



## Alumni Newsletter Department Of Humanities & Communications



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### **A student’s take on college life during COVID-19**

by Meghan Schrader, English and Communications double major

On March 20th of 2020, I read that long dreaded email which so many before me had already received: the virus had reached us at last. For my safety, and the safety of others, I would have to abandon my beloved dorm room, my friends and professors, and return home.

“Home” was a strange word to use. For the past two years, Trine had been my home during the school year and summer. As I packed up my life into mismatched bags and boxes, filled my car beyond capacity, and said goodbye to my home away from home, I wondered for a moment if I’d see it again in the fall as the longevity of the virus loomed over us.

The next part of this story is what many would call “the hard part;” the zoom meetings, the deadlines, the lack of structure, the lack of interaction, the overwhelming reality of passing college classes during a pandemic. I would never say this part was easy, but if it wasn’t for the Hu-

## Continued

manities and Communication Department, for their understanding and kindness and adaptability, it would have been near impossible. Each day, I logged sleepily onto Zoom from my makeshift study space—an armchair and side table in a room in my basement—and was greeted by the downtrodden faces of my classmates.

My professors knew, as they surveyed our emotional destitution, that everything was overwhelming. Classrooms and coursework were quickly and efficiently adapted to online formats. Expectations adjusted accordingly and, as students, we were given much grace. In these times of confusion and uncertainty and unreliable WiFi, we leaned on each other more than ever, even if it was through screens rather than shoulder to shoulder.



On August 7th of 2020, it was with great relief that we returned to our home away from home. The trials were not over, but our hopes were high and our determination strong.

Trine University and the Humanities and Communication Department remains dedicated to the safety and education of its students and staff. Regardless of changes, students are very excited to be back on campus.

## Growth

by Brandi Wilson & Meghan Schrad-er, Communications Students

The 2020-2021 school year has brought a great deal of changes and growth to the Humanities and Communication Department, with new students, new faculty, and new spaces. Already, these students are jumping into projects and organizations, with many joining the HAC Media Team for their Media Practicum internship.

**The Department saw its largest incoming freshman class with 15 new Communication majors!**



## Website Updates

With the growth and the extra hands, we're able to do more projects for the department and greater Trine campus, including creating marketing videos, doing podcasts, and broadcasting sporting events. In order to capture the work of our hardworking students, the HAC website is being updated to display each the work and projects of our HAC students. This new update allows for students to showcase their work after college when searching for a post graduate job.

## Facility Advancements

Taylor Hall is projected to have numerous advancements in the upcoming year. The upstairs lounge area will be converted into an audio recording booth, aiding students in all their audio and podcasting needs. Wells Gallery will soon be open to accommodate students throughout the day for student enjoyment and relaxation. Alongside its unique aspects will be added couches, tables for studying, a Keurig for those late nights and early mornings, a



microwave for our commuter students' lunches, and more. To add to the excitement, the Mac Lab will be journeying to a larger space so even more students can utilize its resources and technology. The HAC Department is working to better the education of their students and do all they can to ensure success!

With the recent addition of our theatre minor, we've seen many changes in the Theatre Department and Drama Club. New and exciting classes have been added to our curriculum, such as theatre production, the fundamentals of acting, stagecraft, and directing. In order to maintain this important aspect of student life and allow the Theatre Department to flourish, funding and donations are needed for props, costumes, and building materials for stage sets and backdrops, to name a few.

## Trine University Finds Fun Ways to Tell Students, "We Care."

by Abbey Wang, Communications major

It is safe to say that for the last year, students, faculty, and staff here at Trine have had to make a lot of sacrifices and changes due to the Coronavirus pandemic. From being sent home suddenly back in March 2020 to losing our beloved fall and spring breaks, it has been a very long and stressful journey thus far. To ease the workload and stress levels of the Trine community, the university introduced "WeCare Days." On WeCare Days, classes were cancelled, and fun activities were held for students throughout the day.

According to Clare Danner, the Director of Student Success, "WeCare days are designed to give students and faculty a break from the rigors of an expedited academic calendar with no breaks, which was necessary to implement this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic." During each allotted WeCare day, administration planned a list of activities for students throughout the day, many of which promoted stress relief and relaxation. After all, the day is all about taking a break.

**"The events that are planned during the WeCare days speak specifically to restoring energy, creating fun, and offering places for students to connect. It also offers the student a day to simply rest and relax if that is what they need,"**

says Shelly Edwards, a Trine University Counselor.

Some of these fun activities were ice skating, snow sledding, massages, and tons of opportunities for free food and beverages across campus. Trine even had virtual events and food delivery for students who were unfortunately stuck in quarantine during their WeCare days.

Personally, my favorite WeCare activity was the parking ticket amnesty: students could bring in any parking tickets they may have collected, and get one voided per WeCare day. Many students struggle financially, so I think this was a favorite for many others on campus as well.

Behind the fun activities and free stuff, WeCare Days were designed to make up for the lack of breaks we had due to COVID-19, but WeCare Days are much more important to our students eye.

While it is unsafe for Trine University to allow week-long breaks, it is important now more than ever for students to destress. Edwards stressed that it is important for us to

continue to host WeCare days, so students get the chance to recharge and rest their minds and spirits. As cliché as it may sound, self-care is

very important, and it speaks volumes that Trine is making the mental health of their students and faculty a priority.



While much has changed in the past year, the HAC Department was dedicated to maintaining its traditions and events to keep students involved and connected.



The Department made sure some of our favorite events were kept around while be-



ing adjusted for COVID guidelines, including Poe Night, the play, Jammin' with Jannen, outdoor movies, and even virtual poetry events.

