Kaci Huelsmann has found herself back on college campuses, including Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, since she launched the campus recruiting program for Springfield, Illinois, based Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc. (LRS). She began that job in 2015, joining a company that is recognized as a global IT leader. LRS is a world-wide provider of innovative information technology solutions with more than 600 employees in offices throughout the United States and around the globe. As a campus recruiter, Kaci’s job is to work closely with colleges and universities across the United States to build a campus presence and let students know about the great opportunities that LRS has to offer. She works with senior management, campus faculty and staff, as well as students and campus organizations to collaborate on special events and presentations as well as recruit students at target schools.

“I’ve had the opportunity to work with students and help them launch their careers,” Kaci said, “and I’ve also had the chance to come back to SIU-C to recruit at my alma mater!” Kaci graduated from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 2006 with a specialization in Public Relations and a minor in Political Science. She started her career with Enterprise Holdings, working at their corporate headquarters in claims management. She developed an interest in recruiting and started doing full cycle recruiting at the Enterprise Corporate Contact Center.

From there, Kaci went on to work for the Automobile Club of Missouri (AAA,) where she was the first dedicated recruiter for the company’s call center. She gained valuable knowledge while developing their recruiting program. While there, Kaci earned her Professional in Human Resources Certification. During her tenure, she increased overall quality assurance, decreased department turnover, and expanded the recruiting program to two additional departments, travel and claims. Drawn to SIU because of her Southern Illinois roots and the fact that both parents had attended the school, Kaci enrolled and decided to live on campus to get the full college experience. She got involved with the Public Relations Student Society of America and other student organizations. Those experiences helped her prepare for professional life. Her favorite SIU classes? “Any classes that were taught by Josh Houston,” she said. “He had a way of teaching that was fun and interactive to the point where you didn’t feel as though you were learning.” Kaci recalls that all faculty and staff at SIU were always accommodating and made an effort to work with students and encourage them. Overall, her experience at SIU was a great one and she enjoys coming back each semester to see future success stories.
**1960s**

**Thomas W. Bohn (M.S. 1964)** went on to earn his Ph.D. from The University of Wisconsin Madison. He spent 23 years as the Dean of the Park School of Communications at Ithaca, NY, retiring in 2003. He co-authored two major textbooks; *Mass Media* (now in its sixth edition) and *Light and Shadows: A History of Motion Pictures* (3 ed.). Currently, he teaches part-time in Mass Communication and Film History.

**1970s**

**Mariann (Berry) Aalda (B.S. 1971)** has performed with the SIU Touring Theater and was awarded the first SIU internship in Public Relations. Her professional career also followed both paths -- first, as an account executive at Burson-Msrsteller PR and a unit publicist for ABC -TV in New York, and later, as an actress. Highlights include: starring on the ABC soap opera, *Edge of Night* (1981-84), as "DiDi Bannister," the distaff half of "Calvin & DiDi," one of daytime TV's first black super-couples; playing opposite OJ Simpson as his wife for three seasons on the HBO dramedy, *1st & Ten*, and co-starring with Redd Foxx and Della Reese as their daughter (the mother to Naya Rivera and Larenz Tate) on the CBS sitcom, *The Royal Family*. When confronted with the glass ceiling of ageism that often befalls women in Hollywood, Mariann returned to her roots of live performing -- as a standup comic and with her performance-art character, "Ginger Peechee-Keene, Adult Sex-Ed Evangelist & Mojo Motivator."

**Barry Birnbaum (B.S. 1974)** also earned an M.A. and Ed.D, in Special Education; he has worked as a professor for a number of years. He is retired from Northeastern Illinois University and currently is full time at Walden. He serves on the Friends of Morris Library Board at SIUC and travels to Carbondale about every six weeks for meetings.

**William Theigpen (B.S. 1976)** has officially retired after 40 years of working as a “computer nerd” for various insurance companies in Philadelphia, PA. He lives near the beaches of Delaware.

