

## Morris Beschloss to receive Distinguished Alumni Award

**M**orris R. Beschloss, '52 JOURN has been named the first recipient of the College of Communications "Distinguished Alumni Award" for his illustrious career as a prominent Chicago industrialist, his journalism career in the Coachella Valley, Calif., area, and his dedication to and support of the College of Communications and the University of Illinois.

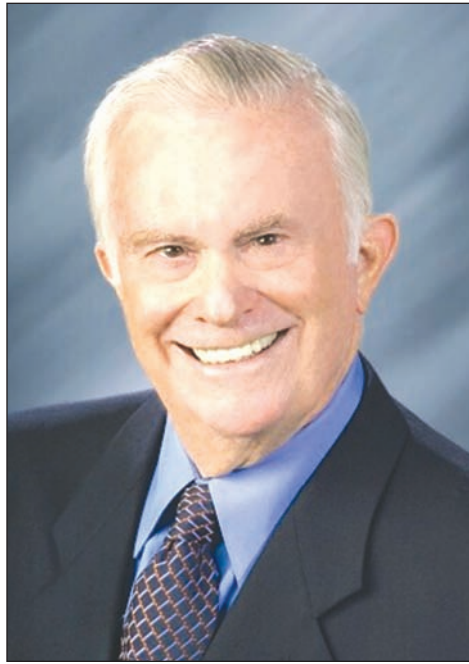
The award will be presented to Beschloss at a ceremony on Sept. 25, 2006. He will also deliver the Distinguished Speaker Series in Journalism speech that day in Gregory Hall.

Beschloss and his wife, Ruth, also a UI alumna, established the Beschloss Family Media Design Center in the College in 2000. Students use this computer lab for assignments in their classes and for other projects. The Center is at the heart of student work in the College.

Beschloss is a well-known journalist, especially in the Palm Springs, Calif., area for his weekly on-air commentary on the CBS television network, as a local expert on business, international and domestic current events. He also appears regularly as a foreign affairs and economic analyst for KPSI and EZ103 Radio. He writes weekly global economic columns for The (Palm Springs) Desert Sun newspaper. And he serves as economic adviser to Rep. Mary Bono and executive adviser to the Harris Bank in Chicago.

After becoming president of Hammond Valve at 33, Beschloss expanded the company dramatically, and the group that Beschloss eventually headed became one of the nation's largest valve suppliers to the plumbing/heating-cooling industry.

Beschloss publishes two newsletters, the monthly "Global Outlook," which covers international events,



Morris R. Beschloss

and "The Beschloss Perspective," which focuses on economic and current developments in the valve-related industry. He is a contributing editor to the industry's leading publication, "The Wholesaler," a consultant to the publisher, and a writer of monthly columns and Q&A features.

Beschloss is a member of the University of Illinois Foundation and its Presidents Council. From 1992-96, Beschloss also served on the Alumni Association's board of directors.

Beschloss is a Distinguished Eagle Scout and a Regent of the national Distinguished Eagle Scout Association, one of only 400 out of 250,000 Eagle Scouts nationally. He has served on the Homewood-Flossmoor, Ill., Board of Education; the Chicago Boy Scouts Council; and since his move to California, the Greater Palm Springs Jewish Federation. He is also president of the Morris R. and Ruth G. Beschloss Foundation, located in Chicago.

## Journalism student earns reporting award, travels to Korea and Japan

*Editor's note: Journalism student **Christine Won** was one of nine winners nationally in the annual Roy W. Howard National Collegiate Reporting Competition. Won's award included an all-expenses-paid trip to Japan and South Korea in June 2006. The award honors the memory of Roy Howard, the journalist who led Scripps Howard newspapers from 1922 to 1953 and United Press International from 1912 to 1920. Following is Won's account of her trip.*

**F**rom where I stood outside Incheon International Airport in South Korea, I could taste the cigarette smoker before me had flicked away. Despite the lateness of the night, cars, buses and assorted taxis honked and roared past. Their exhaust fumes invaded my unaccustomed lungs. Bright lights, not unlike Chicago at night, melted away the last traces of jet lag from 22 hours of travel.

It might not be such an exaggeration to say I learned more, realized more, felt more and understood more in 12 days than I did during 12 years of school. Every minute expanded into eternity; thoughts tripped over one another in their rapid occurrence.

