

CSCA 2017 Preconference

Conversations with Communication Scholars and Local Nonprofit Leaders



Victor Keli` Kinolua B. Cole currently works as a community engagement coordinator for Academic Internships and Study Abroad at Metropolitan State University in the Twins Cities, where his goal is to assist students, faculty and community in reaching their personal, academic, and professional goals. His office recently received grants totaling \$635,000 to convert unpaid internships to paid over four years.

Victor also serves as the co-chair of the Minnesota Association For Experiential Learning (MAFEL), to bring internship host sites and college/university internship coordinators together to share thinking and ideas for best practices in experiential learning. Other interests include teaching at Metropolitan State University in the School of Urban Education and in the Ethnic & Religious Studies Department and being adjunct faculty at Minneapolis Community & Technical College in the Education Department.



Kristopher D. Copeland is an assistant professor of Communication Studies at Northeastern State University. He is coordinator of the general education curriculum for the department along with directing the forensics team. He is a member of the CSCA 2017 pre-conference leadership team. Kristopher's experience with nonprofits includes volunteering with the Cherokee Heritage Center and the Muskogee Little Theater as well as serving on the board of the Sequoyah County Community Theater.



Anne Gerbensky-Kerber (Ph.D., Ohio, 2011) is an Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Before joining the academy, she worked as a communication professional with Weber Shandwick Worldwide and Target Corporation, with expertise in public relations, media relations, and internal communications. She has volunteered for non-profit organizations including Big Brothers, Big Sisters of the Twin Cities and the Lupus Foundation of Minnesota. Her scholarly work explores the intersections of organizational and health communication in a diverse range of contexts spanning from rural Appalachian Ohio to her home state of Minnesota. She is especially passionate about applying academic tools to help organizations meet the needs of economically disadvantaged populations.



Al González is a professor in the School of Media & Communication at Bowling Green State University. He teaches courses in intercultural communication, critical research methods and leadership. Originally from northwest Ohio, Al taught four years at the University of Minnesota, Morris and Texas A&M University, College Station, before returning to BGSU. Al was a member of the board of directors of the Sofia Quintero Art & Cultural Center in Toledo, Ohio, for eight years, and its board president for two years. Currently, he is the inaugural president of the board of directors of *La Conexión de Wood County*. Founded in 2012, *La Conexión* is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization that seeks to create and utilize communication networks among Latina/os and our allies, sponsor cultural programs, and build leadership capacity among Latina/os in Wood County.



Malynnda A. Johnson started her volunteer and community engagement at an early age and has worked with wide variety of organizations. For 15 years her focus has been working directly with HIV and STI prevention organizations in Milwaukee Wisconsin. After moving to Northeast Ohio she is currently working with the Stark County Domestic Violence Project as a board member and counseling volunteer. Beyond her service experiences Malynnda's research also relies on community partnerships. Conducting observational and community based participatory research requires building positive rapport with community partners to encourage mutually beneficial relationships.

Malynnda received her Ph.D in Communication from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee (2012). She is now an assistant professor at the University of Mount Union in Alliance, OH. She teaches health communication, research methods, various classes on media criticism, and directs the senior culminating experience (overseeing 25 student lead research projects each year) for the Department of Communication.



Katherine "Kathy" M. Kelley (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma) is an Associate Professor of Communication at Oral Roberts University (ORU) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She earned a M.A. in Communication with an emphasis in Training and Development from Pepperdine University, and a B.A. in Communication with a Business Cognate from the University of Oklahoma. Kathy's research focuses on trust, supervisor-subordinate communication, and ethical communication. Her primary research explores the dynamics of trust and how it is communicated in the workplace. Furthermore, Kathy studies how supervisors perceive they communicate trust in the workplace and how these communication exchanges affect the sensemaking, resilience, and culture of the organization as a collective. Her publications may be found in *The Leadership Quarterly*, *Communication Research*, *Journal of Business of Communication*, *Communication Studies*, and *Southern Communication Journal*. Her most recent work can be found in *Cases in Organizational and Managerial Communication*. Kathy has over 10 years of teaching and consulting experience with universities and organizations in the greater Los Angeles area and the Midwest region of the United States.



Scott A. Myers (PhD, Kent State University) is a professor and Peggy Rardin McConnell Chair in the Department of Communication Studies at West Virginia University (WVU) where he teaches courses in instructional communication, organizational communication, and communication pedagogy. His research interests center primarily on the student-instructor relationship in the college classroom and the adult sibling relationship. At WVU, he was recognized by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences as a Woodburn Professor (2005–2007) and as an Outstanding Teacher in 2010. He is a former editor of *Communication Teacher*, a former executive director of the Central States Communication Association (CSCA), and a past president of CSCA.

