



# OCA Conversation

Ohio Communication Association

March 2008 Vol. 4, No. 1

## Conference theme: ‘Politics of Communication’

“The Politics of Communication” will be the theme for the 72<sup>nd</sup> annual conference of the Ohio Communication Association, scheduled Saturday, Oct. 4, 2008, at Marietta College. Conference chair Adam C. Earnhardt has issued the call for submission of papers and panel proposals, which are due by 5 p.m. Saturday, May 24.

“When OCA meets, we will be one month away from the next general election, including the election of the next President

### *Call for panels, papers, p2*

of the United States,” said Earnhardt, explaining the theme. “Over the years, Ohio has played a significant role in our understanding of elections, political campaigns, and persuasive discourse. From the Erie County Studies to Ohio’s critical role in the 2004 presidential election, the state continues to be rich in opportunities to understand the role of communication within a democracy.”

He said, however, that “The Politics of Communication” focuses on more than just the importance of communication in an election year. “Politics goes beyond government candidates and elections. There are politics in business, health, relationships, and the media that must be negotiated and studied.

“For example, under this theme, we consider the impact of politics on competent communication at our universities. Accordingly, we

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## 2007 poster session shows student work

Theresa Nutter, left, and Leah Cole, both of the Ohio University Lancaster Campus, show off their entry in the poster competition at the 2007 Ohio Communication Association conference at Boardman. Their research question, “an Analysis of Playboy magazine: Organizational Culture and Change,” drew considerable attention at the conference. For more photos of posters, turn to pages 6 and 7.

## Dr. Flannery takes retreat center post

Sr. Mary Ann Flannery, S.C., a past president of the Ohio Communication Association and former department chair in Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, will take a new position in July as executive director of the Jesuit Retreat House in Parma, Ohio.

The Jesuit Retreat House is an institution that provides retreats for people of all faith backgrounds.

Dr. Flannery was the president of OCA from 2002-2004. An educator 50 years, she has been teaching at JCU the last 19 and was department chair from 1999 through 2007. She plans to continue her affiliation with JCU by teaching a graduate course in the fall 2008 semester.

Her new address after Aug. 1 will

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## Guidelines for 2008 papers and panels

Here are the guidelines for submission of papers and panels for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the Ohio Communication Association on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2008, in Marietta. The conference theme is “the Politics of Communication.”

### PAPER SUBMISSIONS

#### *Submissions of Completed Papers Should Include:*

- 1) A cover page with the title of the paper and the author’s university affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
- 2) On the cover page, mark “Debut” if the author has not presented previously at a state, regional, or national conference/convention.
- 3) On the cover page, mark “Undergraduate Student” if the author is an undergraduate or “Graduate Student” if the author is a graduate student.
- 4) A one-page abstract on the second page not to exceed 150 words.
- 4) Statement of professional responsibility on the second page below the abstract: “In submitting the attached paper, I/We recognize that this submission is considered a professional responsibility. I/We agree to present this paper if it is accepted and programmed. I/We further recognize that all who attend and present at OCA’s annual conference must register and pay required fees.”
- 5) Papers should be e-mailed to [acearnhardt@ysu.edu](mailto:acearnhardt@ysu.edu) in MS WORD by 5:00 PM on Saturday, May 24, 2008.
- 6) Upon receipt, the submitting author will be informed that the paper was received.

### PANEL SUBMISSIONS

#### *Submissions of Completed Panels Should Include:*

- 1) The title of the workshop or panel.
- 2) A complete list of all participants with appropriate contact information (name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number). Also include contact information for the chair, if appropriate.
- 3) A brief rationale and description of the workshop or panel suitable for inclusion in the program.
- 4) A description of any specific materials participants will receive (workshops only).
- 5) A description of your audio visual needs for the session.
- 6) Statement of professional responsibility on the first page below the panel’s title: “In submitting the attached panel proposal, I/We recognize that this submission is considered a professional responsibility. I/We agree to present the proposed panel if it is accepted and programmed. I/We further recognize that all who attend and present at OCA’s annual conference must register and pay required fees.”
- 7) Panels should be e-mailed to [acearnhardt@ysu.edu](mailto:acearnhardt@ysu.edu) in MS WORD by 5:00 PM on Saturday, May 24, 2008.
- 8) Upon receipt, the individual who submits the panel will be informed that the panel was received.

