

JANDOLI SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION

# Innovation Magazine

## 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:

GROUNDBREAKING,  
SYMPOSIUM, HELLINGER  
AWARD, ALUMNUS OF THE  
YEAR



## WHATS NEW:

WOJ RETURNS HOME, DENNY  
WILKINS TRIBUTE, AI USE



## FACULTY AND ALUMNI UPDATES:

NEW FACULTY/STAFF,  
STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS,  
FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

AND MORE!



# Dean's Letter

Dear alums and friends of the Jandoli School,

WOW! That is the best way I can describe Oct. 19. As many of you know, that was the day we celebrated the rich 75-year history of what we now call the Jandoli School of Communication.

We enjoyed fellowship, laughed, cried, and had time to reflect on this program's remarkable history and bright future. I want to thank the alumni planning committee, which spent months helping to set the right tone and bring all of the pieces together.

I also want to thank our new administrative assistant, Ashley Childs, who joined us in April right in the middle of the planning. She did a fantastic job, along with our events staff and graduate assistants to pull off hosting four events in a row in one day.

The day was made even more special because we were able to hold the ceremonial groundbreaking for the expansion and renovation of our home in the more than 40-year-old Murphy Building, thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors. Those donors include Deb Henretta, '83, and her husband, Sean Murray. The addition to the building will be named the Henretta Communication Center to honor her family's deep association with St. Bonaventure and enormous generosity. She told me she hopes her family's gift will motivate others to support the project as well.

I hope you are inspired by the Henretta-Murray family and what you read in this magazine and will consider a gift to help to transform Murphy. You can give using this link: <https://netcommunity.sbu.edu/donation-pages/donate-to-the-jandoli-campaign>

Our students, faculty and alumni make us proud every day. As you may know, one of our most prominent graduates, Adrian Wojnarowski, '91, has returned home. We have more on Woj, other accomplished alumni, innovative student experiences and faculty who are leading thinkers throughout this magazine.

Finally, I want to recognize Dr. Denny Wilkins, the longest-tenured current faculty member in the Jandoli School, on his retirement. Denny has been an indispensable figure in the school since 1996. He has pushed, frustrated and inspired students for nearly 30 years. On a personal level, he is a trusted friend and crucial adviser. He certainly deserves a fulfilling retirement, but we will miss him. Decades of students cannot imagine this place without him, so I am thankful he is not going far and we expect to see a lot of him in the years to come. Thank you for everything, Denny!

And thank you for your support of the Jandoli School of Communication.

Sincerely,  
Aaron Chimbel  
Dean



*Dean Aaron Chimbel, right, awards founding Dean Lee Coppola, '64, the 2024 Alumnus of the Year Award with Dr. Pauline Hoffmann, '91, who served as the second dean of the Jandoli School.*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

75th Anniversary Celebration	04
Jandoli Breaks Ground	05
Mark Hellinger Award	07
Alumnus of the Year	08
Denny Wilkins Tribute	09
Discussion on Election	10
Remembering Bob Dubill	11



Heart of Bona Basketball	20
Sports Media Speed Mentoring	21
What's ABAG?	22
Welcome New Faculty/Staff	23
Student Spotlights	24
Alumni Spotlights	27
Faculty Updates	31

Woj Comes Home	12
AI Use in Classes	14
Hybrid Journalism Series	15
News Blackout	16
Jandoli Representation at the Olympics	18
Sorrento, Italy Program	19





## 75th Anniversary- Symposium & Dinner Celebration

To mark 75 years since Russell Jandoli founded the Department of Journalism at St. Bonaventure, the Jandoli School of Communication, named in his honor, hosted a series of events to reflect on the program's rich history – and to celebrate its bright future on campus Oct. 19.



The events included a symposium on local news, ceremonial groundbreaking for a major expansion and renovation of the school's home in the John J. Murphy Professional Building, Hellinger Award and Alumnus of the Year presentations and a dinner that focused on recognizing our donors.

There were two panels during the symposium. The first covered the importance of local news for democracy. Jeff Wilkin, '77, moderated the panel and was joined by Dan Barry, '80, Lisa Robert Lewis, '76, and Bob McCarthy, '76. The second panel focused on the future of local news and was co-moderated by Dr. Richard Lee, '75, and Anne Lee, '76, with panelists Donna Collins, '79, Troy Smith, '06 and Charlie Specht, '10.



During the 75th celebratory dinner, students Jeffrey Canova, '25, Claire Fisher, '25, and Jack Haskell, '27, honored alumni who paid it forward, Nate Solomon, '24, Carol Schumacher, '78, and Chris LaPlaca, '79, respectively, to thank them for everything that they have done for the Jandoli School. Barry delivered the keynote address with a focus on the importance of truth.



# Jandoli School breaks ground for Henretta Communication Center

05



The Jandoli School looked ahead during the 75th anniversary celebration with a ceremonial groundbreaking for the Henretta Communication Center, the centerpiece of the \$12.2 million expansion and renovation of the Jandoli School's facility in the John J. Murphy Professional Building.

The project was made possible by hundreds of donors, including Deb Henretta, '83, and her husband, Sean Murray. Henretta's father, Elmer, '59, and brothers Michael, '85, and Mark, '90, are also Bonaventure graduates. Deb and Sean met at St. Bonaventure while he worked at the university from 1980-1982.

"Bonaventure has been woven into the fabric of my family for almost 70 years and I know all of us have been grateful for the role our Bona's experience has played in our lives," Henretta said. "Much of my success is deeply rooted in the values and lessons learned at St. Bona's. I am grateful to be in a position to give back to the university and contribute to the success of future generations of Bonaventure students."

The addition will include a high-definition and flexible broadcast studio, podcast and audio studios, and a newsroom that will bring together the campus radio station (WSBU-FM), The Bona Venture student newspaper, SBU-TV, the school's hyperlocal news site (TAPInto Greater Olean) and future media ventures for the first time to facilitate cross-media innovation.



# Henretta Communication Center cont.



Dean Aaron Chimbel, speaking at the ceremonial ground breaking during the October 19, 75th anniversary celebration.

