



Graduate Studies News

NOVEMBER 2011

Finding the Story: Simina Mistreanu by Alecia

Swasy

As project manager for the fund-raising arm of a Romanian not-for-profit, Simina helped raise over \$1 million Euros for purchase of cancer treatment equipment in Romania.

Simina Mistreanu proved you can find great stories anywhere. Even while taking Argentine tango lessons in Romania.

Mistreanu, a Fulbright scholar and first-year Journalism Master's student, met Dana Ene, who was taking tango lessons as part of her battle against breast cancer. "She was in the process of changing her life," Mistreanu said, even studying for the bar exam, something she put off for 15 years after graduating from law school.

Mistreanu wrote about Ene's battle, which was exacerbated by Ro-

mania's beleaguered health system, for an article in *Decat o Revista*. The magazine was started by Mizzou alum Cristian Lupsa, who Mistreanu met while taking his narrative writing class in Romania. The article was recognized with the Romanian Press Club Award for best feature writing.

Mistreanu's interest in improving Romania's health care system led her to a volunteer association called "Save Lives," a group founded by two women who wanted to improve leukemia treatment for children.

At the time, Mistreanu was

working for an online business daily, covering advertising, so she used her network of sources to build a communications campaign for Save Lives. One incentive they discovered was a little-known Romanian law that allowed businesses to direct 20 percent of their profit taxes to a social cause or political party instead of the government. "We raised almost 1.2 million Euros," Mistreanu said.

After Mistreanu graduates, she'll return to her home country and work as a journalist. "There is a lot to do there," she said.

Simina Mistreanu— Making a Difference

submitted by Denise Vaughn

Simina arrived this semester from Romania, studying on a Fulbright scholarship. I'm her housemate; we found each other via the J-school graduate listserv.

At just 23, with youthful features, tiny stature and a quiet, unassuming manner, one might not peg Simina as a mover and shaker. But stories about her past work and life are trickling out slowly as we become acquainted, and I grow more impressed with each revelation.

As project manager for the fund-raising arm of a Romanian not-for-profit, Simina helped raise over \$1 million Euros for purchase of cancer treatment equipment in Romania. She held this position at the same time she worked full-time as reporter for a business daily and free-lanced for an upstart magazine. Although partially paid for the fund-raising job, she put in many volunteer hours above the job requirements.

One day in late September, Simina came home flushed with appreciation and self-consciousness because peers in the *Columbia Missourian* newsroom had bought her flowers and treated her royally. Why the honor? That day she was presented, in absentia, the highest journalism award offered by the Romanian news media. It was for a story she wrote about a breast cancer victim; it had been published in the magazine *Decat o Revista* (her freelance job), founded by 2005 Mizzou J-school graduate Cristian Lupsa. Senior editor Gabriel Dobre accepted the award on Simina's behalf; he later told her that some at the Romanian Press Club event were perhaps a bit miffed, as the club president had commented publicly, "We are giving this award to a child."

Another facet of Simina's extraordinary background emerged in early October when she asked me if I



knew anyone available who could help her produce a short video. It seems that a competition she entered some time ago on behalf of the not-for-profit

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- News 2
- Presentations 3
- Publications 3
- Germany Trip 3
- Student Spotlight 4

Making a Difference, cont.

cancer-equipment project had come through. She is one of three finalists selected, one of whom will represent Romania in an international contest. The prize is 100,000 pounds, which, if won, would go toward purchase of more medical equipment. To enter, a person must have served in volunteer program sponsored by the Romanian telecommunications corporation Vodaphone; her service as project manager raising funds for the cancer equipment qualified her for contest entry.

Simina was not telling me about this as a boast. It only came out because she was upset. That day, a Monday, she had just learned that she was expected to produce a one-minute video piece by Friday, which would be posted on the contest sponsor's Facebook page and would be used as a basis for fans to vote for one of the three finalists. Simina is a print journalist; such a video is out of her skill set. Even though she was up to her ears in coursework, she felt compelled to set aside current obligations and try to win the money for her chosen cause. After Simina cast about at MU for someone to help with the video, on Wednesday a former colleague at a Romanian TV station came through for her and produced a professional video, which may be viewed at http://www.facebook.com/FundatiaVodafone?sk=app_239901402723642.

If Simina wins the Romanian segment of the competition then she will face winners from a total of 20 countries. A panel of

judges will select three finalists, and the ultimate winner will be chosen after personal interviews in Qatar. Voting ends Friday Oct. 21; at last check, Simina was in the lead.

When we discuss Romania, Simina's homesickness gently reveals. She misses close friends being at hand at any hour in Bucharest, misses speaking and writing in her native language, and misses the network she could count upon to get things done. She felt trapped and helpless at MU when facing that video deadline, frustrated by the knowledge that at home she could easily call on colleagues to make such things happen promptly.

It seems that Simina even misses Romania's problems. Compared to the US, she said, it's much easier in Romania to feel like one is making a difference, because things there are so bad. In a place with troublesome government policies that date back to communism and a dictator, people die from lack of medical equipment and care.

