision of the West* (Mercer University Press).

Professor and Director of the Center for Environmental Journalism Tom Yulsman led a group of students and faculty to Svalbard, Norway, to report on environmental issues and accompanied a team of journalists across South Africa for a "Green Media Tour."



FINDING GOD THROUGH GOOGLE

In an age when a confession app can be downloaded and people increasingly share their faith through Instagram, podcasts and YouTube, the study of religion is also changing. CMCI's Center for Media, Religion and Culture (CMRC) recently received a \$500,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to support an investigation of the evolving nature of religious scholarship in the digital age. Stewart Hoover, director of the CMRC, is leading the research effort that brings together scholars, researchers and practitioners to develop new and innovative tools for research and communication. Alongside their research, the project's team will develop a new web platform designed for academic collaboration, idea development and multiplatform communication, including interactive media.

colorado.edu/cmci/cmrc

Media Studies

Associate Professor Shu-Ling Chen Berggreen co-wrote an article with doctoral student Art Bamford in *Journalism and Mass Communication*.

Professor Andrew Calabrese published a journal article in *The Communication Review* titled "Human need as a justification for communication rights."

Chair and Associate Professor Nabil Echchaibi published a chapter titled "Unveiling Obsessions: Muslims and the Trap of Representation" in *Re-Scripting Islam Reporting on Muslims and Their Faith*.

Professor Stewart Hoover spent a semester as a visiting professor at Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

Professor Janice Peck was an invited panelist at an international conference on Global Resistance in the Neoliberal University at the City University of New York.

Assistant Professor Sandra Ristovska completed the George Gerbner Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

Scholar in Residence Nathan Schneider co-edited a book with Trebor Scholz (The New School) titled *Ours to Hack and to Own: The Rise of Platform Cooperativism*.

Associate Professor J. Richard Stevens published a book chapter titled "Plastic Military Mythology: Hypercommercialism and Hasbro's G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero."

Professor Michael Tracey published an essay titled "The Mature Society" for the website Scholars and Rogues.

wildfires

CMCI brings together **experts** with **diverse** perspectives. As a **journalist** and a communication **scholar** discuss the growing issue of **wildfires**, they reveal there is more to **firefighting** than **extinguishing** flames.

By Harrison Dreves



Jody Jahn (left) with other members of her fire crew near Price, Utah, in 2004.



From left to right:

A firefighter builds a fire line with a drip torch at Boulder's Heil Valley Ranch prescribed burn in 2014. Photo by Michael Kodas.

Photo taken by Jody Jahn during dissertation fieldwork as she observes a "buddy check" before a helicopter rappel near New Meadows, Idaho.

Kodas' earliest wildfire photograph, as described below, of an inmate fighting a wildfire at a maximum-security prison.

Kodas on site while serving on a seasonal wildfire crew in Colorado in 2003.

Jody Jahn grew up in rural Idaho and worked eight years as a wildland firefighter, including three years rappelling from helicopters to fight remote blazes. An assistant professor of communication, she studies how firefighters communicate in dangerous situations and how communities discuss fire resilience.

As a journalist, **Michael Kodas** trained with wildfire crews and has reported on wildfires around the world. The associate director of the Center for Environmental Journalism, his newly released book, *Megafire: The Race to Extinguish a Deadly Epidemic of Flame*, explores the global growth of wildfires.

CMCI: How did you first come to work with forest fires?

JODY JAHN: I needed to earn money in the summer during college, and there weren't many great options in rural Idaho, so I chose wildland firefighting. On my 18th birthday—the day before I started—my dad took me to a boot shop. He bought one of my work boots and I bought the other.

I did that throughout the summers to pay for college and then for a few seasons

afterward. So wildfire has always been part of the geography of who I am.