An atrium, expanded First Amendment Lounge, and meeting spaces for students will make the Henretta Communication Center a gathering spot for students, enabling creativity and connections.

“I cannot thank Deb, Sean and their family enough for their enormous generosity,” Chimbel said. “The Henretta family’s connection with St. Bonaventure stretches back nearly 70 years, and now their legacy of service and commitment to this university will continue on for years to come.”

Hundreds of Jandoli School alumni and friends have invested in the fundraising effort. Henretta hopes her family gift will encourage many others to contribute to the project, which will be done in three phases. The Henretta-Murray gift and many others will make phases one and two a reality. Construction of the Henretta Center will begin this winter, Chimbel said, and is expected to be completed in 18 to 24 months.





# Mark Hellinger Awards

07

The Hellinger Awards Ceremony honored Rich Williams, '24, the 2024 Hellinger recipient and Cassidey Kavathas, '24, this year's honorable mention.

The Hellinger Award is named for Mark John Hellinger, an American journalist, theater columnist and film producer. It was established in 1960 by Jim Bishop, who worked with Hellinger at the New York Daily News and considered him his mentor.

Bishop began a long relationship with St. Bonaventure in 1958 when he was invited to speak at the university's Press Day event and was awarded an honorary doctorate. Soon afterward, Bishop began donating manuscripts and notebooks to form an archive of his writings at the university's Friedsam Memorial Library.

Nearly half of all living Hellinger recipients, 28 in all, were in attendance and the previous honorees joined Williams on stage.



Williams excelled in media planning and strategy, contributing significantly to the success of SBU's student advertising agency. He served three years with SBU-TV, as both a multimedia journalist and executive producer. He contributed heavily to his team's district wins in the National Student Advertising Competition. Williams joined Fingerprint Group as an associate media planner in September.



*Dean Aaron Chimbél with Rich Williams*



*Dean Aaron Chimbél with Cassidey Kavathas*

Kavathas focused on reporting and served roles with The Bona Venture and WSBU 88.3 The Buzz. She also worked closely with the office of Advancement. Her work with TAPinto Greater Olean and PolitiFact New York further inspired her to enter a career in local politics reporting. Her writing with Jenna Ebberts for the News21 Fellowship was picked up by The Associated Press and republished in ABC News and The Washington Post among other outlets. She started a position with The Holland Sentinel in Michigan as a politics and courts reporter.

# Alumnus of the Year



Lee Coppola, the founding dean of the Jandoli School of Communication, was awarded the 2024 Alumnus of the Year Award during the 75th anniversary celebration.

A native of Buffalo, he is a 1964 journalism graduate of St. Bonaventure. During summers and immediately following his graduation, Coppola worked for the Associated Press in Buffalo, followed by a two-year hitch in the U.S. Army as editor of the post newspaper at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. He retired from the U.S. Army Reserves as a captain.

Coppola is a veteran newspaperman, television investigative reporter and federal prosecutor and retired in August 2011 after serving for 15 years as the first dean of the Russell J. Jandoli School of Journalism and Mass Communication, now the Jandoli School of Communication.

As a professional journalist, he won more than 30 local, state and national awards, including the George Polk Award, the National Press Club Award and the Investigative Reporters and Editors Award. He also served 16 years as an investigative reporter at The Buffalo News, followed by 10 years as a television investigative reporter, moving from WKBW-TV Channel 7, Buffalo's ABC affiliate, to WIVB-TV Channel 4, the local CBS affiliate.

In 1983, he received his juris doctorate from the University at Buffalo Law School, having earned the degree while working full-time as a journalist. Prior to assuming the deanship at St. Bonaventure, he prosecuted drug dealers as an assistant U.S. Attorney in the Western New York District from 1992-1996.

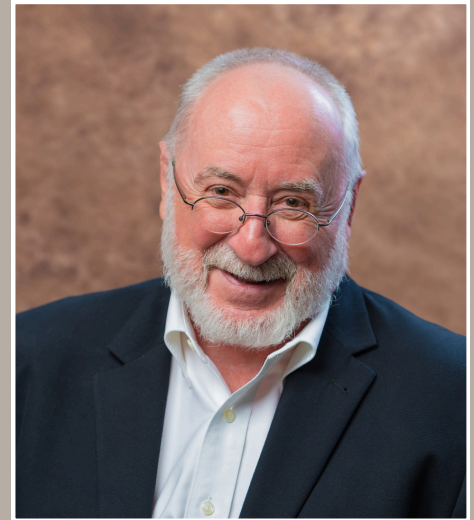
In 2003, he was inducted into the Bishop Fallon High School Hall of Fame, where he was active in the school newspaper until his graduation in 1960. In 2012, he was inducted into the Buffalo Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame, and in 2015 he was named a distinguished graduate of the Jandoli School. He is a frequent speaker on issues concerning journalism, organized crime and public affairs.



# Dr. Denny Wilkins Tribute

Dr. Denny Wilkins, who joined the Jandoli School faculty in 1996, will retire at the end of December. His steadfast commitment to the best ideals of the Jandoli legacy will be remembered for years to come by the students whose lives he changed during his long tenure in the school.

His former student, and now colleague on the faculty, Dr. Brian Moritz, '99, paid tribute to his mentor.



## Honoring a Mentor By Dr. Brian Moritz, '99

I've been given 300 words to pay tribute to Dr. Denny Wilkins, my professor, mentor and friend. My plan was to have it made up of all the needless words he made me omit over the years.

For those of us who've had Denny as our teacher, "omit needless words" is probably the thing we remember the most. Truth is, I've often failed in that — I'm guessing he can find at least 10 words in this sentence to omit.

But the lasting lesson I've learned in the 28 years I've known him is the importance of caring.

Nobody cares more than Denny Wilkins. Nobody cares more about language. When you hear him talk about the writer's moral imperative to make each sentence as clear as possible, that's what "omit needless words" is all about.

