

Dear alumni and SC&I friends,

As another academic year at SC&I comes to a close, we take a look back at the many student and faculty accomplishments this past semester.

We celebrated many of these accomplishments during a special [Honors Day](#) event on May 5. We took the opportunity to thank Professor of Communication Jen Theiss for her six years of excellent leadership as the Director of the Ph.D. Program and to wish Jon Oliver good luck as he departs from his 29 years as our Assistant Dean for Information Technology and moves to become the Chief of Staff to Chancellor-Provost Francine Conway.

Read on for an overview of a few more student and faculty achievements.



Congratulations to SC&I's 2023 Graduates

On May 11, we celebrated our SC&I convocation with 1,039 students receiving a degree from our school, and I was thrilled to officiate for the first time as interim dean. Our undergraduate student convocation speaker was Samantha Marshak who majored in Journalism and Media Studies and Cognitive Science and minored in Philosophy. It was a truly joyful day!

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## COMMChella 2023

Our Department of Communication launched COMMChella 2023, the second annual #BeCOMM communications and social media campaign to celebrate and promote the communication major at Rutgers. The COMMchella Music Festival took place on April 24 at The Yard on the College Avenue campus and it was a semester highlight.

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## Journalism and Media Studies Showcase

On May 4, we had the Journalism and Media Studies Film and Media Showcase featuring student work from a wide array of JMS courses. The event was sponsored by the JMS Department and Alexander Library and was followed by the induction of excelling students to the KTA honor society, dedicated to Knowledge, Truth, and Accuracy!



## Ph.D. Research Colloquium

We held the final colloquium of the year on April 26 showcasing all the practicum research projects that have been completed by our Ph.D. students in the past year. The afternoon included oral presentations and a poster session.

## Faculty News



Assistant Professor of Communication Shawnika Hull received the first-ever Chancellor-Provost Award for Excellence in Community-Engaged Scholarship, and Professor of Professional Practice and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Journalism and Media Studies, Steven Miller, received the Chancellor-Provost Award for Excellence in Teaching. [Read More](#)

Hull has also been named a recipient of a 2023 University-wide Faculty Year-End Excellence Award. [Read More](#)



The Rutgers University Board of Governors approved the promotions of three SC&I Assistant Professors: Shawnika Hull was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure in Communication; Sunyoung Kim was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure in Library and Information Science; and Caitlin Petre was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure in Journalism and Media Studies. [Read More](#)



Professor of Journalism and Media Studies and of History David Greenberg was named a 2023 Guggenheim Fellow by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; he is the sole 2023 Guggenheim Fellow in Biography. [Read More](#)



Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies Melissa Aronczyk received the Outstanding Book Award from the National Communication Association, Public Relations Division, for “A Strategic Nature: Public Relations and the Politics of American Environmentalism” (Aronczyk & Espinoza, 2022). Effective July 1, Aronczyk will serve as the Director of the Ph.D. Program in Communication, Information, and Media, succeeding Professor of Communication Jennifer Theiss who has ably directed the program since 2017. [Read More](#)



Professor of Library and Information Science Marie Radford received the Neil Postman Mentor’s Award from the New York State Communication Association.





Associate Professor of Communication  
Kristina Scharp received the Jack Jay Award  
for Community Engagement and Applied  
Communication Scholarship from the Central  
States Communication Association.



Associate Teaching Professor of Library and  
Information Science Joyce Valenza received  
the President's Award from the New Jersey  
Association of School Librarians.

I am continually impressed with our faculty members' field-defining scholarship, and I encourage you to go to our website and explore the articles listed under the [Research](#) header. There you'll find fascinating information about the latest projects, such as Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies Khadijah Costley White's exhibition, "[This is Not a Drill: The Feelings, Memories, and Cultural Impact of Active Shooter Drills](#)." There are many others, so don't miss out.

I am grateful to our faculty, staff, and students for their hard work, dedication, and extraordinary accomplishments this past year!

I wish you an enjoyable summer. Please keep in touch by visiting our news and events pages and follow us on social media. Know that I am always very happy to hear from you—please write to me at [dafna.lemish@rutgers.edu](mailto:dafna.lemish@rutgers.edu) and I will respond!

Be well, be safe, and recharge.



Dafna Lemish, Ph.D.

Interim Dean

Distinguished Professor of Journalism and Media Studies

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