



Business more like 'usual'

Program makes strides in face of challenges

Like many universities over the past several years, Nicholls State ran a course dotted with numerous and towering hurdles, including adapting operations to COVID protocols, weathering the impact of Category 4 hurricane's direct impact on this region, resulting enrollment dips and saying farewell to Dr. Al Delahaye.

For the first time in what felt like ages, in Academic Year 2022-2023 the MACO Department had a year that seemed "normal," which is to say incredibly busy.

No. That's not quite right.

Actually, the Department was plenty busy before.

Since Spring 2020, when COVID pretty much shut down the world, the Department developed ways for students to practice remote journalism, held a grand opening for the De-Salvo-Callais Family Student Media Center, served leadership roles with regional and national academic organizations and continued Student Media operations.

So, the business of the Department never really slowed down.

But it was not business as usual.



Photo by James Stewart

Assistant Professor Linda Marting (right) and her husband Ken Martin share a laugh and jambalaya at the Department's Family Day tailgate party.

This year was more like the before-times. There were plenty of activities, and they were not conducted via video screen.

The four biggest events were organizing a 50th Anniversary ceremony for KNSU-FM in September, hosting a tailgate party for Family Day with a live band, co-hosting on the Nicholls campus with Southeastern Louisiana University the Southeastern Journalism Conference in February and holding a book-launch

event for alumni Ken Wells and Hillary Wells.

It was a nice change to be able to bring in speakers, like leaders from the United Houma Nation, and see students in class every day of the week ... at least on the days they showed up and didn't ditch class to go on some sort of media expedition.

So this issue of the newsletter will be devoted catching readers up on milestones with a heavy focus on images.

Department establishes tribute webpage for Dr. Al Delahaye



Photo from University Relations

Dr. Stephen Hulbert, then University president, presents Dr. Al Delahaye with an honorary doctorate in Fall 2008.

In 2022 The Department of Mass Communication established a webpage in remembrance of the program's founder Dr. Al Delahaye.

Dr. Delahaye passed away in December of 2021 in Thibodaux. He was 92.

The page includes a biography, his obituary, his induction video for the Louisiana State University Journalism Hall of fame, a link for contributions in his memory and other items.

This issue of the newsletter includes the biography.

To explore the page itself, please go to: <https://www.nicholls.edu/maco/faculty-staff/dr-al-delahaye/>.

KNSU takes the gold

Radio station celebrates 50th Anniversary

KNSU-FM, currently broadcasting at 91.5, celebrated 50 years of service with a documentary film premiere and open house.

The event took place in Talbot Hall on the Nicholls campus with the film shown in the Mary and Al Danos Theater, Sept. 23 and was well attended by alumni, current staff, administration and other fans of KNSU.

The first student “radio” station began operations over telephone lines to the Student Union in February 1968.

KVFG-FM started broadcasting from campus as a 10-watt station at 6 p.m. Feb.

19, 1972, as the state’s third college station. The call letters KNSU were in use at the time by a weather ship, so the station adopted KVFG after then University President Vernon F. Galliano.

In 1985 the call letters KNSU became available, and the station switched.

In Academic Year 1989-1990, the station moved from its spaces in Peltier Hall to Talbot Hall and applied for a power upgrade.

The documentary on the station’s evolution covers the many students who have come and gone over the years and their experiences.

KVFG and KNSU are not just radio stations, they are an enduring part of many people’s lives and for most who worked with the station, it was the best part of their college experience.

KNSU Advisor Lance Arnold produced the documentary, which features interviews with more than 25 current and former KNSU employees.

“50 years of radio at Nicholls State University” can be viewed on the KNSU-Television YouTube page. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6b3q83i3shU>.



KNSU 2022-2023 Station Manager Matt Oubre visits with Paul Cook, the 1971 KNSU station manager. Cook was one of the former KNSU staffers

featured in the 50th Anniversary documentary produced by station Advisor Lance Arnold.



Former program manager manager Paul Robert Heingarten and station managers Sally Mendoza Ash and James Ash chat at the reception (TOP). Andrea Heingarten Paul's wife, stands with her back toward the camera.

Pictured above from left students Bryce Whittington, Kearshtn Foster, Delaney Ligor and Daniel Miller gather for a photo (ABOVE).

Students visit at rth 50th reception From left are Sally-Anne Torres, Evan Cressoine, Emily Harrell and Brogan Burns (LEFT).



