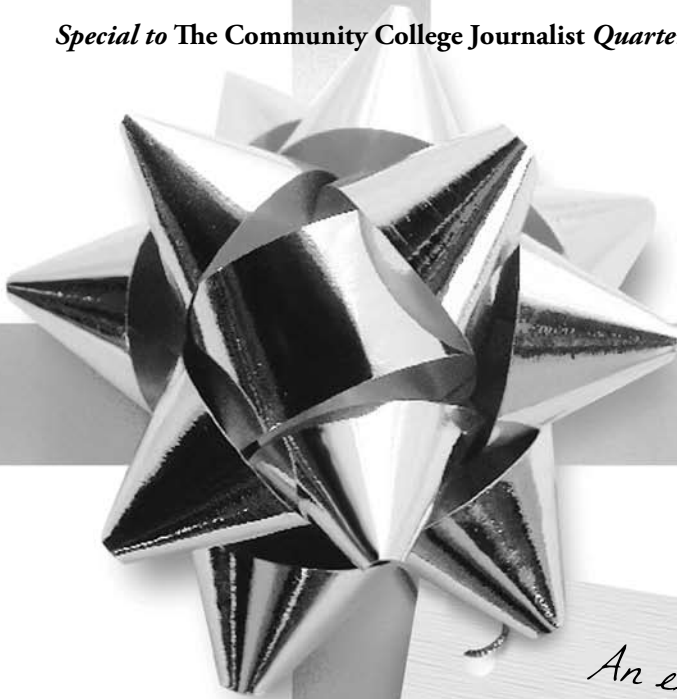


# GIFT 2009

*Special to The Community College Journalist Quarterly Publication*



*An extra  
special GIFT:*

*10 Years of  
Great Ideas*

Researched by  
Dr. David Cuillier, GIFT Grand Prize Winner 2006  
and Carol B. Schwalbe,  
GIFT Grand Prize Winner 2004 and 2005

# 10 Years of Great Ideas

## *A summary of 253 GIFTs and 10 tips for creating your own terrific teaching tools*

By Dr. David Cuillier, Arizona  
and Carol B. Schwalbe, Arizona State

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Nowhere else are you going to find as many great ideas for teaching courses in journalism and mass communication. In the 10-year history of the Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFT) competition, judges have selected 253 of the best classroom exercises to share at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication annual conference.

What makes for a good teaching idea in journalism and mass communication education, or at least what we honor as good teaching? What kind of teachers tend to win the most, and what can we learn from them? How can we improve?

With those questions in mind, and as former GIFT entrants ourselves, we were curious, so we coded and analyzed all 253 GIFTs, and then interviewed judges and the most frequent winners, boiling down 10 tips for 10 years. Here is what we found:

### **GIFTs By the Numbers**

- Women comprised nearly two-thirds of GIFT scholars (62%), which is higher than the percentage of women members in AEJMC (45%). A majority of scholars had doctorates (60%), while 36% had master's degree and 7% a bachelor's degree. More than half (53%) were from research-intensive universities, 46% from four-year teaching universities and 1% from community colleges.

- A bulk of the scholars were from the South (38%), thanks to powerhouse schools in that region—the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill had the most scholars of any university (11), and the University of Florida was second with 10 (see bottom table on page 66). The Midwest (as defined by census regions) had 27% of the GIFTs, the West 20% and the Northeast 14%.

- The person with the most GIFTs was Brian K. Johnson of the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign, who had six. Five teachers earned four GIFTs, eight had three GIFTs and 28 had two GIFTs.

- The largest area of GIFTs was in print journalism (42%), with many focused on how to teach writing, grammar and interviewing skills. About a quarter of the ideas could be applied to all fields, and 13% were specific to mass communication courses (see bottom table on page 65). However, we noted that most of the ideas could be adapted to any subject with a little bit of creativity.

- Most ideas were best suited to small classes (59%), typically skills-oriented subjects, and while 39% could be conducted in one class period, the rest took more than one class or a full semester or quarter. About a third of the ideas (34%) incorporated student teams to facilitate learning, and 26% relied on technology (beyond just looking at the Internet). Few ideas (less than 2%) were intended for distance learning, and only 15% taught cultural or racial diversity.

