

Eye on Campus

Esparragoza Receives Penn State Teaching Fellows Award

By Martina Delgado - Lion's Eye Staff Writer - mdd5136@psu.edu

The Penn State Teaching Fellows Award is a title given only to a select 33 professors in their career. For the 2009-2010 year, our own Dr. Esparragoza was endowed with such award. Dr. Esparragoza so kindly sat down with the Lion's Eye to speak on his new award and reflect on his past years of teaching.

Q: How many years have you been teaching?

Esparragoza: I have been teaching for fourteen years. Seven and a half at Brandywine.

Q: What is it about teaching that makes you so passionate?

Esparragoza: I like to transfer knowledge and work with the students. They make me feel young again. Also, the current issues that students face each day is what keeps me so motivated. I like to take life and connect it with the material because the students will have to do the same thing in their profession. In fact, it's not only the transfer of knowledge, but as a professor, I help build character in the students. An instructor is a leader, a coach, a counselor; we have to attain many different roles depending on the situation.

Q: Where did your education begin? How did you become a professor?

Esparragoza: My education began in Columbia. I attended Universidad del Norte and received my Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. After I graduated, the Universidad called me and wanted me to teach one course and I ended up teaching three! I really enjoyed the experience. I then returned to receive my Masters.

Q: I understand that you work with partners in the U.S., Latin America, and the Caribbean to facilitate research experiences in an international context for students. How was it working there? Did you work with students? Was it any different than working with American students?

Esparragoza: Yes, and I worked closely with the students and it was a great experience. I have worked with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean in collaborative design projects in Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, and Peru. I have also been invited to deliver courses and workshops in Colombia, Dominican Republic and Ecuador. Although, generally speaking, in the past Latin American students were more dedicated. However, now they are the same as American students; some are interested and some are not. I guess because American students have more privileges they are more lax than Latin American students.

Q: What do you think traveling beyond the classroom brings to the learning experience?

Esparragoza: It is extremely important. The more you expose students to the real world, the more they learn. I went to a conference where a Philosophy professor asked a similar question. You can say things one thousand times in a classroom, and it may not stick. Suppose I say, 'water is low'. Students may go home and waste water, but take them to a place where people do not have water and they may think twice before they waste water again. In fact, last year I went on a trip with the honors students to Washington, D.C. When they were asked if this was their first time here a lot of students raised their hands. I was in shock because Washington, D.C. is two hours from Philadelphia. There is so much history and culture there that students should know about.

Q: Did you travel and study?

Esparragoza: No, but I wish I could have. I was talking to my wife and friends about the amount of resources kids have today. If I could go back, I would've been involved in everything.

Q: How did you feel when you were awarded the Teaching Fellows Award?

Esparragoza: It's a mix of surprise, excitement, and happiness. A lot of emotions I cannot define at this moment. I couldn't believe it! At first when a lady called my house to congratulate me, I thought it was a prank, but no. Once I received the official news, I was very excited. I am proud not for what I accomplished, but for my students. They are the reason I received this award, and I thank them.

Surpassing a Cause: Clipping Coupons

By Thomas Alan McGlinchey - Lion's Eye Sports Editor
tam5160@psu.edu

The Penn State Brandywine campus has set up a clipping station on campus for students, faculty, and staff to help clip coupons for military bases across the globe. The goal of the project was \$5000.

Dr. Laura Guertin, professor of Earth Science, has teamed with Diane Shorter, Student Affairs clerk, and they have been clipping coupons for naval bases in Germany, Italy, and Japan over the course of the year. The clippings are clipped for the essentials, whether they are non-food or food coupons. The last clipping was on Tuesday April 7, 2009, where the masses helped clip more than \$ 8,000 worth of coupons.

The clipping took place in the Tomesko Building and was held from 11:30 AM to 8:30 PM. The daily goal was reached in the first few hours, and with 2 hours left in the clipping they reached \$8800. The total for the year so far has reached close to \$13000. So keep on clipping Penn State Brandywine.

