

JOMC CONNECTIONS

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION,
NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE
UNIVERSITY

Crosby Kids



JOMC students, faculty, and staff at the Roland Martin masterclass.

ENGAGE. LEARN. GROW. SUCCEED.

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Words From Our Interim Chair



Dr. Yahya Kamalipour

Welcome to the fall 2023 edition of *JOMC Connections*.

These pages illustrate that the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication remains a vibrant, engaged, collaborative, and steadfast unit.

As usual, the fall 2023 semester was packed with high-impact educational and instructional events.

- **NBCUniversal Collaboration:** With the generous gift from NBCUniversal, we continued supporting students and offered the following Masterclasses in fall 2023:

1. **Dr. Darvelle Hutchins:** An author and vice president of equity and social impact for the New Orleans Saints and Pelicans. *Coordinated by Dr. Daphne Valerius.*
2. **Roland Martin:** Host and managing editor of #RolandMartinUnfiltered. *Coordinated by Prof. David Squires.*
3. **Topher Sanders:** A reporter at ProPublica and Pulitzer finalist and **Corey Johnson** who is an investigative reporter at ProPublica, and a reporter on the investigative unit at the *Tampa Bay Times* and Pulitzer finalist.

Coordinated by Prof. David Squires.

4. **Derrick Cain:** Director of Community Engagement at ResolvePhilly.org while **Eric Marsh** is the Manager of Community Engagement at WHYI in Philadelphia
Coordinated by Dr. Laura Marshall.

- **Spotify Collaboration:** Established a new collaboration with Spotify. See Page 2.
- **AdPr Academy Collaboration:** Established a new collaboration with the Myra Blackmon AdPR Academy for Diversity and Inclusion based at the University of Georgia in Atlanta. See the story on Page 8.
- **ANA Educational Foundation Collaboration:** Established a new collaboration with the ANA Educational Foundation in New York. See Page 2.
- **Title III Grant:** The North Carolina A&T State University Title III office has pledged \$3.6 million to be spent over a three-year period beginning in 2024. The grant will be used to upgrade the television facilities, equipment, and laboratories, including building new broadcast desks on the third floor of Crosby Hall.

- **JOMC Alumni Takeover:** The 9th annual Alumni Takeover brought together 27 accomplished and impressive group of JOMC alumni who shared their industry experiences with students enrolled in a variety of classes during their visit to the campus.

Wishing you all a healthy, productive, and impactful 2024.

JOMC Connections
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Communication North
Carolina Agricultural
and Technical State
University

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Did you get snapped at our
last event? Check out the
photos below and also our
social media (@aggie_jomc) to
see if you were snapped!



Learn About Our Partnerships and Grants



HBCU Campus Connect Program

We have partnered with the ANA Education Foundation (AEF) through their HBCU Campus Connect program. The program brings seasoned professionals from marketing firms and advertising agencies to our campus to conduct sessions on essential topics such as media, research, and integrated marketing. They foster meaningful interactions with students who are keen on pursuing careers in advertising and marketing. AEF has also committed to providing paid internships to select students with participating companies, including Omnicom, Publicis, and Interpublic Group (IPG). Furthermore, this partnership grants us access to valuable resources from our partners, WARC and Cannes Lions. These resources include educational content, real-life cases, and insights that will help us stay on top of the latest trends in the industry.



We have partnered with Spotify, and you should expect some huge changes coming up with their support. A generous contribution of \$50,000 will fuel scholarships within our program. But that's not all—Spotify has granted an extra \$15,000 for renovation on our department's third floor where one of our rooms will be turned into a cutting-edge Spotify studio for students to content create and produce.

Keep on the lookout for Spotify experts who will be gracing our campus next semester, helping shape our brand-new production studio. As a bonus, get ready for a brand-new Spotify-sponsored course in the spring, taught by none other than Dr. Valuerius. Stay tuned for more updates on this exciting collaboration!



Since 2020 our department has been partnered with NBC Universal under the guidance of former professor and Interim Chair Gail Wiggins. Their generous grant of \$500,000 has been instrumental in empowering our students within the department by funding scholarships and facilitating master classes—four in total during the fall semester alone. As this grant concludes in June next year, we thank NBC Universal for their invaluable support and contributions to our department.

