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NOMMO!

"The Power of Spoken Word"

"Nommo" derives from the African oral tradition, referring to the magical power of the word to create ideas that improve life.



Photo Courtesy NCCU Office of Communications

WELCOME TO THE NCCU MASS COMMUNICATION SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

Our Concentrations

Broadcast Media
Journalism
Media Studies
Public Relations

Our Student Produced Media

AudioNet
Campus Echo
Central News
Eagle Eye Media

*"There are stories to be told,
and we want our majors to be the ones to tell them —
through reporting, through research,
and even through promoting the stories of others.
That is the focus of the Department of
Mass Communication." — Calvin Hall, Chair*

Support us! Details on pg. 20

Alumni Giving Back

McNeill scholarship honors Ernie Suggs



Tommy and Gail McNeill provide \$25,000 for student journalism scholarship.

Photo Courtesy of the McNeill Family



Atlanta Journal-Constitution reporter, Ernie Suggs, will have scholarship named in his honor.

Photo Courtesy of Ernie Suggs

By James Burrell

Beginning in the 2023-24 academic year, top N.C. Central University journalism students will be eligible for financial support from The Ernie Suggs Endowed Scholarship in Journalism.

NCCU alumnus Tommy McNeill and his wife, Gail, funded the scholarship in October with an initial \$25,000 donation to the NCCU Foundation to honor Ernie Suggs, his former classmate.

In 1985 — during his freshman year at NCCU — Suggs became the Campus Echo's sports editor. His advisers, he said, put a lot of faith in him and that pushed him to succeed.

Former NCCU journalism professor and author, Kip Branch, played a key role in Suggs' life and who described him as a "father figure."

Branch passed away last Oct. 22.

"He is the reason that I exist as a journalist and as a large part as a man because of what he taught me as a professor and as a mentor," Suggs said.

By his junior and senior years, Suggs would become the Campus Echo's editor-in-chief and graduate in 1990.

"Working at the Campus Echo was a highlight of my college career," he said.

"It fulfilled my destiny of writing

for the school newspaper and learning from amazing professors and advisors."

After graduating, Suggs interned at Gannett Newspapers in White Plains, NY before returning to Durham to write for The Herald-Sun in 1992.

In 1997, he joined The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, where he now reports on race and culture.

In that same year, he would publish a 17 piece series — Fighting to Survive: Historically Black Colleges and Universities Face the 21st Century — that earned him a Pulitzer

See SUGGS / McNEILL pg. 5

Flanagan's big birthday surprise

Funds will provide 'Dalia' scholarships far into the future

By James Burrell

Shortly, Mass Communication students will be able to apply for yet another scholarship named the Dalia Davies Flanagan Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Dalia Davies Flanagan graduated from the department with a concentration in Broadcast Media in 2004. She was also the Arts and Entertainment editor for the department's award-winning student newspaper, the Campus Echo.

While at NCCU she worked with MTV Networks in New York City as an intern in 2003. She then came back to finish her degree and still lives there today.

A television producer, writer, and director, she also works on commercials and magazines. She is also the founder of WELM Media, a digital production company and collective that examines and highlights black culture.

The beginnings of the scholarship started in 2020 during the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic when Flanagan decided to start a virtual accelerator program through her company to help NCCU mass communication students.

"I have such a love for NCCU," Flanagan said.

"I had such a wonderful experience and always wanted to give



Dalia Davies Flanagan with her husband, Brian, and other family members at the Farrison-Newton Communication Building entrance.

Photo by Bruce dePyssler

back to students because I remember being one on campus just hoping anyone would just hook me up or plug me into anything. I was looking for the next big thing or step."

She found students she knew and decided a podcast would be a great way to do the accelerator.

Named The Welm Accelerator, Flanagan would be the lead mentor and design it to last three weeks. She would also use the social audio application Clubhouse to communicate remotely with the students along with bringing in mentors and industry experts.

While doing the accelerator, she

was working with PBS on a series called "American Portraits." The money from that job would help her fund the program.

"That's what made it an accelerator program versus an internship because I wanted to literally invest in the students. I wanted to invest in their creativity, in their creative outlets and also themselves — to let them know that they are valuable."

Flanagan's husband, Brian, was so inspired by her work supporting NCCU, that he decided to get into the act as well with the \$25,000 scholarship fund. He contacted the

See FLANAGAN pg. 19

Q & A

with Dr. Aerial Ellis

Interview by By James Burrell

Aerial Ellis joined the Mass Communication department this year as the Wells Fargo Endowed Chair and Distinguished Professor and is excited to join the nest. A Memphis native, Ellis is a public relations industry leader. She has taught around the world and is the managing principal of Advisory 83, a communication consulting agency. Ellis earned her undergraduate degree in speech communication from Tennessee State University and her master's degree in mass communication from Middle Tennessee State University. She also earned a global executive doctoral degree from the University of Southern California.

Q: How does it feel becoming our department's new Wells Fargo Endowed Chair and Distinguished Professor?

A: It feels great to be at NCCU. As an HBCU alum, my desire has always been to teach at one and be able to be in a position for students, particularly students of color. I am thrilled to be here.

Q: What was your journey to NCCU?

A: I graduated from Tennessee State University. About a month after, I started my PR firm and started to take clients in the sports and entertainment arena. I had several internships while I was an undergraduate, and they led me to the opportunity to build a lot of different relationships



Aerial Ellis brings a wide-ranging PR background to the Wells Fargo Endowed Chair.

Photo courtesy Aerial Ellis

with people who were in Nashville and areas related to the industry such as Atlanta, New York, and Los Angeles.

