

# The Reporter



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The Nation's Oldest National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Organization

## Report from the Webmaster

# SCJ launches online payment functions

By Adam Earnhardt  
National Webmaster

The Society for Collegiate Journalists recently launched an online store with PayPal. Links to the store are available on the SCJ home page at [www.scj.us](http://www.scj.us).

Visitors to the SCJ web site are now able to pay membership dues, chapter charter fees and re-new charter fees.

"I'm pretty excited about these new services," said Adam Earnhardt, SCJ Webmaster. "We are trying to bring SCJ into the twenty-first century with more online services."

In addition to fee collection, an online donation form was created.



Webmaster Adam Earnhardt has spearheaded efforts for online giving.

"This is the beginning of what I hope will be an SCJ foundation," Earnhardt said. "It will take a lot of work, but I believe we can secure SCJ's future with gifts from previous members and other friends in the field of journalism."

Donors can make one-time gifts to SCJ or set-up online giving plans. For example, if donors wish to donate \$120 annually, they can create monthly payment plans. In this case, PayPal would accept \$10 per month from a bank account, credit card, or debit card.

Donation and fee payment through SCJ's online store requires the creation of a PayPal account. "Starting a PayPal account is free and relatively painless," Earnhardt said.

Earnhardt noted that if someone wishes to make payments or donations via PayPal, but can't understand how to create account, they should contact him. Earnhardt can be reached at [webmaster@scj.us](mailto:webmaster@scj.us) or by phone at 814-393-2659.

"I've walked people through the creation of PayPal accounts in the past," Earnhardt said. "It requires that you have an active bank account."



The SCJ website can be found at [www.scj.us](http://www.scj.us).

"PayPal is extremely secure," Earnhardt said. "I've yet to hear of someone losing their money on PayPal because of security problems."

These new services represent the first phase of additional features on the web.

"This is just the start," Earnhardt said. "We plan to roll out other new features over the coming months, including the launch of the e-magazine, *The Collegiate Journalist*."

Earnhardt said he plans to release a Call for Articles some time in mid-May and launch *The Collegiate Journalist* in mid-Fall.

Editors suspect college officials played role in newspaper theft

# Front-page story of stolen newspapers reported lost accreditation; officials deny involvement

KANSAS – A front-page article in Fort Hays State University's student newspaper about the College of Education and Technology almost losing its accreditation may not have been too popular among some readers – about 500 newspapers were missing from the building that houses the college the day the article was printed.

On Jan. 25, copies of the University Leader were delivered to Rarick Hall at approximately 10:30 a.m., and according to witnesses there was not a single copy left in the building by 11:30 a.m.

The front-page article reported that the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education sent a site visit team to Fort Hays State to inspect the education program. The program did not adhere to current standards, according to the article, and the university was subsequently put on probation pending a sec-



ond visit in February to determine whether it will lose its accreditation permanently.

"It's pretty frustrating that we're trying to publish news on campus, and someone would resort to something illegal like this," said Editor in Chief Will Manly. Although all of the newspapers delivered to Rarick Hall were missing, many of them were accounted for.

"I took a good number of these papers to classrooms," said Guy "Ed" Mills, dean of the College of Education. Mills said that he took about 300 copies of the newspaper for students to use the article "as a vehicle for discussion."

However, Manly said, "that wouldn't account for all the papers being gone."

On Jan. 25, the University Leader

received anonymous tips that faculty members from the College of Education were at fault, but officials deny having anything to do with the theft.

"We sure didn't throw any in the dumpster," Mills said. "We didn't ask students not to read it. In fact we took it to them and asked them to read it."

The Fort Hays State University Police Department is still investigating the theft.

"We're fairly certain that something far more serious than theft is involved," wrote members of the University Leader's editorial board in a column on Jan. 28. "We believe our papers were removed because of some content that some administrators did not want students to see."

*This story is reprinted with permission of the Student Press Law Center. For more information about the issues of the student press check online at [www.splc.org](http://www.splc.org). This story was written by Diane Krauthamer.*

## Former newspaper adviser sues Ind. university

INDIANA – A former student newspaper adviser who was removed from his position by Vincennes University filed a federal lawsuit against the school on Feb. 2, claiming his First and 14th Amendment rights were violated.