Welcome Our Newest Professors



Welcome Newest Professor Dr. Laura Marshall

Dr. Laura Marshall has a diverse career in broadcast journalism and public relations. Her experience working in government and health care has helped shape her role as a professor.

Her specialization includes online communication, message design, journalism history, public relations campaigns, and risk and crisis communication.

She began her journey in radio and television journalism. After collecting years of experience under her belt, she transitioned to public relations with a focus on health care.

Her exceptional work earned her an Emmy nomination for TV journalism and recognition from GLAAD for impartial reporting on LGBTQ issues in Atlanta.

Dr. Marshall earned both her

master's and Ph.D. degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she built a strong foundation in communications.

At North Carolina A&T she is an assistant professor in the journalism department where she teaches broadcast journalism and leads the Aggie Television Network.

“I want to light a fire under the students and inspire them to get out there and make those changes. I see so much promise in my students and can’t wait to see it come to fruition.” - Dr. Laura Marshall



Welcome Newest Professor Dr. Ecaterina Stepaniuc

Dr. Ecaterina Stepaniuc is an assistant professor in the JOMC department. Stepaniuc has been at N.C. A&T for two full semesters teaching multimedia courses. Journalism has been a part of her life since the

beginning of time. It all started with the influence of her dad, who encouraged her to go to college.

As a child, Stepaniuc and her dad frequently talked about the concept of "what is the truth" and identified how they could live their lives guided by it.

This inspired her to choose journalism—to dig for the truth and find the facts.

"The job chose me when I had the interest and desire to understand why the truth matters and what is important enough for people to go the extra mile, risking their lives or reputation," said Dr. Stepaniuc.

She has a wealth of experience, previously working as a reporter for the local administration in Madova for the national newspaper.

However, she desired more, leading her to come to the U.S. to pursue her master's and then Ph.D. She expressed her love for sharing knowledge with others.

During her free time, Stepaniuc is also an author, collaborating with her sister on multiple books, one titled "English with Val & Kate."

Stepaniuc believes in dreaming big, creating space for diverse endeavors, and emphasizes the importance of never limiting oneself.

JOMC Takes On Howard University



Christina Mosley

On Oct. 26 and 27, some of our dedicated Journalism and Mass Communication faculty members, including Professor Watson, Professor Squires, and Dr. Marshall, along with our star students Gabriel Woodard, Kaila Collier, and Rosegalie Cineus, took a trip to our nation's capital to participate in the "Transforming HBCU Journalism Education" forum hosted by the Center for Journalism and Democracy (CJD) at Howard University.

Under the guidance of Kali-Ahset Amen, Ph.D., the executive director of the CJD, our team actively engaged in workshops, brainstorming sessions, and collaborative discussions.

Joining forces with faculty and students from Howard University, Morehouse College, NC Central, Texas Southern University, Morgan State University, Savannah State University, and the University of the District of Columbia, they worked on an outline for an investigative

journalism curriculum, in hopes that that this will be the beginning of a program that will train talented investigative journalists across our illustrious HBCUs.

Reflecting on the impact of the experience, Dr. Laura Marshall, one of our professors, emphasized, "Being part of this journey was such a wonderful experience. We, as educators, have so much hope for investigative journalism and love that universities are looking toward starting these programs. This forum was needed as this is the trajectory journalism is taking as investigative journalism has been growing.

What captivated me the most was visual investigative journalism. Journalism isn't just about facts—it's about mastering visuals, data, and online tools to narrate stories. Our duty is to prepare students for the world they'll enter post-graduation. Journalism is swiftly

evolving; our our aim is to ready our students. Crafting a master syllabus for investigative reporting shows that we as educators are ready to progress our teaching to pair with the industry and we hope to implement something like that in the next academic school year."

Likewise, Gabriel Woodard, a promising student from our Journalism and Mass Communication program, shared his enthusiasm: "This experience allowed us to learn more about data analysis within journalism. As students, we had the opportunity to work on a grant application on behalf of the department, and we were taught different ways to problem-solve. I am so grateful that I was able to meet fellow media students and discuss the similar challenges we have in our field. This experience was incredibly empowering and affirmed that we represent the next generation of journalism."

Faculty Profile: Nicole Watson

Maya Barber

Nicole Watson has been apart of the Journalism and Mass Communication department since 2022.

Although Watson has only been here for a short time, she has made more of an impact on the JOMC department than most would know.

