MAKING CONNECTIONS

DAN ROTH (BSJ95) IS LEADING A CONTENT REVOLUTION AT LINKEDIN.
CALL FOR ENTRIES

Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism
This annual award is given to the individual or team of journalists, working for a U.S.-based media outlet, who best displayed moral, ethical or physical courage in the pursuit of a story or series of stories. The contest is open to journalists from newspapers, television stations, online news operations, magazines or radio stations. The story subjects may be local, national or international in scope.

Contest period: 2013 calendar year
Deadline: Postmarked by Feb. 28, 2014
For application information, prize amount and contest rules, visit www.medillmedalforcourage.com

John Bartlow Martin Award
This annual award honors outstanding professional public interest magazine journalism, at which Martin was so adept himself. During his 10 years on the Medill faculty, Martin coached students to excel as reporters and writers.

Contest period: 2013 calendar year
Deadline: Postmarked by Feb. 28, 2014
For application information, prize amount and contest rules, visit www.johnbartlowmartinaward.com

Day in the Life
On Oct. 4, Mike Greenberg (BSJ89) brought his popular ESPN sports talk show “Mike & Mike” to Northwestern, where he broadcast live from Deering Meadow beginning at 5 a.m. Take a behind-the-scenes look at the memorable day.

10 talentQ
The fourth annual exposition focused on the need for creativity and passion.

27 Leading the way
Karen Crotchfelt (BSJ92), the publisher at the Indianapolis Star, is changing the face of business at metro dailies.

31 Love story
Jason Methner (IMC09) saw his proposal to Molly Lipsitz (BSJ08) go viral. Now the two are set to be married in April.

33 Medill MOOC
Eleven Northwestern faculty members teamed up to teach a massive open-online course about content strategy.

FEATURES

ON THE COVER
At the LinkedIn office with Daniel Roth (BSJ95). See story on page 14.

PHOTO BY ARMANDO SANCHEZ

5 Alumni Quote
6 Medill News
7 Faculty News
9 Student News
12 Club Events
13 Events
34 Class Notes
35 Obituaries
36 Keep Reading ...
Very time I walk into Fisk Hall, a familiar feeling comes over me, but not because the place has barely changed since I was a student here nearly 15 years ago. It’s because there’s still an energy – a sense of possibility and ambition and discovery – that emanates from the students here today.

Students come to Medill because they want to change the world, and what they learn here can launch them toward success. What these students may not know is that they will be part of Medill for life.

I returned to Medill last August after 10 years reporting in Tallahassee, Fla., Nashville, Tenn., and Minneapolis, and nearly five years working in Northwestern’s New York office of Alumni Relations and Development. But I never really left Medill. As a reporter, I tapped the Medill network for jobs and mentors. As an alumna, I cheered as my classmates became leading voices in their fields. As the new Director of Development for Medill, I’m inspired every day by the generosity and thoughtfulness of our alumni, parents and friends.

The Marcus Lowes Scholarship is the perfect example (page 6). Marcus (MSJ’95) died far too young, but his family and friends honored his memory and legacy by endowing a scholarship for students who share his passion for sports journalism.

The most meaningful gifts come from personal experience and a desire — reflected in our students and demonstrated by our alumni — to make a difference. Dean Brad Hamm and our faculty are committed to providing life-changing experiences for Medill students and are focused on advancing Medill as the best school of its kind in the world. Members of the Medill community are stepping forward to partner with us to realize these ambitions. Every gift to Medill is a vote of confidence in this vision and an acknowledgment of the role our school has played in your life.

Thank you for supporting Medill, whether you give money, hire graduates, mentor students or, ideally, all three. My job, along with Senior Associate Director Cherie Richardson and our many development colleagues, is to connect you to Medill in the way that’s most meaningful to you. Together, we can make the Medill experience even more extraordinary.

And if you’d like to start by helping to renovate Fisk, give me a call!
A LASTING LEGACY

A GROUP OF FRIENDS BANDED TOGETHER TO HONOR THEIR FRIEND THROUGH A MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

In every group of friends, there's always one person who draws everyone together. For Kappa Sigma Fraternity brothers at Northwestern from 1988 to 1992, Marcus Lowes (MSJ93) was that guy.

Lowes, a Greenville, Ind., native, loved Houston's basketball, but also rooted for the Los Angeles Dodgers — although no one knew why. He had a very sense-humor: a penchant for lively debate and a passion for sports that powered his magnetic personality. But it was his universal acceptance of others that drew people to him most.

“Once you became friends with Marcus, you stayed friends with Marcus,” says Brian Ullery, Lowes’ former roommate. “As a person, he tended to be the epicenter for everybody.”

Fifteen years after his passing from gastric cancer at age 28, Lowes’ legacy still resonates with those who loved him and want his legacy to live on in perpetuity.

The Marcus J. Lowes Memorial Scholarship, established by his friends and fraternity brothers as an endowed gift, will be awarded annually to a Medill graduate journalism student who shares Lowes’ passion for sports journalism.

Lowes, who worked as an online sports copy editor at the Chicago Tribune, loved writing. Ullery says that was one reason why his friends chose Medill for the scholarship.

“People who receive the scholarship will never know Marcus, but that’s not the point of it,” says Kevin Vedder, who joined Ullery on the board that spearheaded the scholarship effort. “You do this as a way of remembering someone who meant something to you. I think there’s a happiness among a lot of people that someone’s going to benefit from him.”

In fact, someone already has.

Nikitta Foston (MSJ14), who is specializing in video/broadcast at Medill, is the scholarship’s inaugural recipient.

“To be awarded this in his name is an amazing tribute. Marcus’s is a powerful story, a tale of life cut too short. I hope I do his legacy justice through my reporting.”

NIKITTA FOSTON
Recipient of Marcus J. Lowes Scholarship

Recruit more talented students, just as Lowes helped them achieve theirs.

Marcus crystallized our lives,” Ullery says. “We owe him so much.”

“The generosity of the Lowes scholarship affords more talented students the chance to attend Medill. Director of Development Jamie Strait (BS88) says, “All of us at Medill are really grateful that they’re choosing to honor their friend in this way.”

Ultimately, Vedder and Ullery say that the hope of the scholarship helps students achieve their goals, just as Lowes helped them achieve theirs.

The 2013 McAllister Fellowship presentations were given in October and November by Matthew Weinstock, assistant managing editor of Hospitals and Health Networks (Top Editor presentation) and Don Pazzour, CEO of Access Intelligence (Top Manager presentation). McAllister fellows are awarded to bring business-to-business media leaders to Medill to advise classes and speak on the state of the B2B industry.

Medill was involved with Social Media Week — a biannual global series of events — for the second consecutive year. Communications and Social Media Manager Marc Zarefsky (BS10) spoke on a panel about “Building (and managing) a killer social media team: college edition,” Professor Ed Malthouse and Research Associate Su Jung Kim discussed “How negative is negative word-of-mouth?” and IMC graduate students joined ONE.org CMO Jaff Davidsort for a presentation titled “Not Social Media, Social Action.”

