



In News Lab at MSU, journalism is alive and well



Host Madison Glassman introduces Patrick Ciccchetti (WMSC) for Montclair News Lab at Montclair State University. NEIL GRABOWSKY/FOR MONTCLAIR LOCAL

By GWEN OREL

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At Montclair State University, journalism is far from dying, it's evolving.

On a rainy day in the School of Communication and Media at Montclair State University, there's a flurry of activity in the control room and in Studio A, where "News Lab" is filming.

Guests wait to go on.

A producer, Professor Steve McCarthy, moves back and forth between rooms, informing the student anchors of the weekly news program that a package (pre-filmed section) is missing sound so to tape the intros and outros without it.

A technician asks if there's time to install a battery in a mic. There isn't. Then there is.

It's the third taping of the 15-minute news program, which airs on at MSU at

wiredjersey.com, and will be on TV 34.

The set is not just an old table rigged up as an anchor desk, but impressive with illuminated walls. "It's the set of the Larry Willmore show at Comedy Central," said Sabrina Araullo, a senior majoring in public relations. Everything is state of the art in the recently opened building. The television cameras are 4K.

At last Friday's taping, there was a package on Isadora Williams, an MSU student who skated for Brazil in the 2018 Olympics; a package on Black History month; a guest appearance by WMSC radio host Patrick Ciccihetti; and an interview with Paul Cell, MSU police chief.



Co-hosts Madison Glassman and Lataya Rothmiller introduce the next story on Montclair News Lab at Montclair State University. NEIL GRABOWSKY/FOR MONTCLAIR LOCAL

McCarthy gives Ciccihetti feedback after his segment: "Did you write your script? You probably tried to do too many things. Pick one or two things," he says. "But, this worked."

There are about 900 students in the school of common media, an interdisciplinary program that includes film, communication studies, media, digital media, PR and more, said Keith Strudler, director of the school of communications and media.

[Strudler joined MSU in fall of 2017](#), after 17 years at Marist college, where he was director



KEITH STRUDLER

for sports communication. The News Lab room, he said, is the "heart and soul of the building." There are four production studios, including a loft style set, a film studio with a wider lighting grid, the News Lab room, and a fourth, still being configured.

"There is a huge, massive industrial overhaul," he said, of the changes in journalism. What is happening is not unlike the advent of television, he says. And MSU wants to prepare students for that: "Journalism is one part of what we do. It's an important part of what we do, but we are a communication and media school. We're not a J school. I'm a realist."

The student hosts and the director of last Friday's News Lab are not scared.



CLAUDIA OLSEN

"How can you say [journalism is] dying," said co-anchor and Journalism major Madison Glassman, about journalism. "It's just going in a different direction." For senior Claudia Olsen, director of Friday's News Lab and a sports media major, newspapers still hold something for her: "I'd rather read a newspaper where it's right in front of me than my phone, where it's smaller articles. I know it sounds so crazy to say, but I feel like a lot of people are like that and it's just not realized."

McCarthy said, “Storytelling has been around since cave writing. It’s a human trait that we need to tell stories about each other,” he said.

Working at News Lab, producing packages and dealing with unexpected mishaps, like a package missing sound last Friday, helps the students prepare for their future careers.

He said, “My mantra is, this is the time to make mistakes.”

It’s a challenge to be on camera and be aware of diction, tone and appearance, said Glassman. All of the student team learn to all do editing, shooting and reporting. They’ve taken classes in individual elements, and producing the News Lap brings it all together, said News Lab Co-anchor and Journalism major Lataya Rothmiller.

The MSU students say they aren’t fooled by “fake news,” and know how to maneuver around social media. Glassman said that when she looks at some of the sources of fake news in a class on journalism ethics, she “can’t even believe people would ever fall for it. But people do.” Her colleagues laughed. “We notice it is a lot of older people, like our parents. I think it is a generational thing.” She says that because she and her peers use social media in their daily lives, they’re comfortable with it, and able to apply for jobs that ask the reporter to do a Periscope or Facebook Live or shoot a video as a teaser in the field.

Rothmiller said the cure for the spreading of false information is for “people to get more informed. People actually have to pick up a paper, actually look at articles and see where they’re coming from. I think being journalism students, if we see somebody spreading something that’s fake or we read something that’s fake, we’re very quick to call somebody out on it.”

These young journalists graduating in May, she said, are going to be the people who make a difference in stopping the spread of fake news.



Montclair State names head of communication school



Keith Strudler will assume his role as as director of the School of Communication and Media on on Monday, July 31. COURTESY OF MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Montclair State University has named Keith Strudler director of its School of Communication and Media, effective Monday.

Strudler, founder and director of the Marist College Center for Sports Communication and associate professor of communication, will lead cross-disciplinary communication, television and digital media programs, including production and sound, film-making, journalism, public and organizational relations, and health communication, according to a press release from the university.

The communications school will be moving into a new state-of-the-art facility this fall.

“It’s an honor to serve as the director of the School of Communication and Media at Montclair State,” Strudler said in a statement.

“I’ve enjoyed meeting with the school’s talented faculty and staff and share their enthusiasm for the amazing opportunities our truly world-class facility will offer. I look forward to working with them, our students and with colleagues across the university – as well as with community and media leaders – to develop and provide exceptional educational opportunities that strengthen the school’s reputation as a national leader.”

After launching the Marist sports communication center in 2011, Strudler took on initiatives such as gaining national coverage for co-branded, sports-related surveys released with the Marist Poll.

He extended this partnership to collaborate on sports polls with the award-winning HBO Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel and formed productive partnerships with external groups such as the Sports PR Summit, the Northeast Associated Press Sports Editors and Unanimous A.I.

“I am delighted to announce Keith Strudler’s appointment,” Montclair State President Susan Cole said in a statement. “As the School of Communication and Media moves into its new, state-of-the-art home, he will supply the leadership experience, academic vision and industry track record needed to spearhead its continued growth and advancement.”

During his term as chair of the communication department at Marist College, Strudler led the development of a new core curriculum that placed technology at its forefront.

One of the first concentrations of its kind when Strudler introduced it in 2002, Marist’s Sports Communication

program has grown into one of the largest and most established such programs in the nation.

Strudler's academic innovations include a certificate program in Global Sports Communication on Marist's Florence, Italy, campus, as well as The Classroom, a weekly student-produced sports talk radio program on WGNV of the New York Hudson Valley that he executive produced.

With Marist College's Lifetime Excellence in Sports Communication Award in 2015, Strudler began a tradition of honoring industry leaders while helping to seed an endowment for the Center for Sports Communication and its activities.

Strudler is on the editorial board of the Journal of Sports Media and is also a weekly sports commentator for Northeast Public Radio, WAMC, which broadcasts to seven states from Albany, New York.

He focuses his research on sports and media and has published on topics ranging from televised sports heroes and the portrayal of race in sports television to the use of emerging technologies in sports spectatorship.

Strudler received his Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of Florida and earned his master's and undergraduate degrees from the University of St. Thomas and Cornell University, respectively.