

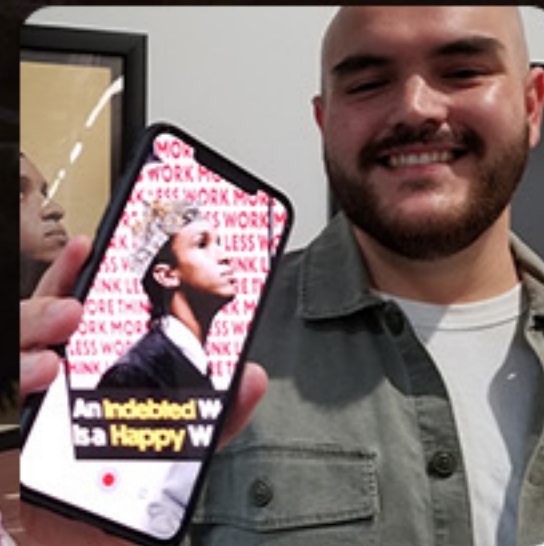
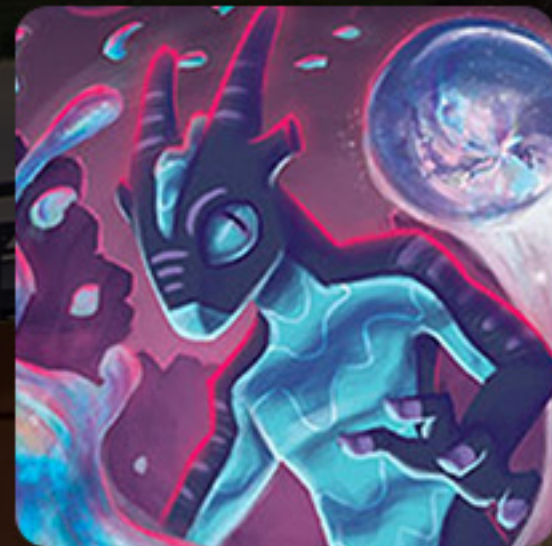
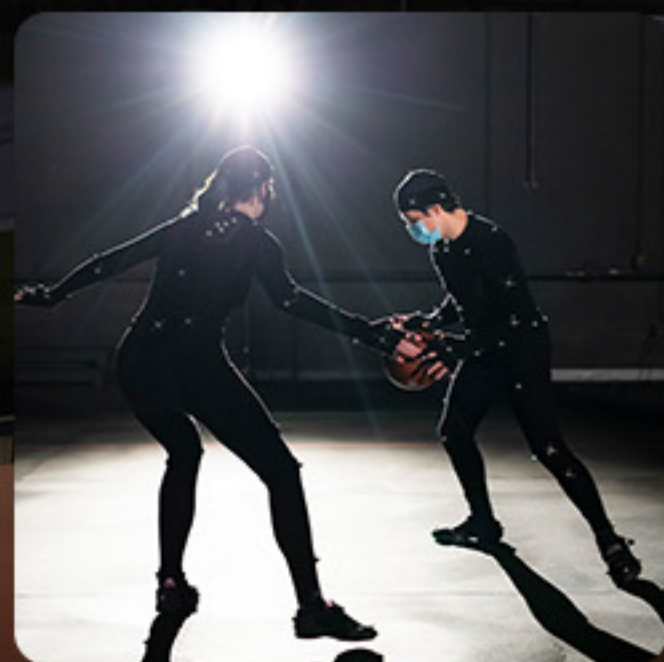


