

Winter | '12

## Jessica Weimer's Portfolio

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## Introduction

This document contains a compilation of my writings from a public relations class I took in the fall of 2012 at Indiana University's School of Journalism. In this class we learned AP Style basics and how to write professional documents such as profile pieces, news releases for print and social media, backgrounders, brochure copy, speeches, newsletters and more. This portfolio, I believe, showcases my ability to write for a wide variety of audiences from CEOs to the general public. It is meant to display the many different types and styles of writing that public relations professionals experience in their ever-changing careers. I hope you enjoy!

## News Release

We were given this news release assignment to inform the Bloomington public about a new seminar the School of Journalism will offer in 2013. All of the information and the quotes were given to us to use as we saw fit. We were told to highlight the two will-be instructors for this workshop, distinguished journalists Joseph Coleman and Thomas French.

This news release was actually chosen (along with one other from my class) to be sent to the public announcing the seminar.

## *Indiana University School of Journalism*

### News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Dec. 3, 2012

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
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### **Resolve to sharpen your reporting skills in 2013**

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – Indiana University’s School of Journalism has announced a three-day intensive reporting workshop for students, professional journalists and the public alike. Distinguished journalists Joseph Coleman and Thomas French will teach the seminar in Ernie Pyle Hall January 11th through the 13th.

Graduate students will be eligible to attain three class credits for this workshop. Members of the public are encouraged to join Indiana University instructors and students for specific fees listed in the table below.

	Early Registration Rate (before December 28 <sup>th</sup> )	Regular Registration Rate (after December 28 <sup>th</sup> )
School of Journalism Alumni	\$400	\$450
General Public	\$400	\$500

Participating students will learn how to discover powerful stories anywhere and generate vivid, newsworthy and inspiring content. They will polish their interviewing skills and learn to plan and report on complex stories when facing a strict deadline.

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Thomas French is a Pulitzer prize-winning reporter. He is a master in journalistic storytelling and in teaching as well.

"Tom is a life-changer," says a former student of French's. "A teacher, a mentor, he connects with students, develops their skills, and pushes them to be better writers and people."

Joseph Coleman came to Indiana University after a reporting career lasting 20 years. He covered stories throughout the world that have appeared in numerous publications.

"Mr. Coleman has a wealth of experience in this area, but I think his greatest asset as a teacher is his patience and interest in students and their original ideas," says one of Coleman's past students.

Anyone feeling inspired to improve their writing and other journalistic skills in 2013 should feel welcome to sign up. Please see given contact for more information.

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## Profile Story

This profile story featured the Bloomington Rotary Club's weekly newsletter highlights Bob Shanks and his achievements within the education system. For this assignment, the class was instructed to meet with and interview candidates for this "Rotarian of the Week" section in *Roundabout*. We were then given a word limit and were told to write in terms of what was most interesting and newsworthy about our interviewee.

Bob Shanks, Rotarian of the Week

From *Roundabout*, the Bloomington Rotary Club newsletter

### **Retiree back in school to promote voting**

Bob Shanks may be retired from a full-time job, but he's not retiring from his passions anytime soon. Shanks now inspires youth in the Bloomington community and beyond.

Shanks and his wife, Linda, spend the majority of their time guiding young people to the voting booths. They talk to high school students about why it's so important to vote.

"Indiana is number 48 out of 50 states when it comes to voter turnout. It's terrible," says Shanks. "Only 25 percent of 18-year-olds vote."

So far, Shanks has spoken to roughly 500 students. He shows them how to fill out voter registration forms.

"I wasn't sure how kids would react," says Shanks. "But it's been successful so far."

Shanks is no stranger to the education system. He studied social studies education at Northern Illinois University before receiving his master's degree in counseling from Southern Illinois.

He started his career in public education as a teacher, then became a guidance counselor. Shanks was then a principal in Teutopolis, Ill., for three years.

After his tenure as principal, Shanks was a superintendent for eight years and then worked for the School Board Association coaching schools on the "No Child Left Behind" legislation.

Raised in Canton, Mo., Shanks has spent his adult life around the Midwest.

Shanks and his wife have two children and two grandchildren. When he's not spending time with family or speaking to students, Shanks is a self-declared expert in people watching.

Shanks says, "I'm a people person. I've spent my whole life in education because I like to be around other people who like people."

Shanks' enthusiasm for education isn't dwindling. He will continue talking to students around Monroe County about the importance of voting.

"Kids are what it's all about," he says, "Working in education is a service occupation – we can't lose sight of that."



## Backgrounder

For this assignment, we were instructed to select a prominent topic on Indiana University's campus and write a backgrounder that would appear in a media kit. We did secondary research on our topic of choice and sectioned our piece to make it readable.

