

# COMM-unity

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## COMM creates leaders outside classroom

By Becca Milem '23

The ability to speak persuasively and passionately often defines students outside of the classroom. So it's no coincidence that between speech, debate, leadership, rhetoric, media and public relations courses, comm students earn leadership positions across campus.

Two communication students who embody this are Joseline Martinez-Cortez, student government president, and Timothy Wotring, student government treasurer. Both are comm majors who are also leaders at Otterbein. Although neither started in the comm department at Otterbein, after having conversations with faculty, and taking comm classes, they both knew this was the place to be.

"It's different in the communication department," Martinez-Cortez said. "Conversations with faculty drew me into the department."

Martinez-Cortez began as an environmental engineering major. Wotring registered undecided and really didn't know what communication meant.

"The communication department provides support and understands we are not just students but we are human beings with passions and struggles. I've rarely met somebody in COMM who didn't believe in me," Martinez-Cortez said.

Martinez-Cortez is a public relations and global studies double major. While she already had a passion for public service, she wanted to be part of something that also allowed her to advocate for minorities. Wotring, a PR and communication studies major, serves as treasurer who also wanted to be a voice for student concerns.

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## Calendar

January 10  
First day of classes

January 17  
M.L. King Day  
No classes

March 7-11  
Spring break

April 22  
Last day of classes

May 1  
Graduation  
ceremonies

## Heberling meets deadline, earns health comm job



Sometimes meeting a key challenge at 1 a.m. will unlock all sorts of doors. For Lauren Heberling '19, after working all day and into the early morning at her Broadway in Columbus internship, her 1 a.m. determination earned her the job she still enjoys today.

Heberling graduated with a degree in public relations and health communication, with a minor in dance. Her love for dance and theatre brought her to participate in dance concerts at Otterbein as well as enjoy Broadway shows from Hamilton in Cleveland to

Broadway's My Fair Lady. Heberling was involved on campus in Greek life, PRSSA, residence life and Otterbein orientation.

She had many internships throughout her college experience. Her sophomore year she was an intern at the Columbus Children's Theatre. Junior year she worked in the marketing and communication office on campus. Her senior year she completed a health communication internship at A Kid Again and later earned an internship with the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA).

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**"I just had the feeling that I needed to try something new...to get out of my comfort zone..."**

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"Getting the internship with CAPA was a dream come true," Heberling said. "Upon graduation, I just had the feeling that I needed to try something new because although I'll always have a love for theatre and dance,

an opportunity to get out of my comfort zone was something I couldn't pass up."

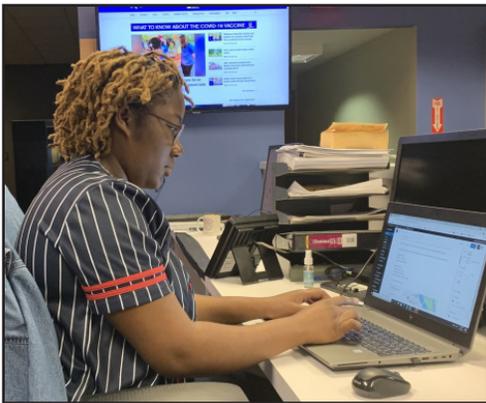
In early March of her senior year, while working an intense 15-hour day for a Broadway in Columbus event at the Ohio Theatre, Heberling received a call about a job opening. The catch was she had to apply immediately. She went home and submitted the application at 1 a.m. After a successful interview, by week's end, she was hired as the communications coordinator for the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP).

"When I started working at the OAFP, I instantly connected with my team," said Heberling. "It is so gratifying to see how my career has developed."

In her role, she is responsible for internal and external communication through the publication of an association magazine, email campaigns, and social media management, as well as event promotion with a team of seven other women.

Heberling wants to continue growing within her career and hopes students will reflect on what they have learned outside of the classroom in internships and other practical experiences.

## Perseverance defines Petit-De's successful job search



By Malachi Brooks '23

Perseverance has defined Schalischea Petit-De's life these past few years. From her days at Otterbein's T&C Media to becoming a digital content producer at channel 2 WDTN-TV in Dayton, Petit-De '19 has persevered.

While her accomplishments came with hardships, she emphasizes that without perseverance she would not have reached her goals.

After graduating and earning her bachelor's degree in journalism and media communication, Petit-De had a challenging time finding a job.

"It took a couple of months to get a job after graduation," she said, "I was

basically distraught because of this."

Still, she continued to utilize the connections she had built during her undergraduate career.

When she reached out to professors in the communication department, she was led to a job as a production assistant at WBNS-10TV in Columbus.

Petit-De worked at WBNS for six months before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Once again, she found herself without a job.

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**Still, she continued to utilize the connections she had built during her undergraduate career.**

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And once again she was forced to persevere. "I applied for a ton of news jobs in Ohio and a bunch of other states across the U.S.," Petit-De said. "Eventually, I got the job for the place I work now."

She attributes her success to an internship she had at NBC4 WCMH-TV, which is the

"sister location" to WDTN-TV in Dayton and says a highlight of her job-application process was being able to practically apply her knowledge from her undergraduate experience to her current job duties.

She recommends that students develop a thick skin when looking for a job and learn to persevere.



## Bishop thrives in policy positions



By Malachi Brooks '23

Tony Bishop '15 is living proof that an education can take you anywhere. In Bishop's case, that includes stops in Washington, D.C., Brussels, Belgium, and back to Ohio.

After graduating from Otterbein with a bachelor's degree in communication studies, Bishop returned to Otterbein to earn his master's degree in allied health in 2018.

A football injury at Otterbein gave him time to figure out how to be versatile in his skill set.