My brief venture in South Korea and Japan was surreal.

Our homework prior to the trip was to study "Confucius Lives Next Door," by T. R. Reid, a 249-page read that tunneled our points of view and silhouetted the gateway to Asia. Before I knew it, it was time to witness firsthand the influence of Confucius' teachings on modern Japanese society and what the East had to teach us about living in the West.

Nine aspiring journalists shook hands with one another in the lobby of a Chicago O'Hare Airport hotel. Our first meal together inside the hotel was polite and proper, stilted with manners, etiquette and formality.

During the next 12 days, we would bond over soju and sake (traditional alcoholic beverages in Korea and Japan, respectively), relate to each other's frus-



Christine Won

tration over the language and cultural barriers and congregate through the sheer centripetal force of braving a foreign land together.

I was there on the streets rubbing shoulders and cheering with the people of my parents and grandparents when Korea won against Togo in the 2006 World Cup. My heart swelled with pride as hundreds of thousands of Koreans wearing red shirts burst into the national anthem in a single collective voice, as if triggered by some invisible conductor.

I learned the difference between North Korean and South Korean mountains — North Korean mountains don't have trees. People eat them because they have nothing else to eat.

Seeing the naked mountains across the ridged border made my heart feel cold, as if stripped bare. I saw the 21st century version of a ghost town in the DMZ between North and South Korea, where two flags for the two countries stood tall. But, of the two villages — each representing the government's promise for peace — only the South Korean village had people living in it.

*See Reporting award, page 14 ...*

## Professor Dash guides middle-schoolers through journalism workshop

By Mary Barrineau

**U**f I journalism professor Leon Dash is in the middle of a discussion of interviewing techniques when he realizes he needs to teach some more basic lessons.

This afternoon, he's meeting with African-American middle school girls instead of college students. And their questions show that there's more to teach them than the interviewing methods he developed as a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for The Washington Post. Who were the Black Panthers? How do you call people up and ask to interview them? What does "accelerate" mean?

Then, in a lesson as relevant to life as journalism, Dash encourages the girls to pound their fists on the table. It's his way of creating an attitude that will help them learn to speak out in the group, and stand up for themselves in the world. "Bang your fist, Keneasha!" he says.

"But we need to be polite," Dash says. "I teach my students to be aggressive, but polite."

Dash has been teaching "immersion journalism" to participants in the Youth Media Workshop, a collaboration between WILL AM-FM-TV and Innovative Ed Consulting, Inc. He is shepherding seven Franklin Middle School students through multiple interviews with five African-American women in the community. The students will use the audio recordings of the interviews to create a radio documentary that will air on WILL-AM.



Leon Dash and Isis, a student from Franklin Middle School in Champaign, Ill.

Dash has seen formerly reticent girls blossom as they become more confident. He said he had been aware of research data that showed that intervention can help show kids the importance of education and help them see that they have options. He was intrigued by the Youth Media Workshop, an after-school program with a mission of using oral history and radio journalism to help close the achievement gap between black and white students in Champaign and Urbana schools.

"I saw this as my opportunity to interact with kids at this level," Dash

says. "I wanted to see if this transformation vehicle could work."

The program seems to be having an effect, he says. "Just the interaction with these young women tells me what's possible. I've seen them go from reticent interviewees to interviewers who are learning to keep a person on the subject, to get control. Sometimes it's not an easy thing to do."

This is the third year that the Youth Media Workshop has worked with Franklin students, teaching them the skills to research and produce a radio program. The students' past documen-

taries are archived on the Web at [will.uiuc.edu/community/youthmediaworkshop/](http://will.uiuc.edu/community/youthmediaworkshop/). This year's project was funded by a grant from the Champaign School District and by proceeds from a fundraising dinner held last spring.

WILL's Kimberlie Kranich, who directs the Youth Media Workshop along with Innovative Ed's William Patterson, says the students interviewed women about early childhood memories of school, family, church and events outside the family. The girls used the first interviews to help focus later interviews on defining moments in the women's lives. "We want the students to make connections to their own lives and to events in society that are related to interview subjects' lives," Kranich says.

Dash's willingness to participate determined the direction of this year's project, she says. "It's become an immersion journalism project. His journalism background and knowledge of history help the students get more out of doing the interviews."