Research from IMC’s Speigel Research Initiative was featured in an October article in Fast Company magazine about turning negative word-of-mouth into positive promotion. The research examined the Air Miles Reward Program, operated by LoyaltyOne, and how social media can aid in engaging customers who post negative comments.

Medill launched a new website on Sept. 13, which includes new features such as action navigation at the bottom of every page with links to frequently used sections, a bold main page with larger images and a more comprehensive main navigation bar.

To be awarded this in his name is an amazing tribute. Marcus’s is a powerful story, a tale of life cut too short. I hope I do his legacy justice through my reporting.

BETH GERACI IS A CLEVELAND-BASED EDITOR WHOSE PASSION FOR STORYTELLING HAS TAKEN HER EVERYWHERE FROM CHICAGO TO INDIA.

By Beth Geraci (MSJ98)

MEDILL NEWS

To be awarded this in his name is an amazing tribute. Marcus’s is a powerful story, a tale of life cut too short. I hope I do his legacy justice through my reporting.

BETH GERACI

MEDILL NEWS

By Deborah Ziff (MSJ06)

WHITAKER PROMOTED TO FULL PROFESSOR

Throughout the course of his career, Charles Whitaker has sailed the Caribbean with Morgan Freeman, delved into the weird and wild of Louisville, followed Jesse Jackson on the presidential campaign trail and covered the installation of the first black members in the British Parliament.

Whitaker was recently promoted to full professor in recognition of more than 30 years of teaching at Medill, as well as his professional achievements and public service.

A native Chicagoan, Whitaker got the journalism itch when his fourth-grade teacher encouraged his writing. Around the same time, he read a story in Ebony magazine about jazz musician Duke Ellington’s appearance at the White House.

“After picking up that story, I thought, ‘people go out and get to do cool stories like this.’

From then on, he had a singular focus on journalism: he wrote a home-printed newspaper about his South Shore neighborhood, received undergraduate and graduate degrees from Medill (BSJ80, MSJ81), and worked after college at the Miami Herald and Louisville Times.

In 1986 he got a job at the publication that first inspired him: Ebony magazine. While an editor there, he covered stories on four continents, including independence celebrations in Namibia, the lives of black people in Brazil and a fashion designer who took Paris by storm, to name a few.

Whitaker came back to Medill — he had been on faculty in the 1990s — in April 2002, to run the Academy for Alternative Journalism, a program to recruit and identify talented young writers for the 124 publications of the then-called Association for Alternative Journalism. He also is a doctoral candidate in Human Development and Social Policy.

Whitaker teaches courses in magazine writing and editing and recently co-authored a textbook called “Magazine Writing,” which is scheduled to come out in early 2014. He also is a doctoral candidate in Human Development and Social Policy.

CHARLES WHITAKER

A native Chicagoan, Whitaker got the journalism itch when his fourth-grade teacher encouraged his writing.
A GAME FOR CONSUMING NEWS

By Erin Golden (MSJ08)

A game created by Medill associate professor Jeremy Gilbert is encouraging students to consume news in an interactive way.

Interim Associate Dean Jack Doppelt was selected in November as an Open Society Fellow to work with Al-Quds University in Ramallah to develop a journalism curriculum with a focus on in-depth storytelling.

Josh Meyer, lecturer and director of education and outreach at the National Security Journalism Initiative, was named an Ochberg Fellow by the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia University. The Ochberg Fellowships were established in 1999 for journalists seeking to deepen their reporting of traumatic events.

Professor Craig Duff presented "The Future of Photography Editing" on Nov. 8 as part of a photography series at the Chicago Photography Center.

Knight Lab Executive Director Miranda Mulligan and Director of Software Engineering Joe Germuska participated in the Medill Faculty Colloquium series on Nov. 4. They discussed the Knight Lab’s current work and the intersection of technology and journalism.

Associate Professor Jeremy Gilbert and Knight Lab Executive Director Miranda Mulligan discussed the Knight Lab and design-thinking at Chicago Ideas Week. Both are working with Medill undergraduates and Smart Media Creative to build the prototype application.

"I don’t really believe that listening or watching or reading about sports is less beneficial than reading about local government," he says. "But I do think that when people say, 'I don’t have time to keep up with local news,' what they really mean is, 'I’m not choosing to spend time keeping up with local news.'" Gilbert figures a little competition can’t hurt.

When you report more media use on Headliner, you’ll pick up badges — and bragging rights over your friends. When you factor in the social aspect of those badges, it might make you pay attention to the kind of news you are not regularly getting," says Gilbert, who was recently promoted to associate professor.

This fall, he tested Headliner in several Medill classes and plans to use the students’ experiences to tweak the app for a full roll out in early 2014.

"I don’t necessarily want to change the kind of news you read just to change it," he says. "I want to change it because just about everyone consuming news falls into a rut."

Editors’ note: Congratulations to Jeremy Gilbert, who joined National Geographic as Director of Digital Operations in January.
Medill’s fourth annual talentQ Exposition was held on Nov. 20 and was the culmination of more than 20 events held this fall that featured guest speakers from leading innovative companies like Pizza Hut, Nielsen, Leo Burnett and Google.

The exposition featured a keynote from Keith Reinhard, chairman emeritus of DDB Worldwide, and a panel discussion about “Who Needs Creativity?” The panel featured Mary Baglivo (MSJ81), vice president for global marketing and chief marketing officer at Northwestern University; Jimmy de Castro, president and general manager of WGN-AM 720; John Kenny, executive vice president and group director of strategic planning at Draftfcb Chicago; Tom O’Keefe, founder/chief executive officer at O’Keefe Reinhard & Paul and Colleen Whitney, senior vice president media at Digitas Chicago & San Francisco. The panel was moderated by Dan Fietsam (MSA88), chief creative officer at EnergyBBDO.

Clockwise from top: Tom O’Keefe speaks on the “Who Needs Creativity?” panel; keynote speaker Keith Reinhard; talentQ organizers (L to R) Romeeta Sukhtankar, Tori Ayres Oman, Lisa Hu (all IMC13) and Lecturer Marty Kohr; and Medill Dean Brad Hamm.
CLUB EVENTS

FEB. 27
MedillTalks: Where Great Ideas Take the Lede
Hear nine Medill faculty members give 10-minute talks on “The Best Ideas in Journalism.”
6-8 p.m. McCormick Tribune Center Forum

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.


The New York Times writers C.J. Chivers and Ben Hubbard discussed their award-winning stories on the conflict in Syria and were awarded the 2012 Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism on Nov. 14. Both reported from Syria under extremely dangerous circumstances, with Hubbard reporting for the Associated Press at the time.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.


The New York Times writers C.J. Chivers and Ben Hubbard discussed their award-winning stories on the conflict in Syria and were awarded the 2012 Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism on Nov. 14. Both reported from Syria under extremely dangerous circumstances, with Hubbard reporting for the Associated Press at the time.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.


The New York Times writers C.J. Chivers and Ben Hubbard discussed their award-winning stories on the conflict in Syria and were awarded the 2012 Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism on Nov. 14. Both reported from Syria under extremely dangerous circumstances, with Hubbard reporting for the Associated Press at the time.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.