**The deadline for all conference submissions is 5 p.m. Saturday, May 24, 2008. If you have not received confirmation by Wednesday, May 28, 2008, that your paper or panel has been received, or if you have any questions, please call Adam C. Earnhardt, OCA Conference Coordinator, at 330-941-1845.**

**Executive... from page 2**[rhendrickson@jcu.edu](mailto:rhendrickson@jcu.edu)

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**OCA Profile****He's still a sports fan**

*Adam Earnhardt once played basketball, now he studies sports media effects*

*Adam Earnhardt is Ohio Communication Association 2007-2008 conference chair. Here is a look inside his life and career.*

**What is your current primary job title and employer and what subjects to do you teach?**

I am an assistant professor and director of the basic course for Youngstown State University. I teach a variety of courses. Over the last year I taught computer-mediated communication, new communication media, persuasion, and gender communication.

**Tell me an interesting fact about you.**

I'm 6'8" and yes, I played basketball for a small college in Rochester, NY. I was given many nicknames for my "play" on the court. My favorites were "El Dante" and "Banger." I was pretty brutal and have the scars on my face and head to show for it. Who knew basketball was a contact sport?

**What was your first job?**

At age 16 I worked at Burger King. I was fired after 2 months for eating a chicken sandwich on the job. It was hard for me to make food for people without first sampling it, you know, to be sure it wasn't tainted. I wanted to be sure I was serving the highest quality product Burger King could produce.

**Tell me about your education.**

I went to a small, private school outside Pittsburgh. My mother worked as a janitor at the school during evenings and on weekends to



**ADAM EARNHEARDT**

send me, my sister, and my brother to private school. I graduated from Clarion University of PA with a bachelors degree and a master's degree, both in communication. I earned my Ph.D. in communication studies at Kent State University. My wife and I traveled 2 hours, one-way for about 4 years to complete our degrees at Kent State. It was worth every penny.

**What was your dissertation topic and what is your current research focus?**

My dissertation topic was "Exploring Possible Predictors of Television Viewer Judgments of Athlete Behaviors." I haven't deviated much from that topic. My research interests are still grounded in sports media effects, fan-athlete interaction, and the impact of athlete behaviors (on the field and off) on fans. My other research interests are

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consider the role effective mentoring plays in helping new faculty and students navigate the politics of academic life.”

OCA invites scholars and teachers to address this theme by examining the nuances of political campaigns, exploring the impact of persuasive discourse on our daily lives, and providing new ideas and interesting directions for the study of the politics of communication. OCA offers researchers, instructors, graduates, and undergraduate students an opportunity to share ideas for teaching and research, and to develop relationships with Ohio communication professionals.

“OCA is open to all communication professionals,” said Earnhardt. “We believe you have so much to offer. Plan to share your talents, interests, and discoveries with OCA in 2008 at Marietta College.”

Submissions are encouraged in the following areas:

- Debut presentations by faculty and students
- G.I.F.T.S. (Great Ideas for Teaching Speech)
- Demonstrations of innovative instructional methods
- Teaching or research challenges
- Program assessment and issues of accreditation
- Statewide issues or concerns for the discipline
- Further developing OCA to meet the needs of its constituents
- Specific university, private college, community college, or high school issues or concerns
- Workshops for undergraduate or graduate success in the discipline
- Hands-on workshops on topics relating to research or to specific topic areas (technology in the classroom, the basic course, developing critical thinking, the at-risk student, etc.)

**OCA NEWS BRIEF****Vorell joins Ohio Northern**

Ohio Northern University appointed Matt Vorell as assistant professor of Organizational Communication. Matt completed his Ph.D. at Colorado University in the summer of 2007, and is in a full-time tenure-track position at Ohio Northern.

Vorell is from Strongsville, Ohio, and lives in Findlay with his wife, Courtney, who teaches at BGSU. Vorell’s dissertation was titled “Babysitters or Guest Teachers: Substitute Teacher Identity Management Within The Organizational Culture of a School District.”

**Beadle named provost of Assumption College**

Communications scholar Mary Beadle, formerly dean of The Graduate School at John Carroll University, has moved to Assumption College in Worcester, MA, as provost.

A native Ohioan, she started her academic career as a visiting professor at JCU and later as an instructor at Kent State while getting her Ph.D. Her first tenure-track position was at Walsh University, where she later became the founding chair of the Communications Department. She moved to John Carroll in 1994 and became dean in 2001.

At Assumption, Dr. Beadle joins former JCU colleague, Dr. Francesco Cesareo, who is president of the college. Assumption is a Catholic institution founded by the Assumptionist Fathers.

Dr. Beadle is responsible for the direction of all matters related to academics and serves as acting president in Dr. Cesareo’s absence.

Dr. Beadle has traveled widely, teaching in Russia, doing research in Brussels and the Vatican, studying in Israel, conducting seminars in Argentina and Paraguay and vacationing in Tanzania.

She has published extensively and is co-author of “Broadcast Announcing Worktext,” now in its third edition, and was lead editor of “Indelible Images: Women in Local Broadcasting.”