Pictured at left from left are Student Government Association President Tyler Legnon, Mrs. Allison Clune, University President Dr. Jay Clune and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Jean Donegan who attended the premier of the documentary on KNSU's 50th Anniversary (RIGHT).



Former Station Manager Nick Gremillion and his wife Kellsie Gremillion at the KNSU's tailgate for Family Day Sept. 24 (ABOVE).

The event featured the band Chicken on the Bone. Matthew Oubre, KNSU station manager, Sophia Mason and Tory Trahan take advantage of the shade at the party (RIGHT). Temperature were in the 90s with humidity more than 60 percent. Associate Professor Andy Simoncelli and Assistant Professor Lance Arnold take a break from serving jambalaya, which the station distributed at no charge (UPPER RIGHT). Arnold helps with a trivia contest just before halftime (CENTER RIGHT). James Stewart, department head, takes pictures for the yearbook (FAR RIGHT).



Fun in the sun

Department hosts Family Day tailgate



Department's founder wore many hats

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following is a biography that can be found on the Department's tribute page.*

Dr. Alfred Newton Delahaye, professor emeritus of journalism, who founded what is today the Department of Mass Communication, was the author of two Nicholls histories, the recipient of a 2008 honorary doctorate and the honoree at a fund-raising dinner in March 2009.

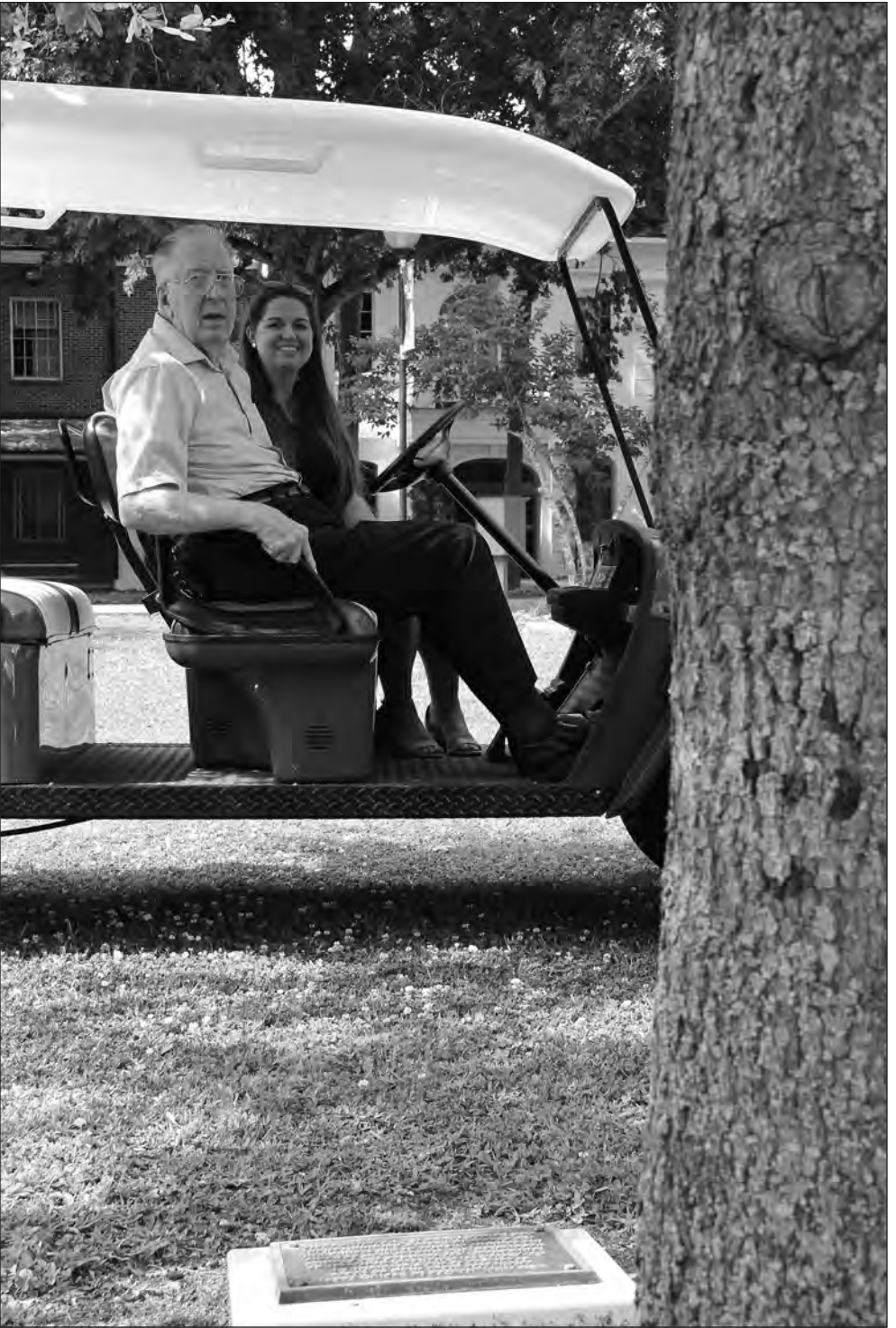
At the dinner he was presented with an oak sapling, which was planted a few days later in the quadrangle; a bronze plaque was added about six months later. In fall 1957 he taught the first journalism course ever offered at Nicholls, and in 1973 was instrumental in establishing a degree program called communication arts.