Although Dash is a Swanlund Endowed Chair, an author and a journalist with a string of awards, the girls seem comfortable with him. "Someone with his accomplishments could be intimidating," Kranich says. "The girls aren't intimidated."

"I don't think the students know who they're dealing with and that's probably good," Kranich says.

They seem to take it in stride when

*See Dash, page 5 ...*

## Four advertising students selected for Most Promising Minority program

By Tim Schwab

The University of Illinois won four spots on the American Advertising Federation's Most Promising Minority Students Program in 2006. It was the largest showing of any single university at this year's awards, held Feb. 7-9 in New York City.

The UI recipients included advertising students **Mary Elizabeth Lee, Omer Navaid, Sandi Preston** and **Danielle Wilburn**, all of whom were nominated by Steve Hall, advertising lecturer and director of career services. Hall received a special recognition award for having nominated the most winning applicants in the ten years the AAF has held the program.

"I would attribute our success to the fact that we have great students and a very strong academic program. And we have a very active AAF chapter affiliate on campus," Hall said of Illinois' success in the Minority Students Program.

Danielle Wilburn said that her weekend in New York was "overwhelming." The non-stop schedule was rigorous, she said, but helpful in more than one way. "A lot of the executives I met in New York said they want to see the day when they're not the only people of color in their agencies," Wilburn said. "The AAF award let me know that I do have a voice. It encouraged me to keep going because I knew I belonged there."

Omer Navaid added to that saying, "I think the reason they have programs like these is because they need minorities in advertising. Advertising is so culturally related. It needs to get a diversity of voices."

"The program was more than just getting an award," Hall said. "It gave minority students an unbelievable opportunity to engage with major advertising industries. Really incredible access," Hall said of the program, which

included recruiting sessions with some of the event's sponsors, including Unilever and Saatchi & Saatchi.

"One minute you could be interviewing with an executive from McDonald's, the next you're taking a three-hour tour of MTV," Hall said.



The AAF, composed of people working in or with the advertising industry, awarded 50 minority students the opportunity to come to New York for a three-day program, which included resume-building workshops, recruiting opportunities with major advertising industry executives and an award luncheon at the New York Athletic Club.

The AAF Most Promising Minority Students Program application process was very involved, according to Hall, who selected five candidates from the University of Illinois chapter affiliate of the AAF. In addition to nomination letters, academic transcripts and resumes, applicants submitted essays about minorities in advertising who inspired them.

Mary Elizabeth Lee chose to write about Zan Mg, whose rags-to-riches story reminded her of her own parent's immigration. Mg came from a poor fishing village in China to America where he founded his own ad agency.

Lee said despite, or perhaps because of, the cramped schedule of the program, she was able to make new friends in the AAF. "We're all coming from the same place so we were able to bond in just those few days."

## Alumni recognized with awards for achievement and leadership



Roger Ebert

Roger Ebert '64 JOURN was honored by the UI Alumni Association with the Alumni Achievement Award. Presentation was made during the 8th Annual Roger Ebert's Overlooked Film Festival in April in Champaign. The University of Illinois Alumni Achievement Award was established in 1957 as the highest award for recognizing alumni who have attained outstanding success and national or international distinction in their chosen business, profession or life's work, and whose accomplishments reflect admirably on or bring honor to the institution.

Ebert received a Pulitzer Prize for film criticism in 1975, and has been the Chicago Sun-Times' film critic for 39 years. His work is syndicated in more than 200 newspapers, and his current television show, "Ebert and Roeper," is well-known. Ebert, a former editor of The Daily Illini and the author of more than a dozen books, was recognized by the University when he received the Chancellor's Medallion in 2005, the same year he was granted a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Pamela Bristow Strobel '74 JOURN, JD '77 LAW, received the Chicago Illini of the Year Award at a banquet at the University Club of Chicago in February. Bristow has combined her legal expertise and business acumen to develop a career that recently landed her on Fortune magazine's list of the "50 Most Powerful Women in America." The former executive vice president and chief administrative officer of Exelon, a \$15 billion utility, she previously was a partner in the law firm of Sidley & Austin, which she joined after 11 years with Isham, Lincoln & Beale. At the College of Law, she was a founding member of the John Cribbitt Society, the College's major donor organization, and received the College's Distinguished Alumna Award in 1996.