Nobody cares more about journalism, what it can and should do for our communities and the world. He's the rare combination of an old-school newspaperman who embraces the importance of digital and emerging media and absolutely nobody cares more about his students. I've seen it firsthand, starting when I was in his very first class in the fall of 1996. But here's the secret: The crusty "Spawn of Satan" exterior is a façade that covers a soft, gooey core of love for his students. If you show him you care, Denny is an advocate for life.

I became a journalist, got into and survived grad school, and became a professor thanks to his mentorship. And three years ago, he helped bring me home for my dream job.

The thing about needless words? Yeah, that's never happening for me.

But one lesson Denny Wilkins taught me, and all of us, will endure. In a world of needless words, he taught us the most necessary one. Care.

*Dr. Brian Moritz is an associate professor in the Jandoli School and directs the school's online master's programs in sports journalism and digital journalism.*

## St. Bonaventure faculty discuss the presidential election



Buffalo Toronto Public Media broadcast a forum that featured St. Bonaventure faculty unpacking the issues in the presidential election.

“This program was a tremendous collaborative effort among students, faculty, staff and alumni,” said Aaron Chimbél, dean of the Jandoli School of Communication. The forum, “Policy Palooza at SBU: How the Presidential Election Will Affect the Lives of Today’s College Students,” was recorded on Tuesday, Oct. 22, on campus.

Jandoli School Professor Richard Lee, ’75, a former political reporter and press secretary, and student Sydney Labayewski, ’26, an SBU-TV news anchor and reporter, moderated the session. Panelists included several St. Bonaventure faculty members, as well as SBU alumnus Bob McCarthy, ’76, a veteran political reporter and analyst.

Panelists discussed the economy, health care, foreign policy, immigration, cybersecurity and other issues. Jandoli School students staffed the production.

The 90-minute program aired on WNED-TV, a PBS member television station in Buffalo, Nov. 2, and 88.7 FM WBFO Nov. 4.



# Remembering Bob Dubill

Robert A. Dubill, '58, an award-winning editor with Gannett News Service and former executive editor at USA TODAY, died after complications from a fall in August at the age of 88.

He was a former St. Bonaventure University trustee, an inaugural member of the Jandoli School's Wall of Distinguished Graduates and our 1985 Alumnus of the Year. He also earned a law degree from Seton Hall University.



*Image via Leslie Smith, Jr, USA TODAY*

'Bob Dubill was the emotional beating heart of the USA TODAY newsroom,' Washington Bureau Chief Susan Page said in the paper's obituary. "His exuberance about breaking a story, especially if we were beating the competition, made every other person in the newsroom want to be part of his team.'

Dubill received a Pulitzer Prize in 1980 and was executive editor of USA TODAY from 1995-2002. He will be remembered as a fierce defender of journalism and a go-to mentor for staff members with USA TODAY.

Dubill was described as "a no-nonsense journalist with a heart of gold," former Editor-in-Chief Karen Jurgensen of USA TODAY said in the obituary. "He was always in search of the right coverage, the best stories, roaming the newsroom to consult with reporters and editors." Dubill is survived by his wife, Mary, children Andrew and Katie, and six grandchildren.



*Image via Frank S. Folwell, USA TODAY*

# Woj Retires from Journalism to Return to Bona's

12

On Sept. 18, Adrian Wojnarowski, '91, shocked the sports world by retiring from his post as ESPN's senior NBA insider and returning home to St. Bonaventure as general manager for the men's basketball program.

Woj, as he is known, was named National Sportswriter of the Year in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and wrote the New York Times bestseller, "The Miracle of St. Anthony: A Season with Coach Bob Hurley and Basketball's Most Improbable Dynasty."



*Vaccaro '89 and Woj '91 embrace*

He was the Jandoli School's 2019 Alumnus of the Year and is a member of the Jandoli School's Wall of Distinguished Graduates. His longtime friend, Mike Vaccaro '89, wrote the following tribute.

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## "You Haven't Changed a Bit"

By Mike Vaccaro, '89

The best part about having been there at the beginning with Woj is that you realize something very unique about him: he is the same person, to his core, that he was the day he introduced himself, "Hi, I'm Adrian Wojnarowski, and I'd like to write for you at The BV."

The same earnestness remains at the fore, from the day his junior year when he won a \$200 grant that could easily have been utilized a hundred lesser ways; instead, he made a beeline for Radio Shack, to buy a TRS-80 laptop, the better to pitch freelance stories to newspapers up and down the East Coast.

The same generosity of spirit remains in his core, from the day as a precocious upperclassman when he refused to allow his obvious talents to intimidate freshman writers at the student paper, and rather offered encouragement and a good example and a blueprint to improve.



## Woj's to Return to Bona's cont.

And, of course, there remains the same ferocious work ethic, a daily tribute to both his working-class parents and to the standards of the Jandoli School that has forever drilled the fundamentals of both scholarship and sweat equity into its pupils; it took more with some, and took deeply with Adrian.

I have known Adrian when he worked for free at The BV; when he was an intern at the Olean Times-Herald, writing only for the 15 cents a mile that would take him to wherever a story might be lurking somewhere in New York, Pennsylvania or Canada; and when he was at ESPN, one of the most highly decorated journalists in the world.

To know Adrian in 2024 is to have known him in 1987. We always strive to retain our essential values, always hope that people can tell us, “you haven’t changed a bit,” and actually mean it. In this case, it’s so. He was always a dreamer, eager to proselytize the power of dreams, always careful to stress: dreams don’t happen by accident.

They are the byproduct of earnestness, generosity of spirit and hard work, filtered through something we genuinely believe to be our greatest gifts: the Bonaventure Way. The Jandoli Way. And, I would argue, the Woj Way.

*Mike Vaccaro is the lead sports columnist at the New York Post, a four-time New York Sportswriter of the Year, the 1989 Hellinger Award recipient and a member of the Jandoli School’s Wall of Distinguished Graduates.*



*Vaccaro '89, and Woj '91.*

Artificial intelligence, or AI, is rapidly changing every industry, especially communication, journalism and media. Jandoli School faculty want to make sure their students are prepared to understand, adapt to, utilize and lead in this area.

From writing courses to video production, faculty members incorporate AI in specific ways for the courses they teach.

