October Student of the Month
Madison Schmek, Junior
Concentration: Journalism/PR

Q: Why did you choose Communications as your major?
A: “Because I love to write. I thought it would be the best way to pursue my love of writing, and it did not disappoint. I learned a lot of valuable skills from my time in the Communications Department, not only for the professional world, but for life as well.”

Q: What is your favorite memory here?
A: “When I had my first article published in the Delphian. It was a feature story on an athlete at Adelphi that I completed for a course, and seeing it published in the newspaper made me feel a sense of accomplishment.”

Q: What has been your favorite class?
A: Newswriting because it made me realize my love for journalism. It was exciting to write articles and try to get them published in the paper. The class provided an insight into what it would be to work professionally in the journalism field.”

Q: What are your future career ambitions?
A: “I plan to attend law school and pursue a career as a lawyer. I have always felt intrigued by the law profession and I am excited to begin that journey after graduation.”

Q: What advice would you give to students here?
A: “Take advantage of every opportunity, try new things, get involved, and never believe that there are things you cannot accomplish. Time will fly by, and it is up to you to accomplish everything you can. Adelphi offers its students a lot of opportunities to succeed so it is up to you to seize them.”

November Student of the Month
Megan Safina, Senior
Concentration: Digital Production

Q: Why did you choose Communications as your major?
A: “I came in undecided. I sat down with the Career Center and took a survey. It said I should be a librarian, but then I realized filming was something I always wanted to do.”

Q: What is your favorite memory here?
A: “Probably filming my final project for Cinematography. I picked a deserted classroom on the third floor and used a cheap rug and put fake blood on it. The film, ‘The Vacant Truth’ made it into the Spring 2018 film festival.”

Q: What has been your favorite class?
A: “Really liked them all, especially Cinematography (with Prof. Poccia) – Every time I watch a film, I think about something that I learned from that class. One of the most rewarding experiences.”

Q: Are there any professors who have made a significant impact on you?
A: “Prof. Poccia because of how much I learned in his class and Prof. Ross because every class I take with him I pick up something new.”

Q: What advice would you give to current/future students in the department?
A: “Enjoy the classes—just have fun and take in what the professors are teaching you.”

Q: Are there any movies that you draw inspiration from?
A: “Get Out” because of the way it mixed horror and comedy.”
Mehdi Salehi’s Drone Class Takes to The Sky

The Communications Department’s newest adjunct professor, Mehdi Salehi, is already making quite the impact on his students.

As part of the Special Topics: Intro to Drone Photography class, Salehi teaches students about the history of drones, different components of drones and how they work and of course how to fly drones.

Students collect data from flying their drones that can then be utilized for photography, filming and creating aerial 3D models.

Salehi says that students learn the skillset to utilize drone technology for real-world scenarios such as drones in media, construction, agriculture, land surveying, engineering, scanning historical sites and more.

Additionally the class helps students to study and pass the FAA test to obtain their drone license for commercial operations.

The new Adelphi professor says that the class opens career opportunities and even more.

“The drone market is growing rapidly,” Salehi says. “New jobs are being created, new ways of utilizing drone technology has been proven to work and students’ drone portfolios can help them stay up to date in the job market but also help them with experimenting and learning this new technology as a powerful tool in their academic, personal and professional life.”

Salehi’s own journey with drones started in 2012 when he was a student. He says he began flying a toy drone and realized the potential and his personal passion for flying.

After that he founded the startup Good Drones LCC in 2014 (currently re-branded as Drone Labs.)

“One of our projects is called Drone for Refugees that was pilot tested in Greece,” Salehi says. “It’s a real-time drone monitoring system to ensure the safe arrival of refugees from Turkey to Greece.”

Salehi describes drone technology as “sophisticated, creative, fun and exciting.” He believes it benefits us by making jobs more efficient, faster, safer, easier and cheaper.

He believes it will also create jobs and new opportunities to improve people’s lives.

Salehi says: “We are lucky to live [in] this moment as we are shaping the drone culture that will be here to stay.”

Drew, Stein Schimke have their short film screened at Adelphi

Professors Joan Stein Schimke and John Drew’s short film, Saeed was screened at the Adelphi University International Immigration Film Festival on Nov. 12 in the Performing Arts Center.