At the community level, Scott has been involved extensively with the United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties as a member of the Citizens' Review Committee, a workplace team captain, and the coordinator for Academic Affairs campaign at West Virginia University. He has served on the board of directors for the Monongalia County Humane Society, where he also served one term as President and two terms as Secretary; the board of directors for Scott's Run Settlement House, where he also served one term as Secretary; and the board of director of the WVU Federal Employees Credit Union. Additionally, he has served as a member of *The Dominion Post's* Community Advisory Board, where he wrote five weekly articles on issues facing the residents of Morgantown, West Virginia.



Christine L. North's doctorate in health communication and Master's in public health in health promotion and education has allowed her to work in a number of non-profit venues both nationally and internationally. She has done work with Activate Allen County assisting with a CDC small communities transformation grant in Ohio, regularly travels with students to the Dominican Republic working alongside a non-profit organization that has been listed as a Top Ten to Watch by Charity Navigator. She has been involved with the Better Volunteering, Better Care network, has published work on the ethics of voluntourism, and is often invited to speak to various service organizations about the best ways to engage in community service.



Sandra "Sandy" Pensoneau-Conway is an assistant professor and introductory course director in the Department of Communication Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Her primary area of teaching and research is in critical communication pedagogy. Among other elements, she engages issues of power, language, and the role of communication in crafting messages accessible to a diverse audience. She is also a long-standing board member and volunteer with Rainbow Café, a local, non-profit LGBTQ youth organization. Her participation with this organization from an administrative perspective includes all areas of human resources and community relations. She will soon begin work on a book project to understand the role that Rainbow Café plays in the ways the youth participants negotiate their identities in rural Southern Illinois.



Christopher "Chris" Rudick is a young working professional in the Greater Denver Area and currently serves as a senior-level account manager at a successful fintech startup. During his time as a college student in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, Chris researched nonprofits within the geographic region and was very involved with the recently defunded Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission as a citizen and researchers. His primary academic interests relate to socialization and organizational learning processes.



Amy Aldridge Sanford will always carry a debt of gratitude for the nonprofits of her hometown. Throughout middle school and high school, she was invited to give her competitive speeches for the Lion's Club, Kiwanis Club, the school board, and the chamber of commerce. Their encouragement gave her the confidence to seek advanced degrees in communication, and in 2006, Amy received a PhD in communication studies from the University of Iowa. Today, she serves Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi as associate vice president for Academic Affairs and is also the 2nd vice president for the Central States Communication Association.

Amy continues to repay the debt owed to her hometown by volunteering with non profit organizations, including AAUW, YWCA, Kids Against Hunger, Dress for Success, and Battleground Texas. She has been a Spelling Bee moderator, a cable commissioner, and has gotten lots of practice as a speech judge. She has consulted with NPOs on mission building and strategic planning.

During the past five years, Amy has been a presenter on more than 30 academic panels and given nearly 50 invited lectures. She has taught many classes, including graduate courses on nonprofit organizational communication, women in leadership, and intercultural communication.



Kellie W. Smith is a professional assistant professor of Communication Studies at Texas A&M University Corpus-Christi and a doctoral student of Health Communication at Texas A&M University in College Station. Kellie teaches persuasion, organizational communication, business and professional communication, and graduate level persuasion theory. Kellie is also the planning and fundraising chair of TAMU-CC's annual COMM Week Event, which she founded in 2013. Kellie is passionate about educating and grooming her students to become effective communicators and engaging leaders in the community. Prior to her academic career, Kellie served in private industry as an advertising account executive, a media researcher, a sales trainer, and a non-profit grant writer for the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi.



Sadie Ward works as the HR Generalist at the Guthrie Theater. Previously, she was the HR and Volunteer Coordinator at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. While at the Ordway Sadie revamped the internship program to include standard documentation across the organization and regular benchmarks to measure the program's success and develop a culture of continuous program improvement. She also serves as the Co-Chair of Minnesota Association for Experiential Learning (MAFEL), to bring internship host sites and college/university internship coordinators together to share thinking and ideas for best practices in experiential learning. Sadie has a well-rounded knowledge of Human Resources, Internship Programs, and Volunteer Management that truly represents the cross section of personnel management needed in non-profit organizations.



Jennifer L. Willis-Rivera is a professor of Communication Studies, but also serves as Development Manager for the nonprofit Random Acts. She has worked with Random Acts for 2 ½ years. In this fully volunteer part-time position, she runs programs that have pulled in as many as 10,000 supporters, and oversees a department that brought in nearly \$500,000 in donations last year. The mission of Random Acts is to conquer the world one random act of kindness at a time, and Jennifer is passionate about helping this organization continue to be successful.

Jennifer has a Ph.D. in Communication Studies from Bowling Green State University (1997) and is currently a professor at the University of Wisconsin - River Falls. She has taught many courses, including intercultural communication, interviewing and communication theory.