Nashville is a very busy city when it comes to entertainment. A lot of people come to Nashville to network and go to concerts, events, and things of that nature.

I worked in a radio station so I would end up connecting with a lot of those people where I was always in the room.

What prompted me to start my own business was that the job market was so difficult to get into even

with several internships and tons of experience as an undergrad and a graduating senior.

I was getting a lot of rejections from job opportunities. I just decided that instead of waiting for someone to give me a job I would make a job. So I started my own PR business.

I launched that business and ran it for seven years and then I merged that business with a colleague to start my second PR firm. In the process of starting that second PR firm, I ended up with an opportunity to teach at Lipscomb University in Nashville, a private Christian school that needed someone to revamp its PR program.

That led to more opportunities to work with PRSA, and the PRSSA Chapter on campus, as well as the local professional chapter in Nashville. And that led to working with other professors on presentations and events and things of that nature to sit on various committees at boards within the PR industry.

After teaching for ten years and running my own business I eventually transitioned to my third business, a consultancy called Advisory 83.

One thing just kind of led to another and I knew that it was time for me to move from that position and pursue something else so that's what landed me at NCCU.

See ELLIS pg. 10

Prize nomination.

In 2013, Suggs earned the Pioneer Black Journalist Award from the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists.

He is a 2009 Harvard University Nieman Fellow and is now on the foundation's board of trustees.

"Me and Tom McNeill went to school together. We are good friends. I have always admired him," Suggs said.

"I am still 100 percent shocked and amazed and honored that he would even consider establishing a scholarship under my name."

McNeill says he admired the work Suggs did at the Campus Echo and wants the scholarship to encourage more alumni to give back to Eagles aspiring to become journalists.

"Suggs epitomizes the vision and the mission of NCCU and serves as a role model for other alumni to follow," McNeill said.

"Due to the fact he was a campus leader and journalism is his profession, it ran parallel with what I thought would be best for NCCU."

McNeill graduated from NCCU in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. He is vice president of sales for Mid-South Medical LLC, a medical distribution company that makes life-saving medical products.

His wife owns two Durham-based hair salons.

"My experience at NCCU was life-changing due to the fact that I had an opportunity to meet the most fabulous and outstanding college

"Suggs epitomizes the vision and the mission of NCCU and serves as a role model for other alumni to follow."

— Tommy McNeill

classmates and learn the various skillsets when it comes to success," McNeill said.

The McNeills previously established the Tommy and Gail McNeill Journalism Award, which gave an annual \$100 award to a Campus Echo student. They have also donated to the university on multiple occasions.

Calvin Hall, associate professor and chair of the department said he is grateful for the contribution.

"I think it is an amazing thing for our department and for the students in our journalism concentration, specifically in the Campus Echo," Hall said.

"It shows the power of what the university's alums as donors can do."

Hall said one criteria to receive the scholarship is that the student contributes to the publication of the Campus Echo for at least five semesters along with demonstrating strong service and leadership skills in journalism.

NCCU's Division of Institutional Advancement — which raises funds for the university through alumni, staff, students, parents and friends — values every contribution from alumni.

"NCCU is extremely grateful to Gail W. McNeill and Tommy T. McNeill for their extraordinary generosity and vision to create an endowed scholarship and support future generations of students in the department of mass communication," said Gia Soublert, vice chancellor of Institutional Advancement.

"We are thankful for the McNeills for their thoughtfulness in honoring Ernie Suggs, a highly-respected and prominent journalist."

Suggs acknowledged the challenges today's college students face and that he knows it will help many.

"I know the hardships of going to college and what that means," he said.

"It was a struggle for me at times, so anytime I could get scholarship money, that was appreciated. I know that this endowment that carries my name will help a lot of people."

Suggs said he'll soon be joining the McNeills by supporting NCCU as well.

He is currently raising funds to establish a scholarship honoring his mother, Thelma, who passed away in February of 2021.

He said he hopes to establish the scholarship by spring 2022.

"She was a single mother, she sent me to college with all the money she had and made sure I was able to go every semester," he said.

"I was the first person in my family to go to college and hope by spring of 2022 to have two scholarships in the Suggs' name, which I am really honored and proud of."

Dr. Mac to retire

After 15 years of illustrious service

By Jacquazha Nettles

Charmaine McKissick-Melton will be retiring from N.C. Central University after the 2022 semester.

Known popularly as Dr. Mac, McKissick-Melton helped make the NCCU Mass Communication department what it is today.

She played a key role in the department's transition out of the English department and into a free-standing department.

As chair of the Mass Communication Department from 2012 to 2014, McKissick-Melton also spearheaded the process of creating a public relations concentration.

One highly recognized achievement was her creation of the internship boot camp and the internship program she established with Duke University for the department's best-performing students. Initially, the program had seven slots paying \$10 per hour — Now 20 slots are paying \$15 per hour.

Another addition she brought to the department was the 3rd floor Mac Lab. In less than 24 hours herself, Brett Chambers and Williams Russell Robinson came up with the proposal.

McKissick-Melton also has deep



Charmaine McKissick-Melton with her son, Maceo, in 2017.

*Photo courtesy
Charmaine McKissick-Melton*

Watch Dr. Mac's Retirement Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOnAXRc4LXs>

Video by Jesse White
& Michael Pearce

roots in the Durham community. She was among the first to integrate Durham schools during her 3rd - 5th-grade years.

Currently, she is on the Pauli Murray Board after having served as Vice-Chair for several years. In that position, she played a key role in getting national landmark status for the Pauli Murray home, which will be called the Pauli Center for Histo-

"I just want to thank her for her dedication and determination for her students because that's truly what a teacher is."