He was born June 4, 1929, near Brusly in West Baton Rouge Parish. At Port Allen High School, he worked as the janitor's helper. He ranked third academically in the class of 1946 and was cited at graduation for never having missed a day of high school.

In the summer of 1946 he entered LSU as a journalism major. He was a 40-cents-an-hour student worker in the auditor's office, except for the time spent as a news editor on *The Reveille*. After his 1949 LSU graduation, he reported for the *Franklinton Era-Leader* until June 1950 when he began graduate studies in journalism at LSU, working as a graduate assistant. As he neared his August 1951 graduation, he asked his draft board to induct him without delay. About a week later he was in Marine Corps boot camp in San Diego.

Upon reporting to Camp Pendleton at Oceanside, Calif., Delahaye was measured for a snowsuit because he would be in an aggressor platoon. While inquiring about officer candidate school, Delahaye came to the attention of a major who wanted him because of his typing skill. Delahaye then found himself behind a desk in a G-2 office, except when he was undergoing cold-weather and advanced infantry training or involved in "combat exercises." During a lull at umpire headquarters during a desert exercise near Barstow, Sgt. Delahaye heard the informal comments of legendary Gen. Lewis "Chesty" Puller.

He continued in the G-2 office, even after getting his military occupational specialty changed from "intelligence man" to "combat correspondent." He did not serve in Korea because the major for whom he worked had to be stateside to look after his wife, who was



Dr. Al Delahaye visits his quadrangle tree in the spring of 2017. The tree was gift at the dinner held in his honor in 2009.

recovering from tuberculosis, and their three small children.

While on active duty, Delahaye covered a variety show featuring performers from his unit along with Jane Russell and Robert Mitchum; it was a fund-raiser for the Iwo Jima flag-raising monument in Washington, D.C.

On weekends Delahaye often visited movie and television studios in or near Hollywood, seeing up close such performers as Red Skelton and Marilyn Monroe.

He actually heard Harpo Marx speak at a fund-raiser.

Released from active duty, Delahaye joined

the staff of the twice-a-week Houma newspapers of publisher John B. Gordon. He was one of only two full-time news staff members. His partner covered police and sports, and he covered meetings of public bodies and wrote features and editorials. Both took and engraved photos and handled general news. Delahaye also worked as a stringer for United Press.

In 1955 he became the founding president of LSU School of Journalism Alumni.

In 1957 he left Houma for Nicholls. His starting salary was \$6,000 a year, and his titles were instructor of journalism and director of publications and public information.

Nicholls bought a Crown Graphic camera, and Delahaye turned a White Hall closet into a darkroom, producing pictures for campus and area publications.

In 1959 he was among the first Americans to visit post-World War II Russia. At the opening of the American Exposition, his group, guests of the American Embassy, joined in a toast with Vice President Richard Nixon and Premier Nikita Khrushchev. Delahaye claimed their glasses as souvenirs moments after Nixon and Khrushchev put them down.

At Nicholls, Delahaye soon became the primary founder and coordinator of the Hall of Fame and the Alumni Federation.

He started the first regularly published student handbook, *The Paddle*, and the alumni publication, *The Colonel*. In 1962 he chose an artist to create a cartoon colonel, which Delahaye popularized as a decal sold by *The Nicholls Worth*.

