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Media Contact:
Alison Wintheiser
wintha87@uwosh.edu
(414) 813-9955

UWO 50th Anniversary Can Inspire High School Students to Pursue Careers in Journalism

OSHKOSH, WI, October 11, 2018 -- The UW-Oshkosh Department of Journalism's 50th Anniversary will welcome back notable national and local alumni to discuss modern media topics at a free event open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 19 in Sage Hall.

High school students can benefit from learning about contemporary media issues, such as the emergence of fake news, as well as exploring diverse career options in the field. Almost 50 speakers will share insights, including Jim VandeHei, co-founder of Politico and Axios; Pat Stiegman, Vice President/Editorial Director at ESPN; Brody Karmenzind, partner manager at Facebook; Paige Bonnano, associate writer/producer for Disney ABC Television; Mariah Haberman, host of Discover Wisconsin; and Cliff Christl, historian for the Green Bay Packers.

Students may choose from a dozen topics including politics, sports, entertainment, digital marketing, multimedia content development and international careers during morning pro talks, which allow for interaction with speakers. In the afternoon, six media panels will explore fake news, entrepreneurial work, digital storytelling, versatile media skills for branding, grasping the changes of social media and community journalism. A keynote will feature the nationally prominent VandeHei on the topic "Facts Matter: Inside My Wild Ride Through New Media with Politico in ObamaWorld and Axios in TrumpLand."

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH • 800 ALGOMA BLVD • OSHKOSH WI 54901-3512
(920) 424-1042 • FAX (920) 424-7146

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Dr. Sara Steffes Hansen, Department of Journalism chair, described the anniversary as a unique learning opportunity that will help high school students understand more about media and possible careers.

“What’s great about the 50th is that they can hear directly from award-winning journalists at national to local media, and hear about public relations work with sports teams, digital content development for tech jobs and advertising at Facebook or ad agencies,” Hansen said. “It’s all here for them to take in from almost 50 professionals in one day.”

Journalism classes provide students with great tools that they can apply to various aspects of everyday life. Matt Smith, journalism CAPP teacher at Fond du Lac High School, explained why it is so important for young students to enroll in journalism courses.

“I think one of the big takeaways from a journalism class would be a true appreciation for the power of communication and news dissemination. It can be so easy to be manipulated or harmed by bad information and yet such a powerful tool for good if done the right way,” Smith said.

The UW Oshkosh journalism department provides a focus on in-depth and hands-on learning experiences for students in multimedia journalism, public relations and advertising.

“Students learn from professors who publish nationally recognized research yet have professional backgrounds to help students apply their skills – they work directly through media and business projects, as well as in national competitions, to use these skills,” Hansen said. “They gain from one-on-one interactions that help build confidence and build relationships in our department and broader media community.”

The 50th Anniversary will take place in Sage Hall on the UWO Campus. While the event is free, RSVP’s are requested. To see the full schedule and RSVP for the event, go to <https://uwosh.edu/journalism/50th-reunion/>.



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The Department of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh was founded in 1968 within the College of Letters and Science and is nationally accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. The department offers three areas of study in multimedia journalism, public relations and advertising. Its mission is to create a vibrant, professional environment that teaches core journalism principles, encourages creativity, keeps pace with technology and provides hands-on experiences for students to step into dynamic media careers. In 2015 the department launched the first public relations major in the UW System, and in 2018 it created the multimedia journalism major. The department's points of pride include the graduation of 2,800 majors, 87 percent of students graduating with one or more internships and 88 percent of recent graduates landing a job in the field.

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