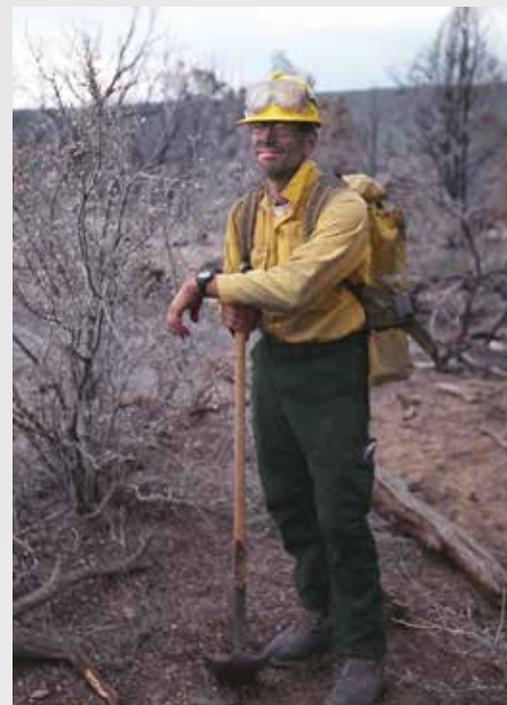
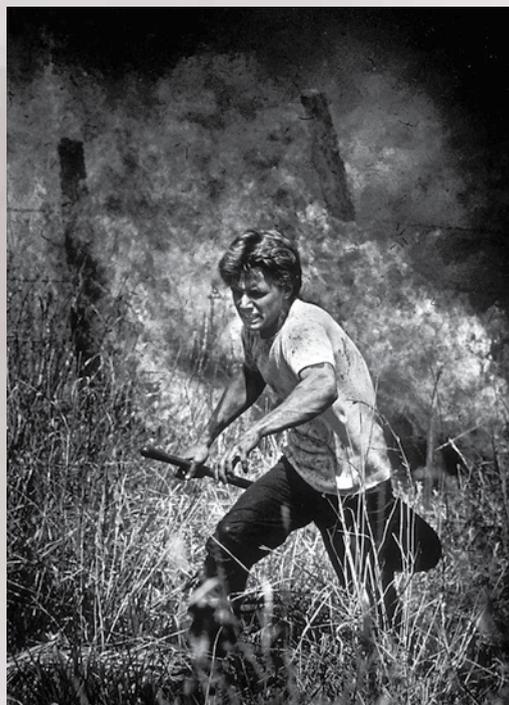
MICHAEL KODAS: Three or four months into my first staff job as a journalist on the East Coast I heard about a wildfire and thought, "I've never seen one of those." I followed the police scanner, parked the car and hopped over some fences to get to where I saw a bunch of people digging a line around this big grass fire. As soon as I started taking photographs, I heard this bellowing voice and there was this guy the size of a bulldozer running at me with a badge. As it turned out, these fences that I hopped over were the periphery fences for a maximum-security prison, and all of the firefighters were prisoners.

The guard started to drag me out of the prison just as the fire exploded and was about to overrun one of the firefighters. So

I'm trying to take a telephoto shot of this while this guy is manhandling me. I figured he was going to stick his hand in my lens, but he just picked me up and he aimed me at the fire to let me take this sequence of photos of this guy running for his life. Then he knocked me down again and dragged me out. The photo was very dramatic and got distributed all over the country, and it just got me really interested in this idea of wildfire.

CMCI: So how do you study wildfires today?

KODAS: My work as a journalist is focused on the idea that our fire crisis has very little to do with forests and fire and is almost all a consequence of economic, political and cultural decisions that we've made.



For example, I did a project for Colorado Public Media where we just took the census from 1990, 2000 and 2010 and overlaid that with our red zone map, which maps our most flammable forests. This showed that since 2000 we've seen well over a hundred thousand homes sprout up in our most flammable forests.

JAHN: I've studied how the language of firefighting reflects the history of firefighting in the United States. Not only did much of the equipment come from military surplus after the world wars, but so did the organizing structure and hierarchy. The language of wildland fire reflects this kind of military mentality: direct and indirect attack; anchoring and flanking the fire. You're a "firefighter" not a "fire manager."

All of this history has created this situation in the U.S. where we have a group of people—wildland firefighters—who fight fire on behalf of the citizens, just like we have people to fight wars on our behalf.

KODAS: We've created a dependency. We have a population that moves into really hazardous landscapes and expects a societal infrastructure to take care of the fire. This creates perverse incentives for the public to live in dangerous places and to not protect their own property.

JAHN: Part of that, too, is that landowners are often disconnected from the ways these fire-dependent ecosystems work. They might purchase a piece of property in a fire-prone area because they love the trees. They see green trees so they think, "Oh, this area is healthy," but in fact it could be really overgrown and ready to burn at any moment.