The New York Times writers C.J. Chivers and Ben Hubbard discussed their award-winning stories on the conflict in Syria and were awarded the 2012 Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism on Nov. 14. Both reported from Syria under extremely dangerous circumstances, with Hubbard reporting for the Associated Press at the time.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.


The New York Times writers C.J. Chivers and Ben Hubbard discussed their award-winning stories on the conflict in Syria and were awarded the 2012 Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism on Nov. 14. Both reported from Syria under extremely dangerous circumstances, with Hubbard reporting for the Associated Press at the time.

Martha Raddatz, ABC News chief global affairs correspondent and moderator of the 2012 Vice Presidential Candidate Debate, spoke on Oct. 17 as the 2013 Minow Visiting Professor in Communications.

Hugo Balta, president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and coordinating producer at ESPN, spoke on Oct. 11 about “Understanding the Latino Community.”

On Oct. 9, Northwestern Law School’s Center on Wrongful Convictions and the Medill Justice Project sponsored a screening of “Scenes of a Crime,” a true-crime documentary that explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York. A Q&A session followed the screening.

Dean Brad Hamm hosted alumni and spoke about the future of Medill on Oct. 4 at the annual Dean’s Reception as part of Northwestern Homecoming Weekend.
DANIEL ROTH (BSJ’95) IS HELPING MAKE LINKEDIN A DESTINATION FOR COMPELLING CONTENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD.

THE BUSINESS OF CONTENT

STORY BY MATT PAOLELLI (BSJ’05, MSJ’06) PHOTOS BY ARMANDO SANCHEZ
BIG, HAIRY, AUDACIOUS GOALS.

THAT’S HOW STAFF AT LINKEDIN REFER TO THE EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS THEY ARE WORKING ON TO ADVANCE THE MISSION OF THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE AND GROW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NEW FEATURES FOR ITS 259 MILLION MEMBERS. AT ITS WORST, A BHAG IS THE NEXT BIG THING THAT NEVER QUITE LIVED UP TO ITS POTENTIAL. BUT AT ITS BEST, A BHAG IS AN UNCONVENTIONAL CALCULATED RISK THAT BREAKS NEW GROUND AND LEADS TO SUCCESS.

Daniel Roth (BSJ95) should know. As executive editor of LinkedIn, he has overseen two successful BHAGs that have helped propel the social network into the uncharted territory of content creation and customized content delivery as a part of LinkedIn’s broader content strategy.

Pulse (formerly known as LinkedIn Today), a newsfeed of pertinent links based on LinkedIn users’ profile information and other data gathered by the site, provides professionals with the top stories of the day in their chosen industry and other relevant links. An algorithm and Roth’s team of editors select the stories and links they believe business people would be interested in reading when visiting LinkedIn.

Another new feature — Influencers — is a series of original blog posts by more than 200 leaders representing a variety of industries, careers and experiences, from Richard Branson to President Barack Obama to Meg Whitman. Users can follow the influencers to receive their latest missives on management, leadership, career development and other thought-provoking topics.

While attempts at original content creation by many social networking sites have met with little success, Roth says it’s a natural fit for LinkedIn.

“People come to LinkedIn because they’re thinking about work or jobs or what’s going on in the business world,” he says. “News is a key component of that. You need to know who is changing jobs and what companies are buying other companies.”

But how did Roth, who spent more than 20 years as a business and technology writer and editor at publications, including Fortune, Forbes and Wired, land such an unconventional role at LinkedIn? In a way, his career has been a successful BHAG of its own, with Roth gamboling on promising professional moves that positioned him for uninterrupted editorial success in the competitive magazine industry.

“I found great mentors, especially in the early part of my career, and that really helped me out,” he says. “During the ‘dot-com’ boom, there were many opportunities that I had to leave and join startups that are now long gone, but I had mentors who told me that I was being a complete idiot, and people at work who helped me think through what I still needed to learn and what I didn’t know.”

With a front row seat covering the volatile boom and bust of the tech industry and the economy, Roth learned enough to feel confident about making a switch when LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner invited him to join the site’s new content creation team in the summer of 2011.

“This was a technology company that was pushing into content at the same time that all the content companies were pushing into technology,” Roth says. “I knew I could learn a lot by being at LinkedIn and seeing how a tech company works, and I could help them from the media side.”

Roth’s desire to stay well-rounded and seek out expertise beyond writing and reporting has served him well throughout his career. His love for journalism began early, when he enrolled at Northwestern University and took classes in related fields that piqued his interest.

Northwestern is a family tradition for Roth, whose parents, grandfather and several aunts and uncles all attended the university. Even his wife, Lisa (MSJ00), earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Northwestern. Roth says his familiarity with the school, combined with his Chernow experience, led him to Medill, where he gained the reporting foundation that would support him at every stage of his career.

“I learned how to get people to talk to me, how to not be afraid to approach anyone and how to ask the right questions,” he says. “The kind of fearlessness and confidence that Medill pushes its students to have is really important.”

But Roth says his successful career came from “not being a journalist full time” while at Northwestern. He minored in linguistics and economics, wrote on-and-off for The Daily Northwestern and took classes in related fields that piqued his interest.

“Medill was essential in terms of creating building blocks, but everything else helped inform the world,” Roth says. “I realized in my sophomore year that what I really wanted to do was business journalism, so I spent more time focused on learning economics and sociology and anything else that felt would prepare me for being able to cover the business world.”

Upon graduation, Roth applied to “every business weekly in the country” and took a reporting job at the Triangle Business Journal in Raleigh, N.C., where he began to hone his craft as a business reporter and also discovered a new angle that would become a dominant feature of the rest of his career: technology.

“The Internet boom was just starting, and there was a lot of tech happening in Research Triangle Park, so I started covering that,” Roth says. “I had my own column — Tech Talk with Dan Roth — which was not very popular, but it was a good start, and I learned how to develop a voice in my writing.”

After nine months in Raleigh, Roth’s work quickly got noticed, as he applied for jobs and interviewed at both Forbes and the Wall Street Journal. Roth took the first of many career leaps by moving to New York to be a fact-checker and writer at Forbes. The magazine’s fact-checking program set up often-tense showdowns between the reporters and fact-checkers, who would together dissect the story to prove or disprove everything that the reporter had written.

“The great part of it was that I got to see what it took to do major feature stories,” Roth says. “The reporters would walk you through their sources and you would see how they progressed from one source to another and how they formed an argument.”

Roth continued to write about the early days of the tech industry for Forbes, but also branched out to cover the Forbes 400.

“I would go on these reporting trips where I would be sent to a city and just told to find all the richest people there.” Roth says. “I did a cover story on the world’s largest hog farmer, whom we put on the 400, so I learned how to value hog farms. Going from
When his editor joined Fortune, Roth also made the switch, and spent much a decade editing and writing stories on everything from the founding of Skype to Donald Trump’s “The Apprentice” to the early days of China’s tech industry.

“I got to see companies on their way up and on their way down, and wrote some stories that I’m really proud of,” Roth says. “As a writer, I learned a lot about my strengths and weaknesses, and as an editor, I learned to spot holes in stories and realize what reporters are writing about.”

