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Journalism Department Alumni Newsletter

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SF State grad gives back to the department

By Minerva Razo ('17)

Former San Francisco State College Daily Golden Gater photo editor Robert Hollis ('71) knows how much work student editors put into producing lab newspapers and magazines. That's why he recently made a gift to the Journalism Department that provides $1,500 in stipends for publication editors. Donations totaling $1,025 from alumni have been raised following Hollis' gift.

"I think being an editor of a student publication is a great opportunity," Hollis said. He was paid $40 a semester as the
photo editor of Phoenix, forerunner of today's *Golden Gate Xpress*.

Becoming an editor gave Hollis the opportunity to learn news story development as well as what constitutes a sharp photo and a dedicated journalist. While working on the Phoenix, Hollis cut classes to pursue photo assignments - though, in retrospect, it's a habit he wouldn't recommend given its impact on his grades.

After graduating in 1971, Hollis enjoyed a long career working as a reporter for news organizations including the *Hearst San Francisco Examiner*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Oakland Tribune* and *Advertiser* in Honolulu. He is now happily retired and looking for ways to give back to the community. "San Francisco State really led to what I consider a great career," Hollis said.

"The sense of community in j-school is incredible," Kelsey Lannin, *Xpress* editor-in-chief said. "Knowing we have supportive alumni who have been in our shoes means a lot. Thank you!"

"I am grateful that the work I contribute will eventually pay off," Arash Malek, editor-in-chief of *Xpress Magazine*, said. "Not only figuratively but literally with the gift that the Hollis family has generously given to the department."

"You have a short time on earth and you can do good in a lot of different ways, but I think helping society keep journalism alive is an important tool," Hollis said. "If we didn't have newspapers, we'd be in pretty bad shape. The idea of doing good through writing and exposing the wrongs in society makes our society better."

More than a thousand dollars has additionally been raised in donations so far. Join the Hollis family and give back the Fourth Estate at SF State by [clicking here to donate now](#)!
Alexis Terrazas keeps relationship between *El Tecolote* and SF State thriving

*By Minerva Razo ('17)*

Since taking over as editor-in-chief of *El Tecolote* in 2014, former SF State student Alexis Terrazas endeavors to include students in the publication. "We've created a steady partnership between *El Tecolote* and SF State and its students," Terrazas said. "It's so important because I was a student at SF State. I was in Jon Funabiki's Ethnic News Service class."

*El Tecolote* was born out of a La Raza Studies class run by Juan Gonzales ('70) in 1970. Since its creation, its Mission District-based office covers any and all matters concerning the city's Latino community.

"I think it's more important than ever to be responsible journalists in this country - especially when covering communities of color that are disenfranchised and I really believe that's the work that we do at *El Tecolote*," Terrazas said.

The bilingual newspaper publishes mostly volunteer writers including aspiring journalists at SF State. Students can enroll in community journalism classes to work with *El Tecolote* directly.

The 10,000-print-circulation newspaper received eight awards from the 2016 San Francisco Peninsula Press Club including first place for a sports feature and first place for blog and commentary.

"My goals for *El Tecolote* are to continue doing what we have been doing," Terrazas said. "I want to also boost our multimedia coverage because before we were just uploading stories online and that's not enough now. You have to tell stories in different ways."

"Now that we have a steady stream of contributors from SF State, I feel like we need that help. At the same time, we provide an opportunity for students who want some experience in writing, reporting or photography."

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**SF State professor brings Imperial County students into journalism**

*By Minerva Razo ('17)*

After a long trip from Imperial County, in Southern California, to San Francisco, 10 high school students spent a week at SF State learning the ins and outs of multimedia storytelling.

SF State journalism professor Jon Funabiki is working with about 125 Imperial County high students near the border with Mexico. Over the summer, 10 lucky students arrived at SF State to
Imperial Project students with Jesse Garnier. Photo by Scot Tucker.

"We're working directly with three teachers and their classes at Brawley High School, Imperial High School and Central High School," Funabiki said. "One of the things that we're attempting is to figure out how to help the students tell stories or focus on environmental journalism in their communities."

"The long-term goal is to get the students to become community storytellers of some kind," Funabiki said. Students were tested on their storytelling skills and will be tested again next summer through more workshops.

Visual and video storytelling training was provided by Jesse Garnier, assistant professor and co-founder of SFBay.ca, and Scot Tucker, director of photography and co-founder of SFBay.ca.

"This was a pilot; an idea," Funabiki said. "We will continue to work with the schools in the Imperial Valley. We're not sure whether we will do another summer workshop but we will continue to do training."

Funabiki will continue working on journalism programs next summer both with students and media outlets.

"In the Silicon Valley project that's happening next summer, we will be working with Bay Area news outlets and help them cover important regional policy issues and housing will be one of those issues," he said.

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Alum makes waves in the surfing world

By Minerva Razo ('17)

Elizabeth Pepin Silva ('94) has spent two decades photographing female surfers and was one of the first women to do so.

"I've been shooting photographs of women surfers since 1996, which apparently I'm one of the first women to do. It's not something that a lot of women do; it's physically very hard," Silva said during a phone interview.

Silva's photos will be featured in a new book, next year, showcasing women surfers.