Some of my research right now is focused on this idea of resilience and looking at how multiple stakeholders define what a fire-resilient landscape is. The problem is when forest managers want to implement forest treatments that end up being opposed by landowners who have a different understanding of what resilience means. For landowners it might have to do with aesthetics and property value, whereas with land managers it may have to do with ecosystem health and the safety of people and habitats.

KODAS: It's really hard, after a century of fire suppression, for people to stand up and say "we were wrong." If we keep putting out fires in this landscape over a long period of time, we're just going to get a way worse fire in the future or we're going to totally change the structure of this forest. We're seeing a pretty steady increase in

wildland firefighter deaths and property loss around the world. I'm kind of tracing this back to decisions that we've made and ways that society chooses to live. It's not that suddenly natural fires are killing more people or damaging more property, but that fires are very different, the way we're dealing with fires is very different, and what we have at risk is very different than before. ●

ESPN'S KATE FAGAN ON LIFE, SPORTS AND MEDIA

Kate Fagan (Comm'03) is a columnist and feature writer for *espnW*, *ESPN.com* and *ESPN The Magazine*. She was a four-year letterwinner in basketball, helping the Buffaloes advance to four straight NCAA Tournament appearances from 2001 to 2004. Fagan holds the Buffs' career record for free throw percentage at 86.1 percent and resides in the top 10 in career three-point field goals. A four-time Academic All-Big 12 selection, she began the podcast *Free Cookies* with Kathryn Budig this year and is the author of the books *What Made Maddy Run* and *The Reappearing Act*. The following passages are from her commencement speech to the Class of 2017.



One million shots that no one witnessed, no one applauded.

I grew up playing basketball. Eventually, I played here, at the University of Colorado, but first I practiced, every day for almost a decade, spending afternoons and evenings working on my game in a gym empty of everything except my dad, a basketball and me. During those years, I took 250 shots a day, which means that growing up I took approximately 1 million shots. One million shots that no one witnessed, no one applauded. And yet I remember, and feel, the undiluted sense of accomplishment and validation when I watched the ball arc toward the rim, when I watched it drop through the net. The gratification came from feeling the competence of my own body, which I had harnessed through repetition; hearing the snap of the net was the punctuation. The feedback loop ended by the time the ball hit the floor.

Try to replace should with want . . .

Dust settles on people, too. We accumulate layers without even realizing it. These layers are the perceptions and beliefs of others—parents and professors, yes, but also people we don't know, but see and hear—and they weigh on us, and muddle our decisions in ways almost impossible to recognize. Right now, as you sit here, you might be coated in these layers. You might be headed toward a job, or a master's degree, that was chosen using the rubric of someone else's values. Even now, as I stand here, I know my recent decisions have been clouded by this accumulation of what I SHOULD do, not what I WANT to do. I should be on TV; I should want more money. But, underneath those layers, I know a different truth: I WANT to write more, even if it means I'll MAKE less money. Try replacing "should" with "want" and, as frequently as you are able, make decisions with that rubric. Life is best when your "should" and your "want" are aligned. And when they're divergent, ask yourself why—and for whom, and for what purpose—you're doing this thing you believe you should.





This is the buzzing superficiality that is hijacking our minds.

Now, I'm not just worried about stories, I even know exactly which Instagram photos will get the most likes—the ones when I include a pair of Nike kicks—and routinely construct situations to get my sneakers in pictures. I have created a crude algorithm in my head, and I'm now altering THE STORY OF MY LIFE, to chase pageviews.

This is the buzzing superficiality that is hijacking our minds, steadily distracting us from sitting still and thinking, letting our mind connect ideas, seeing what meaningful thoughts come up in the silence. This is not a trivial matter; this is actually the fundamental process of making art: sitting in silence and seeing what bubbles to the surface.

