Professor relates to students in new way

By Wilma King-Jones

As the Spring 1997 semester ended, my students and I talked about our plans for the summer. I jokingly told them that while I was at Gannett News Service peering out the window from the 10th floor newsroom to one of the country's most impressive sights - our nation's capital, I would be thinking of them. They of course replied "Yeah, right!"

Ironically, I thought about them often. While I made preparations to move to Arlington for my summer residency, I kept thinking that this was no different from what students must go through when they move away for summer internships.

Accepting the job for me meant eight weeks away from family, friends - familiarity. But conversely it meant new experiences and opportunities for growth personally and professionally. Maybe sharing this aspect of my experience can help students who contemplate moving away to internships or after graduation to jobs.

I used the Internet to find out more about where I would be living - things like where the grocery stores were, which subway line I needed to take to get to Pentagon City Mall and sightseeing ventures, restaurants, hospitals, doctors and such.

The program began with an intensive week long debriefing at American Press Institute (API) in Reston, Virginia, where I became acquainted with 24 professors from across the country - I now consider many of them friends.

I had no expectations about what I wanted to gain from the experience - I gladly accepted everything. Someone asked what I'd be doing and my answer was, "Whatever I'm asked to do."

Well, among other things, I was asked to work in both news and features as a copy editor; come in early or stay late; fill in for vacationing staffers; travel with a reporter to Capitol Hill; attend corporate staff, budget and department meetings. I also attended a reception at Newseum and later had to write a story about the exhibit for which the reception was held.

In essence, I benefited in ways I never dreamed possible because I was flexible.

There were surprises - for me the greatest of which was being in the Washington, DC area on Fourth of July - what a sensation!

Because GNS is a wire service, there was the feeling of empowerment - knowing you're among the first to know when news breaks (the main reason I didn't mind coming in early or staying late)!

Located across the street from the twin towers are Freedom Forum and Freedom Forum's Newseum. I could view the front page of every daily in the U.S. and abroad or at the Newseum's Newsbyte Cafe I could access any on-line newspaper. It was thrilling to see students' and graduates' bylines.

In a few years, Gannett will have moved to Tyson's Corner. Capital Hill, Newseum and Iwo Jima Park - the fringe benefits - will not be as accessible for some as they were for me. But no matter where you go - flexibility, planning, and willingness to grow and learn are imperative to having a successful residency.

I gained so much from my residency-personal development, professional development, enriched knowledge to incorporate into my teaching, but most important, I can relate to students in a unique way.

The Link serves the Department of Journalism's students, faculty and administrators. Suggestions and materials will be accepted from anyone in the department.

Seth Alexander, co-editor
Sarah Ramsey, co-editor
Dr. Augustine Ihator, adviser
SPJ introduces students to real world

By Mikki Olmsted

Students always are looking for something fun to do on Thursday nights.

Western's chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has booked several events for this semester to introduce students to the real world of journalism. The service organization sponsors various programs throughout the year to help the Department of Journalism as well.

The place to be on Tuesday and Thursday nights is the Garrett Conference Center rooms 100 or 103. Events vary from week to week, and are highlighted by an entertaining speaker from a major newspaper or magazine.

An example: Columnist Tim Chavez spoke Sept. 4 to about 30 students on the art of column writing. The SPJ chapter along with the Hearst Foundation will welcome Frank Gibson, Metro Editor and Government Focus Editor of the Tennessean, on Sept. 11 to share his secrets on how to access information from government records.

Herald wins KPA General Excellence

The Herald won its second straight general Excellence Award from the Kentucky Press association during the Summer Convention in Covington.

Competing in the Associates Division in the 1997 Better Newspaper Contest, the Herald placed first in freedom of information, lifestyle section/page, local feature pictures and special edition/section.

Second place awards were for best use of graphics and local news pictures. The Herald received third in editorial page, original ad idea and display advertising and honorable mentions or certifications of merit for front page, best use of photo illustrations, local sports pictures, sports page/section and typography.

JoAnn Thompson, Herald business manager, and Bob Adams, Herald adviser, represented the Herald at the convention.

Hey writers and photographers!

Want to get published and have portfolio pieces?

This fall The Link will hold a contest for the best feature, photograph and ad. Applicants will be picked from various classes or they can be submitted directly to the PR Lab in GW Rm 307.

With six more issues left in the semester, one has plenty of opportunities to build an impressive portfolio.

PRSSA + Pizza

By Sarah Ramsey

Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) is off to an awesome start this year with almost 40 students attending the first meeting. Over pizza and sodas, students learned about the exciting opportunities that comes with being a member.

The next meeting will be September 11 at 6:30 p.m. with Mrs. Wilma King-Jones speaking about her experiences this summer and how they relate to public relations.

As a member of PRSSA, you have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience through Creative Exchange and/or the WebTeam.

Creative Exchange is a student-run public relations agency and we are currently contracted with such businesses as the Corvette Museum, STOODY COMPANY and the WKU Accounting Department.

WebTeam is a student-run group within PRSSA that is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the Journalism Dept. and the PRSSA web site.

The latest PRSSA information can be found outside our office door, GW Rm 307 or call 5840.