

The SCJ Reporter

The Nation's Oldest National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Organization



Founded as ΠΔΕ (1909) and ΑΦΓ (1919)

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Earnhardt receives \$500 grant from National Council to conduct research project

*Courtesy of
SCJ Clarion*

The Society for Collegiate Journalists awarded a \$500 grant to Mary Beth Earnhardt, instructor of communication at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. The grant was in response to her letter requesting funding for a research project.



"I am honored to receive this generous award," said Earnhardt. "I have been interested in studying student journalism since I worked on my college newspaper."

Earnhardt submitted the funding request, a literature review and a methodology section to the National Council. The Council reviewed the request on November 7 at their annual meeting. Response to the request was very favorable, and the motion to fund the research passed unanimously.

"This is a significant step forward for SCJ," said Executive Director Dr. Arthur H. Barlow. "It is the first time we have actively supported research of the student press."

The research project, entitled "Framing the University: An Examination of Stories in Student Newspapers for Positive, Negative, Mixed, and Neutral Themes," is based on agenda-setting theory with an emphasis on second-level agenda setting.

"I plan to examine the relationships that exist between student journalists and the way they cover campus news," said Earnhardt. "Student journalists are in the unique position of living and learning in the environment their publication covers. There are power relationships that exist in the university environment that are not a problem after graduation, I want to know if these relationships are shaping news coverage of campus events."

"I was shocked after reviewing the literature," said Earnhardt. "Very few scholars have focused



Mary Beth Earnhardt, an Instructor of Communication at Clarion University, received a \$500 research grant from the SCJ National Council.

on the issues that are specific to the student press. I believe that we need to conduct empirical investigations to understand why the way journalists are trained to report the news, this training follows them from the university and into society. By funding my research, and by making the commitment to fund other projects in the future, SCJ is making

an extremely important contribution to the field of journalism."

Earnhardt's project has set a precedent which the National Council hopes to continue.

"We have decided to fund scholarly research," said Barlow. "The details are not yet clear, but eventually we want to publish a monographs series."

Earnhardt story continued on page 3.

Michigan student wins Courage in Student Journalism Award for fighting censorship

Lawsuit over school officials' censorship of article continues

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Katherine Dean, former managing editor of the *Arrow*, the student newspaper at Utica High School in Utica, Mich., received the 2003 Courage in Student Journalism Award on Saturday for her commitment to student press freedom.

The Student Press Law Center, the Newseum and the National Scholastic Press Association presented the award to Dean at the NSPA/Journalism Education Association fall convention. The annual award recognizes a student journalist who has fought to uphold the freedom of the student press despite resistance or difficult circumstances.



Dean's struggle began in March 2002 when she co-wrote an article about a lawsuit filed by local residents who alleged that diesel fumes from idling school buses parked at the Utica Community School's garage was detrimental to their health. One of the plaintiffs alleged the fumes caused him to develop cancer. Utica school officials withheld the article on March 7, 2002, one day before it was scheduled for publication.

Since then, Dean and the newspaper staff have fought school officials over the censorship. The American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan filed a lawsuit on behalf of Dean on April 4, 2003, alleging that school officials violated Dean's First Amendment rights because the article might "embarrass school officials." The lawsuit is pending in federal district court.

After it was censored by the school, Dean's article appeared in the local *Macomb Daily* newspaper with an editorial criticizing the school. Several other Michigan newspapers and television stations reported on Dean's struggle.

"Katy Dean's struggle is an example to journalists everywhere," said Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center. "She has stood up to the pressure from her school because she put the health and safety of her readers first."

Dean received \$5,000 from the Newseum for winning the award.

"It's a tremendous honor," Dean said. "My case has helped me realize that the First Amendment is not some far-off ideal that was fought for hundreds of years ago, but a significant right that we need to fight for everyday."

The Courage in Journalism Award is sponsored by the Student Press Law Center, the Newseum and the National Scholastic Press Association. Since 1974, the Student Press Law Center has been the only national organization exclusively devoted to providing free legal advice and assistance to student journalists and advisers and serving as an advocate for their free press and freedom of information rights. The Newseum, the interactive museum of news planned for Washington, D.C., is funded by the Freedom Forum, a nonpartisan foundation dedicated to free press, free speech and free spirit for all people. Founded in 1921, the National Scholastic Press Association and its college division, the Associated Collegiate Press, provide rating services and critical analyses for print and electronic student news media and sponsor the largest annual national conventions for student journalists and their advisers.