That figure was popular for 42 years. Years later he designed the university crest and got a professional artist to execute his design.

In 1965 Delahaye began work on a doctorate at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. He spent the next year at Nicholls and then returned to Missouri as the lecturer in the beginning news writing class; during one fall semester, the class numbered 344 students. He supervised reporting labs and during one semester taught a graduate class. "I was teaching ideal students under ideal conditions at Missouri," he said, "but they would succeed with or without me. So I returned to Nicholls where I thought I could make a difference."

In 1969 he began about 12 years of just classroom teaching – journalism and English courses, mostly technical writing. When Dr. David Boudreaux allowed him to teach two sophomore journalism classes every semester, a solid foundation for a journalism program was in place. In 1972 he spent the summer in The Netherlands at the Amsterdam Institute for the Science of the Press.

In 1973 Delahaye helped to establish the

Faculty Senate and then went on to serve as corresponding secretary for five years.

A 1973 survey of students indicated the viability of a journalism degree program, and so the state board approved one in communication arts. (To have called it journalism would have aroused LSU opposition, Delahaye said.)

The communication arts program gave students a choice of business or creative options.

Delahaye taught all the writing and editing courses, Bob Blazier and Ron Simeral the broadcasting courses.

Delahaye was the unofficial coordinator of the degree program, which had no budget, no departmental status and no clearly defined faculty until 1990. The first communication arts degree was awarded in 1975. In 1972 Delahaye

He often said he could never be bored in a world of words, people and ideas

became co-editor of the bibliography section of *Journalism Quarterly*, a responsibility he then held for about 17 years. In 1974 he became the founding president of the Nicholls chapter of the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. In the early 1980s, Delahaye edited *The Temple*, the publication of Phi Kappa Theta, national social fraternity.

Throughout his teaching career, he meticulously red-inked major and minor errors sentence by sentence. His thorough exams consisted of discussion and recall questions, and, when appropriate, written and edited matter. He almost never missed or canceled a class or cut one short, attending conventions only in August. He never gave a "bubble-in" test, but his largest writing class at Nicholls never exceeded 44 students.

When Donald J. Ayo became university president in 1983, Delahaye once again became director of publications and public information but continued to teach two advanced journalism courses each fall and spring. He also began a weekly faculty-staff newsletter, *Word*, for which he did all of the reporting (sports stories excepted) for six and a half years. In 1984 Delahaye was among the first faculty members to receive the title of distinguished service professor.

In 1987 the state board called in out-of-state consultants to evaluate journalism programs across the state. The Nicholls program received more positive statements and fewer negative ones than any other journalism program in Louisiana. The consultants recom-

mended placing faculty and facilities in one building, giving the program a budget and departmental status and setting a goal of national accreditation.

In 1990 Delahaye became a professor emeritus, but continued to teach mass communication courses as an adjunct. He also continued to coordinate mass communication scholarships and awards, which sometimes totaled about \$18,000 a year. He worked as a volunteer in his Talbot Hall office every day, even after he stopped teaching. His attitude was "I've got to be productive."

He never said no when someone asked him to edit something. For about five semesters, he taught mass communication courses for nothing, because the university semester after semester refused to pay him the \$2,000 he asked. He would say: "I'd rather mow someone's lawn for nothing than accept payment of \$2.50."

In 1999 and 2005 the Nichols Foundation published two volumes of Nicholls State University history researched and written by Delahaye: "The Elkins-Galliano Years, 1948-1983," and "The Ayo Years, 1983-2003." Delahaye planned and coordinated every aspect of the printing, which was paid by the Lorio Foundation of Thibodaux.

All sales income, about \$30,000, made possible a mass communication scholarship named for Walter M. Lowrey, who was instrumental in hiring Delahaye and getting the first journalism course offered.

In retirement Delahaye, the only Nicholls retiree with an office on campus, enjoyed reading four or five newspapers a day, summer vacations in New York, writing articles and feature stories for university publications and, when asked, red-inking *The Nicholls Worth*.

Among his most successful former students are Joey Kennedy, a Pulitzer-Prize winner for editorials in 1972; Ken Wells, a Pulitzer-Prize runner-up, writer of fiction and nonfiction books, and a Page One editor of *The Wall Street Journal*; Tresha Mabile, a television writer and producer, whose work includes five documentaries on Afghanistan and Iraq; and John Gravois, who covered the Bush I and Clinton White Houses for the *Houston Post*.