— Senior Kayla Jordan

ry and Social Justice.

A current project close to her heart is the McKissick Soul City Civil Rights Center located in Warren County, which her father, Floyd McKissick, was a founding member.

The center will be located in a 6,000 square foot 1790 plantation house. She aims for the location to earn status as a national landmark.

Leaving a legacy of genuine care and dedication when it comes to helping and supporting students, McKissick-Melton has been an advocate for students, allowing them to go to her for anything.

"I just want to thank her for her dedication and determination for her students because that's truly what a teacher is," senior Kayla Jordan said.

"Teachers are here to lead the next generation. I think she truly did that. So I just want to thank her for her service to NCCU."

Portfolios prepare students for a competitive job market



One goal of the portfolio requirement is to help students develop the habit of systematically “pulling all their work together.”

Photo courtesy Sam McGhee

By Shanya Hayes

Mass communication majors will now be required to complete a comprehensive portfolio by the end of their undergraduate studies. The additional requirement was announced in March.

Department faculty say they decided on the requirement to help students get ready for today’s competitive job market.

Lisa Paulin, chair of the Curriculum Committee, spearheaded the project working with faculty from each of the concentrations: Media Studies, Broadcast Media, Journalism and Public Relations.

“Our students will be competing with students from top universities,”

Paulin said.

“They need a place to showcase their best work.”

Paulin said students need to develop the habit of pulling together and reviewing their work, not just to get employment, but also to get promotions during their career.

Michael Pearce, an assistant professor who teaches broadcast production courses said the portfolio is not aimed to hold students back.

“The portfolio is not something you are trying to get just to graduate,” Pearce said.

The Broadcast Media concentration, for example, will require the following: a resume, a biography with career goals, a demo reel, five short video projects, five short audio proj-

ects, three news stories (or published photos), a research sample, and other miscellaneous work.

Each portfolio provides suggested courses and resources where students will be able to produce material to meet their portfolio requirements.

“This is something you will need when you are applying for jobs, and hopefully it will be something over the years that you are updating with new stuff,” Pearce said, adding that having a portfolio is necessary for all professionals in the field.

“This is something that everyone needs to be updating,” he said.

According to the department’s portfolio information sheet, students will begin submitting material into their portfolio — which is to be hosted on Wix, WordPress, Weebly or Squarespace — from MSCM 2400, their first Introduction to Mass Communication course.

It can also include any outside professional experience. The information sheet suggests that external reviewers will be able to assist students when selecting the work to include in their portfolios.

Adjunct instructor Kimberly Moore supports the portfolio plan. “It’s needed to have some kind of example of your work,” Moore said. “You need to have something that differentiates you.”

SOARING EAGLES

NCCU MASS COMMUNICATION ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

KENNETH CAMPBELL **CLASS OF 2017**

By James Burrell

NC Central University alumnus and filmmaker Kenneth Alexander Campbell is telling history through a lens.

Graduating from the department in 2017 with a concentration in Media Studies, Campbell is a notable filmmaker and now teaching film at Howard University.

Campbell said his favorite part of being at NCCU was co-directing the short documentary “Millennials of the Moral Movement: Prelude,” released in 2017.

“I was able to screen the film at the Charleston Civil Rights Film Festival. It was really a beautiful capstone to a lot of my experience at NCCU,” said Campbell.

The short documentary followed three NCCU students participating in the Moral March in Raleigh on Feb. 11, 2017.

The film would be screened across the USA and would win the John Hope Franklin Student Documentary Award, the Septima Clark Emerging Artist Award, and others.

“I had support and help from all my NCCU professors. In differ-



*Documentarian Kenneth Campbell
now at Howard University*

Photo Courtesy Kenneth Campbell

ent ways they have all become my mentors. That self-propelled capstone project was possible because of them.”

The project would also be his breakthrough in documentary film. Initially, Campbell was a journalist working at the student newspaper, the Campus Echo, where he was the digital media editor and an editor-at-large making short documentaries.

While at the Campus Echo, Associate Professor and Internship Coordinator Charmaine McKissick-Melton would inform him about an internship at Duke University’s Center for Documentary Studies.

“I was just going around telling students to sign up for the Duke

internship and at the time Kenneth was working at the Campus Echo,” McKissick-Melton said.

“He was a great student. And after that internship and graduating, I have been very proud of him and everything he is doing at Howard along with his recent documentaries. I still stay in touch with him.”

Professor Shauntae White said she appreciated Campbell’s curiosity while at NCCU and that it molded him to where he is now.

“What made him was that he was curious and that is a quality or trait some of our students are missing,” White said.

“He never was a person who just wanted to know information just for the test. He really cared about the information. And I think that really informed him not just as a student, but as a filmmaker and documentarian. It is also why he has become a successful graduate student and teacher.”

After NCCU, Campbell enrolled in Howard University’s School of Communications for an MFA program in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film at Howard University in Fall 2017.

He graduated in May 2020 as the Graduate Exemplar and has

See CAMPBELL pg. 19

FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR



*Calvin Hall took over the reins
as department chair in 2014.*

Photo by Bruce dePyssler

When we published our previous edition of this newsletter, I stated in my welcome message that there was one question driving my focus on the vision and mission of the department: “What stories will we (fill in the blank) today?”

And I stated that blank could be filled with any number of action words by students doing work in our department – the word is report for Journalism concentration students, produce for Broadcast Media concentration students, and so on.

*“Stories that matter from perspectives that matter.
It’s our new motto, our reason for being ...”*

— Calvin Hall

Today, I write to you with an answer to that question. “What stories will we ... today?” We will produce, write, report, analyze... “Stories that matter from perspectives that matter.” It’s our new motto, our reason for being. As the department celebrates its tenth year, those words will carry us forward on our ongoing quest to train our students to help define the future of the field of mass communication.