UCF

Nicholson School of Communication and Media

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Annual Report '22-'23



MAIN CAMPUS

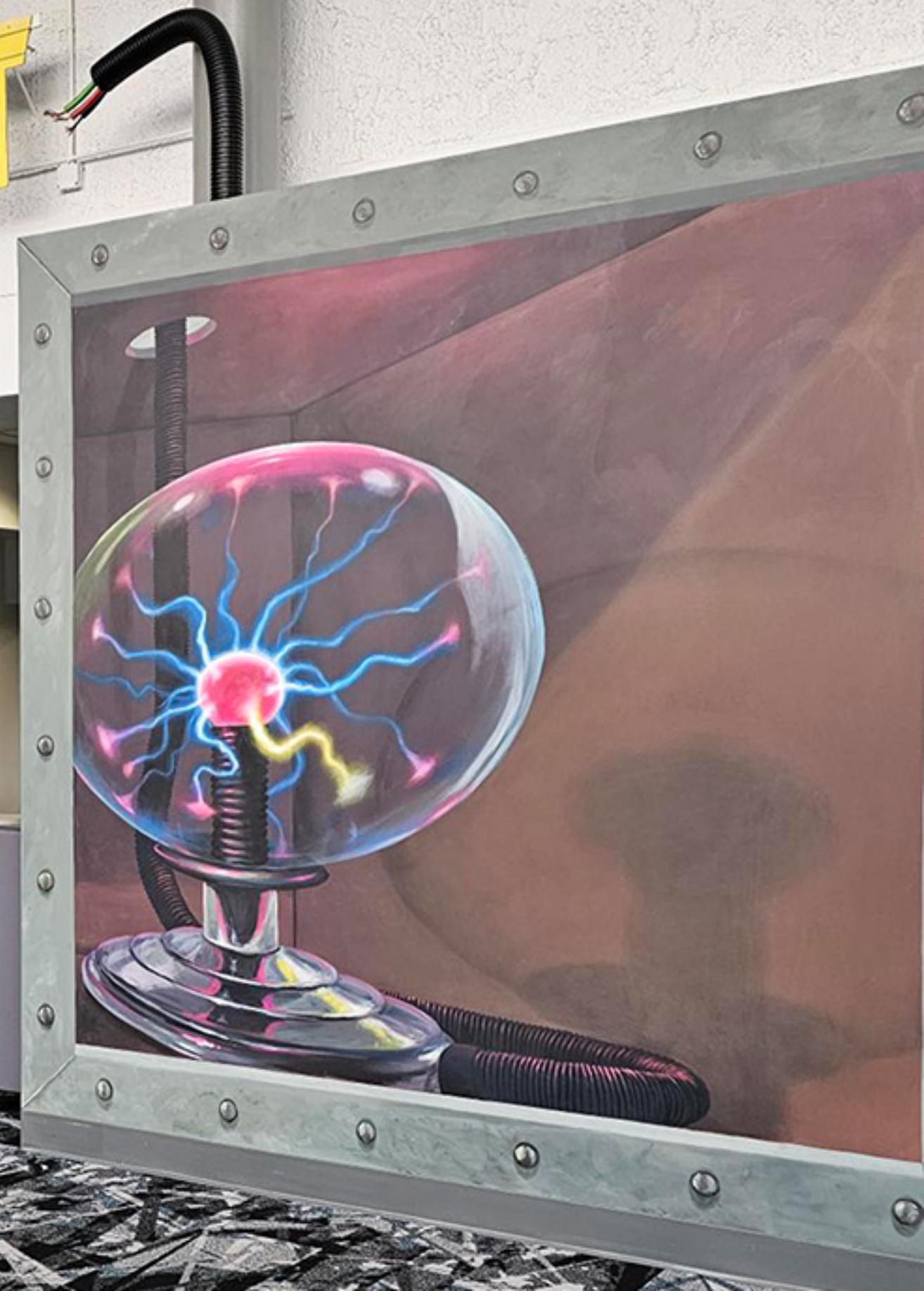
Nicholson School of Communication and Media

TWO HOMES - ONE MISSION

DOWNTOWN

CONNECT

CC IF YOU SEE
SOMETHING,
SAY
SOMETHING,
AND WE'LL DO
SOMETHING.
NEW POLICE
IMPORTANT NUMBERS
AND REMINDERS





A message from the Director

Greetings from the Nicholson School of Communication and Media (NSCM), the largest academic unit in UCF's College of Sciences with nearly 4,450 active students. This annual report should give you a glimpse of how NSCM faculty, staff and students have performed over the past year. I hope you take pride in these accomplishments.

