



View from former COJO Graduate Director Mike Brown's family ranch in Wyoming

The Four Mile fund is a blessing to COJO's graduate students

Many graduate students drown in debts to pay for college and textbooks, but when it comes to the last step in their master's degree, sometimes there is more cost involved.

That is where the University of Wyoming's Communication and Journalism's graduate students are lucky because they have the Four Mile fund to help them finance their thesis or creative project. The Four Mile fund started around five years ago when Michael Brown, COJO's former director of graduate studies, and his mother, Dollie Iberlin, created the fund for the department.

The name Four Mile derives from a creek in Central Wyoming between Buffalo, Casper, and Gillette, where it's called the Powder River Basin.

"It is an energy-rich area and we had oil coming through the family's ranch since the 1970s," Brown said.

"We received money from the oil company and my parents never touched that money."

Brown's step grandfather acquired the ranch in the late 1920s, a few years after immigrating from the Basque area of France.

"They found the area was good for raising sheep, which they did in the Basque country," he said.

Dollie still enjoys going to the ranch and spending her time at the old cabin, where she refuses to allow electricity to encourage her family to explore and enjoy nature.

"We might work hard for a day, and in the evening we would relax, watch the eagles and listen to the coyotes at night. Mom would cook on an old wood stove by the light of a kerosene lantern."

Brown directed the graduate program for 12 years and had many experiences with students. "My mom had this fund sitting there and she didn't need it. She asked if I would like to give it to the university and I said, 'Sure!' After being involved for so long, I really wanted to give back to the department."

That has been a big gift for students.

"Prior to the funding, students had to pay for their data collection for their thesis or equipment for their creative project," COJO's current director of graduate studies, Kristen Landreville said.

(Four Mile, cont. on p. 2).

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College of Arts and Sciences
Communication
and Journalism

(Four Mile, cont. from p.1).

"If they needed a higher quality data for them to publish their work, they would have to pay that on their own or ask for their master's thesis chair to pay, which was just awkward and burdensome for students."

Now, students have the Four Mile fund to help them ease such a burden. "The amount varies every year, but each student can be given some money to help them with their thesis, data collection, or professional project," Landreville said.

For example, some former students used the fund to host a website, create videos, or design a social media campaign, while others use it to pay people to take a survey for their thesis.

Erendira Abigail Morales graduated from the master's program in 2020 and is grateful for the assistance.

"Without the Four Mile Fund, I may not have been able to complete a sound thesis - one that is currently on its way to publication!" Morales said. "Funds allowed me to pay an undergraduate student to help me code television news stories and tweets, and ultimately reach reliability in the results."

"Most people use it for their thesis or project, but we can fund people to travel to conferences as well," Landreville said. Brown loved to attend conferences and wanted to make sure that students had additional support to do so if they wished.

Andrew Wee is a COJO graduate student who used the fund to attend a virtual conference to help him complete his master's project about missionaries, and their use of video and social media to connect with their sponsors. "This conference was extremely helpful in creating a framework and conceptualization of what the world of missions was like outside of my immediate understanding," Wee said. "Furthermore, it showed me the direction of research and prominent researchers in the field, which was fundamental to my project paper."

Aside from those, the department has used the Four-Mile fund for an international cooperative program between the COJO graduate program and the International Journalism Department at Kazakh National University (KazNU).

"It was a program where every summer we would be visited by two or three KazNu students as part of their international research or internship requirement," Brown said.

The students would use the library for their thesis research and meet with some of COJO's faculty to discuss their ideas. The thought was to use the funding to expand into a more formalized program.

"KazNU provides funding to get the students here and we provide academic resources and help to cover the costs of their stay," he explained.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, nine students from KazNU came for a few weeks in 2018. When the pandemic subsides, COJO hopes to have a joint class with KazNU and UW next summer.

"This would be a great opportunity for UW and KazNU students to interact with each other and in a cross-cultural dialogue," COJO's department head, Cindy Price Schultz said. "COJO faculty can also get that experience as they teach topics for the participants."

The funding has helped students succeed at a higher level.

"We have had students who used the funding to gather higher quality data and have their research published in a journal," Landreville said. "That helps them with their careers or getting into a doctoral program."

The fund is a blessing for COJO's graduate students as it enables them to go beyond their financial limits and drives them to go further than four miles in their future, pun intended!