"I started photographing women because I saw a need to show the public an alternative view of women surfers. Women are portrayed very poorly in surf magazines and mainstream media," she said.

It angers Silva that there are too many photos of sexualized bikini-clad women holding a board but rarely photos of them surfing.

She started shooting "One Winter Story," in 2006. It's a film about the first woman to surf the Mavericks, Sarah Gerhardt. What started as a 15-minute video turned to an hour-long critically acclaimed documentary. Silva is excited to be working on her third surf film KÄia`Äina Nei (This Land).
"The skills I learned at SF State and later utilized at Alternet came into play when I made documentaries and other television programs at KQED as a staff associate producer," Silva said. "I was lucky that I got paid to learn on the job how to make documentary films."

Check Silva's work on her website "On the Waterfront."

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**Grads thriving in ever-changing journalism jobs - and one wins the iPad!**

*By Minerva Razo ('17)*

As a current student, it's encouraging to hear from the Journalism Department's alums. Over the summer, 237 former students completed an online survey about their experiences at SF State and their current job status. One lucky respondent won an iPad mini.

Out of those surveyed, 83 percent were employed and over half are currently working in jobs related to journalism.

"This is great news!" Journalism chair and alum Cristina Azocar said. "Our graduates are getting good jobs in an industry that is constantly changing."

Graduates said that the journalism degree requirements were relevant to their professional goals and felt very satisfied with the overall quality of the journalism program as well with the overall quality of instruction. Some felt that changes are necessary in the journalism curriculum including writing for radio and television journalism, and bringing in real-life lessons about the corporate world and marketing.

"We do this survey every three years to assess how students fare when they graduate," Azocar said. "As a faculty, we discuss the results to see how we can do better. These comments really help us keep up to date with our curriculum."

iPad winner Maria Guevarra ('06), business partner to the chief revenue officer at AppDynamics, said, "the journalism skills I've learned have helped me tremendously throughout my career. I'm very detailed, organized and diligent and use my investigative skills to get things done and problem-solved. I wouldn't be where I am now without the discipline and education I received from SF State."

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**Second "Day Of" journalism event brings ethics into the spotlight**

*By Minerva Razo ('17)*

The way we tell a story directly impacts the way other people perceive the world.

Martin Reynolds ('96), director of Reveal Investigative Fellowships, and SF State alum, said this to students during the Journalism Department's "Day Of Ethics" program on Oct. 26.
Reynolds was one of seven speakers for the department's second "Day Of" event, which had a reoccurring theme: diversity and ethics.

"In every single session there was a very important aspect of dealing with issues of race and gender and culture," Journalism chair Cristina Azocar said. "That was really important to us because it's very important to the department.

The event kicked off as Reynolds set the tone of the day with the introduction of the notion of reporter's implicit bias.

Each speaker devoted significant time to diversity and its role in ethics. Award-winning documentary filmmaker Samantha Grant ended the day by talking about her implicit bias in the making of her 2011 film "A Fragile Trust," which tells the story of Jayson Blair, an infamous serial plagiarist in the journalism world.

"I think SF State is one of the most progressive departments in the country," Reynolds said in an interview after the panel. "In terms of the kind of curriculum it offers - like making diversity a priority and rethinking its approach to certain kinds of curriculum."

Among the other speakers on the five panels were assistant multimedia director of the Sacramento Bee Sue Morrow, director of Pictures of the Year International Rick Shaw, KALW Radio's "Your Call" host Rose Aguilar and award-winning documentary photojournalist Rick Rocamora, Wired Magazine articles editor Adam Rogers, and director/producer Samantha Grant.

The department will continue the "Day Of Journalism" program next fall with a new theme.

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**What's Up with Faculty?**

*By Minerva Razo ('17)*

**Rachele Kanigel ('83)**

Associate professor Rachele Kanigel spoke at Kindai University in Osaka, Japan, and Kyoto University of Foreign Studies about social media and the U.S. election. She also worked with student journalists who covered the Japan University English Model United Nations conference.

During her visit to Japan, Kanigel started to make arrangements for a summer study-abroad program in Kyoto. Next summer she will teach international reporting with the new ieiMedia program in Kyoto. Students will work with bilingual Japanese students, who will serve as guides and interpreters. Together, Japanese and North American students will hunt for stories, conduct interviews and produce text, video, photo and multimedia stories for an online magazine. Students will also meet with local journalists and take classes in Japanese language and culture.

The program, which will run June 26-July 21, is open to journalism students and recent graduates. For more information go to [http://ieimedia.com/kyoto](http://ieimedia.com/kyoto).

**Steve Rubenstein**

For still unfathomable reasons, Steve Rubenstein retired his 2009 retirement from the San Francisco Chronicle, rejoined its reporting staff and is currently on his 41st year with the paper. He recently cycled the coast of Maine and ate his first lobster. He's delighted to be back on the third floor of the Humanities building teaching newswriting, a skill that one day he hopes to get the hang of.

**Denise Richards**
Denise Richards' documentary, *Shanghai Deco*, about the art deco design and lifestyle in 1930s Shanghai, was chosen to participate in the Industry Showcase at the *International Documentary Film Association* in Amsterdam in November.