



# MediaConnection

MASS COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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Left to right: Jane Gamache, Dr. Raymond Gamache and Dr. Scott Weiland, Chairperson.

## Gamache Family Makes Donation to Department

The donation will be used to upgrade the department's field video equipment to full high-definition. Remaining funds will be used to upgrade additional audio, lighting, storage media, and more.

"We are very pleased that Ray and Jane made such a generous contribution," stated Scott J. Weiland, Ph.D., department chair. "The dollars will go a long

The addition of the high-definition video field equipment complements the King's College, high-definition television studio and King's College Television (KCTV), which was recently upgraded as well. "We are proud that our Mass Communications students have access to the tools that will help prepare them for careers in broadcast television. Students are rolling up their sleeves and producing their own television shows, and our department team is very pleased to assist them in their efforts," stated Dr. Weiland.

Jane and Dr. Raymond Gamache, former Mass Communications Assistant Professor, recently donated \$5,000 to the Mass Communications Department.

way in helping our students obtain hands-on experience on state-of-the-art, industry standard, broadcast equipment. We are forever grateful for their generosity."

For more information visit [www.kings.edu](http://www.kings.edu) or contact Dr. Weiland at [scottweiland@kings.edu](mailto:scottweiland@kings.edu).

## Students Present Research at RIT Conference

Three mass communications students, Kati Sudnick, Josh Lukaszewski and Emily Sepela presented their research at the 2014 Rochester Institute of Technology's Conference for Undergraduate Research in Communication on April 9, 2014. "Sexual Print Advertising and its Appeal to the Young Consumer" was a quantitative study written for Dr. Michelle Schmude's Research Methods class during the fall 2013 semester.

regional conference. Sponsored by the Department of Communication and held annually at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), the conference has drawn nearly 250 undergraduate scholars from colleges and universities in New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Virginia.



Pictured left to right: Emily Sepela, Kati Sudnick, and Josh Lukaszewski.

The Conference for Undergraduate Research in Communication, which began in 2004 as a small gathering of communication students from western New York, has grown into a vibrant

All accepted papers are published in

a handsome paperback, which is available for purchase online.

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Congratulations  
to our  
2014 Mass  
Communications  
Graduates  
&  
Kati Sudnick  
Recipient  
of the  
Fr. Murgas  
Award

## MediaConnection Contributors

### Mass Communications Faculty

Mr. Michael Berry  
Dr. James P. Dolhon  
Dr. Raymond Gamache  
Ms. Karen Mercincavage  
Dr. Scott Weiland

### Adjunct Faculty

Ms. Susan Henry  
Dr. Michelle Schmude

### Faculty Coordinators

Ms. Karen Mercincavage  
Dr. Raymond Gamache

## WRKC Wins First Place Awards SPJ MARK OF EXCELLENCE AND INTERCOLLEGIATE BROADCASTING



Seated is Jessica Mulligan; standing, from left, is Sue Henry, general manager; Janelle Marshalllick, Brielle Warren, Marcus Mewborn, co-sports director; Ashlee Jacobs, news director; and Tyler R. Tynes, co-sports director.

Staff members of WRKC (88.5 FM), the student-run radio station of King's College, recently won several national broadcasting awards in the prestigious Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ) Mark of Excellence and Intercollegiate Broadcast System (IBS) awards.

In the 2013 Mark of Excellence Awards for Region One, WKRC's "News at Five" won first place and subsequently went on to national competition where it finished second in the country, bested by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Students who participated in the newscast were Ashlee Jacobs, WRKC news director; Tyler R. Tynes, WRKC sports director; and Janelle Marshalllick, Jessica Mulligan and Brielle Warren. "Take Back the Night," a story produced by senior Matt Mezzacapo, was a finalist in the Radio News Reporting category in

Region One of the SPJ Awards.

The station won first place for Best News Feature in the Intercollegiate Broadcasting Systems Award. The piece was produced by Tynes. The station staff also had four additional finalist awards in the IBS Awards competition: Tynes for Best Campus News Coverage; Kaitlyn Faltovich for Best Community News Coverage; Marcus Mewborn and Tynes for Best Sports Talk Show; and Sarah Scinto for Best Documentary.

Amidst all of the success, Sue Henry, who has been the general manager of WRKC for 16 years, refuses to take credit for the accomplishments of the station. Instead, she modestly passes the recognition onto the students.

"The students run the radio station, I just make sure that they run it correctly," Henry said.