Here are some examples:

- **JMC 201**– Reporting and Writing I (Dr. Denny Wilkins): Students use facts gathered from a news conference to write a story. ChatGPT will be given the same facts and told to write a story. Students will critique the AI story for accuracy and context.
- **SC 301**– Strategic Writing and Professional Communication (Mike Jones-Kelley): Students receive a lecture on AI in business writing by Shannon Holfoth, '10, a PR consultant.
- **JMC 245**– Video Production (Scott Sackett): Students engage in critical investigations of the use of AI content generators and productivity tools readily available in Adobe. Students research, analyze and evaluate visual storytelling including the ethical and unethical use of AI. Students evaluate AI-created content within the frameworks of Jandoli School learning objectives and St. Bonaventure University's values: compassion, wisdom, and integrity. Students discuss ethical concerns related to the use of AI-generated content. Students are encouraged to use LLMs and AI tools in ways that foster critical thinking and support rational and creative problem-solving and force evaluative judgments.
- **SC 220**– Digital Content and Engagement and COM 102 – Effective Speaking and Presentations (Scott Sackett): Students engage in critical investigations of the use of AI content generators and productivity tools, including AI-powered writing assistants such as Grammarly. Students research, analyze, and evaluate content and engagement initiatives and strategies and discuss findings and takeaways — how to become more proficient in effective content creation and engagement for target audiences and fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students evaluate AI-created content within the frameworks of Jandoli School learning objectives and St. Bonaventure's values: compassion, wisdom, and integrity. Students produce content for strategic communication with and without AI tools and critique their work according to these frameworks. Students discuss ethical concerns including, but not limited to, data scraping “without credit, consent or compensation” and the propagation of racist, sexist, and classist language. Students consider LLMs' production of irrelevant, fabricated, and inaccurate information called “hallucinations.” Students are encouraged to use LLMs and AI tools in ways that foster critical thinking and support rational and creative problem-solving and force evaluative judgments.

The Jandoli Institute tackled a number of different topics such as climate change, artificial intelligence and NCAA conference realignment for the second installment of its hybrid journalism series.

“The project showcases the diverse expertise of the St. Bonaventure faculty,” said Dr. Richard Lee, executive director of the Jandoli Institute. “Professors from different disciplines have partnered with faculty from the Jandoli School of Communication to develop and produce well-researched, well-reported and well-written journalism.”

Here are the articles and faculty teams:

- “How climate change will impact life and food security inside and outside of the United States” by Dr. Xiao-Ning Zhang, a professor of biology, and Dr. Pauline Hoffmann, an associate professor in the Jandoli School.
- “NCAA Conference Realignment” by Dr. Tiffany Demiris, an assistant professor of sports management, and Dr. Denny Wilkins, a professor in the Jandoli School.
- “Advertisers can renew focus on \$21 billion market: consumers with disabilities” by Dr. Elizabeth Gratz, an assistant professor of marketing, and David Kassnoff, a retired Jandoli School faculty member.
- “Acorns, A Forgotten Food” by Dr. Scott Medler, an associate professor of physician assistant studies, and Dr. Tammy Rae Matthews, an assistant professor in the Jandoli School.
- “History Here and Now: The Issue of Presentism and Relevance” by Dr. Phillip Payne, a professor of history, and Dr. Brian Moritz, director of the Jandoli School’s online M.A. programs in sports journalism and digital journalism.
- “Hate Goes to School” by Dr. Robin Valeri, a professor of psychology, and Dr. Hoffmann.
- “A.I. – Students and the World of Work” by John Stevens, a lecturer in management, and Carole McNall, an assistant professor in the Jandoli School.

“These are dynamic collaborations of interdisciplinary work that will benefit the public,” said Jandoli School Dean Aaron Chimbel. “I am thankful for Dr. Lee and the faculty members who made this happen.”

The Jandoli Institute, a part of the Jandoli School of Communication, serves as a forum for academic research, creative ideas and discussion on the intersection between media and democracy.



# News Blackout Delivers Unexpected Lesson

By Bob Carr, '75

When the assassination attempt on GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump occurred on July 13, millions of Americans heard about it through legitimate news sources — either by watching live television, receiving a news alert from one of the media, or scanning a major news organization's website. I pursued the last one by going directly to the CNN website via my iPhone.



Of course there are other nontraditional sources for communicating information that include X, formerly known as Twitter, and various social media networks and news aggregators.

But what would happen if we didn't have access to the 24/7 legitimate news cycle? How do you cope with an information vacuum during such a critical event?

That's when my thoughts went back 43 years ago to the unusual situation where 31 St. Bonaventure University students did not have firsthand access to news sources when a would-be assassin opened fire on President Ronald Reagan in Washington, D.C.

It all came about because the students were part of two newswriting and reporting classes that had just started a class assignment the previous day called "Operation Blackout," where they were under orders for a week not to read a newspaper or news magazine, listen to radio news or watch a television news program.

As St. Bonaventure's public relations director, I was already preparing a news release on Operation Blackout when the news of the Reagan assassination attempt came through on my office radio. Now the thrust of the news release became much more compelling and newsworthy — there were students voluntarily isolated from legitimate news sources regarding a significant event capturing ongoing, worldwide media attention.

## News Blackout Lessons cont.

St. Bonaventure, which this year celebrates the 75th anniversary of the founding of its journalism degree program, has a long and innovative academic emphasis on solid writing coupled with hands-on, real-world communications experience that has produced Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, sports and news network reporters and anchor people, and strategic public relations/communications advisors.

The late Gilbert Stinger, a highly professional journalist and retired managing editor of the Olean Times Herald, taught the two newswriting classes and was inspired to start “Operation Blackout” by a friend who was caught in Tehran when the Iran Revolution erupted. Upon returning to the U.S., the friend told Stinger that the absence of newscasts in the Iranian capital was “more terrifying than the sound of gunfire.”

So Stinger sought to place the students in a somewhat similar position as that of the former U.S. hostages in Iran who appreciated their freedoms even more following their release in January 1980 after 14 months of imprisonment.

