



OCA Conversation

Ohio Communication Association

July 2005 Vol. 1, No. 2

OCA can grow if benefits are told

Survey team builds database, calls for scholarship, job postings

There is strong potential for increasing membership in the Ohio Communication Association if more can be done to spread word of the benefits. This was one finding in a series of surveys conducted last spring by senior organizational communication classes at the Chillicothe, Eastern (St. Clairsville) and Zanesville campuses of Ohio University.

The team found some support for a proposal that OCA offer an undergraduate scholarship and even more for a suggestion that job opportunities for communication graduates be listed on the OCA web site (<http://www.ohiocomm.org>).

The study, guided by Professor Lisa Wallace of Ohio University-Chillicothe, was based on questions sent to 540 professors at 120 campuses and asked of graduate and undergraduate communication students at four campuses of OU, including the three from which the survey team was drawn and one other, Lancaster.

Responses came from 71 individuals, including 15 undergraduate and eight graduate students. Twenty-five of the respondents indicated they were already among the 75 members of OCA.

Awareness was identified as

the most critical need for the organization. The fact that the project developed the database of 540 professors was seen as a strong first step for marketing, and the survey team urged OCA to use it to send information to the professors that could be passed on to communication majors.

The students attributed some of the lack of awareness to a recent change in the organization's name, which had been Speech Communication Association of Ohio (SCAO). OCA has averaged 75 members over the last three years, including about 50 who were

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President's message:

A progress report

By Jeffrey Tyus, Ph.D.

When I took over as president of the Ohio Communication Association, I made several goals for myself regarding the direction I wanted to lead OCA during the next two years. My number one goal was to improve attendance and involvement at our annual conference in October. I have been a member since 2001 and during that time OCA has slowly experienced a slight decrease in attendance each subsequent year. Therefore, I knew we had to address this issue immediately.

During Spring Quarter 2005, a group of students in senior Organizational Communication courses at Ohio University branch



DR. TYUS

Plan to attend OCA's conference in Dayton

A keynote speech on "Ethics in the Age of Technology," and panels and research paper presentations are on the agenda for the Ohio Communication Association 2005 annual conference. The program on Saturday, Oct. 1, at Sinclair Community College, will feature an address by Dr. Michael Bugeja, author of *Impersonal Divide: The Search for Community in a Technological Age*.

For more about the conference, see pages 3, 5 and 6.

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OCA Profile: Jeffrey Tyus, Ph.D.

This is the first of a series of profiles of people in leadership for the Ohio Communications Association. Dr. Tyus is president of the association.



DR. TYUS

What is your job and employer and what do you teach?

I am an associate professor of communication at Sinclair Community College. I teach Mass Communication, Intercultural Communication, Public Relations, Introduction to Broadcasting and Public Speaking, as well as the capstone portfolio course for our graduating majors.

Tell me an interesting fact about you.

Two interesting facts that come to mind are: 1)

I graduated ninth out of 342 in high school and was the top male graduate, and 2) I am the first in my family with two advanced degrees.

What was your first job?

My first job that I could remember was working as the burger boy at Burger King. It didn't last too long because it was interfering with my studies too much in high school -- I have my priorities, you know!

Tell me about your education.

I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. I am very PROUD to be a graduate of the Cleveland Public School system, having graduated from John Marshall High School, proving that you don't have to graduate from a private school in order to find success in your life. I attended Ohio University for all three degrees – Bachelor's degree in Telecommunications (emphasis on Video Production and Advertising), Master's in Telecommunications (emphasis on Media Management), and Ph.D. in Interpersonal Communication (emphasis on race issues and the media).

What was your dissertation topic and what is your current research focus?

My dissertation was titled, "Breaking Into the Mainstream: Afrocentric Television Shows on the Fringes of the Media." My dissertation was mainly an examination of how Black and White audiences critically assess African-American-oriented sitcoms on the WB and UPN network. Much of my current research interests fall under this same notion of how certain audiences apply critical thinking to interpret various media productions.

What do you like about your job and your workplace?

I enjoy the technological aspects of my job at Sinclair. Since I've been here I have had the opportunity to learn a variety of ways to incorporate technology into my classrooms to make the learning environment both educational and enjoyable for my students. I also enjoy working with my colleagues. Everyone is very nice and willing to help one another achieve their goals.

Tell me something about your personal life (such as family).

My immediate family still lives in Cleveland. I find myself traveling to Cleveland frequently to visit my parents and two brothers and their families. Currently, I am engaged to be married in August '06 and look forward to beginning a new chapter in my life.

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Distinguished chapter award

OU East wins honor with two big projects

The National Communications Association Student Chapter at **Ohio University East** has been selected Ohio Communication Association's "Distinguished Student Organization for 2005. The OCA Awards Committee has invited the students to participate in the annual conference Oct. 1, 2005, at Sinclair Community College in Dayton.

The club sponsored two major projects in the 2004-2005 school year, raising awareness in one and money in the other.