- For a complete description of GIFT winners, including analysis of different teaching styles used in GIFTs, see our paper presented at this year's AEJMC conference in the Small Programs Interest Group, or contact us and we'll e-mail you a copy.

### **10 Tips from 10 Years**

All seven frequent winners and three judges interviewed said they value teaching ideas that engage students and incorporate interactive teaching in addition to lectures and assigned readings.

"Think of how to draw your students in," said Brian K. Johnson, the most frequent

GIFT scholar. "It can't just be a lecture. If there's an unusual hook then that will make them remember the content. I ask myself, 'how can I make this information fun and interesting so that it will stick in their minds?'"

Johnson and other winners provided suggestions for coming up with great ideas, resulting in 10 tips for the GIFT 10th anniversary:

- 1) Attend university teaching workshops, usually hosted by a campus teaching center. Look at what outstanding professors are doing in other fields. Perhaps an engaging exercise used in a math class can be adapted to teaching numeracy in journalism.

- 2) Tap into the K-12 literature. One frequent winner was a secondary education major as an undergraduate and used what she learned in that training to develop active exercises that work in the college setting as well. A lot of high school teaching ideas are provided online and can be adapted for college courses.

- 3) Assess course weaknesses and solicit feedback. Give students a chance to provide anonymous suggestions and comments (for example, a quick feedback form handed out a few times a semester). Then come up with ideas to address those areas of weakness. Focus on the outcome—what you want students to learn.

- 4) Find out what students are interested in (music they listen to, television shows they watch, Facebook, hobbies, etc.), and incorporate those subjects in your exercises. Relevancy increases motivation.

- 5) Read the previous GIFT winners to get

a sense of what a good idea is and to avoid repeating an idea that already was presented. We noticed some repeat ideas, particularly Jeopardy-like quizzes, sometimes in the same year.

6) Adapt and incorporate games and simulations into your course material. Run across a good game show, board game, computer simulation or other activity that engages you and others? Create a version for the class, incorporating what you want to teach.

7) Use everyday objects. Some of the best classroom activities hit home because they are tactile and real. Students remember the message because it reaches all their senses. Some GIFTs use such simple items as string, clay, neckties and M&M's® candies.

8) Keep it simple. You want students to remember your teaching point. Also, judges mark down complex and cumbersome teaching ideas.

9) When submitting your great idea to the contest, make the entry snappy and concise. Get to the point, write clearly and come up with a clever title. Try out your idea for a few semesters, testing, refining and measuring results to derive quantifiable measures showing that it works.

10) Serve as a judge in teaching competitions to get a feel for what a judge might look for and to see the variety of ideas out there. You'll find out how GIFTs are judged (four main criteria: originality, creativity, practicality and student impact). Judging, and reviewing research papers, will make you a better submitter.

### **Building On Success**

Looking back at 10 years of GIFTs, we have the opportunity to make incredible strides in journalism and mass communication education in the next 10 years and beyond. Based on our analysis and discussions with winners and judges, several themes emerged.

First, we see a need for more teaching ideas in underrepresented areas. As a field, we have a wealth of ideas for teaching grammar, lead writing and interviewing, but we should encourage teaching development in other areas relatively unexplored: diversity, distance learning and emerging technologies. Teaching ideas that nurture leadership, entrepreneurship and creativity would help train students to be leaders in an evolving industry as it shifts from traditional news outlets to online media. We also see a need for more ideas that engage students in large lecture courses, as well as in niche fields such as sports journalism. Perhaps special GIFT calls or themes could elicit ideas in underrepresented areas. Several AEJMC groups (for example, newspaper, law and policy, the Teaching Standards Committee) have started their own teaching competitions, which will help fill some of the gaps.

Second, AEJMC or the Community College Journalism Association (CCJA) should create an online searchable GIFT database repository and teaching wiki. While all the GIFTs have been published in annual booklets, all but a few are sold out and are unavailable to current and future teachers. We feel fortunate to have been able to read all 253 ideas, and our teaching will be better for it. All 253 ideas should be provided online, keyword searchable and indexed by teaching area, for current and future teachers. This would be the most comprehensive and practical resource for teaching journalism

and mass communication in the world.