“Likewise, after living in a non-news land, even just for a week, you will appreciate more deeply your freedom to gather, write, read, film, speak, and handle the news,” he said in the news release.

And almost to the person each of the students did — not deviating from the course assignment that ended with handing in a report on how they endured “Operation Blackout.” The news release also spurred major coverage of the students’ dilemma by Buffalo area TV and newspapers, national radio outlets and The New York Times.

Quite the perspective four decades apart. Now if I could only go an hour without checking my iPhone for the latest news.

*Robert P. Carr is a retired public relations consultant from Clarence.*

# Jandoli School Represents in Paris 2024 Olympics



Three journalists with ties to the Jandoli School covered the 2024 Paris Olympics: adjunct professor Sam Borden, Rachel Axon, '06, and Matt Traub, '99.

Borden teaches in our online master's program in sports journalism while also working for ESPN. Borden, an award-winning journalist who joined ESPN in 2017, is a global correspondent and senior writer focused on a variety of sports ranging from international soccer to the NFL, the Olympics to the NBA. He has covered sports in more than 40 countries.

Axon is a staff writer for the Sports Business Journal. She previously reported for USA Today for more than a decade with a focus on investigations on gender inequity, sexual violence, Title IX and Olympic sports. Her sports reporting has earned her several top-10 finishes in the Associated Press Sports Editors writing contests.

Traub writes for SportsTravel Magazine, focusing on the magazine's content, digital and social media strategies. Before joining SportsTravel in 2019, he worked in the sports department for newspapers across the United States. He has covered several different aspects of sports including the Little League World Series, SEC football and the NBA.





Through The Summer Study in Sorrento program, 15 students learned global business and strategic communication through a hands-on approach. The partnership between St. Bonaventure and Sant'Anna Institute in Sorrento allowed students the opportunity to explore and promote the Franciscan roots of a convent there. The experience is a robust, five-week study abroad session in Sorrento, Italy, led by Jandoli School faculty member Anna Bulszewicz, '07.



The students worked with the Franciscan friars of Chioostro di San Francesco and were tasked with creating an innovative marketing campaign to drive visitor interest to the local convent in Sorrento — one that houses some of the oldest artifacts and documents known to the Franciscan order.

Flipping the traditional classroom upside down, students engaged in learning excursions including a tour of the Caserta Royal Palace, meeting with the U.S. Consulate of Naples, and visiting the centuries-old city of Rome and ruins of Pompeii.



# Brown and White: The Heart of Bona's Basketball

20

Students, alumni and fans of St. Bonaventure men's basketball program got a preview of the forthcoming documentary "Brown and White: The Heart of Bona's Basketball" at a special event held Oct. 18 in the Dresser Auditorium of the John J. Murphy Professional Building. The documentary explores the program's impact on the university and its Franciscan values and how it reflected changes in American society.



"Brown and White: The Heart of Bona's Basketball" is a documentary years in the making. Director and producer Mike Camoin, '88, presented excerpts from the work-in-progress alongside moderator and former Big East Conference administrator Tom McElroy, '74. Camoin's mission is to highlight the untold stories and contributions by players and coaches to both the university and to the game itself.

Among the stories explored was the impact of Tom and Sam Stith — orphaned African American brothers from Harlem who helped one of the smallest NCAA Division I college basketball programs achieve national prominence.



"The story goes beyond what took place on the court," Camoin said. "Brown and White' reveals how St. Bonaventure and its basketball program co-exist hand-in-hand and how each thrives on each other's success. Particularly throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the Bonnies mirrored the social and civil rights climate of the nation and its ambition toward advancing the vision of a Great Society."

The screening featured interview clips with players and coaches who were instrumental in the program's surge onto the national scene in the 1960s along with a live discussion with Whitey Martin, '61, and Larry Weise, '58, and coach from 1961-1973. John Hayes, '69, Sam Stith, '60, and Bill Butler, '68, participated via Zoom.

"I wouldn't trade St. Bonaventure for anything ... it means everything to me," said Hayes, a member of the St. Bonaventure Athletics Hall of Fame.

The documentary will air on PBS as early as March of 2025. For more information on the documentary, you can visit [projectunfurl.com](http://projectunfurl.com).

# Sports Media Speed Mentoring

Jandoli School students had the opportunity to participate in a sports media speed mentoring session with Bona alums, organized by Amy Moritz, '95, professional-in-residence in sports media, Oct. 18. Students had an hour to meet with as many mentors as they could during one-on-one sessions that lasted five minutes each.



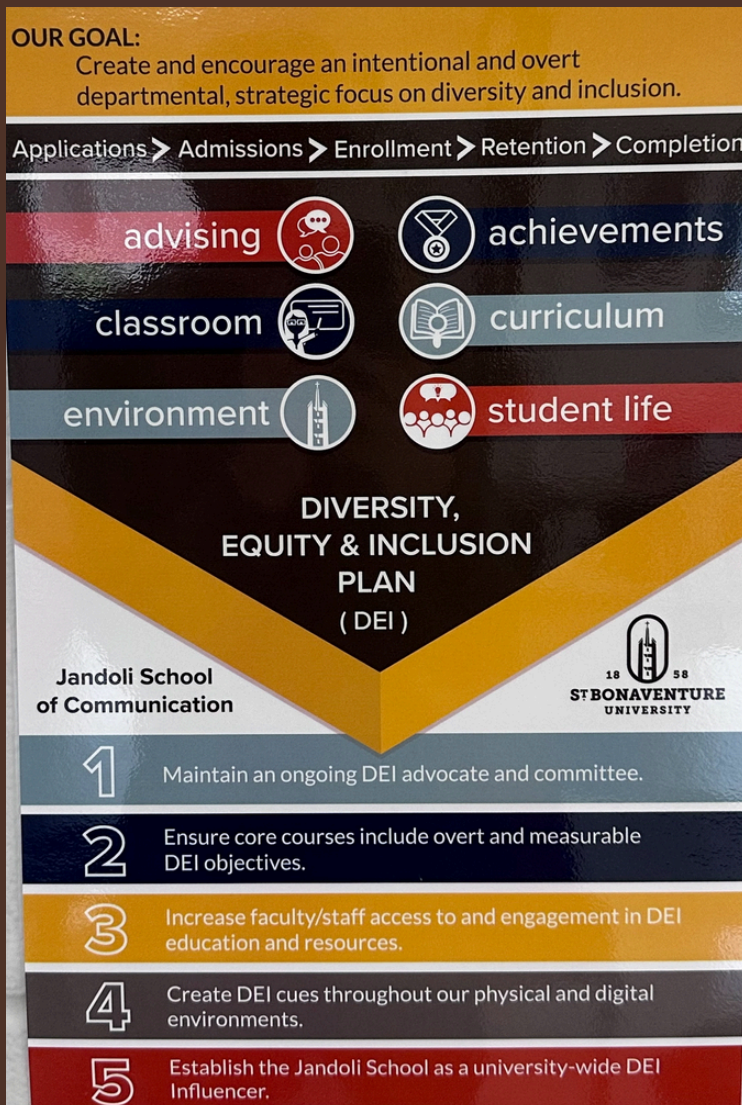
Participating alumni were: **Chris LaPlaca, '79**, (ESPN), **Justin Craig, '97**, (ESPN Radio), **Rayna Banks, '03**, (ESPN), **Tom McElroy, '74**, (former Big East administrator), **Jim Marchiony, '76**, (former athletics administrator at the NCAA, Kansas, UConn, Georgetown and Iona), **Bob Beretta, '87**, (St. Bonaventure director of athletics), **Brian Matthews, '98**, (NFL Senior Vice President, Media Sales), **Eric Fisher, '94**, (Front Office Sports) and **Gerry Helper, '79**, (NHL).