In Fall 2004, the local chapter, joined by the National Communication Association (NCA) and the Commission on Presidential Debates, sponsored a series of "**Debate Watch**" events for each of the presidential and vice-presidential debates. The events garnered a fair amount of attention from local media, according to Dr. Jason Wrench, chapter adviser and OUE assistant professor of communications.

The second major accomplishment was fund-raising conducted to help finance the creation of a student game room on campus. In March of 2005, the chapter produced a night of live music at the university, a first for the Ohio University East campus.

The "**Band Bash**," which drew an audience of 300, was a huge undertaking and involved collaborating on everything from food, to ticket sales, to the loading and unloading of the six different bands that volunteered to participate. In total, the event netted more than \$1,000 for the game room.

Dr. Wrench said the event was also seen by the university administration as an amazing recruiting tool, because it brought prospective students to the campus.



Students at Ohio University East enjoy a "Bandbash" sponsored by the National Communication Association Student Chapter.

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campuses in Eastern (St. Clairsville), Chillicothe, and Zanesville conducted a study and series of surveys to find out how OCA could improve our membership base. One of the most important conclusions drawn from this study was the need to increase AWARENESS of OCA. There were faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students who didn't realize we existed as an organization.

Well, with the help of the Executive Committee, we have started to work on this goal of improving attendance and awareness. First, we changed our name in an effort to make all areas of communication feel invited. Second, we upgraded our web site to make it more user-friendly and changed the web site address to reflect the name change to OCA (www.ohiocomm.org). Third, instead of having the conference in the same place every year, we decided to move the annual conference around the state to increase our exposure in different areas.

Furthermore, I called some members to highlight our mission and ask them to get involved in the conference. Next, I made every attempt to send a personal letter inviting all communication faculty who hadn't attended our conference previously, encouraging them to not only get involved with OCA, but also encourage their students to get involved as well. Finally, we set up an area of the web site (called Ohio Accomplishments) where communication scholars can post their recent accomplishments, so colleagues on campuses across the state may recognize and congratulate them on their successes.

These are just some of the early improvements we've made to reach out to our colleagues within this great state. As a result of these efforts, our web site has been visited more times than ever before and we had the largest number of paper and panel submissions that we've had in a long time. While I am definitely proud of the accomplishments we have made this year, there is still room to grow. As an organization, we vow to make every attempt to reach out to our constituents, from accomplished scholars to aspiring undergraduates.

Please consider becoming a member of the Executive Board of OCA. With more involvement, you can play an integral role in making our state association one of the best in the country. Jeffrey.Tyus@sinclair.edu

Ohio news briefs**JCU department changes name**

The Department of Communications at John Carroll University in Cleveland has been renamed "Department of Communication and Theater Arts."

Sr. Mary Ann Flannery, chair, said the change was made to recognize that the department has faculty teaching courses such as theater, acting for the stage and design for the stage.

JCU also offers CO undergraduate courses in interpersonal communications, event planning, rhetoric, journalism, broadcasting and public relations and a graduate program in communication management.

TYUS PROFILE, from page 2**What other significant achievements have you had?**

I received tenure this year and celebrated my five years of service at Sinclair Community College. Becoming president of OCA was a significant achievement for me as well. Finally, I am proud of my decision to stay in school and achieve both my master's and Ph.D. degrees. Those were significant achievements that actually changed the direction of my life, and I am eternally grateful to those who played an instrumental role in my decision to attain advanced degrees.

What are your goals now?

My main goal for myself personally is to become a published professional. I have taken the time to focus on becoming a better professor. Now I would like to focus my attention on putting the many thoughts that come to my mind into print.

What goal do you have for the Ohio**Communication Association?**

The main goal I have for OCA is to help it become a lively and thriving organization. I would like to help boost our overall membership and our attendance at conferences, and promote our visibility among Communication scholars and students across our state.

If you had to describe yourself, what words would you use?

Laid-back, intuitive, deceitful, thoughtful, appreciative, respectful, and blessed.

This newsletter was edited by Dr. Richard D. Hendrickson, an assistant professor of communications at John Carroll University, using InDesign software in the offices of *The Carroll News*. If you have corrections or suggestions, send e-mail to rhendrickson@jcu.edu.

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listed as returning.

Professors can join OCA by paying \$40 a year, while the student rate is \$20. Members receive a free copy of the association's annual journal of research articles.

Sixty-one percent of the respondents said they also belonged to other communication associations, and all but one said they'd consider joining an organization that specialized in the subject. "(The answers) emphasize there is a desire for the OCA, but professors may not be fully aware of the OCA and its benefits," the team said.

Thirty-nine percent of 15 undergraduates who answered the survey at the four OU campuses said they'd never heard of the OCA, the team reported. "We feel that the awareness ... is low due to professors and institutions not making the OCA and its benefits known to undergraduates."

The team proposed and tested two ideas for increasing student awareness. A proposal for an undergraduate scholarship was supported by 44 percent, while the posting of job opportunities drew 62 percent agreement.