Our accomplishments as a department during the past 10 years in the areas of curriculum, facilities & equipment, faculty & staff, co-curricular experiences, and fundraising/“friend-raising” have ultimately been about empowering our majors with the ability to analyze, produce, write, report, and promote the stories that matter and explore important perspectives in the process. Here is a brief look at our “Mass Comm-plshments” in these areas:

• **Curriculum** – The Public Relations concentration was approved by the University in 2015; a course in multimedia reporting was added as a core requirement for all majors

in 2017; a new concentration in digital filmmaking was developed and is expected to be approved for the 2022-23 academic year.

• **Facilities & Equipment** – A multimedia computer lab was created in 2013; a new audio production classroom was relocated to a larger space in 2017; the NCCU TV Studio renovation was completed in 2019.

• **Faculty & Staff** – Added new tenure-track professors in the Broadcast Media and Public Relations concentrations; the department hired its first Wells Fargo Endowed chairs (part-time in 2015, 2016, 2020; full-time starting in 2022) since the position was created in 2004; added a new assistant for the TV Studio; two faculty members were awarded the prestigious UNC Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2017 and 2020 (joining a third who received the award in 2010).

• **Co-Curricular Experiences** – Hundreds of our majors have participated in internship experiences with dozens of business and

See HALL pg. 10

Q: What made you get into public relations in the first place?

A: I was a mass communication major at TSU. It was double digits ago so there was no PR concentration but only two PR classes you could take only as electives.

I took those classes and in one particular class one of the professors pulled me aside and said, "I really think you are good at writing, problem-solving, and strategy. I think you need to really consider PR as a career."

I thought, "Hmm." I knew about marketing but didn't know about PR. I was a big news head as a kid and always wanted to watch the news and read newspapers, but I always wondered who was the person who gets the stuff on the news. It can't just be the producers at the TV station or the writers.

Someone has to be making the

connection. It wasn't until I took that class at TSU that I realized that it's a PR person that does that.

Q: What is your favorite part about teaching?

A: My favorite part about teaching is allowing my students the opportunity to get those light bulb moments. Just the chance to impart knowledge, information, wisdom and ways to see what they can be.

Whether I'm giving something very textbook focused, or a personal experience about something I've gone through myself as I've had my journey through the industry, I love seeing what my students do with the information, seeing them process it, and taking it to get a job or internship.

Q: What are you most excited about for the future at NCCU and your role?

A: We're excited about the develop-

ment of the Public Relations Advisory Board Council. We are bringing in professionals from all over the country to learn about the concentration, and the department, and to contribute their expertise and knowledge to help our concentration and our department grow.

I'm also excited about what Dr. Hall and the rest of the faculty are doing to grow the department and invest in the students in new, engaging, and innovative ways.

I think that the energy and intentionality are very clear. The faculty and staff in our department truly care about the students and their future. They also care about your well-being as a person. So that's important. I'm grateful to be amongst colleagues who care about the whole aspect of the student.

HALL cont'd from page 9

other organizations; students have received a multitude of awards for their work on the Campus Echo and Durham Voice publications as well as on AudioNet and the new CentralNews student newscast.

• **Fundraising** – The number of one-time and recurring donors to the department has increased ten-fold; the department received funding for two new endowed scholarships for students – the Ernie Suggs Endowed Scholarship and the Dalia Davies Flannagan Endowed Scholarship.

• **"Friend-raising"** – Established an Alumni Advisory Council; established a partnership between McKinney media and the Media Business: Advertising, Sales & Marketing course; established a partnership between the department and NCCU Athletics to create courses in sports media production; our partnership with WNCU 90.7 continues to be a source of strength.

Most of the items listed above were the result of faculty-led initiatives and only tell part of the story

of the department's achievements during its first decade of existence. There have been faculty awards and fellowships as well as alumni successes too numerous to list in this space.

However, the best of our accomplishments, as the song goes, are still yet to come.

Calvin L. Hall, Ph.D.
Department Chair
April 4, 2022

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

“A good teacher is one who makes himself progressively unnecessary.”

— Thomas Carruthers

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

— William Butler Yeats

*“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say,
‘The students are now working as if I did not exist.’”*

— Maria Montessori

Zevandah Barnes, Adjunct



Zevandah Barnes has been teaching with the Department of Mass Communication at NCCU since 2014.

His courses include: Introduction to Mass Communication, Mass Communication Theory and Research, and Elements of Speech. Zevandah is a graduate of the program and a former staff writer for the Campus Echo.

Chavis Carter, Lecturer & TV Studio Assistant



Chavis Carter is the Media Advisor for Central News, the department's award winning, student-run, weekly TV News production.

Only just three years old, Central News contin-

ues to grow and develop into a newscast that serves and represents the NCCU Community. Watch Central News every Friday at Noon at our YouTube channel @CentralNews or on Instagram @nccu_central_news.

Felicia Casey-Hicks, Station Mgr.



Felicia Casey-Hicks began her career at ABC11 in Durham, as a production assistant, special projects producer, and technical director. After doing freelance

production, she worked as a Media Tech at the NC Agency for Public Telecommunications.

Hicks became the TV Studio Manager in 2007. Hicks says she has a responsibility to train media professionals to strive for excellence.

Brett Chambers, Lecturer



Brett Chambers was appointed Co-Director of NABJ's National Entrepreneur Initiative, and elevated to Co-Director, LEAD@Duke/Fuqua summer program.

Chambers was asked to recruit students for the 'Driving Force' program delivered by the Black Automotive Journalists group, providing seven students from the department with paid internships.