Watson has a career spanning over 40 years of experience in the field from working as an associate producer at ESPN to working in communications. Now, Watson is a professor here at N.C. A&T.

Watson is from Rome, New York, but her passion for storytelling pushed her to gain diverse cultural experiences through working abroad in countries like Russia, Cuba, Spain, Italy, Costa Rica, Tanzania, South Africa and more.

She obtained her bachelor's degree in business (marketing) from SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

Watson went on to gain hands-on experience within the broadcast and journalism field before she pursued her MBA in business, management, marketing, and related support services from Argosy University.

Over the course of her career, Watson has accomplished many things, most notably, she is an



Nicole Watson

Emmy-awarded producer for her work as a host on “Tech Today.”

Following that she was one of the first women to work in the BET sports department and paved the way for people who looked like her.

In addition, she is a creator of a show called “The Sports Report” that many other TV networks tried to recreate and make their own.

Watson has worked for many major broadcast stations such as HBO, BET, ESPN, Turner Broadcasting and CBS Radio.

However, after a while, Watson decided to work at N.C. A&T because she enjoys being an educator and wanted to reach as many students as she could.

Moreover, she was impressed with the program and the media studies and communication.

Watson has her hands in many pots in the department.

Not only does she teach undergraduate-level television and digital-media courses but she has also organized skills-oriented master classes, mentored students, and has supervised newscasts and other video-based projects in our department.

Watson is currently working on a couple of projects; as a second job she works for HBCU GO and she is the coordinating producer.

Outside of school, Watson enjoys golf and volunteers for the program “First Tee” where she gets students ready for tournaments in grades 3-5.

She also enjoys horseback riding, rock climbing, tennis and wants to learn how to play pickleball.

Watson always advocates for African Americans in the work field.

“We need people to make decisions about what we put on the air,” said Watson.

“The images that we see and the content that we experience are so important to have, we need more people of color to weigh in.”

Lastly, Watson always tries to make sure people of color have a seat at the table and emphasizes that there are other options than being in front of the camera.

Student Spotlight: Gabriel Woodard

Christina Mosley

Gabriel Woodard is the dedicated executive director of Aggie News this semester. His journey with Aggie News began in his freshman year, joining a team of just six individuals. However, it wasn't until this past year that Aggie News truly took off, and Gabriel found himself stepping into the role of executive director.

He has been actively involved in shaping the narrative of his community through his internship with Greensboro Television Network. Through the city, he has edited and produced content for the mayor, city council, and various events in Greensboro.



Gabriel credits his growth within the field to the hands-on experience he received through the Journalism and Mass Communications department. Last year, he shadowed the former executive director, Lucy Pearsall-Finch, an experience that truly ignited his determination to make a difference at Aggie News. For Gabriel, journalism is not just a job; it's a calling. "You have to love journalism to be a journalist," he affirms, and he wants to ensure that every student leaves the department prepared for the challenges of the real world.

The support and guidance he has received from mentors like Professor Nicole Watson and studio manager Edwin Moye have been like a guiding light throughout his journey. The biggest piece of advice that has stuck with him has been from Professor Watson. "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger," he shares. His motivation comes from witnessing growth and change, both within himself and those around him.



Crosby Kids Hard At Work

Christina Mosley

Ivana Kasongo

Ivana Kasongo is a PR intern under the mentorship of Mrs. Jill White-Huffman, an Aggie alum, at her private practice, where she offers various services such as massage therapy, Thai foot reflexology, premarital coaching, and couple's coaching. Ivana's journey has been very hands-on, leveraging her written and graphic talents to curate engaging social media content, scripting segments for Mrs. Jill's WFMY News 2-Good Morning Show appearances, and conducting research on renowned psychologists like Sue Johnson and John Gottman.



Ashante Farrior

Ashante Farrior is the lead civic engagement coordinator for Students For Justice this semester. Students for Justice is an organization that aims to engage college students in the struggle to fight systemic voter suppression in the United States and to get out the vote. Their work focuses on expanding the electorate through voter outreach, targeting communities of color in voter suppression states and youth 18-24 nationally, in part through intern-designed social media campaigns. Ashante Farrior, as a lead civic engagement coordinator, has created plans for training and digital advocacy for interns on campus, event planning, crafting social media strategies, research, workshops, creating engaging visuals and captions across platforms, and recruiting.