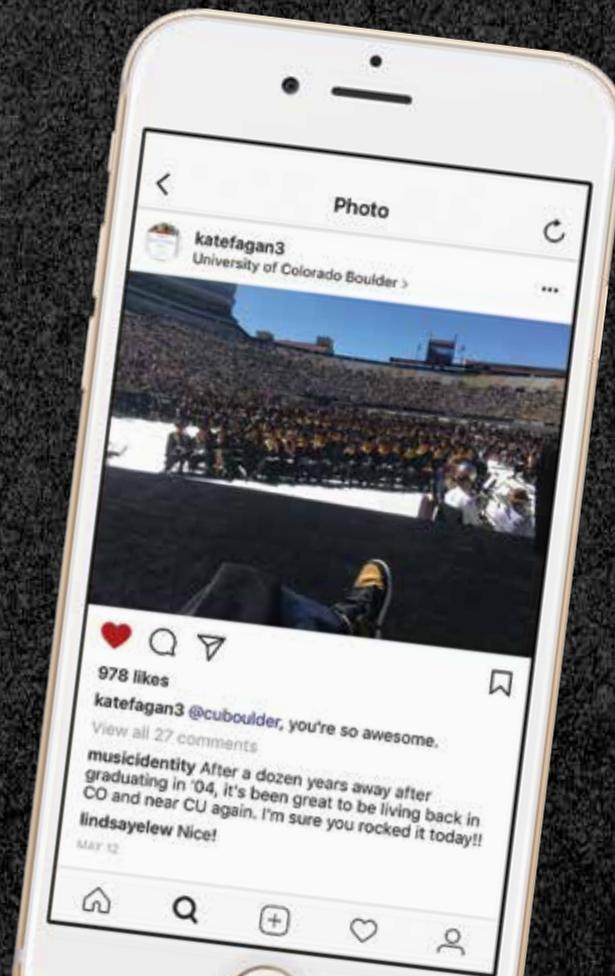


The dead ends I've hit are when I'm more worried about the headline than the content.

One day at the *Daily Camera*, Neil Woelk asked me what my goal was, and I told him I wanted to write for their paper. And he asked what I wanted more: to write, or to write for their paper. Without hesitation, I said, "to write."

Two weeks later I started a job at the *Daily Record* in eastern Washington state, in a small rodeo town called Ellensburg. Here's the point: The dead ends I've hit are when I'm more worried about the headline than the content. I mean that literally and figuratively: The stories I've struggled the most with are the ones I tried to tailor to a clever headline; similarly, the times I've boxed in "success," defined it as something specific, I've always felt a sense of disappointment when it doesn't look exactly like I'd planned.

In journalism, one thing you quickly learn is to never ask yes-or-no questions; always ask open-ended questions. Present them with a wide swath of space in which to roam, so that they can carve their own path within it.



Noticing the world helps us make sense of it.

Working to notice the world is being replaced by trying to BE noticed by the world.

Please, Class of 2017, don't let this keep happening.

Noticing the world helps us make sense of it. What each of you notice about the world will be different than what I notice, than what your best friend will notice, than what anyone else will notice. And some of us communicate these observations through words, some through numbers, others through design, or engineering—but it all starts with a vibration of insight that we allow ourselves to recognize.

Noticing and naming—that's your voice.

Keep using it and keep exercising it—regardless of how many people cheer after the shot hits the court. ●



Alumni news

The Payden Award

The Payden Award recognizes excellence in teaching and research or creative work with a \$20,000 cash prize and the opportunity to present a colloquium on effective teaching methods to faculty colleagues and graduate students. **William R. Payden** (Jour'57), who established the Payden endowment in 2010, was known for his boundless curiosity and enthusiasm, as evidenced by his wide variety of professional paths and personal interests. Payden was a journalist, college professor, sports fan, cinephile, professional pianist, world traveler and collector of aviation memorabilia and classic cars.

2017 AWARD WINNER

Professor of Communication **Peter Simonson** is a highly regarded scholar who has challenged disciplinary boundaries through his many contributions to the field of communication history. Since joining the CU faculty in 2006, he has taught a variety of courses, served as the principal advisor for numerous dissertation and thesis projects and developed or co-developed new courses ranging from Introductory Concepts and Creativity to graduate seminars.

Past winners

2016 Steve Jones

2015 Harsha Ganga

2014 Tom Yulsman

2013 Janice Peck

2012 Nabil Echchaibi

2011 Stewart Hoover

2010 Mindy Cheval and Paul Daugherty

2009 Jan Whitt

2008 Elizabeth Skewes

2007 Andrew Calabrese

2006 Steve Jones



Steve Hatchell, center

1969

Mildred Taylor (MJour) is the author of nine books. Her first, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, which won the Newbery Medal in 1977, recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with the release of a special edition. At CU, Mildred helped create a black studies program and taught in it for two years. She lives in Boulder.