Students came away with valuable networking practice – getting over the shyness and awkwardness that can take over in a networking situation. Alumni reinforced the value of building strong relationships, the importance of developing solid writing skills, which are infinitely transferable, and encouraged students to be adaptable and persistent.





# What's in ABAG?



A key priority of the Jandoli School is ensuring each student, faculty and staff member feels like the school is a place they belong. It's that approach that led faculty members to build on the school's longstanding commitment to inclusion efforts with a new Access and Belonging Advocacy Group.

ABAG, as it is affectionately called, is responsible for ensuring the Jandoli School fosters a welcoming environment and community in which students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors have unhindered access to facilities, programs, and personnel and feel a sense of belonging.

Jandoli School faculty member Scott Sackett coordinates ABAG.

ABAG promotes and monitors diversity, equity and inclusion by advancing observable and measurable initiatives in the school's DEI strategic plan. Some of the initiatives in development are a TV and film series about representation of historically marginalized social groups, celebrations of Native American History Month, Black History Month, and Women's History Month, and ensuring accessibility in the new facilities and building renovations.

ABAG also seeks partnership opportunities with student clubs to advance shared objectives. ABAG partners students working on initiatives to celebrate Hispanic Heritage month in September, National Coming Out Day in October and Native American Heritage Month in November. Events during the fall semester included Seneca filmmaker Caleb Abrams in November, faculty development sessions and the Black Student Union Cultural Collaborative Showcase in December.

# Welcome New Faculty and Staff

23

## *Ashley Childs - Administrative Assistant to the Dean*

Ashley Childs joined the Jandoli School as the administrative assistant to the dean. She previously worked as a legal assistant and receptionist at an attorney's office where she specialized in real estate transactions.



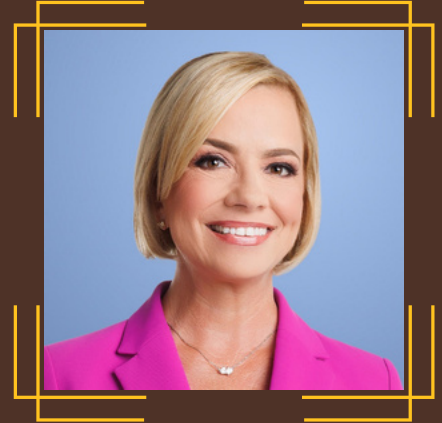
## *Amy Moritz, '95 - Professional in Residence in Sports Media*



Amy Moritz enters a new role at St. Bonaventure as Professional in Residence in Sports Media. She has served as an adjunct professor since 2021 while also working as a public relations manager for The Martin Group. Moritz spent more than 20 years as a sportswriter at the Buffalo News and the Olean Times Herald.

## Julie Murgatroyd

Just as Julie Murgatroyd's coursework in St. Bonaventure's digital journalism master's program was intensifying, so was Hurricane Milton. Murgatroyd, a meteorologist and correspondent at Scripps News, was assigned to cover Milton, the second-most intense tropical cyclone ever recorded over the Gulf of Mexico.



When she found out that she would be traveling to Florida to cover the aftermath of the storm, Murgatroyd knew she needed to get a jump on her schoolwork. She was already exhausted from covering Hurricane Helene, one of the deadliest Atlantic hurricanes in recent history.

"Unfortunately, about the time Milton was making its presence known, I was nearing the end of my coursework, so I had to finish as quickly as I could," Murgatroyd recalls. "I had everything buttoned up before I left to cover Milton."

Murgatroyd has an extensive history covering hurricanes and other natural disasters. She began her career at CNN and spent a decade working at The Weather Channel, where she was able to parlay her passions for storytelling and weather into a successful career.

Given her experience, Murgatroyd knew how unpredictable her work schedule might be when she touched down in Florida. Nearly 3 million Floridians were left without power after Milton made landfall. She knew that internet access and cell service could be problematic, and food and water may be limited.

Ultimately, Murgatroyd submitted her final assignments just in time. Shortly thereafter, she boarded a 4 a.m. flight to St. Petersburg, Florida.

"It was a really long day," she said. "I flew in, met with a crew, and put together a piece on recovery efforts for that same night, which aired live at 8 p.m. for one of our shows."

Though she is finally home with her family in Atlanta, Murgatroyd is about to face an even bigger challenge. She learned that Scripps would be eliminating her entire division, effective November 15. Despite this setback, she is remaining optimistic. She plans to focus more on her studies at St. Bonaventure and continue to follow her passion for storytelling.

