

# LeadTime

The Newsletter of AEJMC's Newspaper Division

aejmc.net/newspaper

Winter/Spring 2008

## HEAD LINES

# Planning process redefining AEJMC

*Discussions focus on goals, strategies for future*

By Susan Keith  
Division Head

What should AEJMC look like during its second century?

That is the question that division heads and other AEJMC leaders pondered during strategic planning sessions at the Midwinter Meeting in St. Louis in early December. The same question will be put to Newspaper Division members and others in AEJMC at the annual convention in August.

By that time, AEJMC will have been involved in self-exami-



Susan Keith

widespread support (AEJMC should try to become more visible

nation for more than a year. The organization's leaders will have discussed — and, in some cases, argued about — everything from ideas likely to gain

See STRATEGIC PLAN, page 2

## CALLS FOR ACTION

Deadlines are coming near for submissions to the competitions the Newspaper Division sponsors in connection with the annual AEJMC convention, scheduled Aug. 6 - 9, 2008, in Chicago.

- Educator of the Year Award  
Deadline: **April 15.**  
Details, page 4
- PF&R Educator of the Year  
Deadline: **March 21.**  
Details, page 4
- General call and two special calls for research papers,  
Deadline: **April 1.**  
Details, page 5
- Student Newspaper Project  
Deadline: **April 15.**  
Entry form, page 6

# Teaching about diversity and fairness

By Leslie-Jean Thornton  
Division Vice Chair

Sharon Bramlett-Solomon, the Newspaper Division's educator of the year for 2007, has a passion for fairness. She's agreed to give some pointers on how journalism teachers can incorporate discussions about such issues into their classes. Her first reaction was right from the heart: Diversity isn't something that

## TEACHING TOOLS

First in a series of Q and A's with leading educators

should be relegated to a one-week exercise or a single class session. It should be taught throughout the course and treated with the same importance as imparting fundamental knowledge. During our discussion, she made it clear that many things already being

taught are appropriate candidates for a "bigger picture" approach.

**You say we need to know what our students know — to find out what they were taught. You mentioned segregation, for example, and how that's not in every textbook. And you gave a telling example about geography and how**

See SOLOMON, page 7

# Strategic plan

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nationally) to ideas likely to engender controversy (AEJMC should change its name, move its headquarters, reorganize its divisions, focus more on research or give its presidents more power).

Important information about these discussions is available on the AEJMC Web site at <http://aejmc.org/talk/?cat=46>. But my conversations with some of you suggest that topic may not have been on the radar of the average Newspaper Division member. So before we are asked to vote in Chicago to approve the strategic plan, it may be worthwhile to review what has happened so far and where you can learn more.

The planning began during the 2006-2007 presidency of Wayne Wanta of Missouri. The AEJMC board of directors voted at the 2006 Winter Meeting in New Orleans to start the strategic planning process, which was prompted, in the words of current President Charles Self of Oklahoma, by the continued growth of AEJMC and “profound changes” in media.

Self wrote that “these challenges require planning, new resources, and organizational change. If AEJMC is to thrive in our changing environments, this planning must be done now. It requires an expansive, thorough, and careful conversation with our membership about how AEJMC should change. It requires long-term goals and new resources.”

One of the early steps in that conversation was what is known in strategic planning jargon as an environmental scan. This consisted of a review of previous reports about AEJMC and a survey of AEJMC’s membership in May and June 2007. In a period when many association members may have been giving final exams or heading off for summer vacation,

## LEARN MORE ONLINE

A meeting with facilitators from the Atlanta-based Genius Group during the 2007 convention in Washington produced three documents that are guiding the strategic planning process:

■ A summary of themes that emerged from the “environmental scan” is available at <http://aejmc.org/talk/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/spws-emerging-themes.pdf>

■ A “practical vision” list of what needs to be in place in three to five years for AEJMC to reach its potential is available at [http://aejmc.org/talk/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/practical-vision\\_spws.pdf](http://aejmc.org/talk/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/practical-vision_spws.pdf)

■ A list of contradictions, i.e. things that are keeping the organization from reaching its 3- to 5-year goals is available at <http://aejmc.org/talk/wp-content/uploads/2007/08/spws-contradictions.pdf>

Names of AEJMC leaders who developed these are listed at <http://aejmc.org/talk/?cat=46>

501 people — most from large universities and nearly 37 percent of them Newspaper Division members — filled out online questionnaires offering their perceptions of AEJMC.