Roth’s next career move came in 2006, when he again followed one of his editors to another publication. Jim Impoco, now the editor-in-chief of Newsweek, was tasked with starting Portfolio for Condé Nast, and he recruited Roth as the publication’s first writer at Portfolio. He valued Roth for his “dazzlingly deep understanding of the technology world and great storytelling skills.”

“Those two seldom come in the same package,” Impoco says. “All I can say is that I made more enemies at my former haunt than I lost friends at my new one.”

Another wakeup call came in the form of a feature Roth wrote on Demand Media, the company behind content-heavy and pay for pennies, and I realized that this industry is changing. I left and wrote some stories that I’m really proud of,” Roth says. “As a writer, I learned a lot about my strengths and weaknesses, and as an editor, I learned to spot holes in stories and realize what reporters are writing about.”

Roth seized an opportunity to return to Fortune to reboot its previously shuttered website. The role gave him experience managing a digital staff, working with online project managers, testing sites and developing new technology, and ensuring that content worked for the Web.

“It was a huge opportunity for me to come back to a magazine I loved with a lot of former colleagues who I got along with really well for a totally new learning experience building a digital property,” he says. “I found a whole new way of thinking about story generating and writing.”

Even more fortuitously, the job also brought him in contact with LinkedIn, where he now oversees the editorial team that works in tandem with LinkedIn’s algorithm to surface the right content to the right professionals at the right time via the LinkedIn Influencers program and Pulse. So far, LinkedIn’s experimental B2B approaches have garnered clicks and return visitors under Roth’s watch, and colleagues say he is a steady hand, even behind a still-evolving wheel.

“His truly unbeatable combination is that he’s hugely talented without a huge ego that gets in the way,” Impoco says. “Watching him turn into a first-rate manager has been fun. We knew he was a good writer and reporter, but running stuff is different. He’s proved himself to be quite good at it.”

John Abell previously worked with Roth at Wired and now reports to him as a senior editor at LinkedIn.

“I’m learning great things about managing people and processes from him,” Abell says. “He’s a natural, perhaps because he was tempered for so much of his career by being the reporter, and not the boss. Some people don’t transition well. He is acing it.”

Under Roth’s leadership, LinkedIn’s editorial innovations are offering a new model for how to generate appealing content and engage a community of readers to keep coming back for more. The average Influencers post gets 59,000 views and 700 comments, Roth says, and because users must respond under their professional identity on the site, it avoids the trolling and off-topic lame wars that usually plague online comment sections.

“Four for a lot of pieces, the comments are more interesting than the original piece, which is a great thing to have happen,” Roth says. “What we really care about is bringing people back every day.”

“Journalism will evolve into a profession that understands that readers are also contributors,” he says. “How do you get them involved in your stories? You need to ask the right questions to get the people who have the answers to give the answers.”

— DANIEL ROTH

On the surface, one of America’s most popular destinations is filled with man-made glitz and glamour. But the real Las Vegas is something else — a town surrounded by breathtaking natural wonders and resilient people recovering from the recession. “Living here, you see that Las Vegas is more than just The Strip. There’s a whole other life outside of there,” Paul Takahashi (BSJ10, MSJ10) says. “Sin City” is home to Takahashi and three other Medill grads who spoke to Elliott Smith (BSJ97) about their careers and life in this desert oasis.
DAVE LOCKETT  |  BSJ89
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

HOW HAVE YOU HELPED CHANGE THE PERCEPTION OF THE UFC OVER THE YEARS? The UFC is a company that is growing more rapidly than any other in the sports industry and this challenge was perfect for my interests. We just finished our 20th anniversary, and we’ve been able to educate people and change the minds of many in the sports world and throughout the country in their views of mixed martial arts and the UFC.

YOU WORK FOR A COLORFUL, OUTSPOKEN BOSS (DANA WHITE). HOW DO YOU KEEP HIM ON MESSAGE? I don’t tell him what to say. He is one of the most savvy business minds in the sports industry. He’s grown this sport the same way the forefathers of the NFL and MLB did for their leagues. It’s a tremendous learning opportunity for me because he understands the fight business and the fans. There’s a lot that people can learn from him.

HOW CAN MEDILL STUDENTS GET AHEAD IN THE CUTTHROAT WORLD OF SPORTS PR AND COMMUNICATION? Be aggressive. Learn as much as you can and everything you can. Understand that you’re going to start small and not make a lot of money. You have to understand, just because you have an advanced degree, it doesn’t mean you’ll start at the top. Everybody wants to be involved in sports, but you need to find a way to differentiate yourself from the competition.

IS LAS VEGAS A GREAT SPORTS TOWN? It’s truly the ultimate big-event town. People like big events, and it’s exciting to be part of the organization that puts on the biggest events in Las Vegas. When people come to the city, they are looking to see something special, and there’s a lot to do, whether you’re on The Strip or beyond.

REBECCA THEIM  |  BSJ84, IMC95
CONTENT MANAGER
R&R PARTNERS/AUTHOR

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL? I am a content manager for R&R Partners, who are the creators of one of the most famous advertising campaigns in American history, the “What Happens in Vegas, Stays in Vegas” campaign. I do just about anything anyone needs in the content realm, from new business development, writing pitches, crafting RFIs, blogging on the website and executive internal communications.

HOW DIFFICULT WAS IT TO WRITE A BOOK ABOUT A NEW ORLEANS NEWSPAPER (“HELL AND HIGH WATER”) FROM LAS VEGAS? I was amazed at how much could be accomplished through social media. The story of the Times-Picayune really resonated with me personally, and I got involved in an activist role. People were angered and dismayed, and so the book was a natural thing. Things just kept happening, and I was literally continuing to revise the manuscript a week before it went to print.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR MEDILL STUDENTS? When I graduated from Medill, you did one of two things—99 percent went out and got a newspaper job and less than a handful did the broadcast sequence. There were not really any other options. But you don’t have to do that anymore. Everybody needs good content and good storytellers.

LAS VEGAS AND NEW ORLEANS ARE TWO PARTY CITIES—HOW ARE THEY SIMILAR? In many ways they couldn’t be more different. You’re talking about a 300-year-old city versus a less than a 100-year-old city, but both are great hospitality towns. They want you to get lost in the revelry and live the underlying theme of “what happens here, stays here.” It’s adult freedom. As long as you haven’t gotten caught on Google, but here’s the secret: The root of all great SEO is graphs and charts, create interactive material for stories and shoot my own photographs. As newsrooms get cut and the industry goes through tumult, editors and managers are looking toward reporters who are jack-of-all-trades, and Medill really instilled that sense.

PAUL TAKAHASHI  |  BSJ10, MSJ10
EDUCATION REPORTER
LAS VEGAS SUN

WHAT’S BEEN YOUR FAVORITE STORY? I did a series two years ago called The Turnaround, and it was interesting because we followed three high schools that were the lowest-performing in the district, and because Nevada is one of the lowest-performing states in the nation, these were some of the poorest schools in the country. I spent about a year with principals, staff and students, looking at what was being done to turn the schools around. The issues these kids faced even just getting to school was very eye-opening.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST THING MEDILL TAUGHT YOU? How to be versatile and how to use any medium to tell the story in the best way possible. I write, compile information for graphs and charts, create interactive material for stories and shoot my own photographs. As newsrooms get cut and the industry goes through tumult, editors and managers are looking toward reporters who are jack-of-all-trades, and Medill really instilled that sense.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF LAS VEGAS? The view that most people get from visiting is literally a four-mile street. It’s a city of two million people, but it’s largely overshadowed by the notion of “Sin City.” There are all the little quirks that people don’t realize, like the city was founded by Mormons. We have a lot of influences here, a lot of religions.