Our students are diverse and come to NSCM to gain the necessary education and training for successful careers following graduation. These students continue to win prestigious academic and professional awards. They are inspired by faculty—among the best in the College and University—who regularly receive teaching and research awards, achieving prestige among their professional colleagues. Of course, our staff members support NSCM in ways that assure our continued success. We also are supported by COS Human Resources and Finance Centers to improve business processes. We are a resolute team with an eye on reaching for the stars.

Our commitment to NSCM strategic goals has not waived. We seek to enhance our eight undergraduate programs; strengthen our five graduate programs; increase partnerships across the spectrum to attract and maintain our cutting edge; and provide an environment where all can thrive and enhance the reputation of our programs and the University. These goals continue to motivate. We believe NSCM stands out. We make the two-campus locations work to our advantage as we provide specialized learning opportunities for our students.

Through it all, our alumni and supporters remain committed to providing innovative ideas to help the Nicholson School respond to a changing world. Our Advisory Board and alumni chapter create opportunities for engagement throughout the year; and through our donors, NSCM supports student groups, mentorship programs for new faculty and staff, the speech and debate teams, opportunities to increase the global footprint of our scholars and creative artists, student scholarships and more!

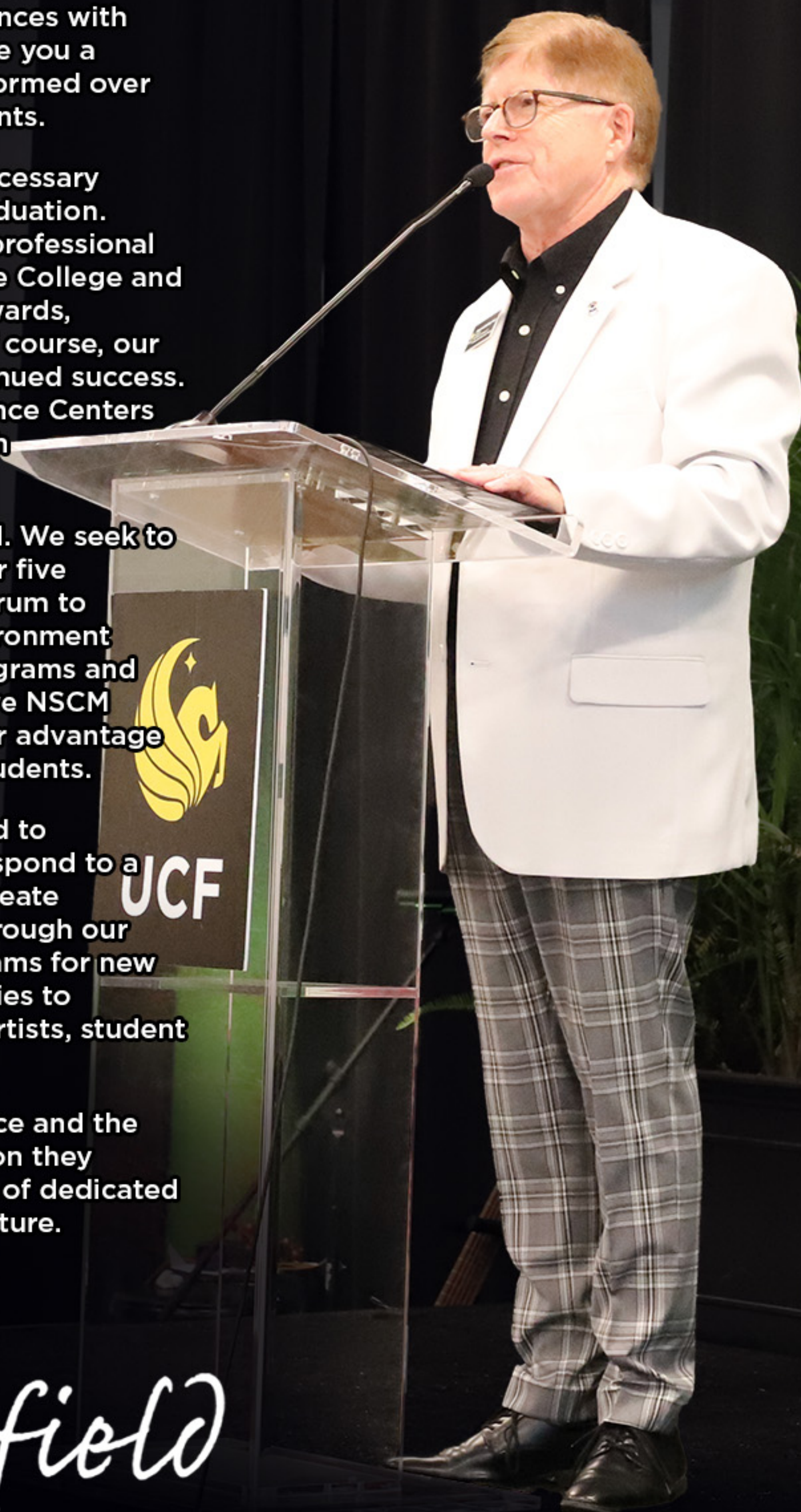
We remain committed to the highest standards of excellence and the success of our graduates provides evidence of the education they received due to the intellect, talent, energy and inspiration of dedicated faculty and staff. We seek your help as we move into the future.