Full results of the survey are available at <http://aejmc.org/talk/wp-content/uploads/2007/07/aejmc-scan-summary.pdf>, but several points stand out. There was a high level of agreement with the statements “AEJMC should strive to be the ‘go to’ organization for journalism and mass communication in the United States” and “AEJMC as an orga-

nization should adopt a higher profile.” Respondents also pointed out what they saw as AEJMC’s weaknesses, including fragmentation, the organization’s size and lack of focus, the content and schedule of conventions, the quality of research and a lack of connection with the professionals.

Respondents were also asked to say which divisions, interest groups and commissions were most important to AEJMC by ranking them on a scale of 0 (totally unimportant) to 10 (extremely important). The Newspaper Division was ranked No. 6, with a mean score of 8.39, behind Media Ethics, Mass Comm and Society, Communication Technology, Communication Theory and Methodology, and Law and Policy.

A few months later, at the 2007 convention in Washington, a team of more than 30 AEJMC leaders said the tasks that AEJMC needed to complete in three to five years were broadly strengthening core values, developing an infrastructure for better marketing the organization, changing the organization’s name, expanding the AEJMC staff, expanding services for members and increasing the organization’s global presence. Among the “contradictions” keeping the organization from reaching those goals, team members felt, were an AEJMC divisional structure that favors specialization rather than a common mission, limited funding and a lack of identified core values across the organization. (See box for instructions on how to find more details online.)

During meetings Dec. 1-2 in St. Louis, 2007-2008 division heads and many members of the August strategic planning team met again to take the lists of practical visions and contradictions generated in August and develop a list of ways to deal with the con-

**See STRATEGIC PLAN, page 3**

## Journals available for sale/donation

Fred Fedler, a retiring professor and longtime member of the Newspaper Division, has an extensive collection of journals that he would like to sell to an individual or donate to an institution or library. Each collection is virtually complete. They include:

*Journalism & Mass Comm Quarterly*, 1970 to present

*Journalism & Mass Comm Educator*, 1970 to present

*Newspaper Research Journal*, first edition to present

*American Journalism* from 1985 to present

*Mass Communication and Society*, 1990 to present

*Columbia Journalism Review* from about 1971 to present and many years of *American Journalism Review*.

Contact him at 407-823-2839 or at [ffedler@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu](mailto:ffedler@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu)

## Wealth of sessions for Chicago

The Newspaper Division has again assembled an extensive set of program offerings for members and other interested parties for the annual AEJMC convention in Chicago in August.

Anchoring the set is a mini-plenary session on The Transformation of Print Journalism. Newspaper is the lead sponsor for this special effort with co-sponsorship from the Civic and Citizen Journalism Interest Group, Community Journalism Interest Group and Media Management and Economics Division.

Representatives of all the groups will collaborate to explore the ongoing transition of metro dailies from ink-on-paper to the digital world, the emergence of publications with narrower focuses finding new audience, the dimensions added by participatory journalism and whether Web-

based journalism can offer an effective business model.

Newspaper is also lead sponsor of three panels with a professional freedom and responsibility theme, co-sponsor of three other PF&R panels and lead sponsor of one panel session on teaching. The panels include a wide range of topics including ethics, business operations and convergence skills.

The division also has scheduled five refereed research sessions, including one for a special call on research into issues affecting the industry co-sponsored with the Council of Affiliates, and a special poster-research session in conjunction with the Mass Communication and Society Division.

Finally, the divisional membership meeting and presentation of annual awards is scheduled for 8:30 p.m. Thursday Aug. 7.

## Strategic plan

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traditions and move AEJMC toward the practical vision in the next three years.

Through a series of exercises and group discussions, those gathered in December came to the conclusion — though definitely not consensus — that AEJMC needed to focus on eight areas. They are, in descending order of importance assigned to them by the group:

- Creating awareness of the AEJMC “brand.”

- Building AEJMC’s prestige/reputation/influence in the academy and with industry.

- Developing financial strategies for supporting AEJMC’s goals.

- Redefining the organization’s internal structure.

- Developing a better membership program.

- Making AEJMC members’ expertise more easily available to the public.

- Making AEJMC an innovative center for scholarship.

- Engaging globally and multiculturally.

If those areas sound vague, they are. Each is an umbrella term that covers several more specific — and sometimes contradictory — suggested actions. For example, among the specific suggestions for building AEJMC’s prestige/reputation/influence in the academy and industry were to add the media center of New York City to the convention city rotation (the conference has never been held there for cost reasons), relocate the association’s headquarters to New York or Washington, D.C., to make it more visible, and empower the

AEJMC president to speak publicly on behalf of the group.