**Kevin Purcell (B.S. 1976)** is enjoying his life as an actor, director, teacher and consultant. Kevin acted in David Rush's new play "To My Dear Wife" at SIU Library October 15, 2016. In collaboration with Music Professor Emeritus Mike Hanes, he performed Dylan Thomas' "A Child's Christmas in Wales" at the Varsity in Carbondale and at Theater in the Park in New Salem, Illinois in December. Kevin is also a consultant with Power and Systems in Boston and is Adjunct Faculty in the School of Business for University of Illinois-Springfield. He considers his SIU education to be key to setting his life direction.
Roger Lautt (B.S. 1974, M.S. 1977) worked as a therapist from 1978 to 1984 with a specialization of working with Vietnam vets who have PTSD. In 1984 he decided to make some money and become a realtor. About 8 years ago, he became involved in dog training and that is a continued passion. He specializes in Scent Discrimination; in November 2017 he will be attending a class to learn how to train dogs for early cancer detection.

**1980s**

Phil Nelson (B.S. 1980) I have been married to Melanie Shelby for thirty-seven years. We are the proud parents of six children and eight grandchildren. I have been pastor of Lakeland Baptist Church in Carbondale since July of 2006. I received an honorary doctorate from the Baptist seminary in Havana Cuba back in 2009. I travel across the United States leading live events for Walk Thru the Bible Ministries and hold open dialogues with college and university students and staff on questions about the validity of the Christian Faith. I received my Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication Spring of 1980. I was a member of the debate team and placed in the top ten percent of debaters at the national debate tournament in April of 1979. I also placed first in SIU’s Spring Oratory Contest in 1979.

Karen Mitchell (B.S. 1977, M.S. 1981) asserts that her time spent at SIU set a path for her life. She left her teaching position at Carbondale Community High School in 1985, taught at Elk Grove High in the Chicago suburbs for four years, completed a Ph.D. in Performance Studies at LSU, and settled into a position at the University of Northern Iowa for 25 years. At UNI, she had the joy of serving as Artist Director of the Interpreters Theater for 22 years and of establishing the SAVE group, an interactive performance troupe aimed at preventing sexual assault on campus. UNI has awarded her accomplishments in teaching with several awards, but the most meaningful was the Leslie Irene Coger Award for distinction in performance given by the NCA. She has just started phased retirement and is loving every minute. On a personal note, she met her partner, Harry Brod at UNI 17 years ago, a scholar in Men’s Studies. They have a happy life filled with travel and laughter. She has no children of her own, but her 4 nieces, 1 nephew, and her dog, Zorro, keep her busy. At 61, she is taking cooking classes, doing water aerobics, trying to get her vocal cords ready for church choir, and thinking about returning to the stage (if she can memorize her lines). She still travels to Carbondale every 2-3 years to see Marion and Marvin Kleinau and check her old haunts — Pinch Penny and Giant City.

Nancy Elliott (B.S. 1982) lives in Champaign, Ill. and works at Carle Hospital and Health Alliance Medical Plans in Urbana, Ill. There, she works as an internal communications specialist. Much of her work involves planning, editing, writing, posting and maintaining the editorial and informational content on the employee portal for 6,000+ employees of their health system. She uses the knowledge gained at SIUC every day.

Carol L. Benton (Ph.D. 1988) is a professor and program coordinator of the Communication Studies degree program at University of Central Missouri. During the 2015-16 academic year, she was selected as a Faculty Fellow and taught within the UCM Honors College. Carol teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in Interpersonal Communication, Improving Listening, Family Communication, Mindful Communication, and Nonverbal Communication. In addition, she has provided workshops and trained groups in the area of nonverbal awareness, performance studies and gender/diversity studies. She is the author of published articles, book chapters, and academic papers exploring the performance of personal and intimate narratives as well as mindfulness in intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions.
1990s

