



From the Desk of the Associate Dean

Every time I walk over to the RJI buildings I'm am awe-struck again. The architecture is truly beautiful. Who would have know you could take a hundred year old building, a 1930s building, and pull them together into something that looks so new, but blends so well with the rest of the "journalism campus." And between the University kicking in the money for all that sod AND the rented plants nestled all over our corner of the campus, the Centennial and Dedication celebrations couldn't have been better housed!

There were lots of great ideas brought to campus, too, and Jeremy reviews a lot of them in this issue.

Things have settled down again and October approaches. Master's and doctoral students continue to win awards, travel the world, and publish.

And the same can be said for the graduate faculty. Congrats to all of you who got special recognition in this issue!

Here's an important question that I hope you'll all respond to. Would you prefer receiving the Grad Newsletter electronically? Please let Amy or me know!

The brown bag program is revving up and we'll be hearing a lot from the Fellows of RJI. These sessions

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Centennial and RJI dedication celebrated

By Jeremy Littau

The Missouri School of Journalism's centennial celebration from Sept. 10-12 also served as a launch for the Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI), as more than 2,000 guests attended the three-day event in Columbia.

The dedication of RJI on Friday was a highlight of the event, as it drew alumni, faculty, current students, and the public to celebrate both the school's storied past and its groundbreaking future. The institute, made possible by a \$31 million gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, was officially dedicated in a ceremony Friday hosted by Dean Mills and attended by political figures from all over Missouri, including U.S. Senator Kit Bond. Reynolds Foundation chair Fred Smith and Missouri governor Matt Blunt unveiled the bust of Don Reynolds during the ceremony.

The Friday events in general were part of a day devoted to innovation called the Technology Summit, which was used to highlight projects and ideas that are driving forward discussion about media and technology. One highlight of the three-day event was a roundtable hosted by MU president Gary

Forsee titled "Communication for a Digital Globe" that discussed views on how technology changes are affecting communication. It brought together panelists from different parts of the industry, from Cisco to AT&T, to discuss the impact of technology innovation and how the media can find a way forward.

Thursday also was a forward-looking day, looking at changes in media through the Futures Forum. Changes in media of all kinds were examined, from journalism to advertising and in ways looking at production, ethics, news values, and many of the other ways in which students approach media every day at the School of Journalism. A roundtable involving publishers and editors from major newspapers, such as Ken Paulson from *USA Today* and Michael Golden from the *New York Times*, discussed what is happening in the industry and how it both is changing and needs to change.

"I'm bullish on newspapers," said Paulson, a Missouri grad who went on to share research that shows that more than 90% of college students pick up a newspaper at least once a week on a campus that had a free newspaper program. Paulson, like many of the other panelists, noted the need for new models but said that there are some encouraging signs that show there is a way to solve the industry crisis.



MU president Gary Forsee. Photo by Dak Dillon

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The Center on Religion & the Professions

By Amy White

MU's Center on Religion & the Professions (CORP), an affiliate of the Missouri School of Journalism, had a busy summer of conferences, events and planning programs for fall.

Centennial panels

The Center hosted two "Futures Forum" sessions at the J-School Centennial & Dedication event in September. Both attracted standing-room only audiences of alumni, faculty, students and staff.

"We were exceptionally pleased with the turnout and interest in the topics for these panels," said Debra L. Mason, MU professor of journalism studies and CORP director. "It shows there is a need for awareness about issues related to religion and meaning in journalism education." The Center aims to improve religious literacy among professionals, including journalists, so they can best serve a diverse public.



Mason

"Politics and Religion – God in the White House" featured Kathleen Falsani, *Chicago Sun-Times* religion columnist and author of "The God Factor: Inside the Spiritual Lives of Public People," which included the first interview with Sen. Barack Obama about his faith. It also featured Dan Gilgoff, politics editor and "God-o-Meter" blogger at Beliefnet.com. A *U.S. News & World Report* contributing editor, Gilgoff is the author of "The Jesus Machine: How James Dobson, Focus on the Family, and Evangelical America are Winning the Culture War."



Tammeus

"The Life of Meaning -- Finding and Reporting it in a World of Crisis" was moderated by Bill Tammeus, BJ '67. A former *Kansas City Star* editorial page editor and Faith section columnist, Tammeus is the author of "A Gift of Meaning," a collection of his columns. The panel featured Pat Rice, former *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* religion editor and contributor to the online *St. Louis Beacon*; and Bob Abernethy, executive editor and host of PBS's "Religion & Ethics Newsweekly," and co-editor of the book, "The Life of Meaning: Reflections on Faith, Doubt, and Repairing the World."