Best wishes,

Robert S. Littlefield

Robert S. Littlefield, Ph.D.

Director and Professor





DEGREES AWARDED

COMMUNICATION

411

FILM AND
MASS MEDIA

256

GAMES AND
INTERACTIVE MEDIA

251

FLORIDA INTERACTIVE
ENTERTAINMENT
ACADEMY

71

The Nicholson School received the Most Improved Graduation Rate Award from the dean of the College of Sciences this year. We owe this honor not just to the students and faculty working hard in the classroom, but also to our advising team, which helps students stay on course to graduate on time.

OUR FIRST Ph.D. GRADUATES!

In December 2022 the Nicholson School congratulated its first graduating students of the Strategic Communication, Ph.D.

The program was introduced in 2019 and focuses on preparing students for an advanced career in communication and related fields.

Dr. Soares is continuing his research in a post-doctoral position, while Dr. Papagni plans to apply what she learned to her position as the public information officer for the City of Orlando.



Dr. Rodrigo Soares



Dr. Ashley Papagni

Hall of Fame Inductee

Scott Anez



The Nicholson School has recognized 36 outstanding leaders in the communication and media industry in the past 23 years with the prestigious Hall of Fame Award. This year, NSCM was proud to present the award to local broadcast announcer and UCF alum, Scott Anez.

Scott is recognized for his 30 year broadcasting career in Central Florida. It started with WUCF while he attended college. He currently hosts Central Florida's Evening News on WDBO.

POST-DOCTORAL SCHOLAR



Dr. Robb Lauzon is the Nicholson School's first Post Doctoral Scholar, responsible for conducting community-based research on the department's Transparency Project: Winter Park Sunshine. Winter Park Sunshine is dedicated to keeping the residents of Winter Park informed about the activities and decisions of their governing agencies. Dr. Lauzon's latest contribution was a visual timeline that highlighted the milestones for constructing the Winter Park Library and Events Center, made to foster civic literacy at the level of local government.

DIRECTOR'S HONOR ROLL

During the Spring '23 semester, Dr. Littlefield invited the top students at NSCM to a congratulatory luncheon to reward them for their academic achievements.

These luncheons will become an annual event to help the director and faculty on the Student Success Committee increase student success at NSCM through student feedback.



Communication

NSCM HOSTS FREE SPEECH WEEK

The Nicholson School hosted events from Oct 17-20 to celebrate the First Amendment. These events included a panel of experts in communication and media; a screening of the documentary "Filthy Dreamers"; an exhibition by the Speech and Debate team; and the Braver Angels keynote event. NSCM hosts these events to both celebrate and emphasize the importance of free speech in the U.S. and other parts of the world where people still fight for their freedom.



Ad/PR STUDENTS CHARGE ON

13 students were selected to participate in the Multicultural Advertising Internship Program (MAIP) over Summer 2023. MAIP is one of the top diversity initiatives in the Ad/PR industry.

40 students were cleared to sit for their Certificate in Principles of Public Relations exam, an industry credential. NSCM is the only school in Florida with a program to support student efforts to earn this credential.