# Practicum Students Visit NBA Studios



Front row, from left, are Bob Carney, senior director, product development and emerging technology; Kevin Wright, senior photo coordinator; Hayley Greenwood, Katie Truillo, Kelsey Pugh, Emily Winters, Sarah Cease, Eryn Harvey and Kristina Atienza; second row, Dan Lynch, Jared

Peterson, Tyler Mejasic, Sean Krutsick, Anthony Tallarido, Leah Laneski, Brian Alifano, Brielle Warren, Matt Lukachinsky, Caryn Wielgopolski, Adam Fedorko, video coordinator; Sue Henry and Ryan Cain, associate video coordinator.

Members of the Communications 296 practicum class had the opportunity to visit NBA Studios in Secaucus, N.J., giving them the chance to meet with several King’s alumni who are involved with the production of professional basketball games that are televised worldwide. The goal of the practicum class is to increase student knowledge of internships and jobs available to them

after graduation.

The trip coincided with a high profile press conference held in New York City by the NBA with Commissioner Adam Silver regarding a brewing controversy over Donald Sterling, owner of the Los Angeles Clippers. Students had the opportunity to discuss the coverage with members of the staff. They also had the chance to ask several King’s

College graduates about their jobs at the production facility. Bob Carney, senior director, product development and emerging technology and alumnus, lead the tour, with the assistance of fellow alumni, Kevin Wright, senior photo coordinator; Adam Fedorko, video coordinator and Ryan Cain, associate video coordinator.

## DeGiosio Awarded “Emerging Voices” Scholarship



Tori DeGiosio

Vittoria DeGiosio was recently awarded a \$2,500 “Emerging Voices” scholarship presented by the Alliance for Women in Media (AWM) and Ford Motor Company Fund. She is a senior majoring in mass communications and political science at King’s College.

As a scholarship recipient, DeGiosio was provide journalist content for AWM’s website. She was awarded the scholarship based on two writing samples, both of

which will be published on the website. She was presented the scholarship at the AWM’s annual Gracie Awards luncheon held recently in New York.

DeGiosio is president of Lambda Pi Eta, the mass

communication honor society; member of the Aquinas Society, the College’s honor society; and Pi Sigma Alpha, the political science honor society.

She is currently interning with The Maternal and Family Health Services, Inc., and Hoegen & Associates, P.C. in Wilkes-Barre. She was a research intern for the 2014 Indicators Report for Lackawanna and Luzerne County, produced by the Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development. She previously interned for Rob McCord’s Governor campaign, and served as a campaign assistant for Matt Cartwright’s U.S. Congress campaign.

DeGiosio is a member of the College’s Honors Program and president of the program’s Student Advisory Council. She is co-editor of “Scop,” the King’s literary magazine, and managing editor of the College’s yearbook, “The Regis.” She has published several articles for 1-800-Politics, a news aggregation website and political blog.

## Local Filmmaker Discusses ‘Kids for Cash’ Film

By Stephanie Zedolik

Mass Communications students attended local filmmaker Robert May’s film ‘Kids for Cash’ and a Q and A session following the screening in February. This event, which took place at R/C Theatres Movies 14 in Wilkes-Barre, PA, was open to the public.

The theater was about half full for the matinee. The audience was a mixture of the young and old, and they were captivated by the film which told the story of the local Kids for Cash scandal. The story made national headlines, and the film was screened around the U.S. before being screened in Wilkes-Barre.

After a screening of the film, the audience was invited to stay for a Q and A session with the director and producer Robert May, as well as one of the teenagers in the film, Hillary Transue.

May began the session by asking the audience what the film made them feel, and the audience was happy to reply. “I felt sad...it destroyed so many lives,” one woman said. This was a sentiment echoed by many, and May acknowledged that this was a reaction experienced by audiences around the country.

This common reaction with strangers who hadn’t lived in Luzerne County or been personally affected by the scandal was something May brought up over and over again. The one thing he learned while screening the film around the country was what linked Luzerne County with the rest of the U.S.

“We’ve learned zero-tolerance policies are alive and well all around the country,” May said. “It takes a society and a community to support these things. I think the whole community loved the zero-tolerance policy until we learned millions of dollars exchanged hands.”