Delahaye, who often said he could never be bored in a world of words, people and ideas, was awarded an honorary doctorate by Nicholls in fall 2008. In March 2009, he was honored at a fund-raising banquet attended by about 170 friends, relatives and former students. He was presented with an oak, which today grows in the quadrangle next to a bronze plaque, which honors his more than 52 years of service to Nicholls.

Nicholls hosts regional journalism conference

In February Nicholls State University co-hosted with Southeastern Louisiana University the first in-person Southeastern Journalism Conference since the University of Southern Mississippi hosted in Spring 2020.

The SEJC holds an on-site event each spring for member schools from the Southeastern United States. The conference includes an awards ceremony for the Best of the South competition (a journalism contest for member schools for on-campus work produced by their schools during the year), speakers and an on-site competition.

One hundred and fifty-four students and advisers from 21 institutions attended the

event, held Feb. 9-11.

Nicholls Mass Comm alumnus Gerald Gruenig (Spring 2013), a news anchor for Lafayette's KLFY-TV and a social media personality, served as the keynote speaker. Several NSU faculty members were panel participants.

The conference highlighted local flair, including an on-site competition event held at Thibodaux's Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, a lecture by leaders for the United Houma Nation, a Cajun-food-forward awards dinner and an after-dinner performance by The Cajun Preserves, a music-preservation group.

As Nicholls was the co-host, its students were not allowed to participate in the on-site

events. However, its students did place in four of the Best of the South categories: KNSU, Third Best Radio Station; Hannah Robert, Sixth Place Best Television Reporter; "Nerd Hour," Seventh Best Audio Program; and "All N," Eighth Place Best Video Newscast.

Nicholls and Southeastern were scheduled to co-host in Spring 2021, but many schools were still struggling with COVID travel restrictions that year.

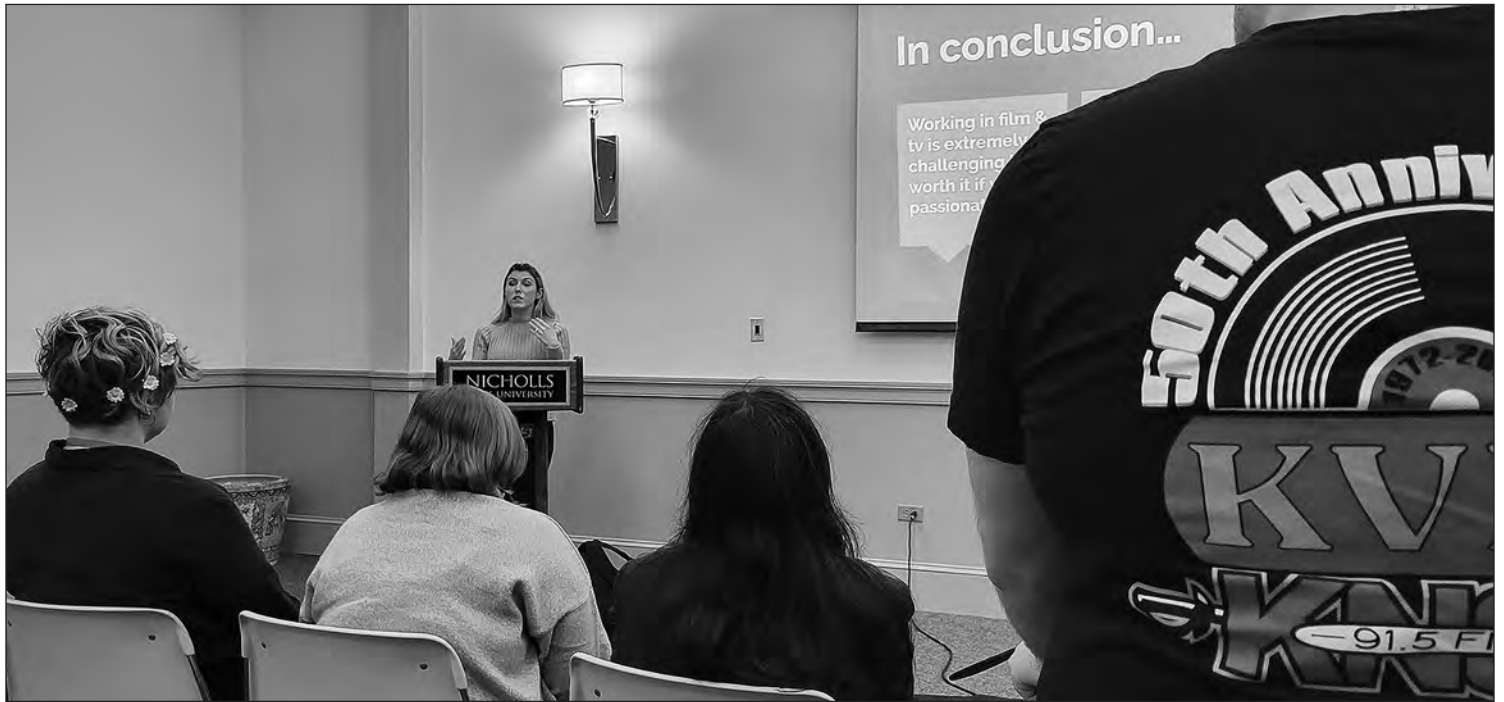
Devastation to Southeast Louisiana from August 2021's Hurricane Ida and lingering COVID issues related to out-of-state travel approvals prevented holding the event in person in Spring 2022.