Finally, we and others believe the GIFT program is a valuable part of AEJMC and CCJA and should be strongly supported. Edna Bautista has coordinated the program for 10 years, working tirelessly to oversee the review process that has a more competitive

acceptance rate than most research paper competitions. As Bautista steps down this year, we applaud her dedication and urge the co-sponsoring organizations to maintain this valuable contribution to journalism and mass communication education—a program that makes us all great.

### **GIFTs by Sequence/Field**

Sequence/field \*

Print journalism	106	42%
Could apply to all	61	24%
Mass communication	34	13%
Advertising	31	12%
Online	26	10%
Law/history/ethics	22	9%
Broadcast journalism	21	8%
Public relations	21	8%
Visual communication	16	6%
Media criticism	14	6%
Media management	4	2%
Film	2	1%
Sports journalism	1	<1%

\* Does not add to 100 % because GIFTs can be included in multiple categories

**GIFT Scholars - Multiple Winners**

Brian K. Johnson	University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign	6
David Cuillier	University of Arizona	4
Miles Maguire	University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh	4
Jane Marcellus	Middle Tennessee State	4
Carol B. Schwalbe	Arizona State University	4
Leslie-Jean Thornton	Arizona State University	4
Susan Brockus	California State University-Chico	3
Gene Burd	University of Texas-Austin	3
Juanita Darling	San Francisco State University	3
Joel Geske	Iowa State University	3
Renee Martin-Kratzer	University of Florida	3
Daniel Reimold	Nanyang Technological	3
Jeff South	Virginia Commonwealth	3
Kathleen Woodruff Wickham	University of Mississippi	3

**Top GIFT-Producing Institutions**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	11
University of Florida	10
Arizona State University	9
Ohio University	8
University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign	6
Syracuse University	6
Middle Tennessee State	5
University of South Carolina	5
University of Texas-Austin	5
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh	5
Virginia Commonwealth	5
California State University – Long Beach	4
Kent State University	4
Pennsylvania State University	4
University of Arizona	4
University of South Florida	4
Washington State University	4

## GIFT Scholars 2000-2009

- Alessandri, Sue Westcott  
 Alley, Kristie  
 Aw, Annette  
 Azocar, Cristina L.  
 Bacon, Cheryl M.  
 Bailey, Beverly S.  
 Baker, Matthew  
 Baker-Schena, Lori  
 Baldwin, Patricia  
**Baldwin, Tamara Kay\***  
 Banchero, Paola  
 Bautista, Dennis R.  
 Bautista, Edna R.  
 Beatty, John  
 Bechtel, Andy  
 Belmas, Genelle  
 Bentley, Clyde H.  
 Boyer, Lori  
 Boyle, Kris  
**Broadway, S. Camille\***  
 Brockus, Susan  
 Burd, Gene  
 Burns, Lisa M.  
 Carter Miller, Ginger R.  
 Castaneda, Laura  
 Chambers, Jason  
 Chance, Sandra F.  
 Chapin, John  
 Christian, Sue Ellen  
 Chuang, Angie  
 Clark, Lynn Schofield  
 Cleary, Johanna  
 Clemson, Patrice  
 Conners, Joan  
 Consalvo, Mia  
 Conway Correll, Linda  
 Conzola, E.J.  
 Cook, Judi  
 Cressman, Dale  
**Cuillier, David\***  
 Cupito, Mary Carmen  
 Darling, Juanita  
 Daugherty Phillingane, Emma  
 DeSanto, John  
 Drewniany, Bonnie  
 Dyer, Carolyn Stewart  
 Evatt, Dixie Shipp  
 Fee, Frank E. Jr.  
 Feighery, Glen  
 Ferree, Lisa  
 Fisher, Douglas  
 Fleming, Jennifer  
 Fletcher, Carol T.  
 Fosdick, Scott  
 Freeman, John  
 Gale, Kendra  
 Gavrilos, Dina  
 Gerl, Ellen J.  
 Geske, Joel  
 Ghanem, Salma  
 Gilligan, Eileen  
 Gillis, Tamara L.  
 Golden Worsham, Anne  
 Golombisky, Kim  
 Gorham, Bradley W.  
 Griffen, W. Glenn  
 Hale, Donna K.  
 Hall, Jim  
 Hallock, Steve  
 Hanley, Michael  
 Harper, Joseph M.  
 Harvey, Linda  
 Haygood, Daniel M.  
 Heckler, Cheryl  
 Henderson, Julie K.  
 Henning, Volker R.