**Dr. Shirvani honored by OCA**

**DR. SHEIDA SHIRVANI, left, OCA executive director, accepts the organization’s Distinguished Service Award at the 2007 annual conference. She was nominated by Dr. Miki Crawford, right. See story, page 8.**

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in computer-mediated and new media communication, media ethics, and the basic course.

**What do you like about your job and your workplace?**

I love the flexibility the job provides. I get to teach some really cool classes, interact with incredibly bright and energetic students, conduct important research on my own schedule, and contribute to our discipline. More importantly, my job gives me time to spend time with my family. I won't ever take a job that takes me too far away from my wife and kids.

As for YSU, you'd have a difficult time finding a better place to work. The people I work with are fun, interesting, and good friends. We really are a family and everyone goes out of their way to help when needed. The people I work with are also my research collaborators. We spend time talking about ideas, methods, and problems related to our studies and find ways to connect when possible.

*“The people I work with are fun, interesting, and good friends.”*

**Tell me something about your personal life.**

I am married to the most beautiful and smartest woman in the world, Mary Beth Earnhardt and I have two amazing daughters, Ella Grace (2) and Katherine Elizabeth (9 months). We recently moved to Ohio and we now live just north of Youngstown. It's nice to live less than 10 minutes from work.

**What significant achievements have you had?**

My most recent significant achievement was the completion of my dissertation at Kent State. I worked full-time for Clarion University and Youngstown State University while completing the degree. It wasn't easy, but it was the best decision I ever made. Another

significant achievement was coordinating the OCA conference in Youngstown. I got the chance to work some amazing people and made some great friends. Of course, two other “significant” achievements are my daughters Ella and Kate.

**What are your goals now?**

My short term goals are to finish to book projects, an edited book on sports fandom and another for the basic communication course, and to turn the dissertation into some meaningful journal articles. I plan to apply for some grant funding and research time to study the impact of mediated sports on viewers. A long term goal is to teach for a semester or a year in another country.

**What goal do you have for the Ohio**

**Communication Association?**

My goal for OCA is quite simple: consistency. We have a solid reputation

that centers on preparing young faculty and graduate students for teaching and researching communication in Ohio. Dawn Carusi, our southeast district representative, recently noted in an e-mail to the executive committee that OCA does an incredible job mentoring faculty and graduate students. We really do a nice job of connecting those with a long history of scholarship and service with those new to the discipline. I like to think our annual conference is a showcase for those connections.

**If you had to describe yourself, what words would you use?**

I like to think I'm energetic and motivated. When I worked in admissions for Clarion University, John Shropshire, dean of enrollment management, told colleagues on campus that he considered me to be honest and trustworthy. To me, there was no greater compliment.

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be Jesuit Retreat House, 5629 State Road, Parma, OH 44134.

Before teaching, Sr. Mary Ann earned her bachelor's degree from Siena Heights College in Michigan. She received both her master's and her doctorate from Kent State University.

Sr. Flannery will join 11 other Jesuit Retreat House directors across the country. She will do writing, teaching and studying.

In a letter to the communications department, Sr. Flannery said, “I am grateful that the Jesuits have confirmed the appointment of a woman in this endeavor. I leave with only the deepest fondness and affection for John Carroll and our department – a place I dearly love,”

*From a story by Kate McCall, The Carroll News*

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## A 2007 conference photo gallery



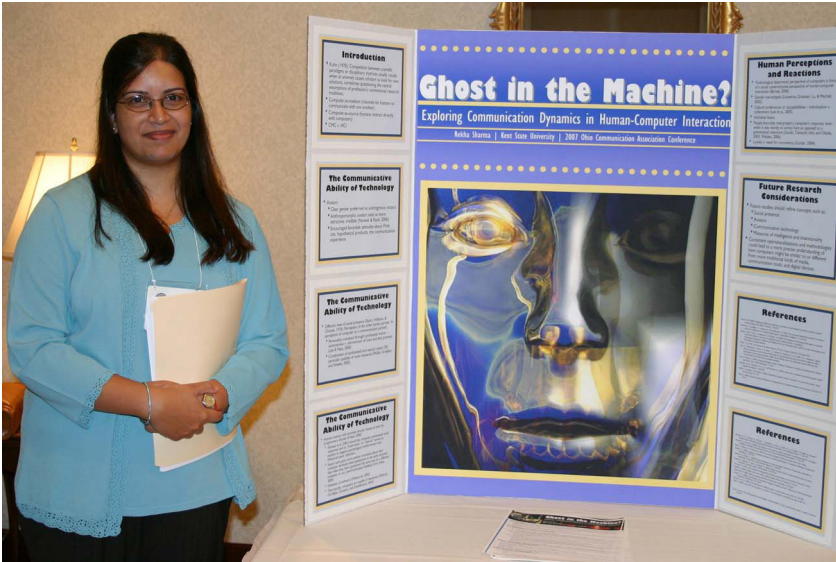
**Clara D'Altorio** of Youngstown State University shows her poster, which won the "Outstanding Undergraduate Poster" award.