1970

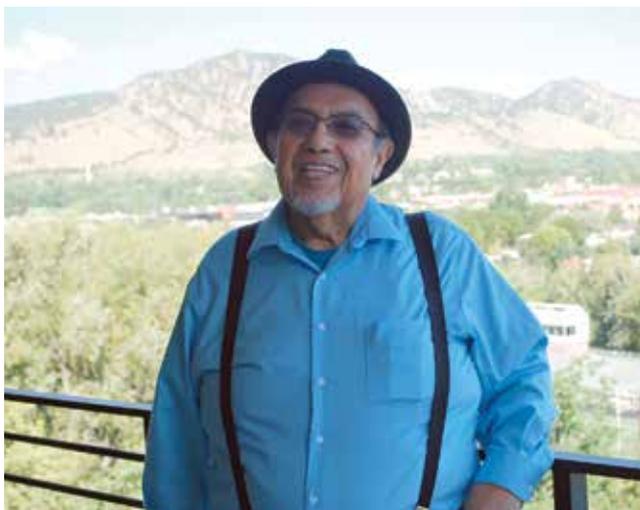
Steve Hatchell (Advert) will be inducted into the CU Athletic Hall of Fame in November alongside nine other honorees. He is president and chief executive officer of the National Football Foundation (Irving, Texas) and the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, Georgia.

1971

Sheila (Slocum) Hollis (Jour) practices energy law at the Washington, D.C., office of Duane Morris LLP, where she serves as office chair and founding managing partner. Sheila established the Enforcement Office of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. She accepted a Lifetime Achievement in Energy Award at the 13th annual Platts Global Energy Awards ceremony and was recognized as one of D.C.'s Top 100 Lawyers in 2017.

1974

After working for more than 35 years as sports director at WLNE ABC 6 in Providence, R.I., **Ken Bell (Comm)** is retiring. Ken covered some of the most memorable moments in New England sports history, including the Celtics' championships of the 1980s, the Red Sox winning the World Series and numerous Patriots Super Bowl victories. A Colorado native, he loves to spend time outside running and hiking.



Magdaleno "Leno" Rose-Avila



John B. Lane



Holly Gauntt

1975

Magdaleno "Leno" Rose-Avila (Comm) is the executive director of Witness to Innocence, an organization dedicated to empowering exonerated death row survivors. His long history of civil and human rights work includes directorial positions at Amnesty International and serving as executive director of the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project in Seattle, Washington.

1978

Dave Curtin (Jour) won a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 1990 and is the assistant director of executive communications at the University of Colorado Boulder.

At the Lippin Group, a brand communications firm, **Pamela Ruben Golum (Comm)** has managed notable client accounts including Dick Wolf and his *Law & Order* franchise, various projects for the Disney Channel and the Emmy Awards. Previously, Pam worked as a journalist with Fairchild Publications and at radio station KBOL in Boulder. She and husband, Rob, live in Los Angeles, California, with their two daughters, Caroline and Jennifer.

For more than 40 years, **Bill Lerner (Comm)** has helped grow and develop iPark, his family's parking garage business (previously known as Imperial Parking Systems), into New York's largest garage and parking facilities operator. Bill also started the organization Billy4Kids to provide shoes for underprivileged children around the world.

1979

A new book by **John B. Lane (Jour)**, *The Beatin' Path: A Lyrical Guide to Lucid Evolution*, won an Independent Publisher IPPY Award in April. He recently read selections from the book, along with a new piece, at a book signing at Tattered Cover book store in Denver. John is also an award-winning instructional designer and a pioneer in online learning.

1980

After serving 15 years as chancellor, **Pamela Shockley-Zalabak (PhDComm)** retired from the University of Colorado Colorado Springs campus in February. She worked for UCCS for four decades and taught classes in the communication department while serving as chancellor.

Tim Coy (Advert) was awarded the Maurice Hendry Award for Journalistic Excellence in 2016 by the Cadillac & LaSalle Club, a nonprofit organization dedicated to motorcar restoration and preservation. He has designed and proofread the organization's international magazine, *The Self-Starters*, since 2004. He continues to operate Ad Type & Design Inc., a firm specializing in graphic design and publishing, founded in 1995. He previously worked in advertising and marketing for the *Rocky Mountain News*, the Denver Newspaper Agency and *The Denver Post*.

KMGH Denver7 has hired **Holly Gauntt (Jour)** as its news director. A veteran newsroom leader with great insight on the Denver area, she worked the past two years as news director at KDVR/KWGN. At KDVR, Holly managed the news staff during a time of great news expansion.