Mike Brown, center, wears a traditional Kazakh outfit to welcome the nine Kazakh students, back row, who visited the COJO Department a few years ago. Also pictured are his wife Bernae, to his right, and former UW students, Paerhati Palizhati and Dilnoza Khasilova.

What is entrepreneurship in Communication and Journalism?

by Cindy Price Schultz

When I think about entrepreneurship, I think about my wedding.

A student of mine used her own photography business as her client for my advertising class, so when I got engaged, I asked her if she would like to shoot my wedding. She hadn't done a wedding at that time, but she talked to me to work out the details.

Now, Dyann Diercks, a 2013 undergraduate and 2015 master's COJO graduate, has done countless weddings and had numerous other photographic experiences.

She still enjoys the freedom of owning her own business and the ability to flow creatively.

So, what does it mean to be an entrepreneur or business owner in creative fields, like writing, design, social media, public relations, news, or many others?

I am part of a committee that is looking at entrepreneurship and innovation in the state of Wyoming and how UW can be part of that. Wyoming has been discussing diversifying its economy, but the

COVID situation has sped that up.

In the meetings we have had, we have talked about the entrepreneurial research, businesses and educational opportunities at UW, but from the communication and journalism perspective, what would be most helpful to current entrepreneurs or business owners?

What do you think we should teach to our majors or minors that could help them develop their own businesses?

We have discussed these overarching issues in our department, but we could really use the input from you, as alumni and friends of COJO.

You could send me an email me at cprice@uwyo.edu to give feedback, but we could also do virtual focus groups or some other forms of feedback.



Diercks took this wedding photo when she was an undergraduate student in the COJO Department.



Dyann Diercks is holding her cat, Julio.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts and helping mold some educational opportunities for students and entrepreneurs in the future.

Thank you in advance!

Lambda Pi Eta joins in the new normal of Zoom events

Based on a story written by Dana Miller



Brooke Darden

Brooke Darden and Adlynn Jamaludin, president and vice president of Lambda Pi Eta, are leading their chapter through the virtual landscape that has become the new normal for college organizations and clubs.

Lambda Pi Eta, Omicron Pi Chapter, is the National Communication Association graduate and undergraduate honor society for University of Wyoming Communication and Journalism majors.

UW has had a proud chapter for many years and has served a kick start for many communication and journalism majors.

"It fosters a creative and rewarding environment for COJO students

to build on their professional development, exchange ideas in their field of communication, build stronger relationships with faculty and enhance students' opportunities post-graduation," Darden said.

"I was excited by the networking opportunities and resumé building, as well as the ability to create a community of friends within my major," she said. "I transitioned into the social media advisor and treasurer before becoming president this past semester."

(Lambda Pi Eta, cont. on p. 4).

(Lambda Pi Eta cont. from p. 3).



Adlynn Jamaludin

Although Covid-19 has hindered all clubs and organizations on campus, Lambda Pi Eta has been able to communicate with its members. The transition to online meetings and events had its patches, but members overcome it because they wanted to connect and build relationships.

“We would usually have various events planned out for our members, but when Covid-19 hit and forced us to move online, we struggled a bit in trying to adapt to online classes and also manage club activities,” Darden said. “However, we did have some events in Fall 2020 and more in Spring 2021.”

Instead of only catering the events to Lambda Pi Eta members, the group decided it would be best to extend the invite to all of COJO’s students. “Recruiting new members has been hard due to the pandemic not allowing us to meet in-person; hence, we thought having other COJO students attending our events would be a good recruitment strategy,” Jamaludin said.

“We adapted most of the events we normally would

do in person to an online format, which sounded easy in theory, but had some challenges.”

Lambda Pi Eta hosted a “Fix your LinkedIn profile” event in February via Zoom, inviting the Advising, Career and Exploratory Services Center to help improve students’ LinkedIn profiles. “The event was a success, as we had all of our members and three non-members attend the event,” Jamaludin said.

“I prefer attending physical events, but I’m just grateful that these events were offered online as opposed to not at all,” Chaley Dimoff, a non-member attendee, said. “I would absolutely love to attend more of these events, especially if they could also be catered to the graduate crowd.”

In addition to skill building, Lambda Pi Eta has provided other support.

“The transition to online classes has been difficult,” Jamaludin said. “However, Lambda Pi Eta has been a resource for me to have a group to connect with and help each other through this.”

“With the success of the LinkedIn event, we are eager to provide our members with more events,” Darden said.

“Not only is this an excellent opportunity to network with others in your field, but also it is an outstanding addition to any job or graduate school application.”

