

CommDay 2026

Friday, March 20, 2026

St. Bonaventure University

Communications Day started as Press Day in 1936. Its purpose was to expose students to media professionals and give them a taste of the excitement a career in journalism can bring. In those days, it was called “Press” Day because the world communicated mainly through presses that produced newspapers and magazines. Today, people still communicate through newspapers and magazines, but also through television, social media, smartphones and other devices. Though the name has changed, the purpose of CommDay has not; it’s just gotten bigger, a lot more creative, interactive and exciting.

CommDay 2026 is a chance to take a glimpse into your future, a chance to see what aspect of the broad field of communication might be something you’d like to think about.

CommDay at St. Bonaventure gives you a chance to learn about many types of communication. We’ve made many changes over the years and we’ve listened to our participating high school advisers. Here are some key details:

- Our CommPetition allows you to submit your best work and not miss any sessions.
- We will have several interactive workshops during two sessions in the morning and an optional session in the afternoon.
- The St. Bonaventure University bookstore will be open! CommDay participants get 20% off one item (just be sure to register using the access code).
- ***LOCATION: Due to construction on the Murphy Building, registration and the opening session will be in the Quick Center for the Arts.***
- As always, CommDay is free.

Here’s how, when and where it works:

8:00 –9:00 a.m. - Arrive on campus for breakfast and registration in the Quick Center for the Arts

9:00 – 9:10 a.m. - Welcome by Dean Aaron Chimbel

9:10 – 9:25 a.m. - Keynote by Pat Lafferty, advertising executive

9:25 – 9:30 a.m. - Presentation of CommPetition awards

9:45 – 10:30 a.m. - First workshop session.

10:40 –11:25 a.m. - Second workshop session.

11:30 – Noon - Lunch at the Hickey Dining Hall (schools not staying for afternoon activities can leave when done)

Noon – 12:20 Open time to go to SBU Bookstore (20% discount is available using the access code) or self-directed tour.

12:30-1:15 p.m. For those students who are not leaving campus at 12:30, the following opportunities available, with advance registration:

- Campus tour
- Third workshop session

Workshops

1. Take The Time to Take the Walk: The Best Advice on Writing – Dr. Chris Mackowski
2. Finding Local News Stories – Anne Lee and Dr. Rich Lee
3. Social Media – Faith Gworek
4. What it Takes to Broadcast Sports – Rick Karnath
5. You Believe What? How to Combat Disinformation – Dr. Pauline Hoffmann
6. Media Consumption and Mental Health – Dr. Tara Walker
7. The Making of an Ad Campaign – Mike Jones-Kelley
8. 360 Degree Communications - A fully integrated marketing/communications approach - Pat Lafferty
9. SBU-TV live experience – Scott Sackett and Danny Bush (Double Morning Session)

Bus Grants

A limited number of bus grants are available to assist schools with the cost of transportation to this event. Please email achilds@sbu.edu by March 5 if you wish to apply for a bus grant.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Childs, St. Bonaventure University Jandoli School of Communication, P.O. Box J, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778; 716-375-2521; achilds@sbu.edu.

REGISTRATION LINK: https://sbu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_73PeN6CJ9pg47ky

The CommPetition

“Your Best Work”

St. Bonaventure’s CommDay CommPetition gives you the opportunity to submit work for a chance to be recognized with thousands of dollars in scholarships to St. Bonaventure University.

This year you can submit your students’ best work covering the time since the last competition, March 31, 2025 to March 10, 2026. All submissions will be submitted to us in advance.

This competition is free to schools and students to participate. Schools that participate in CommDay are not required to enter the CommPetition; it is entirely optional. Schools can submit projects from individual students or from teams. Schools are allowed to have multiple entries.

We encourage students/teams to develop and produce a compelling video, series of photos, or series of feature/news articles. Students will be able to use social and digital media tools they already know, skills they’ve learned in high school like writing, broadcasting, and photography, and any other skills they’ve forged on their own.

The deadline for posting and submitting your work is **Tuesday, March 10 at 2 p.m.** via DropBox (link sent to participating schools before the deadline).

The hallmark of any career in journalism and communication is telling a story truthfully, ethically and well. How will you tell yours?

CommDay Competition 2026 Rules

General

- Entering the CommPetition is optional for all schools attending CommDay.
- We accept entries in three categories: 1.) video, 2.) photography, and 3.) writing.
- Please label each entry with the school name and category (i.e. Smith High-Video).
- Schools may submit multiple entries in each category (please label each entry differently).

For video entries:

- Videos may be up to **five** minutes in length.
- Should tell a compelling non-fiction story.

For writing entries:

- You may submit up to five stories in any combination – five news stories; five feature stories; or a combination of the two.

For photography entries:

- You may submit a series of up to 10 photos.

The judges will look for:

- Excellent writing
- Video aesthetics, image quality
- Use of sounds and/or music
- Images
- Quotations
- Headlines
- Feature stories about topic
- News reporting on topic

Our panel of professional judges will judge you based on:

- Creativity
- Thoughtfulness
- Ethics
- Effectiveness
- Attention to the audience
- Presentation skills
- Design
- Clarity
- Quality
- Grammar and usage
- Attention to detail

- Professionalism of your project

Awards:

Awards will be announced at CommDay, on Friday, March 20, in the following categories:

- Best overall (Best in show)
- Best of category (3)

Prizes:

Best in show - \$1,000 SBU first-year scholarship* for each member of the winning team

Best in category - \$500 SBU first-year scholarship* for each member of the winning team

* SBU first-year scholarships are for students who are admitted to and then enroll at St. Bonaventure University (regardless which program is chosen). If students are majors in the Jandoli School of Communication, the scholarships continue for all four years of their undergraduate program.

There is no registration or participation fee.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions at any time, please contact Ashley Childs, St. Bonaventure University Jandoli School of Communication, P.O. Box J, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778; 716-375-2521; achilds@sbu.edu.