**GIFT Scholars 2000-2009 (continued)**

Henson, Gail Ritchie  
Hill, Myleea D.  
Hixson, Thomas Kim  
Hollerbach, Karie  
Hyde, Jon  
Irby, John  
Irby, Lisa M.  
Jackson, Matt  
Jacobson, Susan  
Jarvis, Elena  
Johnson, Brian K.  
Johnson, Cathy  
Jolliffe, Lee  
Jones Ross, Felecia  
Karadjov, Christopher D.  
Karloff, Kim E.  
Kelly, Jean P.  
Kennedy, Patricia  
Kenney, Rick  
Kent, Michael L.  
Killebrew, Kenneth C.  
Kilmer, Paulette D.  
Kline, Karen E.  
Knabe, Ann Peru  
Knight, Susan M.  
Landesberg, Richard  
Landon, Kim  
Larsen, Phyllis V.  
Larson, Jan  
Lauterer, Jock  
Lauters, Amy Mattson  
Leach, Jan  
Lee, Hyangsook  
Leshner, Tina  
LeVold, J. Barlow  
Lewis, Susan  
List, Karen  
**Lomicky, Carol S.\***

Lucht, Tracy  
Maguire, Miles  
Maier, Scott  
Mallia, Karen  
Marcellus, Jane  
Martinelli, Diana L. Knott  
Martin-Kratzer, Renee  
**Mattern, Jody\***  
McConnell, Jane S.  
Miller, Andrea  
Mitchell, Nancy  
Moore, Kimberly Williams  
Mullins, Jennifer  
Nelson, C. Leigh  
Nirenberg, Jackie S.  
Niwa, Paul  
O'Brian, Coby  
Otto, Paula I.  
Paddon, Anna  
Pagano, Rosanne V.  
Panol, Zeny Sarabia  
Pitts, Gregory  
Plenke, Mark  
Plessinger, Alison  
Pompper, Donnaly  
Quarles, Jan  
**Radin, Patricia K.\***  
Radniecki, Regene  
Randle, Quint B.  
Rauch, Jennifer  
**Reimold, Daniel\***  
Roberts Edenborg, Kate  
Roberts, Chris  
Robinson, Judy L.  
Rogus, Mary T.  
Rosenberry, Jack  
Russell, Edward W.  
**Schwalbe, Carol B.\***



**GIFT Scholars 2000-2009 (continued)**

Sernoe, Jim	Varner, Helen
Silcock, B. William	Vicker, Lauren
Simon, James	Voss, Kimberly Wilmot
Sinclair, Janas	Ward, Douglas B.
Slater, Jan	Watson, John C.
Smith, Jessica E.	Whitmore, Evonne H.
South, Jeff	Wickham, Kathleen Woodruff
Spainhour, Cheryl	Wilcox, Carol
Spaulding, Stacy	Wilson, Margo
Stein, Andi	Wiltse, Eric
Sturgill, Amanda	Wimmer, Terry L.
Tanner, Andrea	Winter, Catherine
Thompson, Brad	Woodard, Jennifer Bailey
Thornton, Leslie-Jean	Workman, Gale A.
Tillotson, Patricia	Yates, Bradford L.
Tobias Neely, Jamie	Zerba, Amy
Tonnessen, Diana	Zibluk, John B. (Jack)
Trumbly Lamsam, Teresa	Zuegner, Carol