Simina's work to right that wrong has earned respect and recognition in Romania. She has laid a very solid foundation on which she could build any number of bigger structures. I claim no crystal ball, yet I can envision this energetic, dedicated and generous young woman honing her skills at Mizzou, then returning to her beloved home and serving an even greater benefit to her country.

News

Jacqui Banaszki was one of six featured presenters at the 2011 Media Ethics Conference hosted by the University of Central Oklahoma. Jacqui joined panels on ethics of deadline reporting, reporting on trauma and the ripple effects of the *News of the World* phone-hacking scandal. The conference was organized by *Oklahoman* presentation editor and online MA alumna **Yvette Walker**, who holds the E.K. Gaylord Ethics Chair at UCO and has for several years worked with the summer minority student workshops at the Missouri School of Journalism. **Stephanie Padgett** and students presenting YAYA research were also present at the conference.

"Missourian I" is rolling. It's the first official bicycle of the **Columbia Missourian**. And it's a classic: A Schwinn commuter, three speed, with front hand brakes and rear pedal brakes, splatter guards front and back, and this awesome '60s-style rear reflector. Many reporting students for *Vox*, the *Missourian* and *MyMissourian.com* don't have cars. Others have cars — but parked way over in the Hearnest lot or beyond. Now they can check out *Missourian I* for that news assignment two or three miles away. The checkout system presented a problem. *Missourian* equipment is generally checked through the library at Lee Hills Hall. But it's not real convenient — and most likely against university rules — to roll the bike into the library. So the barcode went instead on the bike helmet. No helmet, no bike. The bike was taken out of garage hibernation of more than 15 years. New tubes and tires were the only repairs necessary. The only thing left to get is an official *Missourian I* license plate.



First-year master's student Philip Prouhet deftly moves the ball past an opposing defender during a run on the goal in the Muckrakers' game against Swag United on October 25 on Stankowski Field. Taken by Brian Johnson.

With half of a roster of returning players, half a roster of energetic first-year master's students, and the addition of former Mizzou women's soccer player **Paula Pritzen**, the **Muckrakers** are poised to potentially have the capability to possibly find the capacity to maybe even win a game this season. Halfway through the fall

intramural season, the Muckrakers stand in fifth place in the Tuesday night 9 PM league, but their 0-2-0 record says nothing of their heart, their effort, their intelligence, or their ability to survey all of the relevant literature and compose articulate research questions. Like the eponymous investigative reporters of journalism lore, the Muckrakers Futbol Club excels both offensively and defensively, raking through the AstroTurf to expose the power structures that try to stop the ball from crossing the goal line. The Muckrakers, never shy to question political power, take on Ron Paul Texas next on Tuesday, November 1 at 9 PM on Stankowski Field.

Continued on page 3

News, cont.



Greg Perreault and his wife Mimi are happy to report the birth of their first child: Evangeline Elizabeth Perreault. She was born on Monday, October 24th, and everyone is doing just fine.

Lee Wilkins was among 25 academics and professionals running radio and television stations that are part of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to conduct the first public review of CPB's new integrity standards. The project is officially called the Editorial Integrity for Public Media and has been underway for about 18 months. The two-day meeting, which took place at the Burgess Media Ethics Center in Madison, Wisconsin on October 24 and 25, reviewed proposals that cover journalistic work, fundraising and programming decisions, all under the sometimes controversial umbrella of transparency. Those interested may find the draft documents on the CPB website.



Last month, **Betty Houchin Winfield** was inducted into the UW Dept. of Communication Hall of Fame at a reception in the UW Urban Horticulture Center. Along with the five other inductees was former MA student, **Terry Tazioli**, currently of the Seattle Times. Each inductee spoke; Dr. Winfield's speech concerned her doctoral work at UW.

Two Missouri Journalism Students Invited to Tour Germany

Submitted by **Stefan Bellm**

In July, the German Embassy invited 13 students from top journalism schools around the United States for a 10-day tour of the country's media, political and industrial landscape. The Missouri School of Journalism chose Camille Phillips, Branson, Mo., and Stefan Bellm, Nixa, Mo., to represent the school in Germany.

The tour highlighted the importance of U.S.-German relations and offered the students the opportunity to meet with German politicians, tour German media outlets and develop professional contacts with both young American and German journalists.

The tour began in Munich, where students met with the international

Presentations

Grinfeld, Michael. "A Perspective Through the Eyes of the Press: Examining Conflicting Agendas, Arising from the Reporting Process." Presented at Communications in Forensics: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Problematic Death Cases, Columbia, MO, October 2011.

Grinfeld, Michael, Uphoff, Rod & Merrell, Jeff (Prosecuting Attorney, Taney County). "Legal/Journalist Panel Discussion of Pre-Trial Press Statements and Media Coverage." Presented at Communications in Forensics: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Problematic Death Cases, Columbia, MO, October 2011.

Hudson, Berkley and Ostman, Ron. "The Cold War Hunt for John L. Spivak: How the FBI Clandestinely Tracked a Leftist Journalist and Author." Presented at American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA), Kansas City, MO, October 2011.