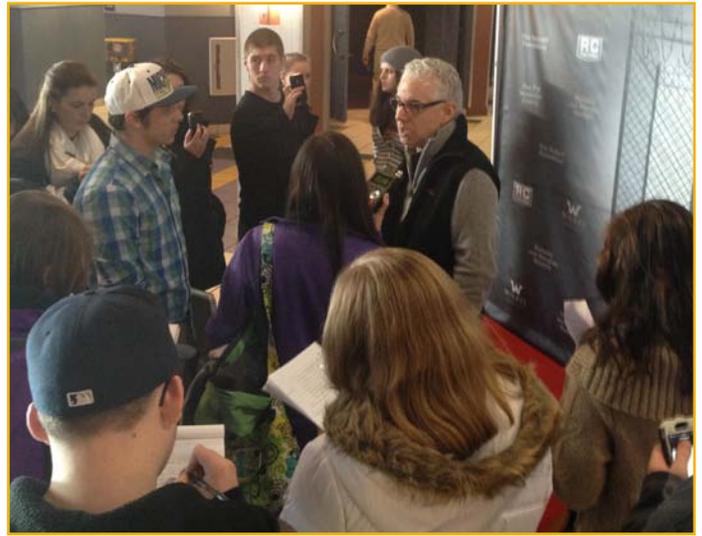
Zero-tolerance policies were implemented in schools across the country following the Columbine shooting. These policies support immediate punishment for any infraction of the rules as a way to prevent violence and drug abuse in schools.

They have also been associated with

a school-to-prison pipeline, where schools push disadvantaged children out of school and into the criminal justice system.

May said these policies, often endorsed by the community, are a problem. “I think schools are going to have to change their policies,” May said. “We need curriculums in schools that help students with tolerance and not just for at-risk kids, because I believe all kids are at-risk.”

This is the kind of conversation May



Robert May speaks with students after “Kids for Cash” screening.

WVIA’s Erika Funke on her program ArtScene. “I think there’s so much power in seeing this film as a community,” May said. “We created zero-tolerance. We

demanded it as a community, and we got it. And it didn’t work out so good.”

May pointed out the hypocrisy of a community that supported a zero-tolerance policy until money was involved. “When I call the community a hypocrite, I mean me too,” May said. “I thought zero-tolerance was a good thing

five years ago. I didn’t have a clue what it was actually doing to them [the kids]. It changed the way I look at things now.”

He hopes the film will help change the views of others as well, especially when it comes to how our society treats children.

“The biggest tragedy I hope you see is more than the money,” May said. “It’s the processes that affected the kids.”

This is what shocked May the most to learn during filming. “I think the biggest shocker was how easily it is that people came to conclusions that we should treat kids like crap and not look back,” May said.

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***“The biggest tragedy I hope you see is more than the money. It’s the processes that affected the kids.” – Robert May***

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hopes his film will spark in communities around the country.

Community and the role it plays in perpetuating this kind of scandal was something May emphasized. One audience member asked, in regards to the corruption, how no one could see it going on. “How could none of us see it?” May said. “What is the ‘it’? Is it the way we treated the kids or the money? We loved it until money was involved.”

May believes the film is bringing communities out to talk about how children are treated, which he feels is very important because of the widespread use of zero-tolerance policies in schools.

He spoke of this in an interview with

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Transue also had a lot to say about how the film has been received by audiences. “The response to the film in this area is surprising,” she said. “I was expecting people to maybe not be as sympathetic to the kids in the film. Reactions in other areas are just as effective and just as passionate. However, here they’re more personal. People know the victims or the judges. In other areas they’re immediately looking at the bigger problem. Here they’re outraged by the smaller picture.”

For Transue, the juvenile justice system and the zero-tolerance policies in place around the U.S. make up the bigger problem.

In addition to covering the stories of those involved in the scandal, the film features a lot of startling statistics about the state of juvenile justice in the U.S. One such statistic is that the U.S. spends \$10,500 per child on education, but it spends \$88,000 per child in prison.

“I hope this opens eyes to how we

treat our children and we learn tolerance,” Transue said.

May expressed similar views, and he hopes that the film will help people learn to think before they judge others. “I think we have to give people more of a chance before we condemn them,” May said.

May, who has two teenaged kids, readily admits that his view on zero-tolerance policies has changed. Five and a

*“... We must tell the story from the villain and the victim’s point-of-view.”*

half years ago, he believed the policies were a good thing that held kids responsible and had consequences for their actions. That was because he wasn’t aware of what the policies were actually

doing to kids.

He said a lot of what happened to the kids had to do with people making instantaneous judgments about who they were. These judgments were made without any consideration given to where the kids came from or what role socioeconomics played in their situations; the kids were simply condemned without being given a chance.

This was a point Transue elaborated on. “When you’re told you’re a bad kid you behave that way,” Transue said. “No one has any more faith in you, so who are you trying to impress anymore?”

The audience expressed outrage upon learning that the teenagers in the film were locked up for minor infractions that many would view as being insignificant.