SO IS IT TRUE THAT MOST RESIDENTS DON’T GO TO CASINOS? Yeah, definitely. You understand it’s the economic driver of the city and there’s a lot of respect for those who go, but with the congestion and the tourists, we tend to avoid it. I can count on two hands when I’ve been, and sometimes, it’s been for stories.

DAN MICHALSKI  |  BSJ94
FOUNDER/EDITOR
Pokerati.com

HOW HAVE YOU COVERED THE POKER BOOM AND BUST? I was able to be a little different by focusing on the law and politics of it all. I was one of the select few who were able to predict poker’s “Black Friday” (when the U.S. government shut down online poker sites). I saw it coming, and it was simply a matter of being a good journalist—asking the right questions, reading documents and seeing there clearly was an investigation going on. It’s a fascinating little world, one that taps into law, politics, the excitement of sports and personality.

IS IT HARD TO LIVE IN VEGAS WITH THE TEMPTATION OF GAMBLING? It’s awesome to live in Vegas because you get to see everyone that comes into town, but you quickly realize that the partying and gambling they want to do is a path to ruin.

WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU CARRIED WITH YOU FROM MEDILL? Aside from the journalism itself, the one place it has really played out is in Search Engine Optimization (SEO). It’s amazing what people put into trying to manipulate Google, but here’s the secret: The root of all great SEO is journalism 101. It’s the foundation of what we learned at Medill: good strong leads, identifying sources correctly, finding where the stories are.

WHAT’S YOUR BEST BAD BEAT STORY? I’m almost embarrassed to admit, I never quite figured out how to become a winning poker player. You realize how difficult it is to do that. I spent so much time being involved in the poker industry. I kind of forgot how to play at a top level.

AND HIGH WATER”) FROM LAS VEGAS?

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST THING MEDILL TAUGHT YOU? How to be versatile and how to use any medium to tell the story in the best way possible. I write, compile information for graphs and charts, create interactive material for stories and shoot my own photographs. As newsrooms get cut and the industry goes through tumult, editors and managers are looking toward reporters who are jack-of-all-trades, and Medill really instilled that sense.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF LAS VEGAS? The view that most people get from visiting is literally a four-mile street. It’s a city of two million people, but it’s largely overshadowed by the notion of “Sin City.” There are all the little quirks that people don’t realize, like the city was founded by Mormons. We have a lot of influences here, a lot of religions.

SO IS IT TRUE THAT MOST RESIDENTS DON’T GO TO CASINOS? Yeah, definitely. You understand it’s the economic driver of the city and there’s a lot of respect for those who go, but with the congestion and the tourists, we tend to avoid it. I can count on two hands when I’ve been, and sometimes, it’s been for stories.

DAN MICHALSKI  |  BSJ94
FOUNDER/EDITOR
Pokerati.com

HOW HAVE YOU COVERED THE POKER BOOM AND BUST? I was able to be a little different by focusing on the law and politics of it all. I was one of the select few who were able to predict poker’s “Black Friday” (when the U.S. government shut down online poker sites). I saw it coming, and it was simply a matter of being a good journalist—asking the right questions, reading documents and seeing there clearly was an investigation going on. It’s a fascinating little world, one that taps into law, politics, the excitement of sports and personality.

IS IT HARD TO LIVE IN VEGAS WITH THE TEMPTATION OF GAMBLING? It’s awesome to live in Vegas because you get to see everyone that comes into town, but you quickly realize that the partying and gambling they want to do is a path to ruin.

WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU CARRIED WITH YOU FROM MEDILL? Aside from the journalism itself, the one place it has really played out is in Search Engine Optimization (SEO). It’s amazing what people put into trying to manipulate Google, but here’s the secret: The root of all great SEO is journalism 101. It’s the foundation of what we learned at Medill: good strong leads, identifying sources correctly, finding where the stories are.

WHAT’S YOUR BEST BAD BEAT STORY? I’m almost embarrassed to admit, I never quite figured out how to become a winning poker player. You realize how difficult it is to do that. I spent so much time being involved in the poker industry. I kind of forgot how to play at a top level.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST THING MEDILL TAUGHT YOU? How to be versatile and how to use any medium to tell the story in the best way possible. I write, compile information for graphs and charts, create interactive material for stories and shoot my own photographs. As newsrooms get cut and the industry goes through tumult, editors and managers are looking toward reporters who are jack-of-all-trades, and Medill really instilled that sense.

WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF LAS VEGAS? The view that most people get from visiting is literally a four-mile street. It’s a city of two million people, but it’s largely overshadowed by the notion of “Sin City.” There are all the little quirks that people don’t realize, like the city was founded by Mormons. We have a lot of influences here, a lot of religions.

SO IS IT TRUE THAT MOST RESIDENTS DON’T GO TO CASINOS? Yeah, definitely. You understand it’s the economic driver of the city and there’s a lot of respect for those who go, but with the congestion and the tourists, we tend to avoid it. I can count on two hands when I’ve been, and sometimes, it’s been for stories.
ESPN’S MIKE GREENBERG (BS’89) BROUGHT HIS POPULAR “MIKE & MIKE” SPORTS TALK SHOW TO CAMPUS FOR A LIVE BROADCAST FROM DEERING MEADOW. WE TAGGED ALONG FOR THE DAY.

5:21 A.M., Mike Greenberg, left, and Mike Golic talk about the day’s biggest sports news and preview Northwestern’s Homecoming matchup against Ohio State.
It is not often that college students will willingly wake up before the sun rises and stand for more than four hours, but that is just what happened on Friday, Oct. 4, as ESPN’s Mike Greenberg (BSJ89) brought his popular “Mike & Mike” sports talk show to campus for a live broadcast from Deering Meadow. Greenberg and co-host Mike Golic were greeted by dozens of students before the show began taping at 5 a.m., and that number quickly swelled into the hundreds as the broadcast aired until 9 a.m.

The on-campus broadcast was part of the third annual ESPN Audio Fall Football Tour, but it was just one event on a jam-packed day for Greenberg, who also served as grand marshal for the Northwestern Homecoming parade that evening. In between, he made a guest appearance on local ESPN Radio, talked with more than 125 Medill students and faculty and sat on an alumni panel for a discussion moderated by University President Morton Schapiro.

Greenberg made sure to credit Medill for helping him get where he is professionally. As he said during his talk to Medill students, “I’ve written three books, and in the author’s bio I only put three things: I put that I work at ESPN, I put the names of my wife and my kids, and I put that I am a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.”
JUMPING INTO THE WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Kimberly Lee (BSJ13, IMC-Cert13) and Katie Zhu (BSJ13) are two recent graduates who are working at up-and-coming social media organizations in the San Francisco area. Lee works at WeChat, which has high popularity globally but is relatively new to the United States, while Zhu is at Medium, a new blogging platform created by two of Twitter’s co-founders. Lee and Zhu spoke with Marc Zarefsky (BSJ07) about what makes their companies unique, their favorite Medill memories and their advice to current students.