Hudson, Berkley. "Unions, Socialism, and the Images of Labor Journalism." Panel moderated at American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA), Kansas City, MO, October 2011.

Vos, T.P. & Li, Y. "Selling Advertising: An Early History." Presented at American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA), Kansas City, MO, October 2011.

Publications

Greenwood, Keith & Reinardy, Scott. "Self-Trained and Self-Motivated: Newspaper Photojournalists Strive for Quality During Technological Challenges." *Visual Communication Quarterly* 18:3, 155-166.



editor of Germany's largest newspaper the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. They also visited the Bavarian State Chancellery and the BMW factory, as well as touring the studios of a public youth radio station On3.

"The trip allowed us to see differences between German and American media and politics," Bellm said.

"We also learned about Germany's commitment to renewable energy and its plan to close all its nuclear power plants by 2022."

Phillips appreciated the differences but questioned whether American practices might better facilitate the development of online media.

"A desire to keep private news agencies competitive has led to limiting
Continued on page 4

Germany Tour, cont.

public broadcasting to using no more than one percent of their budget on online content, and prevents public broadcasting websites from archiving their work past seven days,” Phillips said. “While I can appreciate the viewpoint of private news agencies that don’t have the benefit of steady funding, I’m not sure it would be worth the trade-off of limiting what my organization could do online.”

In Berlin the students visited the German Bundestag, the national parliament, where they met with a representative from the foreign affairs council. They also visited the German Federal Chancellery, the Federal Foreign Office and several media outlets. The students also visited the headquarters of Solon, a global leader in solar panel technology.

“We really wanted to give participants the opportunity to mix and mingle with like-minded people in Germany in order to let them create a network they can use after the short trip is over and that may be helpful later in their career,” said Kristina Jonek, deputy spokesperson for the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. “We therefore organized get-togethers with German journalism students and leading journalists of major news organizations.”

Good Press

Members of the Fort Leavenworth CGSC cohort (who are also enrolled in our online master’s program at the same time that they complete their Army Intermediate Level Education course-work) were recently showcased in the *Leavenworth Lamp*. The article highlighted a recent trip to Poland that the cohort-amongst others- took last September. A primary focus of their ILE training has been. “Genocide and the Military Role: Identification, Prevention, and Intervention.” The trip to Poland allowed them to tour concentration camps and meet survivors in Warsaw.

At the end of the article, student Stephen Wisniew states that he has approached the tour and the focus from a strategic communication standpoint. You can read the entire article [here](#).

MA Student Spotlight: Bailey Brewer by Alecia Swasy

Bailey Brewer, who earned her undergraduate degree in psychology in 2006 from Valparaiso University, is a second year Master’s student in magazine writing. Growing up near Kansas City, she didn’t really think about a writing career, but that changed when she read one special book.

Q: What led you to Mizzou and the Journalism program?

A: I didn’t plan on studying journalism until my twenties, but I did “report” at Vacation Bible School one summer and subbed on a radio station in college. I was also named after a fictional journalist (Bailey Quarters from the show ‘WKRP in Cincinnati’), so looking back it makes some sense that I landed in this field.

I grew up cheering for the—cough—Jayhawks and at first couldn’t imagine even applying here. But because of its great journalism program and affordability I decided it would be okay to come here—although I still get flak

from friends and family for my decision, but really they’re supportive.

Q: Tell me about your thesis/project and how you arrived at it.

A: When I was a freshman in college I read the book ‘Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith’ by Anne Lamott; I would call it a book that I was searching for but didn’t know I was searching for it. Since then I have really fallen in love with the genre of memoir,

particularly memoirs that look honestly at the complexity of one’s Christian spirituality.

For my thesis I plan to take a close look at memoirs about faith and hopefully interview



some authors who write them, to examine what the spiritual memoir can offer a reader that other media maybe cannot.

Q: What are your plans after graduating in May?

A: Well somewhere down the line I want to write my own memoir (s). But in the meantime I’d like to write for magazines and/or newspapers. My interests are pretty varied, so I could

be entertained writing stories based on several different pitches. I also quite enjoy editing, so I’d be willing to explore that path.

The Missouri School of Journalism

Earl English Graduate Studies Center
Missouri School of Journalism
179 Gannett Hall
Columbia, MO 65211-1200

Phone: 573-882-4852

Fax: 573-884-5302



SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, ANNOUNCEMENT, OR ITEM OF INTEREST

Deadline for submission for the December newsletter is Monday, November 28th. Late submissions will be included on a space- available basis, or in a following month.

Esther Thorson, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies

Thorsonem@missouri.edu

Martha Pickens, Academic Advisor & Fiscal
Manager

Pickensm@missouri.edu

Sarah Smith-Frigerio, Senior Academic Advisor

Smithfrigerios@missouri.edu

Ginny Cowell, Administrative Assistant

Cowellvj@missouri.edu

Alecia Swasy, Reporter/Writer

as7n7@mail.missouri.edu