"My interests had to expand," Bishop said. "I ended up being more involved in school and decided to focus more on classes."

Bishop went on to become a tutor in

the writing center, which "opened up a new world beyond sports," he said. After discovering there were opportunities for him to make change in public policy, Bishop began to switch gears.

"I wanted to be a part of shaping society," he said. "I decided public policy was great for me."

Bishop has had several job opportunities helping to shape public policy, such as working in Washington, D.C., with U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and working at the U.S. Liaison Office in Brussels, Belgium.

Bishop then became the executive director for the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus. He is now the Deputy Policy Director for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in Washington, D.C., working with party leadership to craft a policy agenda for all 435 Democratic house races across the nation.

His charisma and talent were recognized by Otterbein University as he was presented with a recent Alum of the Year Award. He also emphasizes the importance of having compassion for others.

"It's all about helping someone else," Bishop said. "If you have wisdom that you can share with someone to make their time easier, you should do it. That's how we advance as a country."

## Otterbein debate leads Parson to earn Ph.D

By Malachi Brooks '23

Maggie Parson knew since her first year at Otterbein that she wanted to earn her Ph.D. There was never a debate about it. Now Parson has combined her love for research and teaching with debate and has received that doctorate degree she dreamt of earning.

While Parson's eventual landing is still unknown, currently she is working for an education publishing company. Parson was certain from her freshman year at Otterbein that she wanted to study communication and maybe even teach it one day.

Now after earning her master's degree at Ball State in Indiana and finishing her Ph.D. at Louisiana State, Parson has realized her dream.

"At Otterbein I was very involved with the debate team and was influenced strongly by communication professor Nichelle



McNabb," Parson said. "Although the pandemic made it difficult, this year I defended my dissertation and earned my Ph.D."

During school at Otterbein, Parson won several speech and debate awards including 3rd place at

### T & C magazine highlights student achievements

The latest issue of Tan and Cardinal magazine, issue 24: Future Perspective, is hot off the presses in the COMM building.

From careers and how students can begin preparation for their dream jobs, to landing internships, to entrepreneurs, the issue features students and their pursuit of big career dreams.

Students and alumni alike can relate to the magazine's stories. Pick up a copy today!



nationals in 2014 in Lincoln/Douglas Debate.

In addition to her involvement in debate, Parson also traveled to Malawi for two weeks as a part of a study-abroad trip.

For her master's thesis, Parson's research centered around popular rap artist, Kanye West and for her Ph.D. dissertation she wrote about environmental rhetoric.

Parson's vision for students who want to attend graduate school is for them not to pay for it. She explained that if you can gain teaching experience with an assistantship then that is the better trade off. She credits Otterbein for a lot of her success.

"At the heart of Otterbein is a bunch of really passionate people," Parson said. "They take the four most tender years of your life and make them really special."

Now that's something not debatable.



## Jones expands community boundaries

By Felicity Boykin '24

Professor Eric Jones sees the boundaries of the Otterbein community extending far beyond Otterbein's campus. Jones' idea of community reaches deep into Columbus neighborhoods wherever Jones feels he can make a difference.

Although Jones is very passionate about teaching Otterbein students, some of the most meaningful work he does is mentoring youths in Columbus, something he has done since 2010.

He enjoys being a role model for younger adults and has been honored for his service with the Simba Mentoring Program of Franklin County Children's Services.

"We have such a great advantage living in Columbus," Jones said. "The economy is so diverse here which is why so many of us are encouraged to stay and make a difference in the local communities that surround us. Some of the most meaningful work that I do is giving back and building relationships within the community."

Jones developed a passion for teaching when he began helping others during his time at Penn State University. Upon graduation Jones took a position as an assistant professor and radio adviser at Claflin University in Orangeburg, S.C.

Then Jones began to look for jobs closer to

home. He was ready for change and wanted to take the next step in his career. Jones was hired by Otterbein and moved to Columbus.

Jones teaches several courses at Otterbein including radio and audio production, freshmen year experience as well as other courses offered in the communication department.

In some of them, he examines racism in media. Jones especially enjoys teaching about radio because it is a curriculum that is creative, and students can portray their personalities on air.

"Use college as your laboratory," Jones advises students. "Make mistakes and keep learning. Try something different. Don't dismiss it if it's not your first choice."

Some recent Otterbein alumni of the campus radio station are on the air in Chicago and Fredericksburg, Virginia.

The student-run station, 97.5 FM WOBN, recently completed the renewal process for its FCC broadcast license. That renewal keeps WOBN on the air as one of the oldest continually run FM-radio stations in the state of Ohio. WOBN began in 1948.

Whether he's mentoring youths, or advising radio students, Jones continues to extend Otterbein's reach into the community.

## Leaders, from page 1

"The job is not as glamorous as it sounds," Martinez-Cortez said. She heads the executive committee, making connections, planning and keeping things on track. Wotring assists student organizations with funding and grant questions and approvals, while participating in bigger conversations about student life.

Being a communication student in a leadership position allows students to use their skills outside the classroom. Martinez-Cortez and Wotring agree that public speaking is a huge skill they have used while in their positions, thanks to professor Nichelle McNabb.

Martinez-Cortez and Wotring agree being a COMM student has provided them with the right information and opportunities to advance their success. The COMM department offers such a wide variety of classes.

Although networking with faculty helps get me where I need to be," Wotring said, "there are some improvements that can be made."

Martinez-Cortez and Wotring both note how they would love a more diverse culture in the department, not only with students but with faculty and staff as well.

"It saddens me," Martinez-Cortez said. "We should make a plan and develop a skill set to move forward to reach out and draw more minorities in, because it just doesn't feel super diverse in the comm department."

And of course, speaking truth to power is another critical skill promoted by comm professors.

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