Minnie Forte, Adjunct



Minnie Forte was selected for the NCCU Woman in History Hall of Fame by the Durham Chamber of Commerce.

She retired and then returned as an instructor

of Speech Communications. Forte has been awarded numerous times for excellence in teaching. "Learning," she says, "does not have to be painful. We teach students, not subject matter .. that's the difference maker."

Bruce dePyssler, Assoc. Prof.



Campus Echo adviser Bruce dePyssler has recently completed seven music videos of songs based on the writings of the Wobbly unionist Matti Huhta aka T-Bone Slim (1880-1942).

The songs were shot live and in studio and are performed by T-Bone's great grand nephew, John Westmoreland and others.

Thomas Letts, Adjunct



Tom Letts is finishing his ninth year as an NCCU adjunct instructor teaching journalism courses. In addition to his teaching responsibilities he often pitches in at the Campus

Echo to help students fine tune their reporting and writing.

Daniel Hooley, Adjunct



In addition to freelance news reporting and teaching journalism classes, Danny Hooley plays guitar in a psychedelic hard rock band.

In the late 1990s, he was an editor of the NCCU Campus Echo.

S. Charmaine McKissick-Melton, Assoc. Prof.



Charmaine McKissick-Melton will be retiring this August. She has enjoyed working, along side Brett Chambers, as Internship Coordinator for 15 years, espe-

cially with the Duke University Summer Paid Internship program. She says it has been the most rewarding experience, other than being chair of the department for two years.

“Dr. Mac” says she looks forward to working on her father’s biography and the preservation of a 1790 Plantation house in Soul City, NC to become the “McKissick Soul City Civil Rights Center.”

Erin Berry-McCrea, Adjunct



In 2021, Erin Berry-McCrea accepted a position as Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for Generation, a global non-profit that provides free training, certification, and job

placement in the tech field.

In 2022, she co-published two book chapters on Black Digital Sisterhood and Sociolinguistics in the College Classroom.

Kimberly Moore, Adjunct

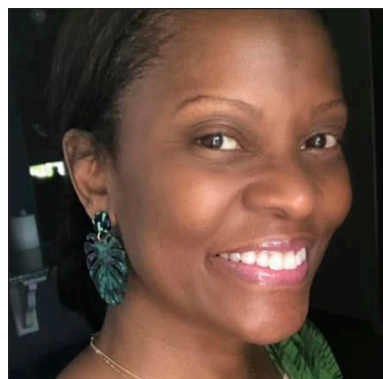


Kimberly Moore is now the Director of Civic Engagement for the Office of Congresswoman Deborah Ross US House District 2.

The district covers Wake County including Apex,

Zebulon, Wendell, Holly Springs, Raleigh and Fuquay Varina.

Viki Suggs-Jones, Adjunct



Viki Suggs-Jones recently published a book titled, *Unscripted: Narratives From Women At Life's 50-Yard Line* and has several pro-

motional events lined up for the months of March, April, and June.

Lisa Paulin, Assoc. Prof.



Lisa Paulin's current research and publications focus on communication efforts to combat health disparities during COVID-19.

She is a member of NCCU's Research Center in Minority Institutions, the Advanced Center for COVID-19 Related Disparities, the NC Community Engagement Alliance, and the Bull City Strong Grant Project. One recent publications she co-authored is *COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Underserved Communities of NC*. Paulin will be presenting *Communicative Dynamics of the Pandemic and Communities on the Margins* in Paris this May.

Michael Pearce, Ass't. Prof.



Michael Pearce's recent short film *SUNRISE* has completed its national festival run. The film garnered four awards, including Best Horror Short at the

Longleaf Film Festival and Best NC Film at the Wreak Havoc Film Festival.

Michael has completed a new documentary film on right hemisphere stroke survivors alongside Duke Assistant Professor Jamila Minga Ph.D., CCC-SLP. Michael was also awarded a grant from The Center for the Advancement of Liberal Studies and STEM at Fayetteville State University for a course redesign during the Spring 2022 semester.

Tianduo Zhang, Ass't. Prof.



Tianduo Zhang has received College of Arts, Social Science and Humanities Faculty Teaching awards and a College Research Pilot Grant.

She has worked on multiple state and federal grants as co-PI and co-investigator. She is also the co-lead of NCCU Health Literacy and Communication Core.

Lolethia Underdue, Lecturer



Lolethia Underdue teaches audio production, media practicum and is an advisor to AudioNet.

In 2021, she submitted two entries for WNCU and AudioNet

behalf on of Daraka Wilson for the Southern Regional Press Institute student competition. She brought home 2nd place for Best Podcast (AudioNet) and 3rd place for Best Radio News Story (WNCU).

Brenda Womble, Instructor



Brenda Womble's play, "Guns of Ava," a true love-story of a highly decorated Black Vietnam War veteran is poised for its 5th tour, now with Hollywood interest.

Recently, she co-authored a coffee table book, "If You Were Not Black" focusing on systemic racism from Jim Crow days until present with modern day narratives of the black experience in America. The book was featured on an ABC news special for Black History month.

Shauntae White, Professor



Shauntae White was promoted to professor in 2020. Since that time, she has served as a Faculty Fellow in the Office of Faculty Professional Development

supporting the coordinator by developing, executing, and teaching pedagogy workshops for faculty across campus.

Lackisha Freeman, WUNC General Mgr



Lackisha Freeman is the general manager of WNCU-FM, a 50,000-watt jazz and news non-commercial educational station licensed to

North Carolina Central University. Freeman is responsible for the overall management and operation of the station and its student training and professional networking initiatives.