Kimberly Lee
Marketing Communications Specialist for WeChat US

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR COMPANY?
WeChat has more than 400 million users worldwide and is the number one social communication app in many countries. In the U.S., WeChat is relatively new. We have a small but growing team that operates essentially like a start up.

HOW DOES YOUR COMPANY DIFFER FROM OTHER POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORKS?
It’s designed uniquely for mobile, so the app easily adapts to your everyday communication needs and provides a more personal way to connect with friends. It is easier to use because it is all-in-one platform that includes SMS, Instagram, Skype and more.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MEDILL EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT?
I served as all council co-chair of the Medill Undergraduate Student Advisory Council (MUSAC) and my last year I planned Medill’s first digital storytelling summit, Media Rewired. We were all passionate about creating an event where students could gain new storytelling tools to complement their classroom learning.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO CURRENT MEDILL STUDENTS?
If you want to make something happen, just go for it. That applies to startups and pretty much everything else in life.

Katie Zhu
Marketing Communications Specialist for WeChat US

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR COMPANY?
If you want to write on the Internet but don’t want to have a blog, Medium is the place for you to share your story. We provide users with a collaborative writing experience, and Medium helps you find the audience for what you have to say.

HOW DOES YOUR COMPANY DIFFER FROM OTHER POPULAR SOCIAL NETWORKS?
Medium is a better place to read and write on the web. It’s different from the quick updates you get on Twitter or Facebook – Medium content is typically longer. We allow users to focus on the words and not have to worry about the rest.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MEDILL EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT?
I received an Eric Lund Global Research and Reporting grant my sophomore year with one of my very good friends, Emily Chow (BSJ12). We traveled to Helsinki for a week and got to work on an independent project, which was an amazing and eye-opening experience.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO CURRENT MEDILL STUDENTS?
Whether your thing is words, photography, just videos, or code, put your work out there as much as possible.

Indianapolis Star publisher Karen Crotchfelt (BSJ92) is leading the Gannett-owned paper past a season of tumultuous cutbacks into new territory, laying out what could be a roadmap of survival for the metro daily in a digital world.

Story by Adam Wren (MSJ16) • Photos by Amando Sanchez
Perhaps Crotchfelt (BSJ’92) smiles because what’s unfolding on the stage is entertaining. During the course of the roughly hour-long show, McAfee gamely hazes and interviews The Star sports columnist Bob Kravitz, chugs a gallon of chocolate milk and shows a video of himself dressed as Santa, racing Indy Car drivers on tricycles on a downtown street.

Perhaps she’s smiling because the event has packed the place, for the 12th weekly installment, drawing a standing-room only audience. And those gathered are much younger than your typical print newspaper subscriber: college students in Colts jerseys, young professionals in ties.

“When you can pack a room on a Tuesday night in the middle of December, it’s pretty exciting,” Crotchfelt says. “Whenever you can pack a room that includes launching a web sports show that’s building an audience. And those gathered are much younger than your typical print newspaper subscriber: college students in Colts jerseys, young professionals in ties.

Crotchfelt took the reins of The Star in December of 2010, amid dire times in the newspaper industry. Only months into her job, she had to lay off dozens of employees in the summer of 2011.

Since then, she’s reinvented the Gannett paper, an effort that includes launching a web sports show that’s building the paper’s audience (and increasing traffic to the paper’s site, IndyStar.com). This, all while managing to bulk up the paper’s audience (and increasing traffic to the paper’s site, IndyStar.com). This, all while managing to bulk up the paper’s audience (and increasing traffic to the paper’s site, IndyStar.com). This, all while managing to bulk up the paper’s audience (and increasing traffic to the paper’s site, IndyStar.com).

Crotchfelt never intended to work on the business side of journalism. When the Illinois native struck out for downtown Indianapolis, she interviewed a mother whose child was an early iteration of the Media Management Center. During her student, she worked for former Medill Dean John Lavine’s journalism school at Medill, it was to be a reporter. As a

Crotchfelt’s arrival.

That November, the guild staged a protest—the first since it was chartered in 1916—denouncing the continued cuts amid bonuses for Gannett’s management. At University Park near The Star’s downtown headquarters, on the street below Crotchfelt’s office, more than 100 members of the guild formed a picket line, chanting “Hey hey, ho ho, corporate greed has got to go.”

“That was the toughest thing I’ve had to do,” Crotchfelt says, recalling the summer 2011 layoffs. “It was tough being new to the market, and new to the people and figuring that out. Really, our approach was to be able to make the right decisions, so we could really try to move forward and add back staffing [in the future].”

Crotchfelt led a deep round of cuts in June, laying off 62 employees and eliminating 15 unfilled jobs, according to figures compiled by the Indianapolis Business Journal. Among those positions cut: 16 newsroom jobs, including 12 copy editors and a number of reporters. Since 2007, The Star had seen its newsroom slashed from 230 staffers to 136 that summer, according to IBJ.

In addition to the cuts, there were also furloughs for remaining staffers. In response, The Indianapolis Newspaper Guild bought billboards around town, one blasting this message: “You got LESS NEWS. We got PAY CUTS. The CEO got $17 million,” referring to a compensation package for then Gannett CEO and President Craig Dubow.

Perhaps she’s smiling because the event has packed the place, for the 12th weekly installment, drawing a standing-room only audience. And those gathered are much younger than your typical print newspaper subscriber: college students in Colts jerseys, young professionals in ties.

Crotchfelt led a deep round of cuts in June, laying off 62 employees and eliminating 15 unfilled jobs, according to figures compiled by the Indianapolis Business Journal. Among those positions cut: 16 newsroom jobs, including 12 copy editors and a number of reporters. Since 2007, The Star had seen its newsroom slashed from 230 staffers to 136 that summer, according to IBJ. In addition to the cuts, there were also furloughs for remaining staffers. In response, The Indianapolis Newspaper Guild bought billboards around town, one blasting this message: “You got LESS NEWS. We got PAY CUTS. The CEO got $17 million,” referring to a compensation package for then Gannett CEO and President Craig Dubow.

That November, the guild staged a protest—the first since it was chartered in 1916—denouncing the continued cuts amid bonuses for Gannett’s management. At University Park near The Star’s downtown headquarters, on the street below Crotchfelt’s office, more than 100 members of the guild formed a picket line, chanting “Hey hey, ho ho, corporate greed has got to go.”

“That was the toughest thing I’ve had to do,” Crotchfelt says, recalling the summer 2011 layoffs. “It was tough being new to the market, and new to the people and figuring that out. Really, our approach was to be able to make the right decisions, so we could really try to move forward and add back staffing [in the future].”
The bloodletting now behind her, Crotchfelt has begun an aggressive bid to remake the paper for a digital age. In September 2013, she introduced the paper’s first pay meter as part of what she calls a “full-access model.” Later that month, in a cost-cutting move, she announced plans to sell The Star’s iconic and sprawling headquarters at 307 N. Pennsylvania St. In 2013, she announced plans to occupy a former Nordstrom department store in Circle City Mall.

