

MAY 2023

# MILLER MINUTE

The Newsletter of the A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication



## K-STATE STUDENTS WIN HEARTLAND EMMY AWARDS

### CONGRATULATIONS

Wildcat Electronic Media took home a record number of awards and 19 out of 31 first-place finishes from the Kansas Association of Broadcasters this year.

"We are giant killers," noted Wildcat 91.9 chief operator and faculty adviser **Dr. Ian Punnett**. Under the collective banner of Wildcat Electronic Media, Wildcat 91.9 and Channel 8 took honors in 93.5% of all KAB categories.

"Truly an amazing showing," said **Andrew Smith**, multimedia news director and professor of practice in the A.Q. Miller School. "We easily tripled the next closest university in total awards between radio and TV and almost quadrupled the next closest in first place finishes. Cheers to the students!"

[Here](#) is the complete list of winners.

Marking a bright spot in what has been a spectacular year for K-State student media, and for the first time in the school's and the university's history, two K-State Channel 8 newscasts won regional student Emmy awards this spring.

**Eden Brockman** (pictured above, left) won a Heartland Emmy for her senior project, "[Channel 8 News Special Report: Political Polarization in Kansas](#)." Brockman received a research grant to fund this project and conducted original research for her special. The project was part of an honors video practicum class, a one-on-one mentorship class with professor Andrew Smith. Fellow students from Wildcat Electronic Media assisted Brockman through camera work and logistics. "I am so grateful to everyone who supported me in this project," Brockman said. "Specifically, I would like to thank Andrew Smith for mentoring me through the entire video process and Dr. Raluca Cozma for mentoring me through the corresponding research paper. The study participants gave their viewpoints on difficult and complex concepts, and I am so glad their perspectives resonated with viewers."

"[MHK All-Day: Sports Special](#)" also won an Emmy award. The newscast covered a variety of K-State sports topics, including the Big 12 Championship, men's basketball coach Jerome Tang's contagious energy, an opera and play-by-play crossover, and athletes who are giving back to their community. The team (pictured above, right, with Channel 8 News Director Andrew Smith) consisted of **Dawson Wagner** as associate producer, **Jacob Hall** as anchor, and **Blake Crawford, Landon Platter, Aaron Magill, Chase Knutsen Hagemann, and Ryan Zielseorf** as reporters. The students produced the special as part of professor Andrew Smith's MC 410 Sports Reporting class. "This is just the beginning for Channel 8 News and Wildcat Electronic Media," Smith said.

# PROFESSOR ANDREW SMITH INFUSES HIS TEACHING AND ADVISING WITH HIS LOVE FOR NEWS AND SPORTS

## Faculty Spotlight

**Andrew Smith**, Professor of Practice in the A.Q. Miller School and K-State's Channel 8 News Director, spent 25 years in local television news as a sports reporter, sports anchor, and sports director leading team coverage. He started in Salt Lake City, went to Las Vegas, and spent the last 17 years of his television career as sports director/executive producer and main sports anchor at WLUK in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Along the way, Smith also did NFL sideline reporting for Fox Network and special projects for ESPN and Sky Sports in London, and he hosted many sports talk radio shows and pre-/post-game reports for the NFL. In 2013, Smith decided he needed more training in leadership, so he entered the Communications and Leadership Master's program at Gonzaga University. That peaked his interest in academia, and in 2016 he applied to be news director and professor of practice at K-State.



- **What were the highlights of this past academic year for you?**

"I am always most excited about the success of the students. Even with limited programming opportunities this last year on Channel 8, they were extremely successful in competition in-state, regionally and nationally. Seeing them go on to great careers is always the best part of my job."

- **What are you most excited about in the coming year?**

"One of the reasons I got into academia was to teach and create study abroad opportunities. This coming year, I will be teaching in the KSU in Italy Arts and Culture program during the summer, then taking students to create mobile journalism in London. I lived for 6 years (and many summers!) in Europe and so love to expose our students to other cultures to broaden their worldview. It's probably my favorite thing in academia!"

