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Holliday returns to Eastern with new outlook on journalism

*By Barbara Harrington
Agency Director*

When LaMar Holliday traveled to Phoenix, Ariz., for the Meredith-Cronkite Fellowship Program in January, he said he got more than he bargained for.

Holliday, a senior journalism major, was one of 12 students selected for the competitive one-week fellowship. Holliday served as a producer, working out of KPHO CBS 5 to help put together a newscast the students would tape during their last day of the fellowship.

But when two major stories broke, Holliday said he quickly got a lesson in covering breaking news.

“It was different because everyone was so laid back,” Holliday said. “It’s like they have a system set in place — if breaking news happens this is what everyone’s supposed to do, this is your post. Everyone executed that perfectly.”

Holliday witnessed firsthand how KPHO covered news of a mall shooting in Chandler, Ariz., and the story of the Tucson,



LaMar Holliday, WEIU-TV anchor, traveled to Phoenix, in January to participate in the Meredith-Cronkite Fellowship Program. Holliday returned from Phoenix with experience in breaking news and a different perspective on television news.

Ariz., shooting, which left six people dead and Rep. Gabrielle Giffords critically injured.

Holliday said eventually watching others work the stories wasn’t enough.

“We got to help out producers and said ‘Hey is there anything we can do?’ And the producer would say ‘Hey, I need you to call these numbers here. Let me know what you can get.’”

Because the Tucson shooting happened the same

day the fellows were supposed to tape their newscast, Holliday said the students will be flown back out to Arizona to put their final product together sometime in the next two months.

While he didn’t walk away with a DVD of his work, Holliday said he came back to Eastern with a different perspective on television news after being in this much larger market.

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Bradd to be inducted into hall of fame

By Anton Jefferson
Staff Reporter

Mike Bradd, an Eastern communication studies professor, will be honored for his play-by-play skills. He will be inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association hall of fame April 30.

Bradd has been a faculty member and sports announcer here for 22 years, at almost every sporting event, he said.

"Bradd is an awesome teacher and he knows his stuff," said Caitlin Nepolioni, senior communication studies major.

"I use my play-by-play abilities to paint a verbal picture for my listeners that are not at the game," he said.

Bradd said it takes years of experience to become a hall of famer.

"It's about longevity," he said. "Several other of the people who broadcast for the universities around the state, like Mike Reece at Southern Illinois is in the hall of fame, and Dick Ludkey from Illinois State, Bill Baker at Northern, too. We are all sort



Bradd announcing at Lantz Arena. Photo by Sandy King

of old timers who have been doing it quite a while."

Bradd said the key for young announcers' is gaining experience.

"Get as much experience as you can; the more hands on experience you get the better," he said.

Bradd gained his experience while working at local radio stations. He also taught at the com-

munity college level before becoming a full-time professor at EIU in the fall of 1988.

"Eastern is a good place to work. I like the students and I like the people I work with so it works out really well," Bradd said.

Bradd said preparing for multiple games on the same day is a challenge.. Preparing for games can take hours for Bradd to do.

Bradd said he likes to be well prepared and he said he familiarizes himself with athletes and statistical information about each athlete prior to the game.

"I try to memorize the numbers to go with the names of the people who are most likely to handle the ball. In football, there's a lot more people, so I try to have a sort of connection so that when the guy catches the ball the name comes to me," he said.

Bradd said he always wanted to take his announcing to the next level.

"The NFL would be pretty good; it's once a week and I could build up and prepare for a game and then start again the next week," he said. "So I guess I'd have to say the Bears, since I'm a Bears fan."

This is not Bradd's first honor. He won an Illinois Silver Dome award in 2004 for the best small market sports play-by-play.

"The main award is just feeling good about what you do at the end of the night," he said.

WEIU graduates finding jobs in the competitive broadcast market

By Rob Warren
Staff Reporter

Recent Eastern graduates have had little trouble finding jobs. In fact, they are finding jobs suitable to what they studied.

Courtney Kerch, a marketing major, has been recently hired at WTVO/

WQRF in Rockford. However, even though she found a job at a TV station, it is as a photographer.

"I didn't think that I'd be doing what I'm doing right now, but I am enjoying it so far and there will be plenty of time in the future to get to where I want

to be," she said. "It's just good to get the experience right now."

Katie Jones, a communication studies major, found her home at the CBS affiliate WHBF news in Rock Island as a full time news reporter for the Quad Cities.

Emily Mieure, a com-

munication studies major, was hired at WFIE in Evansville, Ind., as the sunrise reporter.

These graduates agree that although their schedules here at Eastern were hectic, their schedules for their careers are even more so.

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Interns to experience WEIU-TV

By Jennifer Brown
Co-Editor

WEIU-TV will be selecting new interns for its summer internship program March 15.

These interns, who will receive hands-on experience working for the television station, will embrace the opportunity to fill every position required in a station.

Kelly Runyon, news director of WEIU-TV, said 12 to 20 new students are expected to join the new summer staff.

"They're specifically for journalism, communication, geology, and geography," Runyon said. "Crew will go out nights and weekends; they will cover breaking news, education, business and weather."

Runyon said her students have interviewed prominent people such as presidents and secretaries of state. Students have also covered major events such as tornados and fires.