Indiana University  
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## Backgrounder

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Oct. 2, 2012

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### **Student Drinking and Driving on and near Indiana University's Campus**

Drunk driving is an issue everywhere, particularly in college towns. Indiana University is no exception, which is why Bloomington and Monroe County police are taking measures to decrease the number of fatalities, crashes and arrests caused by student drunk drivers.

#### **Why is this issue important?**

According to a FOX News article, 2.8 million college students in America drove under the influence of alcohol in 2001, a half million more than in 1998. A college drinking prevention site, [collegedrinkingprevention.gov](http://collegedrinkingprevention.gov), estimates that 3,360,000 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 drive under the influence of alcohol. In the state of Indiana, it is illegal for anyone, even those of legal drinking age, to operate a vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of over 0.08 percent.

#### **What has Indiana University done in the past to prevent drunk driving?**

Over the years, Indiana University and the Bloomington community have implemented various campaigns in order to wipe out drunk driving. These efforts have been primarily geared

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toward students aged 18-24.

In 2006 during an infamous party week on IU's campus called Little 500, police and Indiana University Emergency Medical Services got together to create a drunk driving crash simulation. This event took place during the intermission of the Little 500 qualification race in late March. IU Communications said that it hoped to provide students with the "first hand reality" of what could happen to them or their friends if they drove while intoxicated.

IU Communications reported another large movement on campus aimed against drunk driving in 2007. The campaign was called "Get a Ride!" and featured signs inside academic buildings and on buses and streets informing students of options to get home safely on weekends.

"We're trying to be proactive, not reactive," said Monroe County Prosecutor Chris Gaal. "We're trying to get out in front of the problem with education."

In 2011, Monroe County police reported that 80 people aged 21 to 24 in Monroe County were involved in alcohol-related crashes, the highest number for any county in the state. Indiana University, in March of 2012, introduced a "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign. The Indiana Daily Student interviewed Randall Frykberg, Director of Student Legal Services, on the subject of increased drunk driving arrests in Bloomington as a result of this initiative. He says he is concerned with the growing number of cases he has seen, and that he is seeing students who are "way beyond buzz driving and are almost falling down driving."

### **What is happening currently to prevent drunk driving?**

To continue these preventative measures this school year, the Indiana Daily Student reports that the crackdown on DUI arrests relies on thousands of officers from over 250 law

enforcement agencies throughout the state. Troopers from the Indiana State Police went as far as to conduct a random sobriety check at an undisclosed location in Monroe County in August of this year. Drivers were required to take a breathalyzer test and present a form of identification to police on duty.

The success of these individual events is difficult to measure. The Indiana University Police Department hopes that over the years these various campaigns and messages will work to decrease students' attitudes that drunk driving is acceptable and worth the risk.

The Bloomington Police Department encourages students to find safe alternatives to driving home drunk. The Indiana University "Midnight Special" bus system runs from 11 p.m. until 4 a.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights to transport intoxicated students around campus. Greek houses on campus also provide "sober drivers" for those leaving or arriving at a fraternity house. Bloomington police also note, according to a 2011 Indiana Daily Student article, that a \$25 cab fare is worth it in comparison to hundreds of dollars in legal fees and a threat to yourself and those around you.

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#### Works Cited

"Drive sober or get pulled over campaign increases arrests."  
<<http://www.idsnews.com/news/story.aspx?id=86058>>.

"Drunk Driving, Alcohol Deaths, Up Among College Students."  
<<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,150881,00.html>>.

"'Get a Ride' Campaign Seeks to Prevent Drunk Driving."  
<[http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document\\_id=1764](http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=1764)>.

## Brochure Copy

Over Thanksgiving break, my classmates and I were told to go to our five favorite spots in our hometown and write something that could appear in a brochure. We were told to make it as personal as possible to attract people to our town. I visited all the places on my list except, of course, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Carnival.

## **The Beauties of Brownsburg**

### **Also Referred to as “Bulldog Country”**

Take a deep breath – inhale the fresh Indiana air and take in the gorgeous scenery. If you enjoy the little beauties in life mixed with a twinge of city atmosphere, you’re in the right place. This is what the town of Brownsburg, Ind., has to offer. Not too big, not too small. Not too busy, not too boring. And I’m convinced it has the best sunsets of anywhere in the Midwest. Just 20 minutes outside the bustling city of Indianapolis, the purple and white “Brownsburg Bulldog” street signs always welcome me and let me know I’m home. Whether you want to dine out at Dawson’s Too, take a walk surrounded by nature in Arbuckle Park or get your rock climbing on at The Crag, you won’t want to leave. They say you can’t choose your hometown, but I wouldn’t have it any other way.

Here are my personal favorite attractions in Brownsburg. Check them out and I promise you won’t be disappointed!

