Summary

Last June, our advisor Tracy Anderson scheduled a call with The Communicator’s first ever editorial team for social media. Her pitch was simple: Let’s make social media a publication in its own right, which works in conjunction with our print magazine and website. Now, despite a student body of only 530 students, an entirely virtual format from March 2020 - May 2021 and a complete lack of athletic programs, we’ve done just that.

With this inspiration, and those three challenges, we set our primary goals: 1) Use social media, and its multimedia capacity, to connect staff and students through videos and voices. 2) Break news accurately and promptly. 3) Embed high level photography and design in our posts.

We employed several specific strategies to meet these goals and expand social media into the publication we envisioned. Most notably, we posted twice a day, six days a week for nearly every school week; organization and design tools Buffer and Adobe Spark as a hub for our work; and worked closely with journalists and editors alike to create an ecosystem of content.
Judith DeWoskin Retires

This afternoon, Community High School (CHS) English teacher, CET star and forum leader Judith DeWoskin announced her retirement. In the conversation with her forum, she reminisced about room 303 — her corner room of 34 years — and offered optimism for the upcoming school year.

“We have to log in and log out with hope,” DeWoskin said. “Hope that this isn’t the way we teach and learn forever, but rather the hope that we’ve gained something from it, that we’ve learned something from it and that we’ve come together in a difficult time to help each other and feel each other’s pain and understand each...

View post; Impressions: 1,615; Reach: 1,108; Likes: 356; Comments: 32; Saves: 12; Shares: 54

View tweet; Impressions: 4,258; Total engagements: 219; Detail expands: 65
Return to Hybrid Learning

AAPS Hybrid Schedule for High Schoolers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<tr>
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<td>9:05</td>
<td>Hour 1</td>
<td>Hour 2</td>
<td>Hour 3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Remote Hour 7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

communicatorchs: On March 10, the AAPS Board of Education met to hear the district’s updated plan for AAPS’s movement to a hybrid learning option that starts in mid-April for high schoolers. High School Education Director Paul DeAngelis shared a revised high school schedule for hybrid learning which splits each class into two parts.

Those returning to hybrid classes will self-screen for COVID-19 daily and will be divided into two cohorts alphabetically by last name, with accommodations for students living in the same household and other exceptions. Hybrid students will be in-person until noon for half the week and

K-12 schools to offer in-person instruction by March 1, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer recommended at a press conference today.

View post: Impressions: 1,721; Reach: 1,231; Likes: 152; Comments: 0; Saves: 31; Shares: 144

View post: Impressions: 979; Reach: 731; Likes: 157; Comments: 9; Saves: 8; Shares: 28
Thanksgiving Letter to Tracy

communicatorochs Today, The Communicator staff reflects on what we are grateful for in the midst of this turbulent year. We are thankful for you, our supporters, for your continued loyalty to youth journalists; for each individual on staff, for their unrelenting work; for our incredible editor team who help to create and manage our three publications; and most of all, we are thankful for our incredible advisor, Tracy Anderson. Anderson has remained an optimistic and steadfast role model for our staff, and her compassion for us is evident each and every day. Swipe to hear staff members, past and present, talk about what Tracy means to them.
In My Room with Eli Hausman

communicatorchs

Ever since fifth grade, Eli Hausman, currently a senior at Community, has loved everything sneakers. Starting with Nike ID, Hausman found his passion for both style and design.

“Shoes are 90% of your outfit,” Hausman said. “[The obsession] is dying off a little. It makes me sad because it’s played such a huge role in my development as an artist and applying to art schools.”

Hausman has plans to release and design his own shoe with Nike one day. But, now, his focus is trained on a sustainable shoe, one that is eco-friendly in production, use, and waste.

View post

Impressions: 1,272
Reach: 943
Likes: 160
Comments: 0
Saves: 2
Shares: 11
Anne Thomas Retires

communicatorchs On Tuesday, March 23 longtime Community High School math teacher and forum leader Anne Thomas announced to her forum that she would be retiring at the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Thomas, who has taught at Community for more than 30 years, reflected back on her time at CHS:

"I have thoroughly enjoyed working at Community High School," Thomas said. "For over 30 years it has been the thrill of my lifetime."

When asked about what she will miss most about being a forum leader, Thomas had this to say:
Hobbs Kessler Breaks HS Mile Record

communicatorchs On Feb. 8, 2021, the starting gun fired and, 3:57.66 later, CHS senior Hobbs Kessler made history. Running the fastest indoor high school mile ever, Kessler also became the eleventh high schooler to break the lucrative four-minute mark. While Kessler may now hold this record, running was not always his strong suit, rock climbing was.

For context, most sub-four high school...
Fashion Friday with Sela Gur-Arie

CommunicatorChs

Fashion Friday - Sela Gur-Arie

3w

CommunicatorChs Happy

#FashionFriday! This week features Sela Gur-Arie, a senior at CHS. Gur-Arie shows off floral pants from Jaded London, a pink tank top and a green zip-up hoodie. She also wears her sage green Air Max 1 Premiums and layered gold necklaces.