**Anthony Petruzzi (B.S. 1992)** is a Financial Planner, a career he began in 1998. During his time at SIU, he was a member of Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity and later served as Alpha Sigma Alumni President. He was a member of PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) as well as a member of AMA (American Marketing Association). He is currently a member of the SIU Alumni Association. From 1992-1998 he worked in corporate equipment sales, which provided him with the contacts and experiences to realize that a career in Financial Planning was the direction for him. Anthony’s degree in Speech Communication provided him with a background that has led him to engaging in a number of initiatives. In 1995, he founded NBF (Nothing But Fun) Productions for band promotion and fundraisers. He became a Franklin Covey award winning Certified Trainer. He founded Impact Training Group in 2005 for providing corporate training, traveling across the country providing training to groups from company employees to financial planners. In 2015, he authored and published a book, *Connecting with People: Life Lessons from a PEZ® Dispenser*. Like a PEZ dispenser, what you put into your relationships with others affects what you get out. With this book, Anthony hopes to encourage improved interpersonal skills for enjoying better relationships in one’s life. He believes that in today’s hectic world of deadlines, information overload, multitasking and constant technology, we need to be reminded that it is important to let people know how much they are cared for. Anthony is available for speaking engagements. For details see: connectingwithpeople.net

**Peter Ross (M.S. 1988, Ph.D. 1993)** is celebrating his 25th year at Central Michigan University this year. He has held faculty and administrative positions and currently serves as CMU’s Vice-Provost/Academic Development. He is also celebrating 22 years of marriage to SIU-C graduate (1994) **Diane Krider**. Diane is a faculty member in the Department of Communication and Dramatic Arts and serves as Chair of the Council charged with overseeing CMU’s interdisciplinary Integrative Public Relations program – the largest major in the College of Communication and Fine Arts.

**Donald Jones (Ph.D. 1994)** was recently promoted to the rank of Full Professor at Trine University (formerly Tri-State University). He is the only faculty member to ever receive all three of Trine’s major faculty awards: the McKetta Excellence in Teaching Award, the Jannen Renaissance Scholar Award, and the Barrenbrugge Outstanding Faculty Member Award. At Trine he has served as Faculty President and as Chair of the Department of English and Communication, and he developed a public relations program that has had a 100% graduation placement record since 2005. At Trine he has taught more than 30 different courses and currently teaches a variety of courses in public relations, persuasion, argumentation, and research methods. He also is active in the Central States Communication Association and was Chair of the CSCA Public Relations Interest Group.
David W. Worley (Ph.D. 1996) spent 15 years as the Basic Course Director and ultimately Professor and Chairperson at Indiana State University in the Department of Communication. He, along with his wife, Debra who earned her Ph.D. at Wayne State and also taught PR at ISU, retired to Fort Collins, CO (spring and summer) and Apache Junction, AZ (late fall and winter) where they have lived for the past 5 years. They are now in the process of locating permanently to Mesa, AZ. He feels fortunate to still keep in touch with some of his former classmates and professors, including Tom Pace, Mimi Hinchcliff-Pelias and Jan Hoffman Clark.

Karen McGrath (Ph.D. 1996) has research interests in culture, gender, and media representations. She is currently Professor of Communications at the College of Saint Rose (20 years). She has co-authored a book titled The Millennial Mindset: Unraveling Fact from Fiction. Karen has also published peer-reviewed articles or chapters on a range of topics from The Big Bang Theory, The Hunger Games, and social media in education. Currently, she’s co-authoring a book titled Brew Your Business: The Ultimate Craft Beer Playbook to be published in 2017.

Stephen Hunt (Ph.D. 1998) serves as Professor of Communication and Executive Director of the School of Communication at Illinois State University. He recently completed an assignment serving as Chair of Illinois State’s American Democracy Project. As a Carnegie Fellow for Political Engagement, he helps lead national efforts to sharpen the political and civic leadership skills of today’s college students. Hunt is the author of over 30 scholarly articles, many focused on civic and political engagement, and is co-author of a public speaking textbook focused on critical thinking and civic engagement that is used by several communication departments throughout the country.

Nancy J. Curtin (Ph.D. 1999) is currently Chair and Associate Professor of Communication at Millikin University, Decatur, IL. Nancy lives in Decatur with her two children, Thomas, who is 17 years old and Jill, who is 15 years old.