Two student groups submitted their work to the Golden Image Awards, a statewide competition for PR professionals and students.

UCF SPEECH & DEBATE NATIONALS

UCF's Speech and Debate team has made a name for itself over the past few years, and this year was no different as the team continues to stand out in competitions across the nation. With so many talented students, mentored by Director of Forensics Jonathan Conway, UCF's Speech and Debate team claimed accolades including two 2023 National Championships, a 7th straight year as state champions in debate sweepstakes and ranking 11th nationally in speech and debate.



Film and Mass Media

UCF JOINS NBCU ACADEMY

NBCU  ACADEMY

This year, NBCU Academy selected UCF as one of 15 new partners focused on preparing students to succeed in the media industry. Benefits of the partnership include scholarships, internship opportunities and opportunities to learn from some of the nation's top journalists. As part of their mission to promote diversity and inclusion in media NBCU Academy also plans to focus on enhancing classes in the Nicholson School's Hispanic Media Initiative. This initiative provides an outlet and opportunities for students interested in working in a multicultural media environment.



JOURNALISM STUDENTS WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

NSCM journalism students were awarded the prestigious Ed Murrow Award for their work on 'The Moore Project' in collaboration with WUCF TV, Central Florida's PBS station. Their project, 'Freedom Avenue - The Legacy of Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore,' told the story of Harry and Harriette Moore, civil rights activists from the tiny town of Mims, Florida. Students from Professor Rick Brunson's journalism class gathered information from the source, visiting Freedom Avenue and interviewing people who have been impacted by the Moores and their legacy. The Ed Murrow Award is widely recognized as one of the most prestigious awards in journalism.

STUDENTS CREATE FILM FOR HISTORIC MUSEUM

Students in a multidisciplinary honors seminar worked with Assistant Director of Film and Mass Media Dr. Lisa Mills and Dr. Robert Cassanello to conduct research, shoot interviews and gather archive photos and footage for a film about the Wells' Built Museum. Formerly the Wells' Built Hotel, the museum now houses memorabilia from Orlando's African American community and displays about the Civil Rights movement. By January 2023 the film was screening for visitors of the museum, and in May 2023 the film was awarded a prestigious Student Production Award by the Suncoast Regional chapter of the American Academy of Television of Arts and Sciences.

Games and Interactive Media

RISING IN RANK

The Game Design BA rose from rank No. 13 to No. 6, according to the Princeton Review. The publication's list of top college programs for video game design is based on institutional survey data collected in 2022 from administrators at 150 institutions offering game design coursework and/or degrees, which includes academic opportunities in game design, faculty credentials, and career outcomes. Ongoing efforts by faculty to improve the curriculum should lead the program into the top five in upcoming years.

The
Princeton
Review®

#6
Game Design
Program

While the hard work of our students is a part of this rise in recognition, we truly couldn't rise to these heights without the passion and dedication of our game design faculty and the Assistant Director of Games and Interactive Media, Dr. Natalie Underberg-Goode.

UCF LEADS EXTENDED REALITY RESEARCH

The Nicholson School's own Assistant Professor Dr. John Murray is taking part in a nearly \$5 million U.S. National Science Foundation-funded project at UCF. The Virtual Experience Research Accelerator (VERA) will improve human subject research in extended reality (XR) environments. It also focuses on expanding the range of human subjects to people with disabilities that could benefit from the research.

CROSS CULTURE GAME JAM

Game Design BA and MA students took part in non-profit Games for Change's Cross Culture Impact Jam. This unique competition gathered students from schools across North, South and Central America to collaborate in teams and make games themed around inclusivity in just 48 hours. UCF students were on winning teams for the following awards at the end of the competition: Impact Award, Most Creative Award and Visual Excellence Award.



Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy

**1000th
Student
Enrolled**



FIEA enrolled its thousandth graduate student for the Fall 2023 semester since the program started in 2005.

**Ranked
#2
Globally**



The program was rated as the No. 2 graduate video game design program globally by The Princeton

**\$135k
of
Support**



The FIEA program supported students with \$135,000 in fellowships and scholarships during the academic year.