1984

Rob Decker (Comm) is a photographer and graphic artist based in Longmont. After working for clients including American Express, Dell, Dick's Sporting Goods, the National Association of Realtors, Overstock.com, Stanford University, *The Washington Post* and others, Rob is now focused on his National Park Posters project, creating vintage-style posters for parks around the country. See his work featured on our back cover.



Scott Takeda



David Smail

1986

Heidi L. Wagner, J.D. (Jour) is senior vice president of global government affairs for Alexion Pharmaceuticals. She is an attorney with more than 25 years' experience in global health care legislative and regulatory policy issues. Heidi has led numerous federal legislative and regulatory efforts relating to, among other issues, Medicare payment policy, biosimilars, and patient access to medicines for rare and ultrarare diseases.

1988

Sisters **Robin Beeck (Comm)** and Kathy Beeck (Eng/PolSci'86) founded the Boulder International Film Festival, which will celebrate its 14th year Feb. 22–25, 2018. The festival has become a hot spot for movie stars and film enthusiasts from around the country.

1989

James S. Singell (Comm) just returned to Indianapolis, Indiana, from an assignment as marketing director for Eli Lilly in Tokyo, Japan. He has worked for Lilly since 1992 in a variety of sales and marketing roles in the United States and also in Shanghai, China.

1989

On May 6, actor and director **Scott Takeda (Jour)** was the keynote speaker for CU Boulder's Asian graduation celebration. Scott has been in movies and television shows, including *Gone Girl*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot*. The Colorado native lives in Denver.

1990

B.J. (Hoeptner) Evans (Jour) is in her 10th year as communications manager for USA Volleyball in Colorado Springs. She worked her fifth Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as the U.S. volleyball teams won three bronze medals.

1991

Christine Mahoney (Jour) left TV news and teaching journalism in the former Journalism & Mass Comm program at CU to join CMCI as internship/career coordinator in May 2012. She would love to connect with employers who would like to host CMCI students as interns.

1994

Award-winning producer and voice actor **David Vincent (Jour)** is known for voicing hundreds of characters in animation and video games such as *Super Smash Bros.* and *Street Fighter*. David is co-founder and CEO of the iOS app *Unlocked*, a pop culture streaming network. David lives in Los Angeles, California, and will return to Denver for Colorado Anime Fest on March 23–25, 2018.

1995

David Smail (Advert) is a professor of practice in CMCI's Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design. Before returning to CU Boulder in 2016, David served as the chairman and executive director of BBDO Vietnam.



Adam Cole

1996

Brent Schrotenboer (Jour), an enterprise and investigative reporter for *USA Today*, won his fifth national top 10 writing award since 2014 from the Associated Press Sports Editors. Brent, who lives in San Diego, California, has been with *USA Today* since 2012, covering various legal, business and social issues related to sports. He has won 14 national top 10 awards since 2001.

1997

Laura (Schneider) Moetz (MJour) joined Accenture PLC in September 2016 as a marketing and communications manager based in New York City. Previously, Laura was a manager of internal and employee communications for Willis Towers Watson.

1998

Holly Shrewsbury (Jour) is a principal at HMS Strategic Communications. She served as the communications director for Colorado Lt. Gov. Donna Lynne and as interim communications director for Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper.

1999

He has called more games than any other St. Paul Saints broadcaster. He was nominated for a regional Emmy in 2010 and was the runner-up for Broadcaster of the Year in 2013. Three years later, Saints broadcaster **Sean Aronson (Jour)** has been recognized by *Ballpark Digest* as the Broadcaster of the Year in all of minor league baseball.

Kristin Boehm (Jour) joined Hawkins International Public Relations in New York City as digital director in May 2017. Previously, Kristin was director of Dan Klores Communications' digital division, editor of People.com and director of news and engagement for *People*.

Dave Briggs (Jour) is an anchor of *Early Start* on CNN, airing 4–6 a.m. ET. Before this, Dave was an NBC Sports studio host for the Rio Olympics.

2000

Tiffany (Mathews) Cross (Advert) is working for the Kellogg Co. as the Pringles USA associate brand manager.

2002

Peabody Award-winning investigative reporter **Marshall Zelinger (Jour)** recently celebrated his first day on the air on the 9News program *Next with Kyle Clark*. Before that, he spent seven years at Denver7.