The filmed tells the story of a Syrian family who have recently resettled on Long Island. It delves into how the characters are dealing with the aftermath of living in a war-stricken country.

The goal of the film was to show what life looks like and feels like for Syrian families, according to Drew. He explained on a Kickstarter campaign for the project that Saeed is “intended to invite compassion for Syrians who are simply seeking refuge all over the world.”

Drew wrote the screenplay and co-produced the film and Stein Schimke directed it.

Prof. Stein Schimke has directed numerous short films including One Day Crossing, which was nominated for an Academy Award.

Drew previously co-directed, produced and edited Border Stories, which won the Every Humans Have Rights Jury Award in 2008. Saeed is his narrative debut as a screenwriter.
Fifth Annual Media Career Expo brings hope, advice to students

The Department of Communications along with The Delphian hosted the Fifth Annual Media Career Expo on Nov. 28 in Blodgett Hall.

The new departmental tradition brings together various successful alumni from different fields to speak about how they got their jobs and to give advice and hope to students looking to break into the media field.

This year, speakers included Nerfertiti Anderson, ’12, a broadcast journalist and social media strategist; Leslie Fazin, ’10, a copywriter and marketing specialist; Damian Geminder, ’11, a communications coordinator and editor; Sam Rappold ’10, a videographer; Andrew Ryan, ’16, a news photographer/editor; and Kristen Sullivan, ’14, an internet news manager.

As always, senior adjunct professor and faculty advisor to The Delphian, Liza Burby moderated the event and was crucial in originating the event.

“The panelists at our Career Expo—all graduates within the past eight years—provided the audience with practical information that is relevant to our students’ current and future job searches,” Burby said. “Not only did they offer a positive outlook on the prospects for students to get jobs in their chosen fields, they also spoke about their own career paths, including what worked and what didn’t.”

After a panel discussion, dozens of students who attended were allowed to ask questions and talk to the speakers face-to-face while enjoying some light refreshments.

In the previous four years, attendees were able to get internships and/or freelance assignments from the panelists.

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Campbell’s documentary selected for film festival

Thomas W. Campbell's new 37 minute documentary film, The Motorcycle Art of Linus Coraggio, is an official selection in the French Riviera Motorcycle Film Festival.

The film follows the career of New York Artist Linus Coraggio, the architect of the infamous “Gas Station” junkyard installation/landscape/performance space in the East Village of the 1980's and 90's.

Obsessed with motorcycles since he was a young child, he has created over 100 motorcycle artworks from found objects, metal, plastic and wood. The festival takes place from February 15 -17, 2019.

Photography: Thomas W. Campbell

Design, Editing and Layout: Stephen Levine

Thanks to all those who contributed.
Gary Pipa ’88 shares his journey in the TV industry

Gary Pipa ’88 has been working in TV for the past two decades and has learned a lot along the way.

Most recently, Pipa worked as the Senior Vice President for Strategy and Acquisitions for WEtv at AMC Networks. In his role, he was in charge of content strategy and deciding when a show would air or premiere. He was also responsible for acquisitions and licensing, which was necessarily for getting content onto their network.

Pipa says it was also very exciting to be with the company while they produced popular shows like Mad Men, Breaking Bad and The Walking Dead during his 18-year tenure with the company. Studio 108 looked a lot different in the ‘80s when Pipa filmed one of his projects he is most proud of at his time at Adelphi.

During his TV Production class, Pipa’s idea for a sitcom was chosen to be filmed as part of the class. The TV buff wrote, directed, shot and built a set for the 30-minute production. The piece, “For Sentimental Reasons” was about a kid who wanted to move out of his house and move to the west coast. It focused on his family’s anxiety about him leaving.

“It was a really great college experience—a really great production experience,” Pipa says.

As for the future of media, Pipa advises students and recent graduates to get “very comfortable with change” as the business is not as stable as it used to be. He also says it’s important to diversify your expertise since media is changing so rapidly.

There is one aspect of media that Pipa thinks will continue.

“Storytelling is always going to be a part of everything we do in our business,” Pipa says. We have to touch people, touch their emotions—it’s about getting people to care about your story. I don’t think that will ever change.”

Pipa will be a judge at the department’s annual Film Festival in May.