Once she completes her master's degree, Murgatroyd would like to become a college professor. She wants to help students reach their goals.

"I would encourage journalism students to be open to any opportunities," she says. "With the way journalism is right now, you have to be adaptable."



## Annika Spitzer

Annika Spitzer, a strategic communication major, was awarded the May C. Randazzo Memorial Scholarship by the Buffalo Niagara Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

In addition to maintaining academic excellence, Spitzer is engaged in many campus organizations, including social media content manager for the Franciscan Center for Social Concern and vice president for the Jandoli Women in Communications club. Spitzer hopes to continue her passion for community by working for an organization that embodies community, compassion, wisdom and integrity.



The PRSA Buffalo Niagara Chapter honors college students who best demonstrate leadership, community service, and scholastic achievement with the May C. Randazzo Memorial Scholarship. Randazzo, APR, was a public relations manager at Graphic Controls. Randazzo helped develop students and emerging talents within the profession.

Spitzer was honored at the PRSA Annual Extravaganza where Jandoli alumna Kate Welshofer, '96, was the keynote speaker. Spitzer was also recognized at the PRSA Awards Breakfast during this year's national ICON conference.

Spitzer said she is beyond honored to have received the award.

"I want to thank the Public Relations Society of America for upholding its mission of supporting upcoming communication professionals," she said. "I also want to thank the Jandoli School of Communication for preparing me and my fellow Bonnies for opportunities such as this. I can only begin to emphasize the significance of the incredible Bonaventure community in my professional and personal journey."

## Women in Sports Media



Women in Sports Media is a new Jandoli School club developed by students and Amy Moritz, '95, Professional in Residence in Sports Media.

The club helps women looking to enter the world of sports media and communications dominated by men feel like they have a space to talk to learn from and connect with other women. It's crucial for women in the sports communication programs not to feel discouraged because they don't see a lot of other women in sports media. Allie Elkins, a senior sports media major, spearheads the club, which meets weekly.

Women in Sports Media hopes to increase the club's presence on campus by holding events and securing guest speakers to inspire and connect with club members. Future events will include WNBA watch parties, attending women's sporting events together and just building connections within the club through various gatherings.

## Jah'Neyce Washington- Buffalo Broadcasters Association Rising Star Award

Jah'Neyce Washington, who graduated in May with a degree in broadcast journalism, received a Buffalo Broadcasters Association Rising Star Award in September.

She made significant contributions to SBU-TV, was part of the AAF team and was a co-founder of Jandoli Women in Communication.

The Buffalo Broadcasters Association aims to “preserve the rich history of broadcasting in Buffalo, encourage quality broadcasting today and well into the future, and promote the importance of quality broadcasting.”

“I am honored to be one of this year’s Buffalo Broadcaster’s Association’s Rising Star recipients,” Washington said. “I couldn’t have done it without the wonderful guidance of the faculty and staff of the Jandoli School as well as the friends I’ve made along the way in my journalism career. This award isn’t just for me, it’s for all of us in a way. Thank you for being great Jandoli School, and Go Bonnie’s!”

Washington is now an anchor and reporter at WETM-TV, the NBC affiliate in Elmira, New York.



## Blake Silverman- Sports Illustrated

Blake Silverman, who graduated in May with a master’s degree in sports journalism, joined Sports Illustrated as a breaking/trending news writer to support SI.com. In this new position, Silverman will focus on producing high-quality content that covers both hard news and news that aligns with the intersection of social media and sports.

Silverman attributes his competency with the skills he learned at the Jandoli School.

“The program, faculty and everything I learned from you put me in a position to open this door, which I’m truly grateful for,” he said. “The SI team even tested me on newsworthy instincts during the interview process, just to tell you how one to one it applied with what I learned and developed at Bona’s.”



## Christy Sullivan Appointed CEO at D&V Distribution Company

Master's program in leadership alumna Christy Sullivan, '08, was recently announced as CEO at D&V Distribution Co.

Sullivan brings 28 years of experience, most recently with Zippo Manufacturing Company. Some of the titles she held during her time there were director of sales administration and special projects, senior international business development manager and senior national accounts manager. Sullivan has also been an adjunct professor at SBU, teaching courses in national management and sales and marketing applications.



For additional information about the Masters in Leadership program please use the link below:

<https://www.sbu.edu/academics/master-of-arts-in-leadership>

## Paul Wieland Inducted into Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame

Jandoli School legend Paul Wieland, '59, was posthumously inducted as one of 12 members of the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2024 on Nov. 12.

Wieland was the winner of 27 regional and national reporting awards and the author of four books. He returned to teach at the Jandoli School for 15 years, focusing on broadcasting courses and developing the sports production program by acquiring "The Truck" to broadcast games.



Wieland died Feb. 16, 2023, at the age of 84. Wieland is a member of the Jandoli School's Wall of Distinguished Graduates. The top graduating senior each year receives the Paul Wieland Award for Outstanding Achievement in Sports Media.

For more than a quarter of a century he led the Buffalo Sabres communication efforts, first as their inaugural public relations director, and later as the director of communications. Wieland brought live broadcasting to the Sabres organization, first over the radio airwaves, and later as television broadcasts. He was a broadcast pioneer, and under his leadership, the team introduced game broadcasts on local cable in the 1970s. He also developed the first postgame show, the 4th Period.

For all of his groundbreaking work in communications, Wieland was best known to his colleagues and to sports media outlets as a prankster. He created annual April Fool's press releases, which included the fictional draft pick Taro Tsujimoto, the ice alternative Sliderex, selling pieces of the Aud's ice, and the designation purportedly made by President Ronald Reagan of the Sabres as "America's Team."

## Jordan Gathers Appointed Executive Director of Venues Parks & Arts

Jordan Gathers, '15, was appointed executive director of Venues Parks & Arts for the City of South Bend, Indiana.

Gathers had served as acting executive since May 2023 and served as deputy chief of staff from January 2020 until early 2023.

“Venues Parks & Arts hasn’t skipped a beat under Jordan’s leadership,” South Bend Mayor James Mueller said. “I am confident that Jordan will continue to build on VPA’s success, advancing our mission to deliver services that empower everyone to thrive.”