This perfectly illustrates a point May was hoping to make with the film. He talked about how, upon first learning a child was locked up, people automatically want to know what they did to get

See **Local Filmmaker**, page 6

## **‘Kids for Cash’ Judges and Victims Reveal Both Sides**

By Stephanie Zedolik

The interviews with the victims and the judges were a crucial part of “Kids for Cash” as they allowed those involved to tell their side of the story in their own words. These interviews took place both before and after the trial of former judge Mark Ciavarella, and it took a lot of work for the film’s crew to get them.

Robert May, the director and producer of the film, spoke of the interviewing process, describing it from start to finish. It began with approaching the victims, their families and the judges.

“We talked to the parents over the phone and told them what we were going to do,” May said. “And if they were interested, they would have to sign a release and let us use the footage without editing.”

May and his team were open about what they were going to do, but the

families were uneasy at first. “They were not trusting of anyone, quite frankly,” May said.

May and his team talked to the families over the phone, and other families they contacted didn’t want to talk. Of the families who were willing to talk, many were filmed but not all of the interviews were used. “We wanted a broad view of the system and picked the ones that we could form a narrative around,” May said.

Interviewing the victims was an intense process for everyone involved. “It was emotional, listening to the trauma people went through,” May said. “I first learned about PTSD from talking to warriors, and I learned that kids went through that from being locked up.”

One of the victims in the film, Amanda Lorah, was diagnosed with PTSD upon her release. She didn’t talk much about her experience prior to her interviews for “Kids for Cash.” “When

Amanda started talking, she didn’t stop,” May said. “After that interview we knew we were on a different level.”

The process of interviewing the judges was the same. May and his team explained to Mark Ciavarella and Michael Conahan what they were hoping to achieve. “We simply approached the judges and said we were interested in telling their side of the story because it was one-dimensional in the media,” May said.

The judges agreed, and their cooperation was crucial to the film being made. “We weren’t going to do it without the judges,” May said. “We didn’t want a one-sided narrative.”

During the interviews, May and his team made sure the victims, their families, and the judges were comfortable. “We simply didn’t judge them, so they felt comfortable talking to us,” May said.

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locked up. That's the first question that's often asked, and the fact that a child was imprisoned clouds our judgment of that person. "I think the attitude we have to change is not asking, 'What did he do to be there?' but 'Did he deserve to be there?'" May said.

The film presents the audience with a variety of information to make them question how they judge the kids in the film. This information shows how various members of and ideas held by the community shaped this scandal from start to finish.

From the construction of PA Childcare, the new detention facility, to the waiving of lawyers by the kids and their families, audiences are able to see how the scheme of former judges Mark Ciavarella and Michael Conahan worked. By allowing the judges to tell their side of the story, it adds another dimension to the story that was presented in the media at the time of the scandal.

Creating a sense of balance in the film was something May set out to do from the very beginning, even before the interviewing process began. May wasn't sure if the judges would agree to be interviewed, but he approached them and they agreed early on to be involved.

"We decided we were going to have one specific discipline that would be the key to whether we start the project

or not," May said in his interview with Funke. "And that would be that we must tell the story from the villain and the victim's point-of-view."

In contrast to the judges, the film also shows community involvement in the scandal through interviews with Terrie Morgan-Besecker, a local newspaper reporter, and Marsha Levick and Robert Schwartz, representatives from The

***"I think we have to be careful when we paint with such a wide brush." – Robert May***

Juvenile Law Center in Philadelphia, PA.

The film also shows the effects this scheme had on the kids involved through both cinematic techniques that show a loss of innocence, and the interviews with the kids and their families. The mental health of the kids is examined, such as in the case of Amanda Lorah who was diagnosed with PTSD after being released from prison.

One of the most emotional parts of the film is the story of Sandy Fonzo and her son Ed Kenzakoski, whose suicide is one of the film's most dramatic elements. A well-known photograph of Fonzo

shouting at Ciavarella outside of his sentencing hearing is featured in the film. This confrontation shows the emotional and physical tolls the scandal played on the children and their families. It also shows that a prison sentence for Ciavarella won't be able to erase what happened to their lives.

All of this information comes back to the point about community May and Transue emphasized in the Q and A session after the screening. The community played a role in the scandal, and it is through community discussion and a push for change that zero-tolerance policies and a school-to-prison pipeline can be replaced with more effective and less harmful policies.

May believes this film will help bring about this change. "What we're seeing and hearing in other parts of the country, it's a game-changer," May said in his interview with Funke.