Fifty-two percent of the respondents who were current members of OCA expressed satisfaction with the organization, while 26 percent were neutral and 22 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with a statement that OCA was of benefit to them. Sixty-one percent thought the benefits were worth the membership fee.

The annual conference was perceived by the members as worthwhile (61 percent) and well-organized (87 percent). Most of the members (83 percent) said they planned to go to Dayton this year. More than half (61 percent) said they'd like to see more events, besides papers, panels and workshops, but a majority (65 percent) thought a one-day conference was adequate. Fifty-seven percent liked having the conference in the fall, 22 percent preferred a winter gathering and 17 percent said it ought to take place in the summer, but only 4 percent favored a spring conference.

OCA Calendar

Sept. 30 – Executive Committee pre-conference meeting at Sinclair Community College, Dayton.

Oct. 1 – 69th Annual Conference, Sinclair Community College, Dayton.

Where to find leads, 3 tips for job search

By Candace Thomas-Maddox

Students often ask the question, "So what kind of job can I get with a degree in organizational communication?" Typically, my response is, "It would be easier for me to try to explain what kind of job you CAN'T get with an OrgComm degree rather than to list all the options available."

A variety of jobs exist for communication graduates. The trick is knowing how to search for these opportunities. After all, there are few job advertisements that specifically ask for graduates of communication. The web site of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington can help you. It's loaded with information on the kinds of career opportunities open to communication graduates. Click on this link: <http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/communication.htm>

Three strategies to enhance the job search include:

1) Don't limit your search for jobs by searching for only "Communication" in the title. Review the list and identify specific career areas that are of interest to you such as sales, patient advocate or event planner to assist you in searching for specific career opportunities.

2) Consider listing specific skills in searching for careers. Some examples of skills you could include are: interviewing, speaking, research, training, and project management (all the group projects you completed have taught you a thing or two about managing projects).

3) If you have a particular company in mind, review that company's website for job openings. Not only will you discover jobs that are available, but also you can gain valuable insight into the specific procedures for submitting your application (i.e., some companies only accept applications submitted through their website – they do not accept paper copies of resumes). For example, if you have an interest in working for JP Morgan Chase, review their online job postings on the firm's website.

You might be surprised to discover that they have positions available in training and development, event coordination, human resources (interviewing), and project management!

Dr. Thomas-Maddox is associate professor of communication studies at Ohio University – Lancaster.

Heidi Porter is OCA's top 2005 Undergraduate



Heidi Porter, who completed studies in radiology and then sought advanced education in organizational communication, is the Ohio Communication Association undergraduate of the year for 2005.

Porter, a senior in the College of Communication at Ohio University Eastern, is co-chair of the National Communications Association Student Chapter on that campus. She is working on a research study dealing with superiors and subordinates.

While studying Diagnostic Radiologic Technology at an Ohio Valley facility, Ms. Porter earned the Nycomed Amersham Award of Academic Excellence and the Mallinckrodt Award for clinical excellence in radiology. After completing the program, she worked as a staff technologist at an Ohio Valley health care facility.

But she decided she wanted to expand her possibilities. "After reviewing my life goals," she recalls, "I decided to further my education in the field of organizational communication. "I love the field of communication and the immense opportunities offered within it."

Ms. Porter also has received the Thomas and Virginia Helms Scholarship and the prestigious Upper-Class Honors Scholarship which requires a minimum GPA of 3.9. The honors meant she was a student ambassador and presented her paper, "Biological Sex and Personality Variations on Machiavellianism and the Eysenck Personality Variables," at the Eastern Communication Association Conference last spring in Pittsburgh, PA

Carol Savery wins graduate student honor



Carol Savery, a non-traditional graduate student at The University of Akron's School of Communication, has been named the Ohio Communication Association Distinguished Graduate Student for 2005.

Mrs. Savery, who has been teaching public relations courses as a graduate assistant at Akron, successfully defended a master's thesis exploring public relations practitioners' perceptions, characteristics, influences and obstacles regarding diffusion of innovations.

She will graduate with a master of arts degree on Aug. 27.

After earning a bachelor of fine arts degree in theatre from the University of Calgary, Savery has worked as an actress and children's theater instructor in Canada and the U.S. She has been a hospice volunteer in Canada, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio.

At the 2005 International Communications Association conference, Mrs. Savery was given a graduate teaching award by the Instructional and Developmental Division, sponsored by The Amsterdam School of Communications Research.

She was the 2004-2005 vice president of membership and created the website for The University of Akron's AWC student chapter. She is a member of OCA, ICA, NCA and PRSSA.

Mrs. Savery has two grown sons, Dylan and Eden. She lives in Akron with her husband, Dr. John R. Savery, who is on the faculty of the University of Akron Department of Education.

Follow this link to OCA's conference program
Everything you want to know about the Ohio Communication Association's Oct. 1, 2005, annual conference at Sinclair Community College in Dayton is available on the OCA web site.

Open your browser and search for this link:

<http://www.ohiocomm.org/confcall.html>