JOMC Representatives at AdPR Academy



Santroya Pitzer (left), Kennedi Cottle (middle), and Bria Williams (right) at AdPR Academy.

Christina Mosley

In Atlanta, Ga., the University of Georgia recently held its 7th Annual Myra Blackmon AdPR Academy for Diversity and Inclusion, a five-day event coordinated by the university's Department of Advertising and Public Relations.

The program welcomed 29 students from different colleges and universities, three of whom were from our very own Journalism and Mass Communication department at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, receiving their Academy certification in October.

Our university was proudly represented by Bria Williams, Santroya Pitzer, and Kennedi Cottle, who actively engaged in the Academy's comprehensive curriculum.

The AdPR Academy aims to equip BIPOC students interested in advertising and public relations careers with essential skills.

Throughout the event, these students had the opportunity to learn from professionals at renowned companies like Hilton, American Express, Jackson Spalding, Fitzco, Gilded by Good, and SKDK.

The program provided over 35 hours

of professional training and mentoring, giving participants a deeper understanding of the industry.

Daily networking sessions allowed students to connect with industry professionals, potentially opening doors to future career opportunities.

In this hands-on experience, students worked on real-life advertising and public relations challenges.

Here are some words from our student representatives:

Santroya Pitzer: "It was great connecting and networking with peers from other universities. This experience truly put my knowledge to the test. Learning about the different positions in PR has been insightful; there is so much you can do. All the lessons and advice will definitely carry with me. I certainly recommend this program to other young professionals because you will be learning a lot of gems that will be useful no matter what path you take."

Bria Williams: "Great and insightful speakers. They were constantly empowering us. The industry is starving

for diverse perspectives and are looking to us to bridge the gap. The question is, are you ready to do the work? If you are, there is an abundance of opportunities waiting for you. This definitely helped in solidifying my experience. The best advice I received, which I can pass on, is, 'Even though it seems you are not doing enough, you probably are. As long as you put your best foot forward, you are doing enough.'"

Kennedi Cottle: "The experience was wonderful from beginning to end. The workshops, 1 on 1 mentoring, and the connections I formed with my peers were truly amazing. Working in a group with peers with the same career goal as me played a huge role in my experience at AdPR Academy. Not only did my team, The Renaissance, come in first place in the Team Case Competition, but we did it all by learning each other's strengths and using what we knew to teach one another. Through mentoring, we listened to industry professionals talk about their career journey while gaining insight on how to advance my own."

Congratulations Bria, Santroya, and Kennedi for successfully participating in the AdPR Academy for Diversity and Inclusion.

Alumni's Perspective – Special Words for Crosby Kids



Travis Jackson: Advancing HBCU Pride

Travis Jackson, a public relations graduate from the class of 2011, channeled his passion for all things media into the establishment of HBCU Pride Nation. Recognizing the misconceptions surrounding historically black colleges and universities, Travis initiated a movement aimed at reshaping these narratives on a global scale. Through strategic partnerships with reputable brands like Honda, Coach, and Pepsi, HBCU Pride Nation has evolved into a multifaceted media enterprise, amplifying and celebrating experiences within the HBCU community. Travis emphasizes the value of staying consistent, advising the Crosby kids, "You have to stay consistent in what you want to do. From Crosby to my company being recognized and proclaimed with a holiday by my hometown, and even an invitation to speak at the White House. If I can do it, then you can do it too."