According to a press release from the city, Gathers’ accomplishments included:

- bringing back South Bend’s Ethnic Festival, reimagined as Fusion Fest;
- launching the \$25 million Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dream Center;
- completing \$2 million of improvements to LaSalle Park;
- securing \$7.5 million in federal funding for a new aquatic feature and improvements at Kennedy Park;
- receiving \$3 million in state funding for improvements to the Byers Softball Complex;
- starting construction on the Raclin Murphy Encore Center—phase II of the Morris 100 project;
- adding the Coal Line and LINK Trails;
- envisioning upgrades to Potawatomi Park;
- fundraising over \$3 million for youth programs and mentorship, and
- expanding access to opportunity through a Youth Employment Program and “Free Movies at the Morris” for more families to enjoy the 100-year-old theater.

“I am humbled and excited by this opportunity to lead the Venues Parks & Arts team and look forward to continue serving South Bend residents,” Gathers said.

“It is truly an honor to join hands with the community in pursuit of excellence and a future where arts flourish, and our public spaces are vibrant centers of unity, joy, and opportunity for all.”



## Dr. Tara Walker's Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Award



Dr. Tara Walker, assistant professor of Communication, presented her paper titled "Complicated girls suck: A feminist autoethnography of media and outlaw emotions at the turn of the 21st century," at the national Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference.

Using 30 years of personal journals as data, Walker tracks her own development as a “complicated girl” in the 1990s and 2000s. Representations of complicated women in media, pop culture and literature served as inspiration for the interactive poster. Participants were invited to answer the question 'What makes you complicated?'.

## Sam Borden's The Year's Best Sports Writing Feature



Sam Borden, adjunct instructor in the Jandoli School's online journalism master's programs, will have a story in the 2024 edition of The Year's Best Sports Writing, published by Triumph Books.

Borden's story on [Pelé's funeral in Brazil](#) for [ESPN.com](#) is among the 24 pieces honored. This is the third time Borden's work has been picked for the annual anthology.

Borden captures the heart of the people, a country and a sport as they mourn the loss of the icon, Pelé. The people Borden interviewed recount on the magnitude of Pele's impact on the world for his culture.

## Heather Harris

Heather Harris, associate professor in the Jandoli School, released her 12th picture book "Something to Sing About," published by In Your Heart Books.

Harris worked with author Karen Richards Toothaker to create the pictures for this fresh telling of the star-filled night that Jesus was born.



"This project pushed me to research and discover ancient worlds and peoples, animals and angels, settings and styles, so I could illustrate it for a modern audience," Harris said.

The project entailed creating 28 fully finished illustrations, the cover illustration, and end papers, which took the better part of a year.

The book is available on Harris's website: [www.heatherlynnharris.com](http://www.heatherlynnharris.com)



## Dr. Tammy Rae Matthews

Dr. Tammy Rae Matthews, assistant professor of sports journalism and digital journalism, earned the prestigious 2024 African Journalism Studies (AJS) Best Paper Award at the 74th Annual International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, held June 20-24 on Australia's Gold Coast.

Matthews' peer-reviewed paper titled "Enhancing Social Change: Nurturing Nuanced Communication for Addressing Gender-Based Violence within Namibian LGBTQI+ Communities," tackles the pervasive issue of gender-based violence within Namibian LGBTQI+ communities. It delves into the complexities of intimate partner abuse, whether physical, sexual, verbal or emotional, and sheds light on the unique challenges faced by LGBTQI+ survivors.

Matthews explores how psychological violence, rooted in gender roles and identities, permeates various aspects of life. She also examines the physical manifestations of this violence and critiques existing initiatives to address these behaviors. Her paper also earned the Top Faculty Paper Runner-Up Award in the Global Communication and Social Change Division.

## Mackowski and Colleagues Honored with Gold Telly Award

Dr. Chris Mackowski was part of a team honored over the summer with a gold Telly Award. Mackowski served as host for a series of virtual video field trips produced by Acowsay films for the American Battlefield Trust.

The team was recognized in the “History — Online” category. Founded in 1979 to honor local, regional and cable television commercials, the Telly Awards now honor excellence in video and television across all screens. The series was produced by Hannah Ginder and directed by Tyler Eichorst of Acowsay. Kristopher D. White served as associate producer for the American Battlefield Trust.

“Acowsay partnered with the Trust with the goal of creating four feature-length, documentary-style virtual field trips about some of our nation’s most historical cities,” Ginder said. “Each of our destinations — Boston, Massachusetts; Charleston, South Carolina; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Vicksburg, Mississippi — played an important part in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and other historical events.”

The field trips also resulted in a variety of stand-alone spin-off videos, such as a tour of Fort Sumter, a cooking class in New Orleans, an exploration of the world’s oldest commissioned warship, and a visit to the site of the Boston Tea Party.

The virtual video field trips are available through Acowsay’s [website](#) as well as on the American Battlefield Trust’s [YouTube page](#).



## Mackowski Presents Civil War Programs



Mackowski, left, and Dr. Curt Fields as General Ulysses S. Grant in front of the historic Massaponax Church in Spotsylvania, Virginia.

Dr. Chris Mackowski, professor of journalism and mass communication, gave a Civil War tour of New Orleans's French Quarter in July as part of the American Battlefield Trust's annual Teacher Institute for K-12 teachers.

"A Place for Liberty? James Longstreet and the Battle of Liberty Place," which focused on an attempt by white supremacists to overthrow a duly elected biracial government in Louisiana in 1874. Longstreet was a former Confederate officer living in New Orleans who led that state militia's attempts to defend the government.

In July, Mackowski presented a program, "The Lay of the Land: How Topography Influenced the Way Soldiers Moved Across Battlefields," for a virtual Teacher Institute presented by the Trust. He also interviewed Susan Eisenhower, granddaughter of the former president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, as part of that online event.

In August, Mackowski celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Emerging Civil War Symposium (ECW), which he co-founded. ECW promotes emerging voices in the field of Civil War public history.

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