Most importantly, the HAC Department ensured the continuation of the 2020 Senior Send Off, one of the most meaningful and heartfelt events of the year. The Send Off was converted into a video as students and faculty shared a few words of remembrance and congratulations for our graduating seniors.

## New Faculty

### Mindy Maples

by Sadie Woodruff, Communications major



Mindy Maples is a new professor here at Trine in the Communications and Theatre Department. Maples has spent the last ten years adjunct teaching communication and theatre courses at a few universities, such as Spring Arbor University and Kellogg Community College.

Maples is looking forward to developing a robust theatre program and working with students. New plans for the Theatre Department are in the works. To kick off her time at Trine, Maples coordinated the Theatre Department's 'On Broadway' in October of 2020. The show was a combination of monologues and



musical solos from around 20 students, and was a great success.

The latest play, '25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,' took place April 10th and 11th. A lighthearted story about a fictional spelling bee at Putnam Valley Middle School, the play is a very enjoyable adult musical with raunchy jokes. In other words, its perfect for college students.

**Maples will be introducing student-directed one act plays each year, as well as a full-length play every fall and a musical every spring!**



### Michael Oliver

by Faith Patterson, Communications major

Michael Oliver is a new English Professor in the Humanities and Communications Department. He teaches effective speaking and humanities courses here at Trine University. He taught for almost 10 years at a community college in Battle Creek, MI. He started teaching in 1966, teaching for five years before taking 30 years off to start a small business as a manufacturing representative agency involved with Carhoo Cross Country Skis, Nike, Asik's, and Rebok.



**He enjoys photography, skiing, and teaching!**

## Alumni in the Field

### Madison Sanderson

by Meghan Schrader, English and Communications double major



Madison Sanderson, a 2020 communications graduate from Trine, began her journey into the adult world a week after graduation as she moved from Fort Wayne to Indianapolis. She began working for the Indiana Republican State Committee in the Fundraising and Finance Department.

**“My first day of work is one I will remember for a long time,” Madison reminisced.**

“I moved down on a Sunday, and started working virtually on that Monday; however, my internet was not hooked up yet, so I had to sit on my apartment's hallway floor with my computer and a notebook and bum internet off my neighbor. It all worked out though, and my neighbor and I became good friends!”

From her May start date until November, she was primarily focused on the Governor's campaign, and how that looked in a COVID world.

Since then, she has worked a lot more from the State Party platform, as well as working with more local governments and their leaders. Some of Madison's day-to-day activities include planning, coordinating and staffing special events and fundraisers, and managing donor relations.

### Jarod Davis

by Akanksha Thakur, Communications major

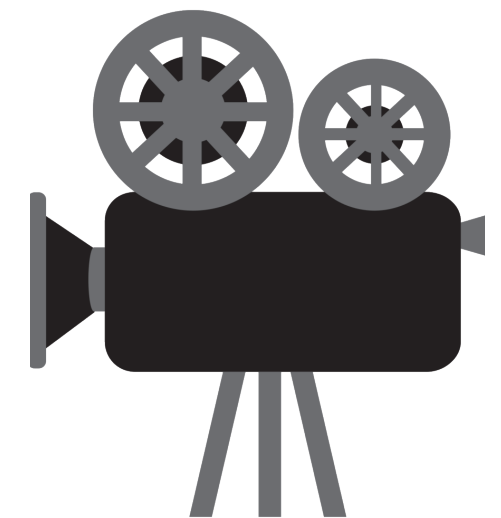


Jarod Davis has turned his long-time interest into a career in videography. After graduating from Trine in the Spring of 2020, Davis went to work as a videographer for Vestil Manufacturing in Angola, Indiana in January of 2021. Some of his daily tasks include planning, recording, and editing videos for Vestil.

“I create video content that advertises Vestil's products. These videos can be full product features or product tutorial videos. Some of my videos go on social media as well,” said Davis.

Davis has always had a passion for creating digital media, and HAC provided the opportunities and classes to make that happen. He juggles many video projects at a time, and those skills he gained through Trine have really helped him in his young career.

**“There are so many more ways to tell a story than just with a camera!” Davis remarked.**



# Donors help transform lives and create a unique experience for our HAC Students

By Abbey Wang, Communications Major

Over the course of the last several years, the Humanities and Communications Department at Trine University has seen many improvements and additions that promote a positive learning environment for students. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are able to continue to grow our department each and every day. While we are excited and grateful for the continuous changes being made, we still have a great need for donations.

In the wake of the annual Trine Day of Giving, we continue to ask alumni, friends, and donors to donate to the Jannen School of Arts and Sciences. Donor may choose a specific department or program, or donate to the school itself and it will be distributed as needed.

The HAC department is looking specifically for donations for the Amy Sayler-Nicholls Writing Center and the Theater Department. If you're interested in giving a gift to the Humanities and Communication Department, visit [www.alumni.trine.edu](http://www.alumni.trine.edu) and simply hit the button that says

**“Donate.”**

Your gift, whatever the size, makes an impact on each student in our school.

## The Amy Sayler-Nicholls Writing Center

Various resources aid our student tutors as they assist their fellow peers in the art of writing. Donations will go towards items such as headsets for Zoom tutor sessions, educational materials and resources, the Walter Cunningham Writing Contest, and tutor swag!

This year's Cunningham Contest winners will be featured in a bound book available for \$5! Contact Janelle Pulczynski to purchase.

## The Theatre Department

Our Theatre Department is fast growing. In order to allow the Theatre Department to flourish, funding and donations are needed for props, costumes, and building materials for stage sets and backdrops.

## The Humanities & Communications Department

Communication students get a variety of real-world experience during their time at Trine. Resources such as photo and video equipment, sound equipment, and recording materials are invaluable items to our students and their experiences.

**Help us keep doing what we do best by donating today!**