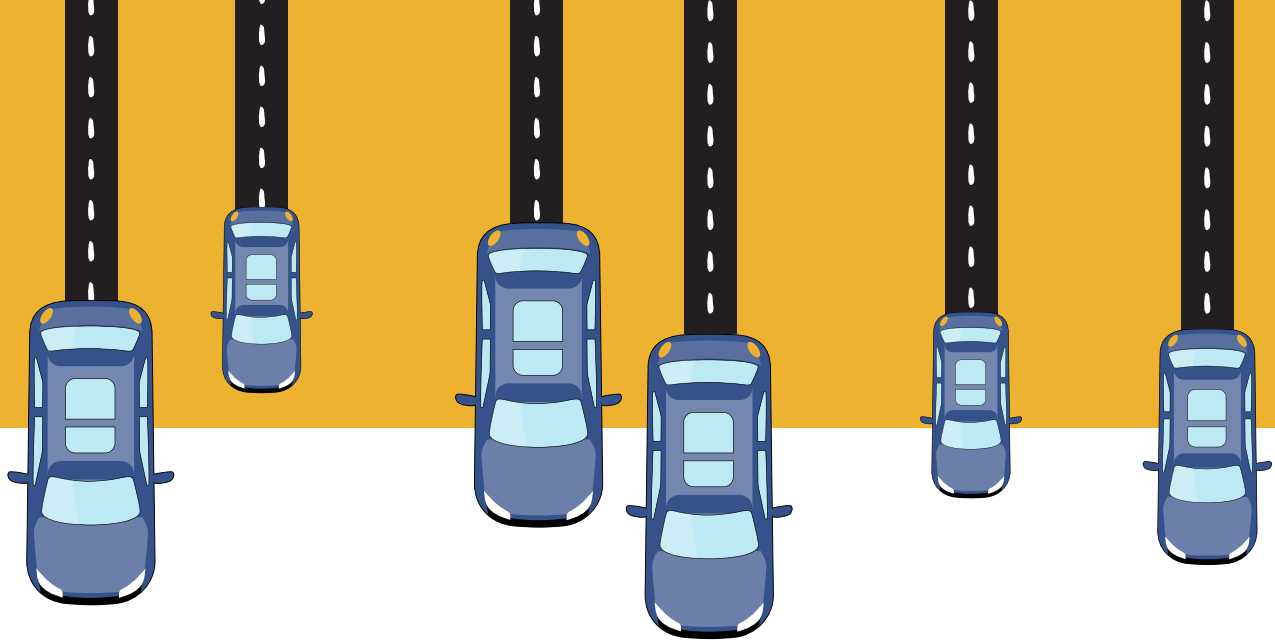
Heaven Ewing: Inside the World of the Baltimore Ravens

Heaven Ewing, a multimedia journalism graduate from the class of 2020, remained resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. With graduating during the peak of the pandemic, Heaven's journey to her current role with the Baltimore Ravens shows that with dedication, you can achieve your goals. Transitioning from an intern to a key contributor within the Marketing Event Staff team, the Ravens were impressed with how knowledgeable she is and that she knew what she wanted very early on. Stressing the importance of doing your research and being intentional with everything that you do, Heaven advises the Crosby kids, "Don't be afraid to show your genuine interest and show that you are exactly the person they are looking for at every opportunity."



Joseph Escobar: Remaining Adaptable

Joseph Escobar, a broadcast journalist graduate from the class of 2009, is a reminder that being adaptable is the key to success in this ever changing world of journalism. As an undergraduate student, Joseph's early career experiences with both Aggie News and as an intern for Fox and CBS News laid the groundwork for his success. Adapting to the challenges posed by the pandemic, he embraced freelance opportunities before securing a role as a field producer for CNBC. Joseph's advice for the Crosby kids emphasizes the importance of staying prepared and seeking assistance when needed: "Don't ever stay comfortable. Always stay ready and remember to exhaust all opportunities available to you."



Alumni On Their Road of Success

SONIA CLARK
PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESERVIST FOR AIR FORCE

DE'JA STEWART
COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST NYC MAYOR

UNIQUA QUILLINS
COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST ATRIUM HEALTH