This change can only come about when people stop making instantaneous judgments about others. This film forces the audience to look at both sides of the story before passing judgment in anyone, and that's something May hopes people will take away with them.

"I think we have to be careful when we paint with such a wide brush," May said. "At an accusation, we say they're [people] guilty no matter what it is, no matter what people do. We do a lot of that. We need to stop doing that."

## School-to-Prison Pipeline Exploits Students

By Greg Adams

During an interview with the filmmaker of Kids for Cash, Robert May mentioned that a lot of the material in the film dealt with something called the school-to-prison pipeline. The school-to-prison pipeline is a way to push students, who are already at a disadvantage, out of school and into the hands of the American criminal justice system. This usually

happens to students who need social or educational assistance.

The first step of a child's journey through this pipeline is usually the zero tolerance policy. It imposes severe consequences upon these kids without taking a closer look at their individual circumstance. Some examples of causes for this outcome are simple dress code violations or cell phone usage. This system has typically targeted children that are black

or Latino. Many regard this policy as a one-size-fits-all problem that needs to be fixed.

For example, a study conducted in Wake County, N.C. found that 40 percent of black students caught with cell phones were suspended compared with 17 percent of white students. This is not a one size fits all problem.

## Students Present Papers from Research Methods Class



Senior, Leslie Miller, presents her qualitative study on "The Rwanda Genocide and Photojournalism."

Senior Mass Communications students recently presented their qualitative studies from Dr. Raymond Gamache's Research Methods class to King's College full-time and adjunct department faculty.

## Congratulations to our 2014 Mass Communications Graduates!



Pictured above are some of the 2014 Mass Communications graduates with Dr. Scott Weiland, chairperson of the department. First row and centered: Joshua Lukaszewski. Second row left to right: Matt Mezzacapo, Marcus Mewborn, Aaron Conn, Rosemaureen Bulger; Erin Carr, Janelle Marshallick, Shannon McCarthy, Dr. Scott Weiland, Danielle Kean, Karissa Kross, Joseph Wescoat. Third row and centered: Louis Montante, Matt Powell, and Melanie Mizenko.



Pictured above are Mass Communications faculty and graduate, Danielle Kean. Left to right: Dr. James P. Dolhon, Professor, Speech and Mass Communications, Mr. Michael Berry, Assistant Technical Professor, Speech and Mass Communications, Danielle Kean, Michelle Kean, mother, and Karen Mercincavage, Associate Technical Professor.

## Student Exhibition/Competition in Widmann Gallery

The Mass Communications Department displayed student works from April 28 - May 23, 2014. Student displays included graphic design, Web design, advertising, and photography; while computer displays showcased student TV shows, PSAs and animations. The event was coordinated by Karen Mercincavage, Associate Technical Professor and students of the Mass Communications department.

Student winners and categories include Leslie Miller, Book Cover Design; Caryn Wielgopolski, Manipulated Photography; Caryn Wielgopolski and Kristina Atienza, Print Ad, tied with Kelsey James, Print Ad; Trevor Marszallick, Magazine Cover Design; Eryn Harvey, Photography; Michael Hoskins, Two-Page Magazine Spread; Rachele Canazaro, Logo Design; and Emily Sepela, CD Cover Design.



*Pictured are some of the Mass Communication students who participated (left to right): Kati Sudnick, Caryn Wielgopolski, Dany Calcano, Cheyenne Tarselli, Kelsey James, Janelle Marshallick, Casey Waslasky and Ashlee Jacobs.*

Student team winners include: Video; and Kati Sudnick, Broadcast Radio. Brian Alifano, Alexandra Bolinski, Tyler Tynes, and Emily Sepela, Broadcast TV/

## 2014 Students Inducted into National Honor Society



*Seated left to right, first row seated: Louis Montante and Justin Binkowski. Second row standing: Karen Mercincavage, associate technical professor and advisor; Michelle McNulty, Stephanie Burke,*

*Robert Vornlocker, Dany Calcano; Rosemaureen Bulger; and Dr. Scott Weiland, Mass Communications Department Chairperson.*

On March 27, 2014, eight students were inducted into the Mass Communications Department's national honor society, Psi Epsilon Chapter of Lambda Pi Eta. Lambda Pi Eta (LPH) is the National Communication Association's official honor society at four-year colleges and universities.

As an accredited member of the Association of College

Honor Societies (ACHS), Lambda Pi Eta has active chapters at four-year colleges and universities worldwide. Lambda Pi Eta recognizes, fosters, and rewards outstanding scholastic achievement while stimulating interest in the communication discipline.