"Students want a history in broadcasting because they'll spend a lot of the time on the air," she said. "They need to be the best of the best."

Nancy Yousef, an EIU communication major, is a finalist for the WEIU-TV internship. She first became interested in broadcast media while a student at Parkland College.

"I volunteered at the TV/radio station at Parkland. Also, while I was at Park-

"It's a great opportunity to sharpen the skills learned in my classes and also exposes me to many new things that I will need to know and be comfortable doing in the field of broadcast journalism. I'm hoping to learn what it takes to be a successful broadcast journalist and how to run a successful newscast."

Claire Dau, communication studies major

land, I was a volunteer/guest at WCIA 3 news in Champaign, for a segment called "Talk of the Town" where a panel of woman including myself would talk about some of the things going on," she said.

Yousef found out about the internship from Runyon in a meeting which was promoting new volunteers.

"I know this internship is challenging and that is what I am looking for," Yousef said. "I want to learn everything there is to running a newscast and I know WEIU can definitely teach me that."

Claire Dau, a communication major, began shadowing at WEIU-TV the summer before attending Eastern.

"It's a great opportunity to sharpen the skills learned in my classes and also exposes me to many new things that I will need to know and be comfortable doing in the field of broadcast journalism," Dau said. "I'm hoping to learn what it takes to be a successful broadcast journalist and how to run a successful newscast."

Dau hopes this internship helps her narrow her field of broadcasting by the end of the summer.

William Hurley, senior geography major, became interested in the internship in order to further his experience with broadcast meteorology.

"Starting last semester I was doing weather broadcasts that were posted on the Internet, but this is my first semester with WEIU doing live weather forecasts," Hurley said. "An ideal job for me would be an off-camera meteorologist at a news outlet or the National Weather Service, but the minor also teaches you to be on-camera."

Hurley has always enjoyed working with the weather, and the internship would provide him the opportunity to report on weather year-round.

"I hope to gain a well-rounded perspective and knowledge of the entire production process," Hurley said.

Students who are selected for the internship will work about 30 hours per week in a state-of-the-art studio for the 12-week program.

"Students come from coast to coast," Runyon said, "from California and Florida last year."

Grads

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Mieure said her work day starts at 4 a.m. and she is in bed by 7 p.m., but she would not want to go back to the schedule she had her last semester in college.

"I learned a lot at WEIU and would not have the job I have now if it weren't for its stellar program, but I'm sure glad to have moved on," Mieure said.

The others agree that they learned a lot while working at WEIU and it gave them a big advantage compared to other recent graduates from other schools.

The best advice they have to offer is to start applying for jobs early and do not hold out for the perfect job.

Holiday

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"I'm so used to small market experience and the fact that I got to go to a 12 size market and see how they do things and see how they tell stories and see how they execute things, has helped me as a reporter since I've been back," Holliday said. "It's helped me become a better writer, a better listener and gives me different ways to tell my stories."

Vicki Paisley interns at WTVO-17 during Eastern's winter break 2010

By Merritt Whitley
Staff Reporter

Over winter break, Vicki Paisley, junior journalism major, had an internship at WTVO-TV in Rockford, Ill.

The internship lasted two weeks and started every day at 10 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m. It introduced the job of a professional anchor and provided the opportunity to gain workplace experience.

"It was very casual, a good way to gain experience and contact information. I definitely learned what to expect when I'm going into the job market," Paisley said.

Paisley's experience also included regularly helping the producers, editing and working with photographers. Paisley said she was well-prepared for this internship because of her experiences at school and stressed the importance of getting involved.

"Working at school has definitely helped; it's been good to be involved in school," Paisley said.

Paisley heard about the internship from a friend, LaMar Holliday, who had previously done the internship at Rockford over the summer. Paisley said she was glad she finished the internship.

Internships are a great way for students to pursue future careers and help them gain experience in the field of their choice. At Eastern, students are encouraged to participate in internships to expand their learning and



Vicki Paisley, junior journalism major, recently completed an internship in Rockford, Ill. Paisley, a WEIU-TV news anchor, heard about the story from an WEIU employee, LaMar Holliday.

improve their skills in a professional atmosphere.

In the classroom, students learn what is expected in the real world from their teachers. However, internships are the place where students can put the skills they have learned to the true test.

Kent Harrell, news director at Channel 17, stressed the importance of internships and how students should take the opportunity to do as many as they can. He said Paisley did a great job and it was a pleasure having her there to help, especially since they were short-staffed.

Harrell said the types of tasks interns are asked to do depend on the student's skill level, but overall it is important for students to be exposed to the newsroom. These experiences are important for students and help to increase their knowledge

and confidence in the workplace.

Harrell also said he likes to see work experience before hiring. Details such as work experience help students stick out and make them more qualified and hireable compared to less experienced students.

Kelly Runyon, WEIU-TV news director, said internships are a positive experience for students. When asked whether internships were important for students, she replied, "Absolutely. It helps students grow, mature and learn the business even more. It is imperative to gain different experiences."

At WEIU-TV, students in this department are well prepared for internships and learn by doing hands-on work. Students are provided with many opportunities to explore the newsroom and learn different skills.

Many internships are available. It's about finding ones that students are interested in and going after them. These opportunities can be extremely beneficial and could really help play a role in finding a future job.

**Join
The Agency
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