-

BRIANNA WILLIAMS
ASSOCIATE EDITOR ESPN

ALEXIS DAVIS
SPORTS REPORTER CRONKITE NEWS

JALEN GILKEY
SPORTS ANCHOR & REPORTER FOR WFMY-2

FELICIA LAWRENCE
EVENING ANCHOR WTHR - INDIANAPOLIS

-

ANDRE' PAYNE
EXECUTIVE PROD. ABC-11 RALIEGH

NIA LUCKY
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER CBS NEWS

JAMILLE WHITLOW
PRODUCTION ASST. NBC-4

-

LATOYA VICKERS
FOUNDER, COO GV INDUSTRIES

SUZANNE WALLS
ACCOUNT MGR. HEARST MAGAZINE

DAWN HALL
EXEC. DIRECTOR UNIVERSITY STUDENT SUCCESS

GET TO KNOW OUR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- **NABJ:** Our National Association of Black Journalists student chapter, hosts the NABJ Multimedia Short Course, offering vital networking, mentorship, and scholarship opportunities. Here we are advocates for fair media representation, support diverse newsroom leadership, and celebrate journalistic excellence.
- **Aggie Filmmakers:** Our organization encourages creativity and offers opportunities to write, direct, and produce individual projects. Here you can explore the art of filmmaking and enjoy quality entertainment crafted by our members.
- **PRSSA:** Our Public Relations Student Society of America chapter is dedicated to preparing members for PR careers by staying updated on industry trends. Our activities foster crucial skills like public speaking, writing, and professionalism. Through engaging meetings, community service, workshops, fundraisers, and social events, we cultivate a close-knit network of talented future professionals.
- **APSE:** Associated Press Sports Editors is affiliated with N.C. A&T. Our organization hosts activities, workshops, and training in live-game coverage.
- **Aggie Media Group:** Our organization is a student-run public relations agency dedicated to amplifying brands and empowering students. Our mission is to provide high-quality public relations services to our clients while fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment that promotes creativity, teamwork, and professional development among our members.



JOMC DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

ABOUT OUR SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

JOMC students can apply for scholarships in their spring semester at N.C. A&T if they meet GPA requirements. These scholarships, which support students with financial need and that demonstrate excellence in the department, are accessible through a single application. These scholarships are generously supported by alumni, organizations, and philanthropists. Look out for the annual application link sent during spring.

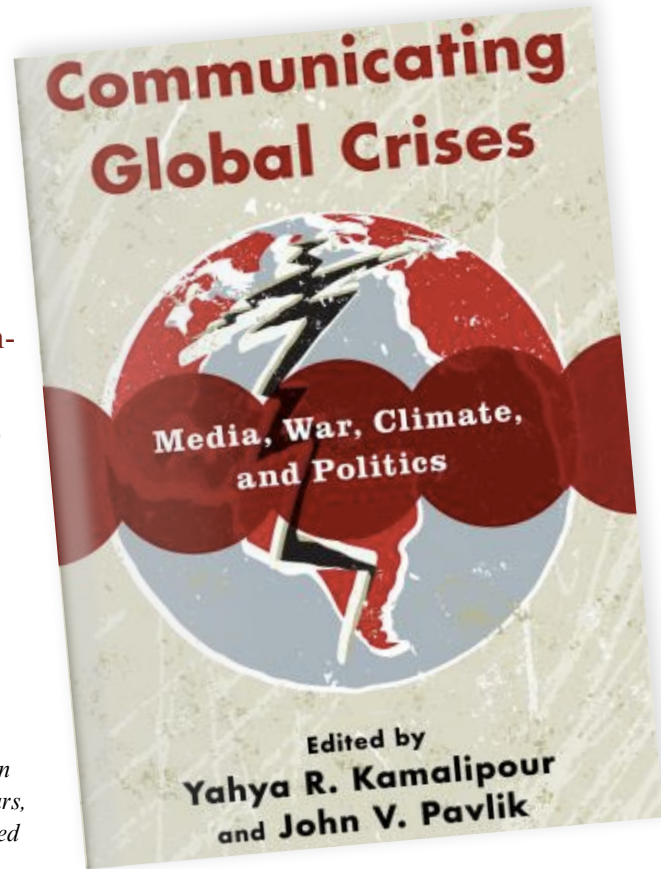
POSSIBLE SCHOLARSHIPS

- NBCUniversal
- Wieden+Kennedy
- Richard E. Moore
- Caterpillar Foundation
- Shirley T. Frye Endowment
- Henry V. and Ruth Whitehead Foundation
- National Association of Broadcasters Educational

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CODE TO VISIT THE JOURNALISM AND
MASS COMMUNICATION WEBSITE:



Discover 'Communicating Global Crises': An Insightful Exploration



This significant collaborative book provides a valuable and much-needed global discourse and analysis of our increasingly divided nations and world. In this eclectic and multidisciplinary volume, contributors focus on various issues including the rise of nationalism, militarism, fake news, climate crisis, media corporations, economic inequalities, inequality, refugee crisis, cultural representations, social media, human interactions, information warfare, propaganda, and the emergence of a new world order. Available for purchase at: <https://rowman.com/>

Communicating Global Crises combines valuable case studies of the role of the media in ongoing conflicts like Ukraine, Russia and Iran with more general assessments of infowars, mediated climate crises and other communicated conflicts. The editors must be applauded for assembling a real global team of authors that combine Western with non-Western academic perspectives in a most timely manner.

— Kai Hafez, University of Erfurt, Germany



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