**\*GIFT grand prize winners**

## **GIFT Timeline**

- 1999** Great Ideas For Teachers, a practical teaching session first proposed by Dr. Edna Bautista, is accepted on behalf of the Community College Journalism Association and is scheduled to be on the program for the 2000 AEJMC convention; the Small Programs Interest Group agrees to be a co-sponsor.
- 2000** GIFT debuts in Phoenix, Ariz., in the late afternoon of the last day of the AEJMC convention; more than 30 people attend the session (featuring a panel of award-winning journalism and mass communication educators) and receive teaching handouts as “free gifts.” With the surprising success of GIFT and requests for its continuity the following year, the program becomes CCJA’s signature session. At the AEJMC mid-winter meeting and chip auction in Atlanta, Ga., Bautista and then-CCJA President Dr. Carroll Ferguson Nardone and SPIG officers Dr. Brian Steffen and Dr. Jim Sernoe decide at the last minute to expand the panel format into an interactive poster session for broader outreach and promotion of excellent and innovative teaching standards.
- 2001** GIFT becomes a teaching competition at the AEJMC convention in Washington, D.C. In keeping with the “gift-giving” theme, door prizes are given away at the festive poster session, which is the highest-attended during its time slot. Sales also begin on spiral-bound GIFT journals. Dr. Patricia Radin is the first GIFT grand prize winner.
- 2002** The Newspaper and Scholastic Journalism divisions join CCJA and SPIG as mini-plenary co-sponsors of GIFT at the AEJMC convention in Miami, Fla. Dr. Carol S. Lomicky wins the GIFT grand prize.
- 2003** The GIFT Web site is launched on [www.geocities.com/aejmcgift](http://www.geocities.com/aejmcgift). The GIFT journal (the special summer edition of CCJA’s quarterly publication, *The Community College Journalist*) is printed as a magazine with a color cover of the red bow logo. The poster session takes place at the AEJMC convention in Kansas City, Mo. Dr. Tamara Kay Baldwin wins the GIFT grand prize.

### **GIFT Timeline (continued)**

- 2004** GIFT goes international at the AEJMC convention in Toronto, Canada, where Carol B. Schwalbe wins the GIFT grand prize. The GIFT journal is printed as a black-and-white magazine.
- 2005** The International Communication Division replaces the Newspaper Division as one of GIFT's co-sponsors at the AEJMC convention in San Antonio, Texas. Carol B. Schwalbe makes GIFT history by winning the grand prize for the second year in a row.
- 2006** A record-breaking number of submissions (more than 80 GIFT articles instead of the average 60+ entries) are received by the AEJMC uniform deadline of April 1. Dr. David Cuillier wins the GIFT grand prize at the AEJMC convention in San Francisco, Calif. The GIFT journal is now printed in its current, mini-magazine format.
- 2007** GIFT heads back to its poster session roots at the AEJMC convention in Washington, D.C. Dr. S. Camille Broadway wins the GIFT grand prize. Photos are in an online album at <http://gift2007.bravebost.com/>.
- 2008** GIFT continues at the AEJMC convention in Chicago, Ill., where Dr. Jody Mattern wins the grand prize. All hard copies of past GIFT journals are sold out.
- 2009** Happy 10th anniversary to GIFT! The Graduate Education Interest Group replaces the International Communication Division as one of GIFT's co-sponsors at the AEJMC convention in Boston, Mass., where Dr. Daniel Reimold wins the grand prize. All GIFT scholars from the past decade are honored and identified by the red ribbons on their convention name badges for having shared their terrific teaching tips over the years. A special study of the GIFT Program is conducted by winners Cuillier and Schwalbe and is presented at a SPIG research session and summarized in the GIFT journal. Bautista "retires" from coordinating the GIFT Program and as editor of *The Community College Journalist*. GeoCities will discontinue hosting free Web sites, including GIFT, later in 2009. Thank you to all who have helped and will continue to make the GIFT Program a worthwhile effort to benefit our colleagues and, ultimately, our students!

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Please send your name, title, school or professional affiliation, mailing address, phone number and e-mail, along with \$40 to Dr. Steve Ames, CCJA Executive Secretary-Treasurer at 3376 Hill Canyon Ave., Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-1119. Or for more information, contact him at [docames@roadrunner.com](mailto:docames@roadrunner.com). Please see our Web site at [www.ccjaonline.org](http://www.ccjaonline.org) or <http://ccjanews.bravehost.com/>.