- **You are pursuing a doctorate in leadership communication. What are your research interests?**

"While I haven't settled on a dissertation topic yet, I have quite a few options since I have so many interests. I'm currently pursuing projects in sports media and how leadership works on the floor and in the stands at sporting events; education abroad and the effects of cultural assimilation; and community engaged scholarship involving food scarcity and local leadership."

- **What do you like to do outside of work?**

"Outside of work I love to create on the stage! I just played Captain Von Trapp in the Manhattan Arts Center production of "The Sound of Music." Each year I do a couple of shows - it is my art. I'm also a philanthropist working with food scarcity in Manhattan. I've been on the board, and president of, the Common Table organization focused on providing meals every night for the hungry and homeless. My wife and two daughters and I run the meal every Monday night and have for the last five years. We love service, and anyone is welcome to come and help! I am active in my religious group, and I love spending time with my family, playing games, laughing, and being together. We love to travel together! Whether it is to our family who have all moved to California, or international travel, we love to be together."

- **Any advice for K-State students interested in a broadcasting career?**

"Learn to write well! It all starts with writing. Find out what you want to do and follow your passion."



Andrew Smith as  
Captain Von Trapp



# GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Maria Paula Cardozo Baquero

First-year master's student from Bogota, Colombia. Graduate teaching assistant / instructor, Public Speaking and Content Management for Distribution.

### Why did you choose K-State?

I decided to pursue my Masters's degree in Mass Communications at Kansas State because of the program's strength in communication concepts and theories, allowing me to develop my critical thinking and to understand the relevance of ethics and the power of social transformation through mass communication. With this knowledge, I will be prepared to transform messages in any media or advertising outlet to create a better world, providing society with valuable content and truthful information to generate critical and informed opinions to construct more humane and sustainable societies.

### What are your research interests?

I firmly believe that communication has the power to transform societies; that's why I'm interested in studying how social media impacts people's visibility, perception, and attitudes toward environmental issues, specifically water conservation.

### What were the highlights of this academic year for you?

This year I taught for the first time undergraduate-level courses. It was amazing to be part of the learning process of my students, see their growth, and teach them skills that will help them in their personal and professional lives. Also, during this past year, I discovered a passion for environmental communication. I plan to continue learning about this fascinating topic and finding ways to build a sustainable relationship between humans and the environment.

### What are your long-term plans?

After finishing my master's degree, I would like to return to the communication industry. I aim to start working with non-profit organizations developing communication and marketing programs related to environmental issues and social transformation in South American cultures.

### Any hobbies or fun facts about yourself that you'd like to share?

I love macrame weaving and have a small business selling handmade products that I make myself. I'm super proud of this initiative, and you can check out my work on Instagram [@amari.nudos](#).



## DR. NANCY MUTURI PUBLISHES HEALTH COMMUNICATION STUDY



**Dr. Nancy Muturi** and colleagues at the Vet School have recently published an article, "One Health Approach for Reporting Veterinary Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacterales (CRE) and Other Bacteria of Public Health Concern," in the CDC's *Emerging Infections Diseases Journal*.

The study, which was funded by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), aimed at understanding how to communicate about CRE and other bacterial to pet owners, veterinarians, and public health authorities in order to contain it, protect the public, and prevent further outbreaks. This was a collaborative multidisciplinary and multi-institutional project involving Kansas State University, National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF), Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Intelligence Fusion, Topeka, and Missouri University. Muturi offered expertise in health communication, a critical component of the One-health approach to disease prevention.

The online article can be accessed [here](#).

# ONLINE MASTER'S PROGRAM IN MASS COMMUNICATIONS RANKED AMONG MOST AFFORDABLE IN THE NATION

The A.Q. Miller School's online master's degree in Mass Communications has been named in the Top 10 of the nation's most affordable online programs in the discipline. The ranking comes from Online U, which has been in the business of ranking affordability and other factors relating to potential students' choices among online degree programs since 2014. Based on the online tuition for 2022 - 2023, K-State was found to be "a great value" to its students and was ranked seventh on the [list](#).