For additional information contact: Mark Goodman, Executive Director, Student Press Law Center at (703) 807-1904

SCJ Chapter Reports



Marlin Chronicle takes First Place Best in Show

The Marlin Chronicle won First Place Best in Show as a four-year non-weekly at the National Student Media Convention 2003 in Dallas, Texas. The convention, attended by more than 2,500 student journalists and advisers representing more than 600 college newspapers, is sponsored by the Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) and College Media Advisers (CMA).

"We particularly prize this recognition because the award was given for the efforts of the entire staff, led by Editor-in-Chief Julia Green," said Dr. Bill Ruehlmann, adviser to the Virginia Wesleyan College paper. "It is a terrific achievement. I am enormously proud of our student journalists, who do their good work not for awards but as a public service to the college community."

Opinion editor Kelli Davis, Co-Features Editor Jaclyn Bailey, Co-Sports Editor Colleen O'Connell, Copy Editor Erica Clarke and Ruehlmann attended the convention Nov. 5-9. They represented the VWC newspaper and the Society for Collegiate Journalists, to which they all belong, participating in national SCJ planning sessions, professional workshops, interview opportunities and critiques. The VWC Chapter will be hosting an SCJ convention at VWC March 4-6, 2004.



Pictured above from left to right are Kelli Davis, Erica Clarke, Colleen O'Connell, Julia Green and their adviser Bill Ruehlmann. The five attend the National Student Media Convention in Dallas, Texas winning First Place Best in Show for The Marlin Chronicle.

Continued from the front page

"As our first funded endeavor in research, Earnhardt has set a high standard for what I hope will be other opportunities to follow," said SJC President Dr. William Ruehlmann.

Earnhardt has been involved with SCJ since her induction in 1995.

She was named Student Journalist of the Year in 1999, she served as editor of The Reporter from 1995-2003, and she is a member of the National Technology and Recruitment and Retention Planning (TARARP) Committee. Her husband, Adam Earnhardt, is the current SCJ webmaster.

Earnhardt is a doctoral student at Kent State University in Ohio where she is pursuing her Ph.D. in Communication Studies. She presented research papers at the National Communication Association Convention in 2003, taking home a top paper award from the Training and Development Division, and she also presented research at the 1998, 2002, and 2003 Eastern Communication Association Conventions.



Happy Holidays!

National Council

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Notes from the Executive Director



This semester is running its course very quickly so let's catch up on where we are so we can collectively enjoy the winter break.

The major news, as predicted, are outcomes from the annual SCJ National Council meeting held at this year's CMA/ACP Convention in Dallas, Texas.

There are three major initiatives; regionalization, choice of a national philanthropy and the decision for SCJ to start funding scholarly activities.

Mary Beth Earnhardt, the recipient of SCJ's first National Grant, details her prospectus in our cover story. I was pleased to bring this issue to National Council, and they were pleased to support it.

I believe it is a domain SCJ has long overlooked; we are a unique organization in the service we provide our chapters, our advisers, and our members.

In similar business, National Council adopted the Student Press Law Center as our National Philanthropy... and continued our traditional support by donating \$500 to SPLC at the convention. It is only natural to strengthen our support of this vigorous and vital organization. They provide precious support for student journalism throughout the nation.

National Council was also informed of the codification of Region I at the last meeting held in conjunction with Clarion University's annual College Media Day. The bylaws and election of officers for Region I move SCJ one step ahead in its effort to facilitate better communication among local chapters. We can all support, learn and achieve by establishing strong local bonds.

Look for more reports on these initiatives in the December newsletter.

And, - last chance to compete in this year's National Contest—the final mailing is out: Deadline is December 31st—as they say in Pennsylvania, “You have to play to win.”

Chapter Notes

Congratulations to our new members at:

*Hampden-Sydney Coll. , Va—
2 new members*

*Winona State University, MN—
11 new members*

*Susquehanna University, PA—
10 new members*

*Remember the deadline for the 2004
Society for Collegiate Journalists' contest is December 31!*

*Send all entries to:
Mary Jennings, SCJ Contest Director
Student Publications Adviser
University of North Alabama Box 5027
Florence, AL 35632
Phone: (256) 765-4426
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The SCJ Reporter
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