

the Journalist

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New Minority Today editor expects changes

By Angela Pham

As the editor-in-chief for Minority Today during the 2006-2007 school year, senior Jennifer Ether plans to take advantage of her position.

With experience writing for both The Daily Eastern News and Minority Today, Ether became editor-in-chief after former editor Stephanie Johnson graduated and asked her to take over. She will be taking on new responsibilities including assigning articles to writers and keeping the staff informed about the minority community. But Ether hopes to make changes in the newspaper as well.

"I hope to bring in a much larger minority staff," Ether said. "I think the minority group extends far beyond the African-American group; I think minorities [also] include Asians, Hispanics, gays and women."

Realizing that many journalism majors on campus seem unaware that Minority Today is not exclusively for black students, Ether said she wants to open up the staff and increase the number of writers that work for the paper, as well as cover more topics of interest for the minority community.

"In the past, some of the topics that were chosen, people just didn't care enough, then it's just pushed to the side," Ether said. "I just see some improvements that can be made. I'm excited and anxious to experience it more; I'm just getting started now."

Ether is also the president of Rhythm and X-tacy, a dance group on campus, and said she plans to have a busy year. As the former 2005 Miss Black EIU and 2006 pageant coordinator, having a demanding



Jenn Ether, senior, editor of Minority Today, posts flyers to recruit reporters for her next issue. She said she hopes to involve more students in the publication in this year.

*Photo by
Angela Pham*

schedule is not a new experience for Ether, and she said she is anticipating a new challenge.

Ether credits the journalism department for helping her get where she is today.

"I think the journalism department is like a family," she said. "I've never had a journalism teacher I didn't like. You see the same faces every day; you can walk into the office and know everyone there by name."

Ether said that she believes Minority Today plays a significant role on campus by representing the minorities and covering minority-related events.

"There are a million things going on campus and the [Daily Eastern News] can't get it all. That's our job, every two weeks, to cover the minority events that they can't always."

Marjani Lewis, managing editor of Minority Today, spoke positively about Ether's new plans.

"We have a lot of high expectations this year, and we're going to try to make it appealing for all minorities on campus. I think she's going to do a really good job," Lewis explained.

According to Eastern's Web site, Minority Today has a distribution of approximately 9,000 copies each publication day as a biweekly insertion in the DEN. But Ether said she is up for the challenge.

"I just told myself I'd make the best of college, tackle as many things as I can, and I think I have," Ether added.

Professor McElwee turning faculty and student heads

By Terrah Graves

Lola McElwee, a professor in the journalism department, is making quite an impression on the students and faculty of Eastern Illinois University.

Everyone you ask about McElwee will tell you different reasons why she is a great professor and journalist.

One student, Cathy Bayer, a junior journalism major and senior campus reporter for The Daily Eastern News, said that “[McElwee] is just one of those teachers that genuinely cares about your best interests.”

McElwee has been a professor at Eastern since 1991. As of this year, she is now a part of the tenure-track faculty, with additional standards to meet and more responsibilities.

Attaining tenure is no easy task, as many professors will relate. Every year a professor is evaluated on his or her teaching, service to the department, and research done on a chosen subject. If a professor meets standards that prove he or she is an effective member of the staff, the professor may receive tenure after several years. These are all aspects of the job that McElwee says she works hard to constantly improve.

As with any new job, McElwee also gained some new responsibilities.

Responsibilities such as academic advising and serving on multiple committees set up to serve the journalism department and the campus as a whole are included.

McElwee is chairman of the Assessment Committee, which analyzes the quality of the department and ways to improve it.

This committee is important to McElwee because, as she explains, the journalism department at Eastern has been nationally accredited for its quality and it is important to discover new ways to keep that reputation going.

“My goal for the journalism department is similar to everyone else’s: To build on our strengths,” McElwee said.

She is also a part of the department’s Outreach Committee and serves on the Judicial Board for Eastern.

Another self-proclaimed goal



Lola McElwee points out another AP Style need to her students. McElwee is a familiar face in the journalism department, but she was appointed a tenure track faculty member this year after 15 years as an annually contracted faculty member, many of those full-time.

Photo by Terrah Graves

for McElwee is to help improve the department’s math program. She wants her students to have knowledge on practical things and not be stuck in a situation where they are unable to write a story because it contains numbers.

Setting goals for her career and her extensive experience with writing and editing have helped McElwee become a tenure-track professor at Eastern.

She began her journalism career in high school at a local paper in her hometown of Virginia, Illinois: “population 1800,” she explains. “There was not one thing I didn’t like about the job.”

Since then she has reported for newspapers including the Knoxville Journal, the Mattoon Journal Gazette and served as copy editor for the Charleston Times-Courier.

McElwee has also earned a master’s in English from Eastern and hopes

to earn her doctorate in either mass communication or journalism.

Her fellow faculty members say that she is greatly respected because of her great aptitude for what she does and her credible background in journalism.

“I know she’s a good teacher because I know her background. I know she’s well-liked and well-respected and she seems to have a lot of fun with her students,” said John Ryan, a fellow faculty member and director of student publications.

McElwee explained that what gave her a passion for journalism is the thought that she could make a difference. That is what she loves about teaching and students as well.

“I like that students are still excited and want to try to change the world,” McElwee said. “I like when I can see in someone’s face that they finally get it.”