Tully says the move will keep the paper — literally and figuratively — at the center of Indianapolis, and praises Crotchfelt’s performance so far, despite the cuts. “I really feel that she’s come in with a vision and stabilized things,” Tully says. “And she’s taken a number of really significant steps that have given us breathing room to think. ‘OK, we’re not only cutting, we’re also making decisions for the future.’ ... At our newspaper, for the last couple of years, you can point to a number of things that have been done that are known for. Crotchfelt insists the paper is occupying a middle ground between entertaining readers and informing them. “Our watchdog work is what sets us apart,” she says. “It’s still the core of what we do.” The paper appears to actually have increased its investigative work in recent months, running investigations into the practices of the state’s public-private economic development agency and exposing level emails sent by a trustee of Indiana’s community college system, which led to the administrator’s resignation.

Meanwhile, Crotchfelt has charged Jeff Taylor, the paper’s Pulitzer Prize-winning editor she hired away from The Detroit Free Press in 2012, with bulking up the newsroom staff. “When I got here, we put an emphasis on putting more feet on the street — to create more content-gathering positions,” Taylor says. “[In the first few months] We added four news reporting positions, two feature reporting positions and a new position on our digital desk to do what we described as our version of a local ‘Drudge Report.’ ”

So far, Crotchfelt’s plan to revive the paper seems to be working. “One thing we are very clear on is our purpose, and that is to serve the people of Indy,” Crotchfelt says. “Could you imagine if there wasn’t a Star? If there wasn’t a Tribune in Chicago?”

“I still remain bullish on where we are headed,” Crotchfelt says. “I always say, ‘750,000 people engage with our content every week. There’s a business model in there.’ ”

The challenge, she says, is to find it. Back on the Tuesday night in December, as “The Pat McAfee Show” comes to a close, Crotchfelt flags down a waitress for the check. After squaring up, she looks across the room, surveying the crowd one last time. She’s encouraged by what she sees. “For a newspaper that’s more than 100 years old, and had done business the same way for 90 years, it’s a testimony of what we can do with creativity”.

— Karen Crotchfelt


didly ever after

When Molly Lipsitz (BSJo8) met Jason Methner (IMC09) at a mutual friend’s birthday party in September 2008, it wasn’t the stuff of fairy tales — or Internet sensations. • “I really wasn’t looking for someone to date who would become my husband,” says Lipsitz. “It wasn’t like, ‘I’m going to marry this guy! I just know it.’ Five years later, though, she agreed to do just that after Methner popped the question in a way that sent the Internet abuzz, with Time, MSN, The Huffington Post and Today.com all featuring stories about the unique proposal.

Story by Cynthia Wang (BSJ93) • Photos by Armando Sanchez
Their love story began two weeks after that first meeting. Methner learned more about Lipsitz and discovered she was an adventurous eater. He picked out a Ghanaian restaurant for their first date. Lipsitz appreciated that.

The pair talked. Got along. She liked his persistence. “I liked.” Methner says, “her standstillfulness.”

“Could you pick a better word?” Lipsitz asks.

“I liked that she was challenging,” Methner says without skipping a beat. “She took everything I said with a grain of salt and came from a position of defense, which I thought was really entertaining.”

Three years later, Lipsitz, along with her beloved stuffed animal, Bunny, moved into Methner’s home in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago.

“We obviously were serious,” Lipsitz says, “but I was still just in my early 20s and kind of figuring it all out.”

Methner, though, admits that on his end he had already focused on marriage.

“I don’t know if there was one single thing that made me sure,” he says, citing their attraction, chemistry, desire to raise a family and shared vision of a future together. “It was sure,” he says, citing their attraction, chemistry, desire to raise a family and shared vision of a future together. “It was

Lipsitz laughs and says, “We have constructive conversations!”

Because Methner had planned such a great first date, surely an ordinary proposal wouldn’t do. He enlisted two friends to help edit what would become their engagement tale depicted in a fairy-tale.

“Over the course of six to nine months, Methner says, he bought the ring, finalized the book, secured the Harriet Washington Library as the location for the proposal, hired Lipsitz’s friend Apauna Paul Jain to photograph her reaction, arranged for a friend of Lipsitz to call her for a manicure date the morning of the planned event just so Lipsitz’s fingers would be camera-ready and called Lipsitz’s parents for their blessing. He had also told Lipsitz two weeks prior that, on March 23, 2013, they would be meeting a family friend for lunch to celebrate the publication of her children’s book.

“Lipsitz is so attached to the library with a cacophony of lies that were snowballing upon themselves,” Methner says. “But eventually it all worked out.”

For Lipsitz, the frustrations of the day — running late, skipping a beat. “She took everything I said with a grain of salt and came from a position of defense, which I thought was really entertaining.”

The photo of the proposal were then posted on the Chicago Public Library Facebook page and soon, “A Hare-y Tale” became a viral sensation. Methner, director of strategic analytics at Draftfcb and Lipsitz, a digital manager at Weber and Thatch, say all the attention has been positive, although Methner says it can be revealing: “how surprised you are to find out that people know some of those intimate details about you.”

With their wedding scheduled for April 5, at Germania Place in Chicago, Methner and Lipsitz’s love story seems headed for a fairy-tale finish after all. But will there be any surprises in store? “I would never tell!” Lipsitz says. Now that would be the stuff of legend.
Karen DeCrow (BSJ59) participated in the “Come Talk with Great Women” program that was a part of the National Women’s Hall of Fame induction ceremony on October 16 and was inducted into the Hall in 2009.

Bill Ostendorf (BSJ76, MSJ80) led a series of four webinars for the Inland Press Association on “The New Newsroom” aimed at helping editors rethink their strategy and approach in the era of reduced resources and new pressures of 24/7, social-networked coverage. Ostendorf has led more than 1,000 workshops and webinars for reporters, editors, marketers, publishers and sales professionals in 23 countries. He has also led the redesign of more than 500 newspapers and magazines and more than 250 media-related web sites. Ostendorf and his wife, Frances (Jacyb), (BSJ76), a freelance copy editor, have lived in Seekonk, Mass., since 1987.

Diane Jacobs (MSJ82) was named Managing Attorney in the Office of the Texas Attorney General, Civil Medicaid Fraud Division. Jacobs is defensive discovery coordinator in prosecution of cases of civil fraud against the Texas Medicaid program.

Hagit Limor (BSJ82, MSJ83) joined WXIX-TV (Cincinnati, OH) as an Investigative Reporter in July 2013 and also is a Professor at the University of Cincinnati in the Electronic Media Division of the College of Communication and Information. He will continue in that role in addition to reporting. Hagit has also served as an Investigative Reporter at WCPO-TV (Cincinnati, OH) and as National President of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Maura Anne Kelly Lannan (MSJ94) and Bob Lannan of Potomac, Md., announce that their daughter, Margaret Mary (“Peggy”) Lannan, has been married on April 20, 2013 and their son, Richard joins his wife, Margaret, two sons and five grandsons.