2003

Adam Cole (Jour) is serving as the public affairs officer for the U.S. Navy's Amphibious Force, 7th Fleet, in Okinawa, Japan. Cole oversees social media strategy, visual information production and media operations for 13 units that fall under this military command.



Garrett Cortese

2004

After more than 11 years in various roles with *Alliance Wake* magazine—the last three years as editor-in-chief—**Garrett Cortese (Jour)** has moved on to a new opportunity and adventure. At the start of 2017, Garrett began his new job as the editorial director of watersports for the Bonnier Corp. in Winter Park, Florida. He will oversee the creation and production of *Wakeboarding* magazine and *WaterSki* magazine, both of which he read as a child growing up in California. Cortese will also help produce digital content, special issues and brand extensions for each publication.

2006

During his time at CU Boulder, **Troy Hendershott (Jour)** was working full time for HDNet, which is now AXStv, as the program manager from 2000 to 2012. He retired in a sense to fulfill his dream of traveling around the world. Hendershott left Denver on a one-way ticket to Belize and has traveled to 35 countries—living in 19 of them. He is always proud to be a CU Boulder alumnus and hopes to inspire others. Throughout his travel, he has learned a great deal and has worked a variety of jobs. Follow Hendershott on his travel blog, rtwexperiences.com.

2008

Cari Eastman (PhDComm) has continued her research on immigration and border-related issues, and her second book, *Immigration: Examining the Facts*, was recently published by ABC-CLIO. Eastman continues to write as well as lecture at colleges and universities.



Stephanie Lyra, second from right, at the Emmy Awards

2011

Stephanie Lyra (Jour,Thtr) works as an editor at Bunim Murray Productions. She was nominated for an Emmy this year for outstanding picture editing for an unstructured reality program for her work on A&E's *Born This Way*, a series following seven young adults who have Down syndrome. She lives in Los Angeles, California.

2012

Emily Talley (Comm) retired from professional golf this year after playing three seasons on the LPGA Symetra Tour and a fourth and final season on the Ladies European Tour. Emily lives in Oslo, Norway, with her fiancé, Andreas Høye (Finance'14), who was on the CU cross country ski team. Emily is the content and sales manager for an outdoor adventure startup and app called Outtt, which is based in Oslo.

2013

The Green Bay Packers signed a contract extension making **David Bakhtiari (Comm ex)** one of the NFL's highest-paid tackles. In 2013, David started every game at left tackle, becoming the first rookie to do this for Green Bay since 1978.

Beth Bartel (MJour) works as an outreach specialist at UNAVCO, a Boulder-based scientific facility supporting research in natural hazards and other sectors of Earth science. She dabbles in much of what she worked on in the journalism program at CU—video production, photography, public relations, design, web content and social media.



Savannah Sellers

After graduating with a communication and psychology double major, **Sean Martin (Comm)** worked as an IT consultant at a Boulder startup for two years before landing back at CU as full-time staff doing IT work and project management. Martin is a system administrator at Facilities Management, is engaged to his fiancée and has settled into a home in Longmont.

Emmy-winner **Savannah Sellers (Jour)** was recently named co-anchor of NBC News' *Stay Tuned*, Snapchat's first daily news show. Featuring current events and entertainment news, it will run at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and at 1 p.m. on weekends.

2015

In April, **Elizabeth Hernandez (Jour)** returned to Boulder to report on the university that taught her a thing or two about reporting. Before landing the *Boulder Daily Camera's* higher-education beat, Elizabeth dug deep as a fellow at the Center for Public Integrity, an investigative newsroom in Washington, D.C. Before that, she called *The Denver Post* home for two years, first as an intern and then as a staff reporter covering breaking news and education. When she's not filling her reporter's notebook, she enjoys reading and writing but detests arithmetic.

We'd love to hear from you

Send us your updates, follow us on social media, attend one of our many events and let us know if you plan to be in the area. We need your expertise as we plan mentoring programs, develop our advisory boards and build industry partnerships.

colorado.edu/cmci/alumni-friends

what is **cmci**?

The College of **MEDIA, COMMUNICATION** and **INFORMATION** prepares students to be **LEADERS** in our ever-changing **INFORMATION SOCIETY**. Our students and faculty think across **BOUNDARIES**, innovate around **EMERGING** problems and **CREATE CULTURE** that **TRANSCENDS** convention.

