



# K A P P A T A U A L P H A NEWSLETTER

National Society Honoring Scholarship in Journalism and Mass Communication

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AEJMC Convention Issue

## Baruch College historian wins Mott award

Through wars, economic disasters and epidemics, America's newsboys (and girls) helped deliver the nation's news for more than 100 years.

Who were these children? What did they sacrifice and what did they gain as they helped contribute to the United States' economic, cultural and social development from the 1830s to 1940?

Historian Vincent DiGirolamo chronicles their stories and efforts in his book *Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys*, the winner of the Frank Luther Mott/Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award for 2019.

DiGirolamo, a history professor at Baruch College at the City University of New York, will receive the award Aug. 7 as part of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's annual convention, which is being held virtually this year.

"He brings together extensive research, a rich theoretical knowledge gracefully deployed in the story line, and amazing language skills to produce a book that is a tremendous contribution to the history of journalism," said Holly Hall, national president of Kappa Tau Alpha and a contest judge.

That history feels especially relevant today as low-income workers, in particular, grapple with economic distress and fewer guarantees in a "gig economy," said Hall, a professor at Arkansas State University.

DiGirolamo specializes in 19th and 20th century United States history, and recently created a [podcast](#) about the book for Journalism History. *Crying the News* was published by Oxford University Press.

Named in honor of Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Frank Luther Mott, a longtime University of Missouri professor and leader of Kappa Tau Alpha, the award honors the best research-based book about journalism or mass communication published during the year. The award has been presented annually since 1944.

Other finalists for 2019 were Aimee Edmondson for *In Sullivan's Shadow: The Use and Abuse of Libel Law during the Long Civil Rights Struggle* (University of Massachusetts Press); Anne Nelson for *Shadow Network: Media, Money, and the Secret Hub of the Radical Right* (Bloomsbury Publishing); Reece Peck for *Fox Populism: Branding*



Vincent DiGirolamo

*Conservatism as Working Class* (Cambridge University Press); and Heidi J.S. Tworek for *News from Germany: The Competition to Control World Communications, 1900-1945* (Harvard University Press).

## Northern Illinois' Cassidy named adviser of year

When Bill Cassidy was asked to take over as KTA chapter adviser at Northern Illinois University in 2007, he had only been teaching at the school for a year. Thirteen years later, he's still volunteering his time and making sure deserving students are recognized.

In August, Cassidy will be honored as the 36th winner of the William H. Taft Outstanding Adviser award at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication virtual conference.

As the KTA adviser, Cassidy plays an essential role in making sure NIU top students garner the recognition they deserve. Cassidy said one of the highlights of his year is inducting students during the annual awards banquet.

"A lot of my students probably don't even know it's a possibility, and so they're very excited about it," Cassidy said. "To see them get rewarded for all their hard work is something I take a lot of pleasure in."

The KTA chapter at Northern Illinois University was established in 1983 and is named after Quintus C. Wilson, who received the first Taft award in 1984. Mehdi Semati, chair of the Department of



CASSIDY

Communication at NIU, said she enjoys watching Cassidy initiate new KTA members.

"We all witness it every year, and it is one of those things that makes us proud to have Bill as a colleague," he said.

Knowing the campus was likely to be closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cassidy worked early in the semester to ensure that 2020 graduates would receive their honors even though the banquet was canceled. He also will be the national Kappa Tau Alpha vice president for 2020-2022.

In addition to his service and teaching, Cassidy has conducted research related to sports journalism, media credibility and AIDS coverage. For the last few years, he has concentrated on issues facing gay and lesbian athletes. In 2017, he received a \$500 KTA research grant and has since published two books on how sports journalists covered athletes' coming out stories.

Cassidy said the most obvious difference was that the male athletes were covered much more

extensively than the women, even though the women Cassidy studied were more accomplished in their respective sports.

"It's pretty obvious that the coming out stories of women athletes are considered much less newsworthy by sports journalists," Cassidy said.

Much like KTA has always been a part of his time at NIU, sports have always been a part of Cassidy's journalism career. An avid fan of horse racing, he spent 16 years as a columnist and correspondent for *The Daily Racing Form*, which Cassidy describes as "the bible of the thoroughbred horseracing industry."

He then returned to school and received a master's degree from the University of Houston and Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. Now, he teaches courses on sports journalism, editorial writing and more.

Cassidy is involved in other organizations besides KTA. He serves as an affiliate for the school's Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality; is an active member of AEJMC; and is the journalism area coordinator at NIU.

# BYU's Carter to lead Kappa Tau Alpha

Edward L. Carter, director of the School of Communications at Brigham Young University, will become the 46th president of Kappa Tau Alpha on Sept. 1.