2000s

Belinda Scrogham (B.A. 2000) After a 12 year career in not-for-profit fundraising, event planning, and staffing/management, I chose not to return to work after my third child was born. I run my own business out of my home as a Diamond Leader with It Works! Global and am active with Colorado PTA as Lukas PTA President. I have been married to fellow Saluki, Jason Scrogham, for ten years. We live in Westminster, Colorado with our three children; Riley (9), Addi (5) and Kane (21 months). We spend most of our free time traveling for our oldest son’s rugby tournaments and enjoy anything that puts us in the mountains.
Julie Orlandini (B.S. 2004) has been employed with Watson Dwyer, Inc. since graduating from SIUC. Julie is currently a Senior Recruiter with Watson Dwyer, a boutique staffing firm located in the heart of the Chicago Loop. Julie's position includes full-life cycle recruiting for some of Chicago's top companies, as well as heavy business development and account management. She recruits in all areas of corporate business for various positions including Human Resources, Marketing, Legal, IT, Administrative, and Accounting. She has also created the Watson Dwyer Internship program, in which she trains and mentors college students on the fundamentals of recruiting; sourcing, reference checking, database management, ATS usage, skills testing, and employee relations.

2010s

Shauna M. MacDonald (M.A. 2007, Ph.D. 2011) recently performed her ethnographic solo show, To Catch and To Keep, as part of Villanova University’s Nova Performance Group’s 2016-2017 Season. To Catch and To Keep is a performed collection of linguistic and material fragments assembled from several sets of stories: her arts-based/performative autoethnographic research in and around the lighthouses of New Jersey; personal narratives of her life (and family’s life) as each are connected by and to lighthouses and seaside spaces; historical data and works (from oral histories collected during her research of memoirs, historical artifacts, and various recorded histories). It is a performed collection about keeping: about lighthouse keeping, about keeping lighthouses protected in the modern world, about what and who is (and isn’t), MacDonald says, kept in our collective and public memories, and the (academic and everyday life) process of keeping memories and histories for future generations to encounter. Shauna performed the show on September 18 & 19 in the Communication Studio (the Department of Communication’s BlackBox space). The ethnographic research that contributes to this project was made possible by the support of Villanova University’s Waterhouse Family Institute for the Study of Communication and Society.

Megan Kramper (B.S. 2010, M.Ed. 2012) accepted the position of Assistant Director of Athletic Media Relations at Indiana University in August 2016, after spending the last three years at Indiana State. At IU She is the primary media contact for women’s basketball and women’s golf while assisting on football game days. She’s “beyond excited” for her first season in the Big Ten! Go Hoosiers!
Taylor A. Saul (B.S. 2016) was contacted by one of his former managers that he worked for in Carbondale, about an opportunity at TEKsystems. There, his title is IT Recruiter, where he assists many companies in finding the top IT national talent. It is a unique position giving him insight into the projects that many people are working on. He works in the Peoria/Bloomington offices in Central Illinois, so he works closely with two of the Fortune 500 companies — Caterpillar and State Farm.

Rebecca Cohen (B.S. 2016) After graduating in May 2016, she was offered a Communications and Marketing Coordinator position at Addison Public Library in Addison, IL. Rebecca reports that “I started work just two weeks after graduation and moving home so it was a pretty quick transition period. In my position I coordinate all marketing materials for the library, do graphic design work for the different departments and library as a whole, create and publish the printed newsletter six times a year, manage the social media accounts, serve on several committees throughout the city of Addison and play a key role in connecting the community to the library. I have to say, I am working at my dream job. Every day I know that I am impacting those around me and that is where my passion and position become one.”

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR, Nathan Stucky

In this issue you’ll note we’re again featuring some of our wonderful alumni. We invite all of our former students to use this forum to keep us up to date on personal and professional life events. I also want to thank the many alumni and friends of the department for giving generously to support scholarships and other department activities. The department of Communication Studies depends on private donations to provide student scholarships, bring guest speakers to campus and support student and faculty research. If you would like to donate, please visit our department’s giving page at: http://cola.siu.edu/communication_studies/giving/