Michael Mullen, who was also a journalism instructor and chairman of the journalism department, filed suit against the public university at a federal district court in Terre Haute nine months after he was transferred and demoted after conflict between student newspaper the **Trailblazer** and the university.

According to the complaint filed by Mullen, tension began to arise with the university in April 2003, when copies of the **Trailblazer** were stolen in response to a controversial April Fools' Day issue. The university administration did not follow through with an investigation of the theft, although Mullen and students "were repeatedly told between April of 2003 and April of 2004 that the matter of the removal of the papers was still under investigation," according to the Feb. 2 complaint.

In addition to not investigating the

theft, the university denounced the April Fools' issue as "vulgar and in poor taste" in a letter to Mullen, the complaint said. Over the summer, the university threatened to cancel the newspaper altogether, and the next school year the administration denied him the salary increase he was entitled to, according to the complaint.

On May 11, interim Dean Mary Trimbo told Mullen he was being transferred to the English department, and that he would no longer be serving as the adviser to the **Trailblazer**. The next day, Mullen found out that there was no grievance process available for faculty, and instead he had to follow a "disagreement procedure," in which his complaints are submitted through a chain of command. The first person in the chain of command was Trimbo, who made the original decision to demote Mullen.

"That [disagreement procedure] denies due process, because due process allows you to tell your side of the story [and] to have your situation reviewed by an impartial reviewer," said

Mullen's lawyer, Ida Lamberti. "Clearly if you go back to the person who made the decision against you in the first place, that's not an impartial reviewer."

Mullen attempted to take his complaint to someone higher in the chain of command than Trimbo, Lamberti said. The complaint reached former interim President John Gregg, who represented one of the students who was accused of the April 2003 theft before becoming interim president. Gregg told Mullen that the administration was supporting Trimbo's decision to transfer him from the journalism department and remove him from his position as the **Trailblazer's** adviser.

After Mullen filed suit, Trimbo maintained that Mullen was transferred to the English department out of necessity.

"He has tenure in English, and we had need for him in English, and we moved him to English. He did not have tenure in journalism," Trimbo said. She said Mullen's transfer was not unusual because the administration had transferred

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# Extra copies of "Feature" pub available

By Arthur Barlow  
National Executive Director

President William Ruehlmann has offered to make his textbook, **The Feature Story Strikes Back! Storytelling in Newspapers** available to active SCJ chapters.

Ruehlmann said, "It's a labor of love. I love SCJ and writing, so this is my opportunity to share both passions at once. You'll find action-packed advice and examples on how to make a reporter's free pass to the circus of life pay off in prose."

"See the elephant and get paid for it. If you like **The Feature Story Strikes Back!** and you want to share it with other students of the craft, SCJ provides extra copies at cost: a mere ten bucks per book," Ruehlmann continued.

Executive Director, Art Barlow, will be providing a free copy to each active chapter conducting

their annual initiation.

This is only the first of a series of new services for SCJ chapters to be provided by the National Office to active SCJ chapters.

For several years National Council has expressed a desire to publish a monograph series in a text similar to the **Constitution/Handbook**. To that end we invite people to submit scholarly studies, practical hand guides, and other resources.

Mary Beth Earnhardt was the first recipient of a grant from National Council. The grant is in support of research into the workings of student journalism.

Barlow used a semester-long sabbatical to search out cognate organizations which have the potential to serve student journalists and their particular needs.

A handbook identifying these organizations will be printed on the Clarion campus and will be distributed to all active SCJ or-

ganizations in April.

Support for the distribution of this important handbook was provided by the National Council during their annual meeting held in Nashville Tennessee in November.

Again, this text will be in the format of the current **Constitution/Handbook**.

## SPLC—Adviser

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another tenured English professor back to the department in 2003, although she would not name the professor, citing a "personnel issue."