The degree, which was launched four years ago, consists of 30 credit hours and is primarily focused on strategic communication with grounding in communication theory and research. The program allows students to earn credit for on-the-job research and provides electives in such areas as strategic communication management, audience analytics, social media data visualization, and international communication. The program attracts students from all over the country.

"Our goal is to make learning accessible to all students, so we are pleased to offer high-quality graduate programming at an affordable cost," said Dr. Heather Woods, Associate Director for Graduate Programs and Research.



## RECENT SMC GRADUATE HEADED TO GERMANY

May 2023 graduate in Journalism and Mass Communications **Eden Brockman**'s post-graduation plans include studying and working in Germany for a year as part of the 40th cohort of the [Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals](#) program. Eden will join 75 participants from across the country for the 11-month fellowship, including a two-month language training program, a semester of study at a university, and a professional internship.

"I am so excited to challenge myself and grow through this program! I am so grateful to SMC for preparing me for this experience and supporting me each step of the way," Eden says. The exchange program is very competitive, and Eden credits her success to her professors and mentors "for uplifting me and giving me the confidence to seek these opportunities."



## SMC PROFESSORS INVITED TO PRESENT AT OHIO UNIVERSITY PROGRAM IN JUNE

**Dr. Sam Mwangi** and **Dr. Huyen Nguyen** have been invited as Expert Presenters by the Institute for International Journalism at Ohio University at their "Boosting the Sustainability of Community Media in South Africa" program in June. Dr. Mwangi's online session is titled "Low-cost tools for news media production" and will provide the delegation from the Association of Independent Publishers in South Africa during their three-week visit to Ohio with valuable insights into sustainable operations among their peers in the United States. Dr. Nguyen will present a session titled "AI: tools, tips, and threats for community media."



## SMC'S HUCK BOYD CENTER GOES TO RENO

The Huck Boyd National Center for Community Media, in conjunction with the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE), will co-organize the [annual conference of community media editors and scholars](#) from June 21-25. The conference will be hosted by the Reynolds School of Journalism in Reno, Nevada, and will bring together community scholars and practitioners from the USA, Canada, and Europe.

The Huck Boyd National Center handles the entire paper submission and review process. "We send out research submission calls, assign submitted papers to peer reviewers, and notify authors of the review outcome," **Dr. Sam Mwangi**, director, explained. "It is a long and intense process, but it places the Huck Boyd Center at the heart of the conversation happening in the community media world. What's not to love about that!"



# HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE MULTIMEDIA TEAM VISITS K-STATE

Earlier this month, **Tanner Holte**, who is a current K-State online student and the Multimedia Coordinator at Highland Community College, brought a large group of multimedia students to check out KKSU-TV, KSDB, and the Collegian.

"It was such a great time, and we got to do a lot more than we originally planned," Holte said. The visit sparked new interests and ideas that the team hadn't considered before the trip. "Seeing the studios and a live newscast, the Collegian Media Group's different paths, and the radio station was truly awe-inspiring. I hope that it can be done again in the future and that some of these students will look at what KSU has to offer when it comes time for them to transfer on from Highland," Holter added.

Sam Pyle, one of the students who visited, shared that the trip was an amazing experience. "It has opened my eyes to the many career paths that I did not know about before this experience."

Haley Hetrick, another visitor, found the trip to K-State "lots of fun and very educational. I was already thinking about transferring to K-State after Highland, but I was still looking at other options. But after this trip, I am definitely going to K-State!" Hetrick's favorite part was touring the Royal Purple and talking to the professors about their program and how the operations are student-driven and any student can join. Hetrick added, "I also enjoyed the radio station and listening to their podcasts and talking to the professor! I cannot wait to transfer to K-State in the fall of 2024!!!"



## CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD WINNERS!

Nancy Goulden Teaching Award  
**Ash Denchfield**  
**Joyce Glasscock**



Charles Griffin  
Graduate Leadership Award  
**Aaron Trujillo**



**Professor Darren Epping-Fuentes**, Assistant Director for Instructional Excellence, presented the students with their awards at the school's end-of-year celebration on May 3.

Schenck-Hamlin  
Graduate Research Award  
**Wilhelmina Antwi**  
**Nguyen Ngoc Yen My**



# SMC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT'S MULTIPLE RESEARCH PROJECTS EARN UNIVERSITY AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Mass Communications junior **Maddie Willson** earned a \$1,000 scholarship for Undergraduate Research from the College of Arts & Sciences. The grant supports her ongoing research with **Dr. Huyen Nguyen** on VR videos on YouTube. The project is titled "Characteristics of VR videos and how viewers engage with immersive experiences." The team plans to finalize the project this summer, as the study was accepted for presentation at this year's conference (August, Washington, D.C.) of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), the flagship association in the discipline.

The student-professor team also started working on a new research project about spatial audio in 360VR for [the International Conference on Immersive and 3D Audio](#).



This year, Maddie Willson was also recognized as One of the Top 20 Winners for the Hearst Multimedia Innovative Storytelling and Audience Engagement competition. No other student from our school achieved such a high rank for at least the past decade. The competitive program awards scholarships to students for outstanding performance in college-level journalism, with matching grants to the students' schools. Entrants must be actively involved in campus media and must submit at least two published articles, photographs or multimedia pieces to the various competitions. Judges are professional multimedia journalists from major media outlets across the nation. Willson was the 11th-place finalist and honorable mention recipient in the Hearst National Multimedia Awards.

Moreover, Maddie (far right of photo) and her group of student researchers earned a [Kirmser Undergraduate Research Award from K-State Libraries](#). The recognition was for a research project the group conducted for their biogeography class that focused on the lesser prairie-chicken, a species which was recently listed under the Endangered Species Act.

## DR. HEATHER WOODS GIVES INVITED TALK ON SMART HOMES AT CONFERENCE IN GERMANY

**Dr. Heather Woods** gave an invited talk at an international conference in Mannheim, Germany, earlier this month. Entitled "Optimizing Failure: What the Rise of the Smart Home Tells us About the Future of Living in Digitality," the talk examined the role of smart technologies in domestic life.

"Smart homes—domestic spaces outfitted with connected technologies—are rapidly increasing in number," Dr. Woods notes. "My research explains how these technologies are changing the way we live life at home. The talk described how the modern drive to optimize life comes at a cost—we miss out on the good things in life that aren't immediately quantifiable or computational."



The talk was based on research from Dr. Woods' new book on smart homes, forthcoming from the University of Alabama Press. "I am excited about sharing this new work with colleagues and practitioners across the globe," Dr. Woods said.

## DR. IAN PUNNETT HONORED WITH "BEST IN COMPETITION" AWARDS AT BEA 2023

The Broadcast Education Association's (BEA) [Festival of Media Arts](#) is one of the most competitive in the nation for electronic media students and faculty. Professor of Practice **Dr. Ian Punnett**, Wildcat 91.9 chief operator, was recognized with two "Best in Competition" awards in two categories at BEA 2023 faculty competition:

- Audio Promo, PSA, Commercial Category Best of Competition: K-State Football Weekly Evergreen Promo; **Ian Punnett & Jacob Cummings**, Kansas State University
- Sports Audio Category Best of Competition: "The Big 12 Championship: K-State vs. TCU"; **Ian Punnett**, Kansas State University.

Channel 8's story about graduate student **Kolby Van Camp**'s touchdown call was given an Award of Excellence: Opera Play-by-play; **Jacob Hall**, Kansas State University (Honorable mention).

**Miller Minute editor:**  
Raluca Cozma