Pam Strobel



Don Heimburger

Donald J. Heimburger '69 JOURN was presented with the Alumni Association's Constituent Leadership Award at February's Journalism Career Night. As past president and longtime member of the College's alumni board, he has helped organize events on and off campus, including the annual Chicago Alumni Reunion and the Homecoming Tent Party. For the past 10 years, Heimburger has coordinated Journalism Career Night, recruiting journalism professionals to come back to campus to meet with students. "My experience here at the U of I was a good experience, and I want other students to come away with the same feeling," he said.

Text and Strobel and Heimburger photos courtesy of the UI Alumni Association

## Alumnus auditions for ESPN 'Dream Job;' effort leads to on-air position



PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN.COM

Cesar Rodriguez

Cesar Rodriguez '05 JOURN earned one of six spots in the finals of ESPN Deportes' "Dream Job: El Reportero." Open auditions were held this spring in New York, Chicago, Mexico City, Miami, Houston and Los Angeles for ESPN's reality series that gives competitors the opportunity to cover a popular sports venue. Rodriguez emerged as the Chicago winner out of approximately 500 entrants vying for a chance to represent ESPN as a reporter in June at the World Cup soccer tournament in Germany.

The six finalists gathered in Mexico City in May where they each created a package chronicling a soccer game, including analyzation, feedback, interviews, statistics and game summaries. Although Rodriguez was not the eventual winner, he said he wouldn't have traded the experience for anything.

For the past year he served as a policy adviser to Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn. However, after forwarding a copy of his Dream Job efforts, Rodriguez recently received an offer from Telemundo Chicago. Now he is a full-time reporter for the Latino television station in Chicago, covering sports — including the Bears, Sox and Major League Soccer — as well as hard news and politics.

### Dash continued from page 4:

Dash teases them about their doodling, about the candy bars they bring to the meeting and about acting sleepy. They don't seem embarrassed when they misunderstand him and he explains that the former president he's talking about is "Lyndon" Johnson, not "Linda" Johnson, after one of the girls asks, "There was a woman president?"

Franklin 8th grader Amaris Bailey says she was shocked the first time she answered one of Leon Dash's questions incorrectly. He didn't say, "That wasn't what I was looking for" or "You're on the right track, but that's not right," as her teachers at Franklin would have said. "He just said, 'No' and then he moved on to somebody else," Bailey says. "I thought, 'Don't I even get another chance?' Then I thought, 'OK, yeah, he's straightforward.'"

The girls now appreciate that Dash answers their questions directly. "He

cares about us enough to make sure we don't mess up," 6th grader Kayla Carter says.

Franklin teacher Shameem Rakha, who assists with the project, says it's a tribute to Dash's teaching style that he is able to speak to the students directly without losing them. "It also speaks to this group of girls and their personal strength," she says.

Although Dash hasn't accompanied the students on interviews, he has read the transcripts of all of them. Dash suggested that the girls take 92-year-old Erma Bridgewater out to walk in the community to stimulate memories about her childhood. The girls were nervous about carrying out the suggestion, but found that it paid off with Bridgewater's rich recollections of her early life in Champaign.

"He teaches us how to think while we're doing the interviews," Carter says.

Instead of writing questions ahead of time that they want to ask as they have done in the past, the girls went into the first interview with one question. All the other questions were supposed to come from listening to what the interview subject had to say.

Dash has also used discussions of the interview transcripts to teach the girls about other aspects of African-American history. He told them about "sundown towns" in central Illinois, towns that decreed blacks had to be out of town before dark. Bailey became so interested in the subject that she did a school report on it. Carter wants the group to plan a trip to one of the towns to interview residents about sundown towns. Dash also showed them a photograph of the lynching of an African-American. "I'd never seen anything like that before," Carter says.

Carter says she realized on a trip to

the grocery store with her mom how the confidence to ask questions can come in handy in everyday life. Her mom couldn't find something in the store and Carter went to ask for directions. "My mommy said, 'You are good at asking questions and getting answers!'"

Dash says he can see the growth of the girls in the questions they ask. "They're not intimidated," he says. "I've been happy to see that it has been a transformative experience. That is satisfying."

Mary Barrineau is the public information coordinator for WILL-AM-FM-TV, a unit of the College of Communications.

Editor's note: In May 2006, WILL learned that the Youth Media Workshop had won the UI Campus Award for Excellence in Public Engagement team award. The project received a \$5,000 cash award.