David Sumner, executive director of the Indiana Collegiate Press Association, said he doubts there was a need for Mullen in the English department at all, because that need did not arise until after the **Trailblazer** published controversial material. "It just seems too coincidental that this re-assignment occurred [at the same time]," Sumner said. Sumner said the Indiana Collegiate Press Association unanimously supports Mullen.

Mullen filed a tort claim in September 2004, at which point the university was given 90 days to respond. The university did not respond, and he filed a federal lawsuit against them on Feb. 2. Vincennes University has not responded to the lawsuit yet.

Lamberti said Mullen is hoping to achieve possible reinstatement to his old position, as well as the compensation of actual damages due to his financial loss. In addition Mullen is hoping to change university policies that impede constitutional rights, such as the lack of a grievance procedure available for faculty.

"We're asking that the court order [Vincennes University] to stop doing what they are doing that violates free speech and that violates due process," Lamberti said.

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## SCJ MAJOR AWARDS— DEADLINE EXTENSION!

The deadlines for:

- The Student Journalist of the Year Award
- The McDonald Award for Outstanding Chapter of the Year
- The Barker Award for Outstanding Chapter Adviser of the Year
- The Inglehart Award for Special Contributions to the field

Have been extended until **March 15**.

Copies of the nomination forms are included with this mailing.

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# Notes from the Executive Director



Still winter, well, in Pennsylvania, but I did hear the geese as they flew over our little town this morning so it's time to think Spring, and the convention in New York City and Awards and annual SCJ Initiations and special fundraisers for our philanthropy: SPLC and....whatever your imagination offers.

HOWEVER, there is still ice on the lawn and gloom in the heavens so let's make the most of the spirit of this season, good time to read Ezra Pound.

I usually try to add a little spark of enthusiasm to the monthly newsletter, but sometimes that forms a false shimmer on the surface while trouble brews beneath. Let me express some serious concerns regarding our fine, national organization.

I have consistently touted the party line that SCJ is primarily in the recognition business. We empower adviser and peers to recognize, if not excellence, at least achievement; we provide a national venue for saying "Thank You" for a job well done – hard words to come by, but fine words to live by, once they are formulated. We also use our meager financial resources to add some extra voltage to our charges; we present an SCJ member five hundred dollars as the recognized Student Journalist of the Year; we always make a cash donation to SPLC at the autumn CMA/ACP convention. We recognize the nation's outstanding SCJ Chapter and Adviser, and we stand ready to make that extra special recognition of singular achievement; the Inglehart Award. National Office works diligently to make these and other awards available to active chapter and lifetime SCJ members.

I spoke with Past President Sheridan Barker yesterday. Entries for these awards are mailed to him, and as Past President he makes the call; Deadline is past. So far: NO Student journalist of the Year nominees; One McDonald Award nominee; NO Barker Award nominees; NO Inglehart Award nominees.

I am therefore extending the deadline to 15 March. There will still be time to announce the winners in New York City. Advisers take a hard look; I ask you. Go to the web ([www.scj.us](http://www.scj.us)) if you need forms or just call us at Clarion, PA.

As long as I have worked myself into a mood; let's also take note that for every new SCJ Chapter we charter we seem to lose one to the defunct bin. You must have at least three new Initiates in a two year period to remain active. You must be an active chapter and an SCJ member to be eligible for our awards and other services, prod, prod.

On a positive note, Mary Jennings is moving the National Contest along, and results are flowing into the national office at a steady rate. I anticipate making the announcements in NYC, and Vivian Wagner of Muskingum College will be handling the processing of the awards this year for us.

And on an even more positive note I am just informed that the Fairmont State SCJ Chapter has raised funds for SPLC – show us the way.

Next stop St. Patrick's Day – Erin go Braugh (What does that mean?)

## SCJ Chapter Notes and News

### Congratulations to our new members at:

Clarion University, PA—  
8 new members;  
Elizabethtown College, PA—  
8 new members;  
Slippery Rock University, PA—  
2 new members;  
Tennessee Technical University, TN—  
3 new members

The National Office invites members and advisers to our session at CMA in New York City.



### The SCJ Reporter

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