FACULTY FUN FACTS

Charles Grant: "I spent three weeks on a safari in Tanzania in June, 2019."

Charmaine McKissick-Melton: "I am a grandmother of a three year old, Raelyn Nicole Kemp. I am known as "Mama Mac."

Vickie Suggs-Jones: "I love to play golf."

Lolethia Underdue: "Thanks to COVID I learned that I hate Zoom and all forms of video conferencing!"

Minnie Forte-Brown: "I went to nursery school and NCC (North Carolina College) in what is now the Dent Building.

Samanda N. Chasten: "10+ years as a competitive, year-round swimmer."

Bruce dePyssler: "My wife and I are building a seaside home in Sierra Leone, so we can watch the sun set over the North Atlantic Ocean. And I'm single digit handicap golfer."

Tom Letts: "Me and my brother, Phil, once climbed to the top of the iconic Half Dome in California's Yosemite National Park using the tourist-friendly but still challenging route up the back of the granite monolith."

Brett Chambers: "I use to dream about being in Forbes magazine, my daughter has been recognized by them the last two years in a row. (In 30 under 30 for sports and 50 Social Influencers). #GirlDad."

Tianduo Zhang: "I love vegetable gardening! This summer I am growing 5 kinds of tomatoes, 6 kinds of beans and many exotic vegetables such as New Zealand Spinach, Asian Wax Corn, and Ice Plants."

ALUMNI UPDATES

Julian Alexander Melton

2012 ~ Verizon Wireless Technical Support

In 2017, I started a clothing line called XVII Roses (17 Roses) which is still going strong in 2022. I earned my MBA from Strayer University in 2017.

Monique Lewis

2014 ~ Senior Designer

Promotion to Senior Designer at Material, a market research consultancy based in Los Angeles.

Tia Simone Samuel

2017 ~ Scrum Master

I am happy to finally have a communications position. After five years of No's I finally got my Yes and am proud to say that I'm a black girl in tech, doing communications work! Let's break those barriers!

Anngelica Mohabir

2013 ~ Architectural Interior Designer

Earned my Masters degree in Architectural Design. Currently working as an advocate for equitable design at Determined by Design in Washington DC. Award recipient for affordable housing multi family designs. I own Ann2 Interior Solutions that will be launching decorative cabinet hardware.

Sierra Mckoy

2007 ~ HR Communication Manager

Building a network of other communication professionals.

Destiny Owens

2016 ~ Associate Producer, Post Production Assistant, & Academic Coach and Coach Coordinator
The first feature film that I've worked on since relocating to LA in 2018 after grad school

is being released on HBO Max in June 2022 by New Line Cinema & Warner Bros. The film is House Party (remake) directed by Calmatic. I also still work in corporate production at WW International and have the honor of working on the team responsible for producing Oprah Winfrey's live events through her partnership with the company.

Genesis Doubleddee

2015 ~ Visual Communications Coordinator

Just received my M.S. degree from Syracuse University in Communications (Advertising). Currently applying to a portfolio school. Also, I own my own small branding agency (Jackson & Porter).

Marissa L. Thomas

2016 ~ Attorney

Passing the bar exam on my first try and becoming the first attorney in my family.

Palace Jones

2020 ~ Copywriter

I recently started at Squarespace as a Copywriter in their creative department.

Gabrielle Jones

2009 ~ Vice President of Content

In December of 2021, I became the first-ever Vice President of Content at Louisville Public Media, the NPR member station in Louisville, Kentucky.

Chanel Norman

2016 ~ Co-Owner Of Chanel Productions

Jasmil Moore (former Mass Comm graduated as well) and I both went into business together 2 years ago with Chanel Productions Photography, Video and Marketing. We met in the department in 2015 and

are now engaged! We also share two kids :) We have a residential studio and Garner, NC and a studio in Greensboro while traveling throughout the Carolina's to meet clients needs. This is currently my full time job and I really enjoy it! I'm living my dreams.

Dekedrik Fields

2018 ~ *Media Studies*

In 2021, I completed my Masters in Family and Consumer Science at NCCU!

Kaylee Sciacca

2019 ~ *Communications Manager for the University of Virginia Law School*

Moved to Virginia with my fiancée last year, adopted a dog (Bart), set to be married in September.

Marcus Christon

2014 ~ *Senior Communications Officer, U.S. Department of Defense*

Since graduating from NCCU, I've earned my M.S. in Strategic Public Relations from Virginia Commonwealth University and my M.P.S. in Integrated Marketing Communications from Georgetown University. I have served as a public affairs officer for several federal agencies, including an appointee role at the U.S. Administration for Children & Families under the Obama Presidential Administration. For personal accomplishments, I launched my food blog, Chow & Company, in October 2021. My blog is a passion project where I get to apply the communication skills I learned at NCCU (and beyond) to create a space for food, fun, and fellowship.

Kanisha Madison

2011 ~ *HRIC Specialist*

Currently in program to receive my hr business partner certificate

Jazmin Bailey

2018 ~ *News Producer*

My most recent professional accomplishment is being promoted to a Morning News Producer at WTVD ABC11.

Amanda Willis

2011 ~ *Human Resources Director*

I am currently Human Resources Director at Clinton College located in Rock Hill, SC.

Michael McDermott 2017 ~ *CEO*

Most recently in 2022, I have been a business owner for a full year now, my company is growing and I could not be more excited about the opportunities and growth moving forward.

Courtney Goodmon

2017 ~ *Freelance Photographer*

Elevated to Prophet at Freedom Temple The Cathedral of Grace.

Alesha Harrington

2017 ~ *Traveler Counselor II (CWTSATO)*

Passed my 2nd semester in doctoral program: All A's.