These suggestions have not been uploaded to the AEJMC Web site, but I’m happy to share them with any Newspaper Division members who would like to learn more. Just e-mail me at [susank@scils.rutgers.edu](mailto:susank@scils.rutgers.edu)

A group of AEJMC leaders is using the documents produced so far to write a strategic plan for the organization. The timeline for the planning process calls for the plan to be shared with members in June and July. A final presentation of the strategic plan and a vote by the membership on whether to accept it are scheduled for the August convention.

This process has the potential to affect AEJMC and our division greatly. I encourage Newspaper Division members to watch for the final version of the strategic plan and consider it carefully.

Call for Nominations  
**OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD**

AEJMC Newspaper Division

Deadline: April 15, by email to Ann Auman - auman@hawaii.edu.

Please put all attachments and any links in ONE email message.

The AEJMC Newspaper Division seeks nominations for its Outstanding Educator Award. The award is open to any journalism professor who is a full-time faculty member of a bachelor degree-granting institution of higher education in the United States.

The nominee should have a demonstrated track record of achievement in preparing journalism students, advancing journalism education and promoting career development.

Please attach a nomination package consisting of the following:

1. Nomination letter of no more than two single-spaced pages following this format:

Nominator: Name, title, school or organization, email, phone.

2. Two-page document from the nominee that lists the nominee's achievements. Links to the nominee's personal Web site, books, blogs, etc. may be included.

3. A maximum of three letters of support from the nominee's students, former students or industry professionals may also be included. Each of these letters should be no more than one page, single-spaced. Letters of support should take the following form and be sent to Dr. Ann Auman (auman@hawaii.edu) by e-mail in one message

Nominee:

School:

This person deserves the Newspaper Division's Outstanding Teacher Award because (ATTACH LETTER SENT ELECTRONICALLY)

4. Names of two colleagues or professional associates provided by the nominee who the selection committee might call for further information. Include the title, e-mail and phone number of each colleague.

Please e-mail applications and letters to:

Dr. Ann Auman

AEJMC Newspaper Division Teaching Standards Co-Chair

University of Hawaii-Manoa

auman@hawaii.edu

Please note in the subject line of the email that it is a nomination for the AEJMC Newspaper Division Outstanding Educator Award.

## Nominations sought for PF&R educator

By John Carvalho  
 PF&R Co-Chair

In proposing 2007 Newspaper Division PF&R Professor of the Year recipient George Padgett of Elon University, his nominator wrote: "George Padgett is real. He deeply values free expression, and his students capture his excitement about its importance in a free society. He is an ethical person, highly respected by his peers who know they can trust his word. He deeply values diversity, and his work as a teacher-scholar comes from the heart."

Is there another George Padgett out there? We hope so

The Newspaper Division is seeking nominees for the 2008 PF&R Professor of the Year. Perhaps you know of an individual whose life and work shows a commitment to one or all of our five areas that comprise professional freedom and responsibility values: free expression; ethics; media criticism and accountability; racial, gender, and cultural inclusiveness; and public service.

The award is open to any journalism classroom teacher who is a full-time faculty member of a bachelor's degree-granting institution of higher education. The award will be presented at the Newspaper Division meeting during this year's AEJMC convention in Chicago.

Please send a nomination letter of no more than two pages, providing the information that explains your nominee's commitment to PF&R. You also need to include a copy of the nominee's vita. Deadline is March 21, 2008.

Materials may be sent as an e-mail attachment to carvajp@auburn.edu. (Also use this e-mail address if you have any questions.) The postal mailing

**See PF&R AWARD, page 5**

## Research papers due April 1; three venues available

The Newspaper Division of AEJMC invites faculty and students to submit research papers regarding newspaper topics for presentation at the AEJMC Annual Convention, Aug. 6-9, 2008, in Chicago.

### The following information applies to papers submitted under any of the three calls:

■ Sessions will be devoted to theoretically based studies of newspapers or issues concerning the newspaper industry. Both qualitative and quantitative research in newspaper history, law, policy, effects, processes, use and ethics are welcome. Papers may not be longer than 25 pages,

excluding tables, figures and references. Papers must be submitted electronically no later than 11:59 p.m. (EST) April 1.

■ All entries should follow the AEJMC Uniform Call for Papers, available at [http://www.aejmc.org/\\_events/convention/paper-call/index.php](http://www.aejmc.org/_events/convention/paper-call/index.php).