Carter succeeds Holly Kathleen Hall, of Arkansas State, who served from 2018-2020.

"I am truly honored to serve KTA in this new role," said Carter, who previously served as vice president. "I have greatly valued my association with KTA since being inducted as an undergraduate student 25 years ago, and I look forward to helping today's top students experience the benefits of association with KTA.

Carter credits Hall and KTA Executive Director Beverly Horvit with working to keep Kappa Tau Alpha relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. As most universities moved to hold virtual initiation ceremonies, Horvit recorded a congratulatory message for new initiates nationwide, and the leaders also decided to waive initiation fees for deserving students facing financial difficulties.



CARTER

The newly elected vice president is Bill Cassidy, professor of journalism at Northern Illinois University. Horvit was re-elected executive director/treasurer.

Carter has served as BYU's KTA chapter adviser for 13 years and received the national KTA Adviser of the Year award in 2016.

A professor of communications, Carter occasionally engages in legal consulting and represents news media clients and others in federal and state courts. Carter's academic research focuses on intellectual property and freedom of expression in U.S. and international law.

He completed a postgraduate degree in International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford, holds an LL.M. (master of laws) degree, with distinction, in Intellectual Property from the University of Edinburgh School of Law and received a Juris Doctor magna cum laude from

the BYU J. Reuben Clark Law School. He also holds a master's degree from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and a bachelor's degree in communications from BYU.

Cassidy is the Journalism Area Coordinator in the Department of Communication at Northern Illinois University, where he has served as KTA adviser since 2007. In 2017, he received a KTA Chapter Adviser Research Grant and a Keith P. Sanders Outstanding Service Award.

At this year's AEJMC convention, Cassidy will receive both KTA's William H. Taft Outstanding Adviser award and AEJMC's Dorothy Bowles Public Service Award. Cassidy has been a member of AEJMC for more than two decades and has served in several leadership roles, including as head of the Newspaper and Online News Division.

Horvit earned her Ph.D. at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism, where she is an associate professor professional practice. She has served as the executive director of KTA since March 2017.

## Three KTA advisers win research grants

With help from KTA, Enakshi Roy, of Western Kentucky University, headed to Kolkata, India, to do archival research on Bengali women's magazines.

Roy received a \$1,000 Kappa Tau Alpha adviser research grant to support her work, as did Patrick File, the KTA adviser at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Roy is analyzing essays written by women in 11 Bengali periodicals from 1865 to 1947, the period known as the Bengali Renaissance. She said she has already seen two distinct themes in the discourse related to women's education in India: women should be trained in the humanities and home-related fields, and the more radical idea that women should receive the same education as men.

For his research, File will examine media coverage of legal problems in photography from 1885 to 1920, including copyright and consent.

"Understanding how journalists and the public used law and legal discourse to define the social role of journalism can help us better understand the crucial and dynamic relationship between journalism and



ROY



FILE



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democracy," File said.

He plans to review archives in New York City and at the University of Utah.

In addition to Roy and File, Sheri Broyles, of the University of North Texas, also received a KTA research grant. The \$500 grant will help Broyles with her planned book on photojournalist Junebug Clark.

Clark has worked as a photojournalist for more than 30 years with clients ranging from Jack Daniel's Distillery to Time and National Geographic. Since retiring,

Clark has volunteered his time helping students at the Mayborn School of Journalism at UNT. Broyles will interview Clark to capture his stories related to photography from childhood to retirement. She calls telling Clark's story her "passion project."

Since KTA began the grant program in 2003, the society has awarded 37 grants totaling more than \$31,500.

## IN BRIEF

### KTA expands by two chapters

The number of Kappa Tau Alpha chapters grew to 98 in 2019 with the addition of Azusa Pacific University and Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Azusa Pacific University is a private liberal arts university of about 10,000 students in the Los Angeles area. The college is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission, formerly known as the accrediting council of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The journalism program is 13 years old and based in the College of Arts.

SIU Carbondale is the flagship campus of the Southern Illinois University System. It is a research-intensive and comprehensive university with about 15,000 students. SIU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The School of Journalism is based in the College of Mass Communication and Media Arts.

### KTA celebrates 110 years of excellence

Despite the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the national honor society anticipates initiating member No. 75,000 this year, its 110th anniversary.

"I am so thankful to the many dedicated chapter advisers who ensured that their deserving students were recognized this year even as their physical campuses closed," said Beverly Horvit, KTA executive director.

Kappa Tau Alpha was founded in 1910 at the University of Missouri by Walter Williams, dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, and is the seventh oldest national college honor society.

Membership is by invitation only by one of the society's 98 campus chapters and is based solely on scholarship and character.



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