Deontae Williams

2018 ~ *CEO at Pricetrappers LLC*

Created a 6 figure business teaching students about the foreign exchange market. Also created a foundation, PTS Cares, to support scholarships for students eligible for financial aid at the university!

Alexis Sloan

2018 ~ *Program support assistant*

In June 2020, I moved to Indianapolis, Indiana and accepted a job working for the government.

Joniqua Hutchinson

2017 ~ *Entrepreneur*

I received my Business License for my production company Afflo Media Group.

Chelsea Taft

2021 ~ *Marketing and Communications Program Coordinator*

My most recent accomplishments has been getting a job at with Duke Health. This has allowed me to craft communication and strategic efforts to serve our patients and our community.

Ayannah Crawley

2014 ~ *Communications Consultant*

Led organizational strategic planning for Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation.

Phillip Robinson 2017

Freelance Broadcast Operator for ACC Network

Within the last two years I've released two books and have given two TEDx talks.

Corliss Pauling 2011

Director of Marketing and Digital Media

Promoted to Director of Marketing and Digital Media at vitalink, a marketing and branding firm in Raleigh.

Belinda Dunn

2011 ~ *Systems and Electronic Resources Librarian*

My most recent professional accomplishment was receiving my Masters in Library Science from NCCU.

Julian Alexander Melton

2012 ~ *Verizon Wireless Senior Tech Support Analyst*

I have been working for Verizon Wireless as a Tech Support representative for the past 8 years. I also have a clothing line called XVIIIRoses, since 2017. I also act part time in various movies found on Amazon Prime, Tubi and Peacock streaming services.

Maceo Kemp

2015 ~ *Product assurance technician*

Just brought a new home and

car.

LaMont Chaney II

2019 ~ *Digitizer / Assistant Editor*

Short film "Caught" that I directed has been selected to 11 festivals and 6 awards.

Kanisha Madison

2011 ~ *HR Coordinator at the Nicholas school of the environment*
I recently obtained a new position in the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke U.

Reginald "RJ" Simon

2014 ~ *7th Grade ELA*

In October 2021, I received my NC Teacher's License in 9-12 ELA. I will begin pursuing my Master's Degree in Principal Preparation at NCSU in May 2022.

Tomeika Bowden

2000 ~ *Chief External Affairs Officer*

I am president of the NCCU Alumni Association.

Shereka Littlejohn Dunston

2008 ~ *Co-Founder of Family Strategists, LLC dba Black Life Coach Connection*

I was named 2022 Trailblazer of the Year by Crafted To Motivate, LLC.

Mark Stanback

2017 ~ *Part time at Belk, Durham Bulls, WRAL, and eventually at Duke University*
Getting a position with the Durham Bulls semi pro baseball team as the game day video board operator/instant replay.

Kenisha

2011 ~ *HR Coordinator at the Nicholas school of the environment*
I recently obtained a new position within the Nicholas school of the environment at Duke.

Savin Joseph

2009 ~ *Senior Director of Business Development*

Arssante Malone

2011 ~ *Community Engagement Specialist*

I'm currently a father of six, contracted instructional coach, nonprofit leader, and community organizer for several counties throughout NC.

Tony Cunningham, Jr.

2018 ~ *Digital Communications Specialist-Durham Public Schools*
Photography published in Mob Journal Magazine, New Wave Magazine, and NCCU Now. Landed new position with Durham Public Schools as the Digital Communications Specialist in the Office of Public Affairs. Was Chief Photographer for Issue 2 of the DPS Spark Insider Magazine, which is set to release this spring.

LaShonda Bianca Lewis

2019 ~ *Marketing and Content Specialist in University Development at UNC-CH*
Getting a new job at UNC.

Rainah Davis

2001 ~ *Media Communications*
Recently secured nearly \$500k in book proposals for celebrity clients at my agency. Also one of the projects we ghostwrite was nominated for Feathered Quill Book Awards Finalist.

Marliss Platt

2009 ~ *High School Dean of Students*

Ashley Pugh

2014 ~ *Director of Communication & External Affairs*
I still live in Seattle. I was given the opportunity to create my own department at my job and have been managing a small communication & content team. I love what I do and that I work for a Black nonprofit that focuses on the economic stability of Black people.

Isha Latay Jackson

2010 ~ *Operations Leader*

I recently had a child and started a photography and event planning business.

Munyaradzi Bvumbe

2019 ~ *Digital Business Representative/ BMC Software*
Director of Evangelism / Broadcasting and Media at Active Word Church.

Tameka Nichole Stephenson

2007 ~ *Program Director to 105.5 FM the King, Atlanta*
I'd simply like to share my website, www.TamekaNichole.com which shares articles about my professional and personal accomplishments. Grateful for the educational direction. I'm the field experience that NCCU has given to me!

Sheena Johnson Cooper

2005 ~ *Director of Marketing & Community Engagement for Durham Public Schools*

Evan Owens

2017 ~ *Marketing Communications Specialist*
I picked up so many skills at NCCU through all of the wonderful extracurricular opportunities and mentors. I had and have applied it all to build a career in marketing. I really enjoy what I do and get to use my passion for creativity and storytelling every day. Since graduating, my wife and I bought a home and now have two beautiful children. NCCU's communications department is top notch and truly gives their students incredible opportunities to grow and learn.

Justin Laidlaw

2017 ~ *Marketing Communications Specialist*
Engagement Manager at Code the Dream, Founder at Buddy Ruski.

Cam Clifton

2015 ~ *Resident Director*

Nothing big right now.