Pictured from left are Associate Professor Andy Simoncelli, Hannah Robert, Matt Obre and Assistant Professor Lance Arnold (ABOVE). The students are holding certificate presented to Nicholls media at the SEJC awards dinner.

Student Treniece Cannon (RIGHT) reads copy on set as the Nicholls crew sets up for a script-reading contest.





Gerald Gruenig (Spring 2013), a news anchor for Lafayette's KLFY-TV and a social media personality, served as the keynote speaker at the awards dinner (ABOVE).

Hillary Wells, a 2012 graduate, writer, comedian and producer, discusses careers in the film industry as a guest speaker (TOP).

Louise Billiot, vocational rehab coordinator with the United Houma Nation (front), and Helen Babin, grants compliance and management with the UHN, give a presentation to SEJC feature-writing contestants on the UHN's efforts to strengthen intergenerational integration (LEFT). The talk took place at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center in Thibodaux.

Departmental news items

Award-winning journalist joins faculty

Chris Singleton, a Fall 2006 Print Journalism graduate and 17-veteran of the Houma Courier and Thibodaux Daily Comet newspapers' sports department joined the faculty in Fall 2023 as a visiting instructor.

"We are excited to have Chris return to campus, though in a way he never really left," Department Head James Stewart said. "Chris had a very successful newspaper career, but throughout that time he kept in touch, acting as a guest speaker and helping on projects when asked."

During his time as a sports photographer/writer, Singleton earned more than 16 professional awards, including being named the Louisiana Sports Writers Association's Sports Reporter of the Year and receiving its award for Best Overall Sports Coverage in 2019.

Singleton served as sports editor of the Nicholls Worth while a student, and Stewart



Singleton

said that in addition to teaching courses, Singleton will be advising student media.

"Working at the Nicholls Worth gave me a golden opportunity to learn the journalism industry," Singleton said.

"I was able to cover great sporting events and make lifelong connections in the industry and relationships that continue to help me to this day," he said.

He added the experience was more than learning job skills.

"Being a member of the Nicholls Worth was like being a part of a family," he said. "The

memories created from those days last forever."

Stewart said, "Our student media operations have started to regain their footing following the COVID disruptions, and I know that Chris will bring a lot of energy to that effort."

"Chris is actually coming to us after a year of teaching at a Lafourche middle school," Stewart said.

Singleton said, "I have always loved interacting with students and peers of all ages."

He added that he wants to pass on the knowledge he gained in the profession to the next generation of journalists.

"Every time Chris's name comes up with people who have worked with him or read his stuff, the first thing they say is how well liked and respected he was as a reporter," Stewart said.



Pictured from left are A. Laure Chamberlain-Kasovich, Trevor Tabor, and assistant professors Linda Martin and Nicki Boudreaux at Women of Achievement luncheon in March (ABOVE).

Tabor had nominated the faculty members for the award.

Assistant Professor Lance Arnold speaks with a group of Lutchter High School students on a visit to campus in the spring (RIGHT). With the ease of COVID restrictions, the Department was able to resume typical recruiting activities such as this.



Magazine earns second Top 20 finish

Nicholls State University's Department of Mass Communication placed 12th in the Hearst Journalism Awards Program's Team Digital News/Enterprise Competition, according to a May 2022 announcement from the organization.