#### **Dawson’s Too**

May I suggest the chicken parmesan? Dawson’s Too is my favorite restaurant in Brownsburg. It’s located right in the center of the town, so if you want the grand tour take a drive to Dawson’s. In this quaint building, your meal always comes with light music and a pleasant atmosphere. Dawson’s also has chicken parmesan to die for. I must always make room for dessert when I choose to dine here. I have sampled the key lime pie and the chocolate mousse, both of which I would highly recommend. This restaurant is perfect for a family dinner or a first date.

#### **Arbuckle Acres**

Even if you’re not a nature person, as I am not, you’ll enjoy the peaceful surroundings of Arbuckle Acres. If you’re looking for quiet, though, don’t go on a summer Saturday afternoon! Brownsburg’s recreational baseball league for kids holds games there. Even if you don’t have anyone to cheer for, I always find it fun to hang out in the bleachers and watch the young children running around in circles. Arbuckle Acres has a huge playground (not just for kids!) and a series of walking trails. Step out onto the bridge overlooking the river and you have perhaps the most picturesque view in Brownsburg.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> of July Carnival**

If you’re around during the beginning of July, venture to Arbuckle Acres to enjoy deliciously fattening food and some rides you won’t soon forget. My favorite ride is called The Zipper. Ride if you dare! The carnival always provides excellent people-watching opportunities - believe it or not! If this is one of your favorite pastimes, as it is mine, you will not be disappointed. Don’t pass up the lemon shake-up stand – it’s perfectly refreshing and scrumptious at the same time.

#### **Challenger Center**

Looking for a fun and educational visit with your family? One of my favorite activities as a child was to play in the Challenger Center. The Challenger Center stands as a NASA-simulation building, with airlocks and job stations and real astronaut technology. I will never forget the moment the mission leader said to my class, "Your mission was successful!" It's an experience you and your family will never forget. You'll be able to spend fun quality time and actually learn something simultaneously. What could be wrong with that, right? If you don't want to do a shuttle take-off simulation, just visit the planetarium. It's beautiful and still enlightening. Who knows, you might learn something too!

### **The Crag Rock Climbing Gym**

Ready to get your rock climbing on? Although you'll probably be incredibly sore the next day like me, it's an experience you don't want to pass up. Work off some of those calories from Dawson's, strap in and climb away! If you make it to the top of the tallest, most difficult wall (I never can), you get to sign your name anywhere on the wall for bragging rights. At the top of every wall, even the easy ones which I most frequent, a bell hangs at the top that you can chime when and if you reach it. The Crag is probably my most favorite thing to do when I'm bored around Brownsburg. It's a fun workout, if there ever was such a thing!

## Company Executive Speech

This assignment was designed so we could write a speech and perform it in front of our classmates. We were to choose a company, do research from its most recent annual report, and write for its CEO.



The Way Forward for J.C. Penney  
Written for: Ron Johnson, CEO

Since 1902 when J.C. Penney's ideals were originally laid out on the table, customers have been our primary focus. We welcome our customers as guests and treat them as we would like to be treated: fair and square.

So where does our company go from here? How do we push through the obstacles we're facing and come out stronger than ever? We're going straight back to the no-nonsense, focused logic that launched J.C. Penney in the first place. Our customers *each* deserve a J.C. Penney experience that they will remember and cherish. That's what will set us apart.

There's no doubt that customer values have shifted a bit since 1902. Through our recent rebranding, we feel that J.C. Penney now embodies the lifestyle of the picture-perfect, stylistically sophisticated American family. This change welcomes customers to make J.C. Penney part of their experience. *We* dress their kids for their first day of kindergarten, last day of high school and *we* send them off to college. But with Ellen DeGeneres as our new spokesperson, that family feeling has a modern element that makes J.C. Penney something new again, something to anticipate.

Our Americana-inspired rebranding not only moved us to create a new red, white and blue J.C. Penney logo, it also called us to reevaluate some of our products as well. We feel that a company *for* the American lifestyle should provide the *most* innovative, fashionable choices at a realistic price. This year in our stores, we will be launching a brand we are very excited about: Martha Stewart cookware. A perfect example of an easier, happier lifestyle.

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We want our customers to love going shopping again. Where are you from? A big city? A small town? We're making J.C. Penney *the* place to shop all across the board. This customer experience lies in the hands of our prized associates. We make them a team of helpful, driven people just like our customers. They will, this year, be doing the best work of their lives. We will continue to teach them the values of the company. We hire high-quality associates with a passion and knack for learning. We will continue to provide customers with efficient, friendly service.

We are making 2013 our year of transformation. We're looking at where we've been, in good times and bad, to inspire us to move forward with more force than ever. It won't happen in the blink of an eye. It will be hard work. But with our motives pinpointed and our hopes high, we'll get there. We will not disappoint; we will work together to make J.C. Penney the store our customers deserve. America's favorite store.

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