**Brian Billingsly** of Ohio University-Lancaster, discusses his poster, which asks "Does your mother know you're on MySpace?"



**Andrew Wilsterman** of Kent State University-Tuscarawus, discusses his video documentary with Jean Reid of KSU.



**Rekha Sharma** of Kent State University displays her poster, titled “Ghost in the Machine?”



**Stephanie Kirkpatrick** of the University of Akron, with her poster titled “For My Eyes Only? The MySpace.com Crisis in Ohio Schools.”

# OCA awards ceremony reunites teacher, student

By Margaret Garmon  
Kent State University

Retirement does not seem to come easy for **Ray Heisey**, emeritus professor of communication from Kent State University -- a fortunate happenstance for his former students, no matter how many years and miles have separated them.

In 1976 Ray had a leave of absence from KSU to serve as president of Damavand College in Tehran, Iran. Among the first Damavand graduates of the class of 1976 Ray would present a diploma to was **Sheida Shirvani**.

Last October, Ray was present when Sheida was awarded a top communication honor, the Distinguished Service Award from the Ohio Communication Association. Sheida is a professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Ohio University's Zanesville campus.

Ray arrived in Damavand College in the fall 1975. The new all-women college was located on a campus with buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright Associated Architects. The library, a venue for the graduation ceremony, had been built with a contribution from the U. S. Agency for International Development.

Aside from running into each other at academic conferences, Ray and Sheida did not have a real opportunity to reconnect formally, but when Ray learned that Sheida would be presented the award at the OCA conference in Boardman, he and his wife Susanne made a point of being there for his former student.

And when Sheida was presented the OCA award, she made a point of thanking Ray for his support in coming to see her receive this honor from her fellow communication scholars and peers. Her remarks were very touching about how supportive Ray had been in encouraging women students to advance their studies.

Sheida explained recently why it was important for Ray to be there, calling it a "wonderful gesture" on the part of an honorable man.

"Dr. Heisey found out about the award and took the time out of his retirement to come and see me personally when I received this award. That is just the type of individual he is to reconnect and be so considerate," Sheida said.

"He is a wonderful man and I am proud to be associated with him and know him," she added.



**Ray Heisey, left, congratulates his former student, Sheida Shirvani, after she was presented the Ohio Communication Association Distinguished Service Award. Heisey is an emeritus professor of communication and former director of the School of Communication Studies at Kent State University.**

Although their cultural backgrounds are diverse, their interest in communication across cultures is a common bond. Ray is researching what his Damavand students are doing now. Many are now educators and professionals in various communication fields in the United States and Canada. His article, "Reflections on a Persian Jewel" will highlight graduates from Damavand, his Persian jewel.

Sheida came to the United States in 1976 after earning her bachelor of arts degree in English literature and philosophy from Damavand. Sheida wanted to continue her education and get a master's degree, and the United States offered her more opportunities than were available in Iran.

As a young graduate student, she also

saw how prevalent gender inequity can be back home in Iran and here in the United States.

"I was young when I left home and came to the United States; I saw inequity the world over. I also saw the importance of cross-cultural relationships in our life experiences. This gave me something new to research and I continue to focus on that area," Sheida said.

This interest in communication was shown in earning a master's degree in communication theory from Eastern New Mexico University and a doctoral degree in the teaching of cross-cultural and interpersonal communication at the college level from North Texas State University.

When Sheida was a student, the Internet was not the world-wide phenomenon it is now. She remarked on how different life would have been if the Internet had been available in the 1970's.

"If I had the Internet in the 1970's, I would not have left Iran. I could have obtained my education on line. Had these capabilities been available then, I would not be here in the United States," Sheida said.

Looking at the Middle East, if we understood how to communicate better, we would not have such a complicated situation in that part of the world, Sheida added.

Sheida has been a tireless advocate for communication studies in her role as an educator and as executive director of OCA.

"I feel that I was born to this field of communication. We chose to help other people -- students, junior faculty and colleagues. Keeping busy with organizations such as OCA is one way to give back to my field, my community and Ohio, Sheida said.

*Garmon is a Ph.D. student at Kent State University. This article first appeared in the Kent-Ravenna Record Courier.*

## Send your news to OCA Conversation

Have you been appointed, promoted, published or honored? Ohio Communication Association members are eager to hear about it. Send your news to the editor, Dr. Richard Hendrickson, associate professor, Department of Communication and Theatre Arts, John Carroll University. Call 216-397-3078 or write [rhendrickson@jcu.edu](mailto:rhendrickson@jcu.edu). The deadline for the next edition is July 15, 2008.