An Industry-Leading Program

FIEA graduates consistently find jobs with an average starting salary of \$73,000. The students graduate in the disciplines of 3D Art, Animation, Level Design, Technical Art, Programming, Technical Design and Project Management. Many of the graduates have obtained employment at some of the world's best entertainment studios and simulation companies such as Electronic Arts, Iron Galaxy, Epic Games, Ubisoft, Universal Studios, Bungie, Microsoft Games Studios, Insomniac, Dream Haven, Deck Nine Games, Velan Studios, Lost Boys Interactive, Wonderstorm, Jam City, WildBrain, Third Time Games, Unhumanly and Pocket Piñata.



The games Hermea, K3LVN, Soul Shard and Drain Runner were recognized this year at UCF Downtown. Game plaques were presented to each team member marking the completion of their capstone projects. The 71 new alumni were each awarded a Master of Science in Interactive Entertainment degree.



INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media encourages students to strengthen their global perspective by studying abroad at one of our partner institutions.

Students can earn credit toward their degrees while spending a semester abroad.

NSCM's global communication and media studies efforts are in continuous development. Some of these opportunities include: a dual degree program in Germany, NSCM faculty abroad and visiting scholars.

Salzburg, Austria

Located in the heart of Europe, Salzburg College offers a full-service study abroad opportunity for NSCM students.

Canberra, Australia

The University of Canberra is a young, vibrant university with a focus on learning and creativity, as well as creating opportunities and positive outcomes for students.

Madrid, Spain

IE University's beautiful medieval campus is in the city of Segovia, located just 25 minutes from Madrid and its international airport by high-speed train.

Other Locations Include:

- Bournemouth, England
- Ilmenau, Germany
- Enschede, Netherlands
- Zaragoza, Spain
- Jöngköping, Sweden

Dual Degree in Germany

The Director of the Nicholson School, Dr. Robert S. Littlefield, travelled to Germany in November to meet with university officials at TU Ilmenau. In an effort to advance a project several years in the making, the Nicholson School and TU Ilmenau are collaborating to create a dual degree master's program between the two universities that will provide students a more global academic experience. Students from both schools in the program will travel for classes over a semester, and by the end of the program earn a diploma from both universities.



Dr. Nan Yu in China

Dr. Nan Yu attended an international conference held in Xiamen University in China and delivered a talk on History of Public Health in China: From the Disease Prevention and Health Communication Perspectives. In April 2023, Dr. Yu was invited by Fushan Medical Association to give a three day workshop to 400 healthcare workers in Guangzhou, China, during which she covered the topics such as health campaigns, physician's burnout, physician-patient communications, empowered patients, physicians and social media and public understanding of diseases.



VISITING SCHOLARS

This year, the Nicholson School hosted several international scholars from China and Germany to expose students to international perspectives and increase the school's global outreach.

Dr. Christina Schumann and Professor Elisabeth Wagner-Olfermann visited NSCM from TU Ilmenau, Germany. During each of their visits they gave presentations about their research and academic experiences in other countries.

Dr. Juan Chen and Dr. Zheng Tang are working on projects with faculty at NSCM. Dr. Chen is working on a project regarding how psychological distance and narratives can impact women's responses to breast cancer messages; while Dr. Tang is working on a project regarding immigrant workers and their health conditions in labor-intensive jobs.



Dr. Christina Schumann



Elisabeth Wagner-Olfermann



Dr. Juan Chen



Dr. Zheng Tang

WHO WE ARE

The Nicholson School of Communication and Media (NSCM) is a diverse and large academic unit in the College of Sciences at the University of Central Florida. NSCM provides intellectual leadership in the areas of communication and media through quality academic programs and significant scholarly research and creative activity.

Our goals are:

- To build, strengthen and support the quality of our undergraduate and graduate programs.
- To expand external partnerships for research opportunities and scholarships.
- To build the reputation of the school as a welcoming place where everyone can thrive.

GO KNIGHTS! CHARGE ON!



UCF

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Orlando, FL 32816-1344

UCF Downtown Campus

500 W Livingston St.
Orlando, FL 32801

Find out more about NSCM at: communication.ucf.edu