Kasovich

The award was in recognition of Spring 2021's issue of "Garde Voir Ci," a digital magazine produced by students in A. Laure Chamberlain-Kasovich's capstone course. That issue was an in-depth report on the United Houma Nation.

This is second year the department has placed in the top 20 in this category of a competition that has been described as the Pulitzer

Prize of collegiate journalism. In 2020, the first year it was able to enter in the division, the school placed 20th.

Western Kentucky won 2022's title.

"We are thrilled with the result in a contest with entries from the best journalism schools in the nation," James Stewart, mass communication department head, said. "The recognition is a great reward for a lot of hard work."

Stewart said that placing in this particular division has special meaning.

"First, Garde Voir Ci Si is a senior-level and team-based platform. So, it is a reflection the talents of our students and the skills they have developed during their time in the program," he said.

"We also take a lot of pride in the fact that the publication focuses on under-reported voices in our community," he added.

Spring 2020's issue had reported on the abandoned Louisiana community of Grand Bayou in Assumption Parish.



Ken Wells (left) looks on as Hillary Wells signs a copy of their novel for Alumni Affairs Director Monque Crochet.

Department hosts book launch for writing duo

On March 2 the Department hosted a book-launch in Talbot Hall for a writing duo of alumni for their novel "Swamped!"

The book is the first collaboration between Ken Wells and Hillary Wells.

Ken, a Bayou Black native, is a former student body president and 1972 graduate of Nicholls, who would go on to become a Pulitzer Prize finalist as reporter and serve as editor on two Pulitzer-Prize winning projects for the Wall Street Journal.

He has also written six novels and two books of narrative non-fiction. One, "The Good Pirates of the Forgotten Bayous," focusing on post-Katrina South Louisiana, received the Harry Chapin book award.

Hillary, a 2012 Mass Communication graduate from Nicholls and Ken's niece, is a writer, comedian and producer.

Hillary said she was drawn to the project working with her uncle by the opportunity to help him develop a strong female character.

The pair read excerpts from the book in the Mary and Al Danos Theater and answered questions from the audience regarding the collaboration.

Following the reading, the pair signed copies of the book in the lobby while refreshments – provided by the Office of Alumni Affairs – were served.

The book, released by Koehler Books Jan. 13, is an adventure tale of two wildly different teens flung together amid dire circumstances.



Ms. Nicki Boudreaux (right), assistant professor of Mass Communication, was one of three presenters at the Nicholls State University panel "Defining Civil Liberties in the Digital Age: Using an 18th Century Shield in a 21st Century Struggle" on Sept. 21 in the Mary and Al Danos Theater. The session was part of the University's Constitution Week activities. Also pictured are Dr. James Gilley (left) and Dr. Samuel Sprunk, assistant professors of Political Science.

Bickham takes new post

Dr. Shaniece Bickham, an associate professor at Nicholls since Fall 2017, left in the summer of 2022 to take a job as program coordinator at her alma mater, Dillard.



Bickham

During her time at Nicholls, she served as adviser to the Department's chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and

chaired the Department's program to prepare students for graduate school.

She published three refereed journal articles and three book chapters. She also made five scholarly presentations.

In 2019 she was named a Lillian Kopenhaver Center for the Advancement of Women in Communication Fellow.

She had received early promotion to associate professor to have taken effect for the 2022-2023 academic year.

"We are going to miss her a lot," said Department Head James Stewart, "and wish her all the best."

What's new?

Please clip and mail to Department of Mass Communication
P. O. Box 2031, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA 70310
or email james.stewart@nicholls.edu

We, and your fellow alumni, would like to know what's new. Please let us hear about address changes, promotions, new jobs, awards and any other news which you may wish to share. In addition to news about you, we also invite your suggestions and recommendations as to how we might improve. We particularly want to report marriages and births.

10000-3561-733699-10

Nicholls State University
Department of Mass Communication
Newsletter
Vol.24, No. 1
Spring 2021 The Nicholls State University De-
partment of Mass Communication newsletter is
published by the Department of Mass Commu-
nication, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux,
LA 70310. Production by Nicholls State Univer-
sity Printing and Design Services.
Dr. Jay Clune, University President
Ms. Jean Doegan, College of
Liberal Arts Interim Dean
Dr. James Stewart, Department Head