7 DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS

Advertising, Public Relations and Media Design
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5 AFFILIATED CENTERS AND LABS

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By the numbers

All **FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS** take an **INTERDISCIPLINARY** class covering a range of **IDEAS** and **HANDS-ON** experience

2,000+

undergraduate and graduate students

30%

increase in incoming students for fall 2017

\$3.4

million received in research grants since the college's inception in 2015

22:1

student-to-faculty ratio

almost 400

students completed internships for credit in 2016-17

18,193

alumni as of May 2017

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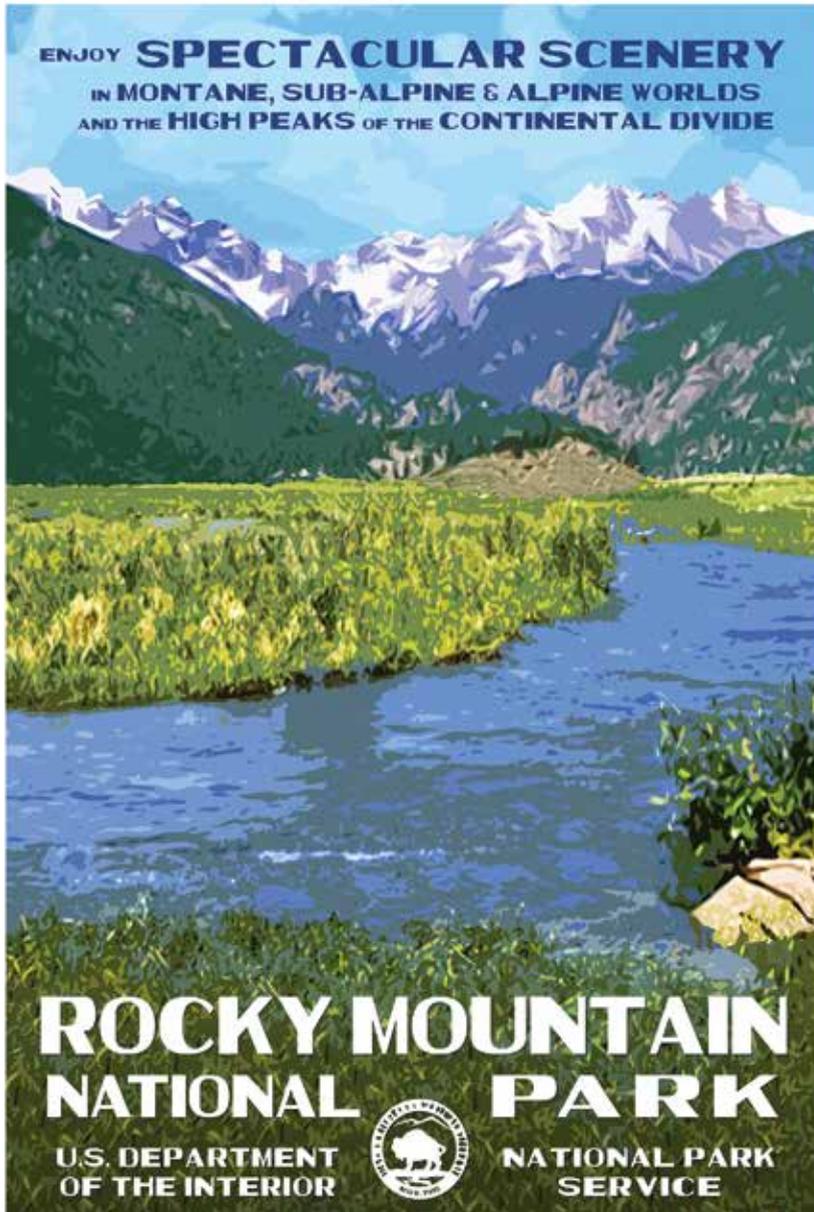
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Rob Decker (Comm'84) is a photographer and graphic artist based in Longmont, Colorado. He photographed his first national parks at age 8, and studied with Ansel Adams in Yosemite National Park when he was 19. Rob has visited 43 of 59 national parks as part of his National Park Posters project. To create these vintage-style posters, he takes a series of high-dynamic-range photographs and uses a digital process to transform the composite image into a work of graphic art. Learn more at national-park-posters.com.

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