**Submission of papers:** All papers must be submitted electronically. No hard copy will be accepted. Full instructions on submitting papers are posted on the AEJMC Web site. Questions may be directed to the Research Co-Chairs, Bill Cassidy at [bcassidy@niu.edu](mailto:bcassidy@niu.edu) or David Arant at [darant@memphis.edu](mailto:darant@memphis.edu).

### General call: for regular research competition

The Newspaper Division offers an open competition in which student papers compete with faculty papers. However, student authors are encouraged to submit their papers for consideration for the MacDougall Student Paper Award, \$200 and a plaque given to the author of the top student paper. Papers to be considered for the MacDougall Student Paper Award should be noted as such in the accompanying cover note. All authors of the paper must be students for the paper to be considered for this award. In addition, awards are given for the top three Newspaper Division papers. Winners receive a \$100 prize and a plaque. All papers are automatically considered for the top three paper awards.

All submissions will be blind refereed by a panel of independent readers. Authors will be notified whether their papers have been accepted and will receive a copy of the reviewers' comments by May 15, 2008.

Papers are accepted on the understanding they have not been previously presented or published and are not under consideration by a scholarly journal or by another scholarly or trade organization. Papers cannot be submitted to more than one AEJMC division, nor to both the regular research competition and to a special call for papers.

### Special Call: for papers on newspaper multimedia practices

The division is hosting a special call for papers on newspaper multimedia journalism practices. Any paper that examines how newspapers are using media other than print is eligible. Papers might examine such topics as newspapers' use of video or blogs, changing work roles and practices resulting from the use of multiple media, challenges for photographers shooting both stills and video, the ethics implications of multimedia reports, multimedia participatory or citizen journalism, economic challenges to multimedia journalism or the challenges of doing multimedia journalism at student, community or alternative newspapers. Papers submitted in response to this special call are eligible for the division's student paper and top paper awards. Papers cannot be submitted to more than one AEJMC division, nor to both the regular research competition and to a special call for papers.

### Special Call: newspaper industry research papers

A special refereed paper session at the national convention sponsored by the Council of Affiliates and the Newspaper Division will focus on industry-related research. The competition offers \$300 to the top paper in this competition, which is based on a list of research ideas for research suggested by Earl J. Wilkinson of the International Newspaper Marketing Association. That list may be found at the Newspaper Division Web site at <http://aejmc.net/newspaper/news-research.html>. Papers are accepted on the understanding they have not been presented or published elsewhere and are not under consideration by a scholarly journal or by another scholarly or trade organization. Papers submitted in response to this special call are eligible for the division's student paper and top paper awards. Papers cannot be submitted to more than one AEJMC division, nor to both the regular research competition and to a special call.

## PF&R Award

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address is John Carvalho; Department of Communication and Journalism; 217 Tichenor Hall; Auburn University, AL 36849-5206.

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

### 2008 AEJMC NEWSPAPER DIVISION NEWSPAPER PROJECT AWARD

The AEJMC Newspaper Division's Newspaper Project Award recognizes publications produced by students and professors in journalism classes or as special curricular projects connected to courses. To qualify, the publication must have been edited and produced as part of the curriculum, text reported and written by students, and professors must have been responsible for editing and/or advising. Magazines or Yellow Page-like compilations will not be accepted. Eligible publications must have been published in either the 2006-2007 or 2007-2008 academic years. Publications that are only online will not be accepted.

Use this form and hard copies of the newspaper to enter.

Professor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone with area code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Newspaper Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Published: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/s or project affiliated with publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Also attach a one-page double-spaced explanation about the newspaper project. Address why you chose this project, its target audience, special challenges the publication faced, what you and the students learned in completing this project and how it fits into your journalism curriculum.

Submissions: Entries should consist of five copies of a single issue of the newspaper. Please be sure to staple copies of the entry form and the one-page explanation about the project to each of the 5 copies you submit. They must be post-marked by April 15. Address queries to: [rnankney@samford.edu](mailto:rnankney@samford.edu).

Send entries to:

Dr. Bernie Ankney  
Samford University  
Journalism and Mass Communication  
800 Lakeshore Drive, UCA 105  
Birmingham, AL 35229

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# Solomon

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**one's impression of the world might be visually as well as conceptually skewed. Would you talk a bit about such things?**

When I was growing up, the maps I saw had some countries big and some small, but they weren't related to their actual size. I thought the United States was much, much bigger... The maps reflected a social or political view, not geography. But how would children know that? And learning something like that when you're young will affect everything else you learn, even when you're older. It's our job to help students find out what knowledge gaps they have.

**How can we figure out likely knowledge gaps?**

As you get to various subjects, look for the history in which discrimination may have played a part. Same thing with race. Look at how the subject you're about to address was reported in the press.