“I usually just pull up to school in a sweatshirt and leggings— or even my pajamas. I like to be comfortable,” Gur-Arie said. “But over quarantine I was able to build up my closet with pieces that are both comfortable and cute. So I can finally say I’m starting to build my sense of style.”

Photos, IGTV and post by Abbi

Impressions: 1,045
Reach: 759
Likes: 158
Comments: 19
Saves: 3
Shares: 3
Neutral Zone Accused of Upholding Racist Culture

communicatorchs

This is a complicated story. In June 2020, a public statement with demands was released on social media by a former teen leader at the Neutral Zone, a local nonprofit that provides teen programs and spaces. Journalist Lucy Tobier spent two months researching these charges.

The statement accused the Neutral Zone of charges of racism and the organization’s failure to uphold a culture of consent.

The Neutral Zone board hired a third-party civil rights attorney who interviewed staff and teens for five weeks, and at the end of the investigation found all allegations to be untrue. However, more than five youth leaders have resigned from their positions on the Neutral Zone and feel...
We are proud to announce that our third edition is arriving in subscribers' mailboxes beginning this week; it is 131 pages long! The “Through the Window” series introduces our theme of adaptation through the profiles of eleven CHS students and staff members.

“I taught myself how to be bored and just be fine with that,” said Grace Bradley, a CHS senior, in her “Through the Window” interview. “I could spend days doing nothing, and I wouldn’t be going crazy. I was fine to just sit and let my mind wander. I think that’s a really good skill because we can get so caught up in our lives doing all these things. At some point you need to be
Seniors React to First Day Back

communicatorchs

It is already the second week of hybrid learning, and CHS seniors are still excited for their last few days.

Josh Caldwell struggled with online school and is hoping to rekindle some relationships with teachers.

"Being online damaged my relationships with a lot of my teachers,"

Liked by noahbernstein_ and 199 others

3 days ago

Add a comment...
Results: Overview

In previous years, social media was used as a “point grab.” At the end of the week, staff would throw up a post (or ten) to meet a publishing deadline, without consideration for quality of content. Our accounts suffered from inconsistency, and our editors struggled to exercise proper oversight. This year, with an explicit vision and a number of new technologies, we changed that.

To improve our workflow, we used Buffer, an editing, approval, scheduling and analytics software. Buffer also came with a shop grid feature, allowing us to link resources or longer articles in our bio. To incorporate top tier design we used the Adobe Design Suite, including Spark and Premiere Pro. There, we designed everything from our breaking news template to our IGTV videos and animations.
Results: Constants

Communicator Eats

Communicator Eats This week Communicator Eats features chili
chili cinnamon roll. Although the recipe
takes a long time to rest and chill the
dough, there is not much hands on work needed. Making these cinnamon
rolls is a perfect way to enjoy a warm snack on the middle. However, using a regular
bacon mixture works well too! Click this link in the bio for the recipe.

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Our Turn

We asked Ann Arbor high schoolers, “How do you feel about the discrepancies in weight rooms between the male and female NCAA basketball players?”

We asked Ann Arbor seniors and teachers, “What can students do to prepare for the SAT?”

Guess Who

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Evaluation: Looking Back

This was the first year that we made our social media platforms into a true publication. At the same time, we were learning fully remotely. At the start of the year, social media didn’t get very much attention, and it was difficult to maintain quality and consistency. Early on, we (the editors) needed to advocate more for social media and encourage more staff members to create content for it.

We also wish that we had put more emphasis on having staff members create and lead our constants. Communicator Eats and Fashion Friday were great examples of staff-led constants; journalists on staff created posts independently, and, with occasional changes, they went straight into the Buffer scheduling queue. In addition to creating opportunities for staff to be more involved in social media, staff-led constants tended to have the most success.
Evaluation: Looking Ahead

Next year, only one of our three editors will be returning to work on social media. Our biggest goal is to expand our content on Facebook, Twitter and Tik Tok. We focused on Instagram this year because it reaches all of our audiences, but we have untapped potential on the other three platforms.

We also hope to put a heavier emphasis on photography, which will be significantly easier to teach in-person. Our staff currently has six photographers, and we would like everyone on staff to understand photojournalism.

Lastly, our overarching goal is to help our staff understand that social media is a vital journalistic outlet. So many people receive breaking news and other content through social media, and creating a consistent, accurate and sustainable social media publication is a necessary service to our audience. As we learned this year, targeting new staff members was an effective way to boost participation; next year, we are aiming to push all staff members to create social media content.
Evaluation: Conclusion

This year has been a learning process for all of us. The Communicator has never used social media in this fashion, which meant we didn’t have anything to base our system on. It took diligent planning to figure out how to reach people and create meaningful content, and as we plan for next year we have a much better idea of how to maintain an effective social media publication.

Our experimentation, innovative tools and hardworking staff helped make the change we hoped to see. Our Instagram averaged around 12,000 impressions per week, 40,000 impressions per month, and we grew our following by over 35%. But the fruits of our labor extended beyond social media. We were able to engage with The Communicator’s audience more readily, find sources for larger print and web projects, and, later, promote them. It is that intersectionality between print, web and social media that makes a great publication.