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Kim brings fresh ideas to journalism department

By Zach Nugent

Every year brings changes to the faculty of Eastern Illinois University. This year the journalism department became a new home for Dr. Eunseong Kim.

Kim, originally from South Korea, came to the United States for the first time in 1995. After a year in the States, she returned home for three years before permanently moving here. Kim completed her undergraduate studies in South Korea.

She explained that she always wanted to teach, but while in college she also became interested in journalism. In school, Kim worked for a local newspaper and enjoyed being able to inform others of current events.

Upon graduation, Kim taught English and worked for a publishing company as a free-lance writer.

In 1999 she came to the United States to do her graduate studies. She earned both her master's and doctoral degrees at the Indiana University School of Journalism.

Kim was drawn to Eastern because she thinks it has a strong journalism department. She said that Eastern has a reputation for "caring about students," and she wanted to be part of that. She added that she is "excited about establishing her teaching career."

While here, Kim wants to contribute as much as possible to strengthen the journalism department. She said that while Eastern has solid, practical courses, improvement could be made. She wants to see an increase in research-orientated classes. She thinks she can help the department place more emphasis on the importance of extensive research.

Professor McElwee continued.

Thankfully for all who have, and will, experience McElwee as a professor or co-worker, she has become an asset to the Eastern journalism department.

And what advice does she give students on their endeavor's as future journalists?

"The one thing I tell students, whether they are going to be a journalist, an editor, or a banker, you have to enjoy what you do. And of course; accuracy, accuracy, accuracy," McElwee said with a laugh.



Dr. Kim explains the role her computer plays in her research. Kim, a new professor this year, has brought many ideas from around the globe that she thinks will help improve the already reputable journalism department here at Eastern.

Photo by Terri Johnson

Besides trying to increase the area of research, Kim also wants to be active in extra-curricular activities.

She has interests in publications like Pounce Online and Minority Today. She hopes she can contribute to the online versions of these publications. By doing so, she can help introduce students to the technology of online media.

She explored the role of the Internet in the election process as part of her doctoral research and is also interested in the role of blogs in other aspects of American life.

Currently, Kim teaches Journalism and Democracy and Women in the Media.

She intends on making Eastern and its journalism department her permanent home.

Kim is also a wife and mother. Her husband, David Evensen, is a newspaper reporter who is currently looking for a newspaper home in Illinois. He has reported for Indiana newspapers including the Richmond Palladium Item and the Columbus Republic. Her son, Ian, is two and is fascinated with all the changes in his life recently, including a trip to Korea to meet his grandparents last summer, Kim said.

Mark your calendars now!

*The Society of Collegiate Journalists
Internship Panel*

Monday, Oct. 23 at 7 p.m. in Buzzard 2440

New 'Welcome' program greets journalism students

By Ashley Mefford

This year at the first Journalism Welcome, the many internships offered at Eastern was one of the main topics.

Many great opportunities to get involved at Eastern are available to journalism students. Students can participate in a daily newspaper, yearbook, television or radio station, work for magazines or a public relations firm.

Many schools, because of size, do not offer chances like these. These were just some of the different opportunities available for journalism majors discussed during the journalism informational meeting.

The event was September 10 in the Buzzard auditorium. Four main speakers were James Tidwell, department head, John Ryan, adviser to student publications, Terri Johnson, adviser to PRSSA and the Agency, and Kate Henderson, an Eastern alumna, and WEIU-TV expert.

James Tidwell welcomed the students and faculty at the opening. He gave a brief background of the journalism department.

He explained that the department gave its first degrees in 1975 and then in

1982 was accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. Tidwell told how Eastern's journalism program had its credentials updated in May and are good for another six years.

He emphasized the type of education that Eastern has to offer saying that small classes allow for a better teacher-student interaction. He also described the importance of involvement with student media, which allows students to "practice what they learn." He said students should be able to take the skills they learned in the classroom and apply them to practical use.

Professor John Ryan spoke next about student publications. He also spoke of the importance of experience with student-run publications and internships.

He discussed the relationship between how many internships students partake in with what kind of jobs they will receive once they graduate.

"One is better than two and three is better than two," Ryan explained.

The fact that public relations can often tie into journalism was also discussed at the event. "Ninety percent of public relations activities are media relations," said Professor Terri Johnson.

For public relations, one has to be able to write news releases, which Johnson said are basically in-depth stories. By getting experience with publications such as The Agency, a student run public relations firm, students can prepare for this relationship between public relations and journalism in the work place.

Students like to see what alumna in their field are doing. Kate Henderson, an Eastern alumna from last year, spoke about her experience with WEIU-TV.

"WEIU-TV News is directed and written by students," said Henderson.

She also spoke about schools that have the television equipment, but unlike Eastern, do not allow students to use it.

The key points from this informational event were to get involved in student media along with internships. Speakers stressed that writing for a publication for a few years will not only be a great experience, but will make students more qualified for jobs.

A phrase echoed throughout the meeting was "building your resumé." All of the activities students become involved with are going to set them apart from other journalism graduates.



Megan Cruz talks to Kyle Mayhugh, editor of the DEN, seated, about the American Copy Editors Society. Kyle is the president of the student chapter of ACES. Ashley Rueff, standing, right, represented the Society for Collegiate Journalists at the Welcome.

Photo by Zach Nugent

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