**What do you mean when you say diversity issues need to be brought "up from the footnote"?**

Diversity issues aren't "additional" information, they're an integral part of everything that happens, but this wasn't always recognized. 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education* (Supreme Court case), was the beginning of the race story in national discourse in journalism. It forced the press to talk about race. Even so, the headlines read like one that said, "Court okays race mix." Although there's been progress, we're nowhere near the point where we're examining nuances on a regular basis.

**One of the most difficult aspects of discrimination is that it's likely to feel "normal" or even "right" to those who**

**live with it daily. How do you explain to students that stereotypes are fixed in the culture?**

Just look to popular culture. *Birth of a Nation*. *The Jazz Singer*. TV grew up beside the civil rights movement. Find examples there.

**You've said you want stu-**

## SHARON BRAMLETT-SOLOMON

- Associate Professor, Arizona State University, Cronkite School, since 1986

- Research focus: Media construction and depiction of race images and issues.



Sharon  
Bramlett-  
Solomon

**dents to know that "diversity is simply the right thing to do" and that the job of a journalist is to hold a mirror to society. When they're heading out to the field, what do you tell them to look for?**

They need to find sources who reflect multiculturalism, to get out more and come to know the community. Especially broadcast journalists, who tend to be in revolving door jobs and don't stay in one place very long. Without knowledge of the community, assignments are made on preconceived points and this is how they'll be reported. This is dangerous. Know the demographics, how the community developed, local issues... Journalists need to steadily cultivate a wide variety of sources. They need to make sure their reports aren't filled with loaded, stereotyped, biased words that will color how people understand what you've written. When covering news, you must think of all society. You must go beyond who looks like you.

**You talk about "mind schemas" and words that are automatic triggers in society. What do you mean, and how can we make students — and**

**ourselves — more aware of them?**

Some words come with a whole bunch of baggage. "Welfare," for example. Ask your students: How many of you got loans? Education grants? Well, if you got them from the government, not Melinda Gates, that's welfare. The bailout of the S&L

industry? Welfare. Refrain from using "minority": it's loaded with mind schemas, mental structures that automatically organize

the world. Suddenly there's a mental frame for who is good, who is bad, what they look like, what jobs they do... Ask students, "If you could come back as any race or gender, what would it be?" The majority of them will say they would return in the same race, same gender. We construct world views around ourselves.

**One last question. You described an "in group/out group" exercise you do with your classes. It seems remarkably effective. How does that go?**

Ask students if they belong to a church, for example. If they do, that's their "in" group. What classes are they "in"? What organizations? Who are their friends? The people they're not linked to are "out," the religion that's not theirs is "out." Help them see how many in and out groups they have. We make assumptions that the story is about our "in" groups but we need to be inclusive. The media are prime purveyors of assumptions that one group is more powerful than another. Point out to them their objectification. Media literacy is the key to being informed about the human condition.

# Faculty can help orient grad students to AEJMC

By Sue Westcott Alessandri  
AEJMC Membership Committee

AEJMC is an integral part of a graduate student's socialization into academia. From almost the first day we arrived on campus as Ph.D. student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, my cohort and I started hearing about "presenting at AEJ." I believe this culture help set the proper expectations for graduate students who would one day be faculty members.

Yet while it is in their best interest to join the organization as early as possible, some students might hesitate to take that step, whether it's because they don't know the organization exists or because they're not sure their research will fit in. A nudge

from a trusted faculty member might be just what they need.

Here are some proven ways that you can get graduate students involved with AEJMC early in their academic careers:

1. In your classes, require a research paper that can be submitted to a regional or annual AEJMC conference. Set due dates with the AEJMC deadlines in mind, so timing isn't a factor.

2. Partner with graduate students to conduct research beyond coursework to be presented at AEJMC-sponsored conferences. This research adds credibility by linking students' work with nationally known scholars.

3. Walk your advisees around at an AEJMC conference to introduce students to the people who might one day hire them. On a

personal level, introducing graduate students to established faculty members helps to make students feel more comfortable as scholars — rather than merely as students.

4. Encourage your advisees to get involved in a division related to their research interests. This helps graduate students realize that they are accomplished enough to take part in the organization.

For information on AEJMC membership, refer your students to AEJMC's Web site. Details about joining can be found at [http://www.aejmc.org/\\_about/get\\_forms.php](http://www.aejmc.org/_about/get_forms.php).

*Sue Westcott Alessandri of Syracuse University is a member of the AEJMC Membership Committee.*

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Journalism and Mass Communication**

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