Conference programming

Also in September, CORP co-sponsored a pre-conference program on "Getting Up to Speed on Multimedia: A Practical Primer for Print Journalists," at the Religion Newswriters Association conference in Washington, D.C. The program featured Lynda Kraxberger, as-



Kraxberger

sociate professor in convergence journalism at MU. In addition to heading CORP, Mason is the RNA executive director.

The Center also co-sponsored a pre-conference program on "Teaching Religion and Media: Best Practices for the 21st Century" at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication convention in Chicago, Ill., in August. MU journalism doctoral student Jeremy Littau, a CORP graduate research assistant, presented the paper "Time to 'Get' Religion? An Analysis of Religious Literacy Among Journalism Students" at the convention. The paper, authored by Littau and Mason, was based on research they conducted for CORP.



Littau

CORP co-sponsored a seminar on "China, Religion & Human Rights" at The National Press Club in Washington, D.C. in May. The seminar trained journalists to report on issues such as human rights and religious freedom at the Beijing Olympics.

New course

CORP and affiliates developed a new course, "Religious Literacy for Professionals" (Religious Studies 3100) that will be taught online in Spring 2009 through MU Extension's Center for Distance and Independent Learning. The course provides practical knowledge about religion as it is encountered in the professional world in a pluralistic society and features a journalism module.

The Center was one of 10 institutions accepted to participate in the weeklong Institute on Religion in Curriculum and Culture of Higher Education in West Cornwall, Conn. in June. Mason and CORP outreach coordinator Amy White presented on "Religious Literacy for Professionals," based on the new religious literacy class. White also was a panelist about religious literacy initiatives at universities, presenting on the course and related CORP research at the Society for Values in Higher Education annual meeting in Baltimore, Md., in June.

Upcoming events

The Center's film series, now in its second year, is under way. The 11-film series explores a theme of "Spirituality & Health." October films include "Renewal: Inspiring Stories from America's Religious Environmental Movement" on Oct. 16 and "Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality" on Oct. 30. The free films are shown at 7 p.m. in Wrench Auditorium (South Memorial Union).

The Center also recently launched an online film lending library with a variety of documentaries, dramas and

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The Center on Religion & the Professions

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educational films. Films include "Using the News to Teach Religion" and "What is an Evangelical? A Short Course for Media Professionals."

CORP is co-sponsoring several campus events this fall with the MU Museum of Art & Archaeology, Peace Studies Program, Department of Philosophy, and Center for Arts & Humanities.

Additional achievements

MU journalism professor emeritus Edmund B. Lambeth edited the book, "Professional Creativity & the Common Good," which is being published by Marquette Books of Spokane, Wash. The book includes chapters based on a Distinguished Lecture Series hosted by CORP in 2004-05 and on CORP research on religion and professions. Lambeth is a former director of the Center.



Lambeth

J-School graduate Justin Hienz, a 2006-07 CORP graduate research assistant, was hired by National



Hienz

Public Radio Digital Media Group. Hienz works on the NPR Web site, on religion and enterprise stories, and does production. He earned a bachelor's degree in religious studies and master's degrees in journalism and religious studies at MU.

CORP Director Mason authored the cover story, "Keeping the Faith," in the May 2008 issue of "Quill," a publication of the Society of Professional Journalists. The article is about how journalists balance their private faith and covering religious issues.

Mason's Spring 2008 "Religion Reporting and Writing" course students authored articles featured in a Columbia Missourian series appearing this fall. The series, on "Spiritual Journeys," explores area youths' spiritual rites of passages, explorations and identities.

For more information about Center on Religion & the Professions events and programs, see <http://corp.missouri.edu> or call 882-2770.

Amy White is outreach coordinator at the MU Center on Religion & the Professions.



J-School logo and contact information for the Missouri School of Journalism, including phone and fax numbers, and a website link.

- List of staff members: Esther Thorson, Martha Pickens, Amy Lenk, Ginny Cowell, and Jeremy Littau, with their respective email addresses.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, ANNOUNCEMENT OR ITEM OF INTEREST
Deadline for Submission for the November Newsletter is October 15. Late submissions will be included on a space-available basis or in the following month.