COVID-19 and the Greater Yellowstone Area

The year 2020 has been unthinkable and changed the way we live. The pandemic took a toll on all of us and affected many industries across the globe, including the tourism industry, which was Conor Mullen’s main inspiration for his photojournalism project.

Mullen, the recipient of the 2020 Larsh Bristol photojournalism fellowship, focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the Greater Yellowstone area over the last summer.

The Larsh Bristol photojournalism fellowship is an annual award for UW students to support their strong visual storytelling projects.

The award is named after Larsh Bristol, a 1973 journalism graduate who spend his life making meaningful photographs. Through this award, Larsh’s memory and love for photography lives on.

What Mullen came to learn was, despite the pandemic, “some areas were as crowded as ever.”

Mullen added, “I was able to get photos from a distance of large crowds of people not social distancing, many of them not



A staff member sweeps an empty room at the Yellowstone Lake Lodge in Summer 2020. (Photo by Conor Mullen).

wearing masks, but observing this natural phenomenon that they would otherwise as if this whole thing wasn’t going on.”

2021 COJO Awards Recipients



Colt Duncan

Larsh Bristol Photojournalism Fellow

Colt Duncan, a zoology major, and honors and photography minor from Excelsior Springs, Missouri, was recently named the 2021-2022 Larsh Bristol Photojournalism Fellow. Duncan plans to photograph the wild places in Wyoming that are off the beaten path, such as Medicine Bow National Forest, the Red Desert, Thunder Basin National Grassland, the North Platte River and the Bridger-Teton Wilderness. The award is in memory of Larsh Bristol, a UW journalism graduate who worked at many Wyoming newspapers after graduation.



Maricris McLane

Top 20 College of Arts and Sciences graduates

Maricris McLane, a communication major and public relations minor originally from Lucban, Quezon, in the Philippines, was named one of the Top 20 College of Arts and Sciences graduates for the 2020-21 school year. In addition to her scholastic duties, McLane is a cadet in the UW Army ROTC.



Elizabeth Chambers

Top 20 College of Arts and Sciences graduates

Elizabeth Chambers, a communication and sociology major, and honors and Spanish minor from Jackson, was named one of the College of Arts and Sciences Top 20 graduates for the 2020-21 school year. Chambers was also a former Judith Muhlberg Study Abroad Scholar winner when she studied in Spain.



Bailey Patterson

Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistants

Bailey Patterson, a communication graduate student from Casper, was named one of the Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistants for the University of Wyoming. According to the notification letter, this award is the University's highest honor conferred for graduate student teaching and is a testament to her extraordinary dedication to effectively reaching and challenging her students. Patterson taught COJO 2010, Public Speaking.

(Awards, cont. on p. 6).

(Awards, cont. from p. 5).



Fabian Martinez

Judith Muhlberg Study Abroad Fellow

Fabian Martinez, a communication major from Rock Springs, was named the Judith Muhlberg Study Abroad fellow for 2021-2022. He plans to spend Spring 2022 in Japan to learn more about the culture and immerse himself in the language.



Madison Crepeau

COJO Top Professional Project

Madison Crepeau received the COJO Top Professional Project award for her work, "The World Needs More Leaders: A Leadership Communication Course for the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University of Wyoming." Crepeau's project chair was Dr. Cindy Price Schultz. Crepeau was also selected speaker for the graduate student commencement for UW this May.



Heather Baker

COJO Top Thesis

Heather Baker received the COJO Top Thesis Award for her work, "Online Learning in Nigeria: A 'Developing Country's' Limitations to Emerging Educational Methods." Baker's thesis chair was Dr. Tracey Patton.



Madison Clark

Wyoming instructors in Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE)

Madison Clark, a communication master's student from Wellfleet, Nebraska, was named one of the top Wyoming instructors in Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE) for first-year students. Clark taught COJO 2100 Newswriting and graduated in May.

SUMMER 2021 COJO FACULTY KUDOS

Dr. Tracey Owens Patton received the 2021 Shepard Symposium Social Justice Award.

Dr. Patton was also named the 2021 Sandeen Lecturer in Humanities.

This is one of the highest speaking awards at UW, other than the Presidential Lecture being the

highest. The event has been tentatively scheduled for December 13, 2021.

Dr. Cindy Price Schultz was part of a team that published, "Sharing Pro-Marijuana Messaging on Social Media: The Moderating Role of Legislation," in the *Journal of American College Health*.