Shakira Warren

2017 ~ *Assignment Editor at WSOC-TV*

Dwayna Ashanti Williams

2013 ~ *Entrepreneur/ Business Owner*

I've been in business for 5 years. Providing public relations and digital brand strategy to women-led business and entrepreneurs. We really realigned our business to elevate more Mompreneurs with lifestyle brands to show up and be seen. We're looking to hit our first six figure year. Truly excited for 2022.

Tavarius Felton

2017 ~ *IT Analysts & Professor*
Since NC Central I started a mental health organization Clouded Mentalities that connects willing residents of the

Triangle to volunteer more. I am also a professor at Durham Tech instructing Public speaking courses. Although teaching is my first passion, my career is in IT. I have worked for DHHS as an IT analyst for the last 3 years.

Kelse Edwards

2020 ~ *Communications Officer*
My most recent professional accomplishment is starting my position of Communications Officer with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. I started my position in December of 2021 and in three short months have already been promoted to a Communications Officer for Intergovernmental Affairs. I am very excited about my journey and look forward to a rewarding career in the communications field.

WNCU UPDATES

- Full renovation underway, including the student station, AudioNet: Campus Access Radio.
- With a grant from NC Local News Lab, WNCU is underway with an audio, video, and digital content production initiative with mass communication students. Work will include sonic IDs and a podcast series. The project runs through August 2022.
- WNCU will partner with Durham Central Park to present the Durham Playlist Concert Series on the first Friday of every month May-October 2022.

We need your support!

*Get details on ways to support
Mass Communication
and its students on page 20.*

department and Institutional Advancement with the idea to surprise his wife with an endowed scholarship under her name.

Associate Professor Bruce dePyssler, who advised Flanagan while she worked at the student newspaper, the Campus Echo, was there when her husband and family unveiled the scholarship to her.

"It was a wonderful day for a wonderful former student," said dePyssler.

"Brian set it all up as a surprise birthday present for Dalia. And it worked. When she came into the TV studio we and all their family members were there to surprise her."

Lecturer Brett Chambers, who was also at the unveiling, said Flanagan was one of the students he always admired.

"I was just impressed with her enthusiasm. She had an incredible attitude. She just got stuff done,"

Chambers said.

"She worked hard and helped her fellow students out a lot. She was just one of those people who was special. She had intensity, talent, commitment and compassion."

Chambers said the scholarship is more than just money — it's a way to build a legacy and open up opportunities for students.

"I think it is very forward-thinking of her husband to do that in her honor," he said.

"That's not just love — that's building a family legacy. They're investing in the future of someone who is going to have the opportunity that Dalia had."

Calvin Hall, associate professor and chair of the department said he is thrilled about the scholarship and how it was an event to surprise her.

"I think it is amazing," Hall said.

"It's really good to see our alumni in the world come back to

find ways to give back. And for this particular scholarship, it was really great to be a part of a special event that surrounded the presentation of the scholarship as a surprise for her."

Hall also said that the Flanagans gave an extra amount of money so that the scholarship could be given to a student this year, even before the funds are officially available.

Once the scholarship is ready it will be given to students who meet the specific criteria.

Though Flanagan has had many proud moments in her life from working in television and starting a family, she said the scholarship is one of them too.

"I'm really proud of the scholarship and everything it can be," Flanagan said.

"It feels very full circle for me — nourishing and energizing."

CAMPBELL cont'd from page 8

been teaching at the university since 2021.

In 2020, Campbell worked as an Impact Producer for Emmy Award-winning and Oscar-nominated director and producer Sam Pollard on the documentary "MLK/FBI."

The film was the first to examine the extent of the FBI's monitoring and harassment of Martin Luther King, Jr. based on newly declassified FBI files.

A year prior, he directed the documentary short "BLAHC" for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. It explores the history of the DC-based Brookland Literary & Hunting Club from 1942 to 2018.

Campbell said he is proud of his work at NCCU and how it shaped his career as a documentary filmmaker.

"I'm proud that at NCCU I was able to produce and direct short

feature-length projects that planted the seeds while I was a student. And which culminated in my latest work," he said.

"All of the connections and skills that led me to work on those films were really nurtured at NCCU. Even when I would take classes at the Center for Documentary Arts at Duke, it has always been NCCU professors that championed me as a student and the support has not stopped since."

Let's help them get there, and beyond.



125 Commencement, O'Kelly-Riddick Stadium
Photo Courtesy NCCU Office of Communications

Give a Gift to Mass Communication

Your gift to the department of Mass Communication allows us to continue to provide a quality education for our students in the following ways:

- Fostering student success by allowing us the funds to support student attendance at conferences and workshops.
- Supporting the recognition of our students by providing scholarship opportunities.
- Encouraging the professional development of our faculty as we seek to learn new skills that will enable us to strengthen our teaching.
- Ensuring that the department can supply students with the most current equipment to practice their skills while they learn.

Partner with us as we work to empower our students to tell "Stories

that matter from perspectives that matter."

Donate online at <https://www.nccu.edu/institutional-advancement/giving-online>.

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- Indicate Amount
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- Add donor and payment information as requested

If you would like to consider other giving opportunities such as establishing a scholarship, naming opportunities, or planned giving for the Department of Mass Communication, please contact Jim Ervin in the NCCU Office of Institutional Advancement at (919) 530-5264 or Jim.Ervin@nccu.edu.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Mass Communication is to prepare students for careers and study in mass communication.

The department offers engaged learning, student media, research experiences, and connections to professional practice opportunities.

The department values the comprehensive preparation of graduates with an understanding of the ethical, practical, and theoretical foundations in the field and an understanding of and appreciation for cultural diversity.

NOMMO

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