Emory J. Mills (MSJ99) has taught speech communication at Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville for the past year and will also begin teaching at Carroll Community College in Westminster, Md. Also, he is enrolling this fall at University of Maryland College Park, where he is pursuing an M. Ed in Second Language Education and Culture along with K-12 certification in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

REPORTER PART OF PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING TEAM

South Florida Sun Sentinel reporter Sally Keestin (BSJ88) has made a career of looking at news events and showing readers meaningful patterns. In 2013, her investigation of speeding police in South Florida earned her the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, widely regarded as the most prestigious honor bestowed by the Pulitzer board. Keestin, who has been an investigative reporter at the Sun Sentinel since 1996, credited Medill training for the journalistic mindset that helped her figure out how to document the problem.

“Look for the bigger picture in any news event, and I think I learned that at NU,” she says. “Every editor I’ve had for 26 years has said Northwestern graduates are the best. We learn not just the basics of reporting, but also the critical thinking skills that take a story to the next level.”

Keestin and her colleague, John Maines, revealed that nearly 800 officers were regularly driving 90 to 120 mph on Florida highways, endangering other drivers, pedestrians and themselves. Once Keestin and Maines reported the widespread nature of the problem, police agencies took action, punishing speeding cops and developing systems to monitor police driving. A follow-up story showed that officers slowed down dramatically—an 84 percent drop in high-speed incidents compared to the same timeframe one year earlier.

“The series had a very positive impact on the community,” says Sun Sentinel Editor Howard Saltz. “It wasn’t just interesting. It wasn’t the biggest story I’ve done. It was something that helped her igure out how to document the problem. The roads are safer.”

Joe Fryer (BSJ00) is a correspondent for NBC News, based in Los Angeles, reporting for NBC Nightly News, Today Show and MSNBC. He previously worked for KHOU-TV in Houston, where in 2013 he won a National Headliner Award, Sigma Delta Chi’s Award, two regional Emmys and one regional Edward R. Murrow Award.

J.E. Samson (BSJ03) was promoted to Director of Digital Development for O+O, after being at the magazine for two years. Previously he was the Digital Editorial Director for Alloy Media + Marketing and the Online Director for Teen Vogue. Samson was recently selected by the fashion website Refinery29 as one of the top New York City-based Instagrammers to follow (@ejismamon).

Marc Zarefsky (BSJ07) and Emily Zarefsky welcomed their first child, Isabella Louise, on Nov. 29. Zarefsky is the Communications and Social Media Manager at Medill, and is also co-editor and managing editor of the Medill Magazine.

JOHN HOLLINGER JR.

John Hollinger Jr. (BSJ43), 90, died in October. Hollinger grew up in Evanston, Ill., and served in World War II. His wife, Ilene, was also a Northwestern alum. Hollinger started out writing for the California State Automobile Association and later was editor of Motorland Magazine. He later started the “Time for Travel” program that aired on KCBS radio. Hollinger also pursued music, working as a musician for much of his adult life playing in the horn section of big bands.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Ilene; his son, John, and three grandchildren.

GEORGE TIPSON WILSON

George Tipton Wilson (BSJ47), 92, died in May 2013. Born in Smithland, Ky., Wilson studied journalism at Murray State University and the University of Kentucky, leaving the latter to join the Army at the outbreak of World War II. Wilson was one of the first soldiers to work in the message center of the then new Pentagon building. He later worked in cryptography in General Douglas MacArthur’s Australian headquarters in Brisbane, Australia, for a month. He left Brisbane and was assigned to the Philippines. Returning from World War II, Wilson enrolled at Medill and continued his studies. He was the first student at Northwestern to attend under the GI Bill of Rights. While there he became sports editor of The Daily Northwestern. He worked as associate editor of The Miami News, then became executive vice president of advertising and public relations at Mitchum Company. Upon retirement, Wilson became a full-time freelance writer. His list of publications included Editor and Publisher Magazine, The World and The Memphis Business Journal, Aviation History Magazine, FFW Magazine, Mississippi Magazine, Tennessee Conservatorist, Southern Living, among others. In 2009, the Tennessee Writers Alliance voted Wilson Literary Legend of the Year.
1. Here Comes the Sun: A Young Family’s Journey through Cancer
   Brian Lucas (MSJ94)
   Lucas’ first book is a memoir that tells how he, his wife and their two young daughters traveled the roller coaster ride of recovery after his wife’s diagnosis with late-stage leukemia. Through chemo, radiation, and a bone marrow transplant, the book looks at the impact of a cancer battle and how one family persevered on a quest for a cure. It offers an honest look at what happens when an illness throws life off track and how a combination of science, love and serendipity can help make things right.

2. The New Democrats and the Return to Power
   Al From (BSJ65, MSJ66)
   In 1984, From led a small band of governors, U.S. senators, and members of Congress to organize the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). Their mission: to rescue the party from the political wilderness, redefine its message and, most importantly, win presidential elections. From explores the founding philosophy of the New Democrats, which became the model for resurgent center-left parties in Europe and throughout the democratic world.

3. Hail Mary: The 10-Step Playbook for Republican Recovery
   Ford O’Connell (MSJ06)
   With wit and wisdom, veteran GOP strategist Ford O’Connell pulls no punches in his debut book, offering a 10-step roadmap for revitalizing the Republican Party. Kicking off with “Ronald Reagan is Dead. Accept It.,” O’Connell tackles several controversial subjects, including gay marriage, immigration, and abortion, issues the GOP must internally rectify if it is to retake the White House in 2016.

4. The Creative Compass: Writing Your Way from Inspiration to Publication
   by Sierra Prasada (MSJ07) and Dan Millman
   The five universal stages of creativity presented in this book explain how to pursue ideas that you strongly connect with, observe what works for you and commit to it, work through inevitable doubt and anxiety, appreciate drafts as essential layers leading to quality work and mastery of craft and recognize the practice as a metaphor that will enrich your life. This book is useful for any writer, storyteller, artist or innovator.

5. Dear Mr. Knightley
   Katherine Reay (MC93)
   Growing up in the foster care system, Samantha Moore found her best friends in the works of Austen, Dickens, and the Bronte sisters. The problem is that she now relates to others more comfortably as Elizabeth Bennet and Jane Eyre than as herself. While pursuing a degree at Medill, Sam struggles to find her own voice and lay down those safe hiding places. Soon she begins to write her own story — by giving it to a complete stranger.

6. Autumns in the Garden
   Ira Berkow (MSJ64)
   Featuring 40 years of Knicks coverage from one of New York’s most popular sportswriters, these unforgettable stories from New York Times columnist Ira Berkow capture the spirit of the Knicks, from memories of Red Holzman and Earl Monroe to reflections on Carmelo Anthony and Jeremy Lin. As the Knicks celebrate the 40th anniversary of their 1973 NBA championship, this book enlightens fans on the entire colorful history of the franchise.

See more books written by alumni online at bit.ly/Medill-Keep-Reading

My students at @MedillSchool just rock. So inspiring.

@Locs_n_Laughs

Listened to and met the Editor-In-Chief of Bloomberg News today! Thanks for an incredible opportunity, @BloombergWay and @MedillSchool!

@Kim_Adams1