Plane Crashes and Communications with John Guinane

By Ashley Carpenter
Lion's Eye Staff Writer
anc148@psu.edu

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes of local news broadcastings and how they get the news? Well, some of our answers and thoughts were answered by John Guinane.

On Thursday, April 9, 2009, Guinane was asked to be not only a guest speaker to talk about the ins and outs of his career and discuss what happened behind the scenes of the crash of Continental Flight 3407 back in February.

As a one time student of Ms. Karrie Bowen to now a successful videographer, Guinane has seen his fair share of tragic accidents. Guinane is now a videographer at WGRZ-Channel 2 in Buffalo New York, and his job gave him the opportunity to be one of the first media personnel on the scene of the Continental crash.

The Continental commuter plane was in the final stages of landing when nose-dived into a house in suburban Buffalo, sparking a fiery explosion that killed all 49 people aboard and a person in the home. It was the nation's first fatal crash of a commercial airliner in 2 1/2 years. Since the crash was a huge news story, Guinane was called back into work that night along with everyone else who worked at the news station. One of the first places he was sent was the local community center where the families of the passengers aboard the plane were told to go and wait further information. As the story unfolded, Guinane interviewed families, captured video of emotional breakdowns of people receiving the news, and dealt with federal, state and local officials about the facts and the people who were lost in the crash.

Guinane's presentation offered his audience the opportunity to discuss various parts of the crash and numerous questions arose from students. One in particular that stood out was how does a news person deal with something this sad and do reporters and photographers ever get emotional?

Guinane's answer was simple. "Of course you do. You get emotional and you have to reason with yourself, but at the same time I also have to do my job." Guinane was also asked if psychological help is available to news personnel like it is for emergency medical responders, and Guinane told his audience that counselling is available to anyone who needs it.

"Yes they had psychologists there for the reporters because of the impact of not only the actual site but when speaking to the families, it can really hit you emotionally". He then went on saying, "It's tough as a reporter. You have to respect everybody. The one family that came out and wanted to talk about their loved one actually came to us wanting to share their story." Guinane discussed the importance of ethics in situations of tragic proportion.

"You have to approach the situation with morals and ethics; you can't run up on the family and get them to talk," he said.

As he continued, John shared some insight on being and working for an actual team. He made it very clear that you have to be willing to want to work when you're not up to it and that some days you don't sleep or eat at all! News doesn't stop just because it is weekend, and Guinane said that he has had times when he has had to work 16 hour days just to get the essential facts of a news story and make sure that it hits air in a timely manner.

Another interesting fact Guinane mentioned had to do with the state in which our economy is in. Everyone in some way shape or form, is or has been effected by this economy. Guinane's employer is no exception. Equipment that is broken doesn't get fixed as readily as it once was, people who leave the station aren't being replaced, unpaid furloughs are being put into place, and job descriptions are being changed to include more responsibility. Guinane is a photographer by trade, but in recent months he has also had to learn a lot about engineering and reporting. Guinane explained that there are now times that he is sent out to cover stories, driving and setting up a live truck, which are the big trucks with the satellite dishes on the top. Guinane told us that he has to not only be by himself but drive, set up, interview, and shoot a story and take it back to the news room to be shown on air, and before there used to be an engineer and a reporter with him.

As the presentation wrapped up, everyone in the room got to not only see Guinane's work and raw footage from the plane crash, but more so got to receive a good sense of what it is to work in the news. He brought to Penn State Brandywine students and faculty members a well-rounded and honest look at broadcast news, and helped many in attendance a sense of what it is like to work in that kind of environment.



From WGRZ Channel 2 in Buffalo, NY photojournalist John Guinane discusses the ins and outs of working in the news media when national tragedies occur. Guinane was among the hundreds of news professionals who covered the crash of Continental Flight 3407 when it crashed outside of Buffalo NY in February. (photo by Ashley Carpenter)