Greetings!

Hope the summer was productive and restful as we start the new academic year.

The newsletter points out the happy addition of a new child to the family of Megan Lambertz-Berndt, a book published by Malynnda Johnson dealing with HIV on TV, and a new job for Tom Salek in Chicago (his hometown).

The department officially welcomed two new faculty this fall – Sara VanderHaagen and Sarah Riforgiate. Sara VanderHaagen publishes using rhetorical methods and will serve as director of the graduate internship program.

Sarah Riforgiate publishes in the area of work/life balance and will be serving as the undergraduate internship director.

One special note goes to Riley Richards who is studying the interaction between robots and humans. The research papers listed attest to the success of this project which is a new interest of Riley’s in the discipline of how humans interact with robots, taking what was science fiction and creating a reality program. But then we live in an era with “ghosting,” “fake news,” and “sexting,” so perhaps things are changing.

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**Personals**

**Malynnda Johnson** was voted to the position of executive director of Midwest Popular Culture Association.

**Tom Salek** will be starting as an Assistant Professor at Concordia University in Chicago this Fall.

**Megan and Kristen Lambertz-Berndt** welcomed the birth of their child, Louis Lambertz-Berndt, on April 29th in Grover Beach, California. Both the child and mothers are doing well in the state of California. A summer trip to Portland, Mount Shasta, Redmond, Crater Lake, and Bend introduced the child to the world.

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Accomplishments

Bridgett Alecia Brzezinski was promoted to Champion Guide, a supervisory position at Una Health in Chicago, serving as liaison with company leadership and those involved in facilitating behavioral changes.

Malynnda Johnson is now director of Indiana State University’s Research in Community Health (ReCoH) program connecting undergraduate students with community research opportunities.

Research


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