

# Journalism Alumni <sup>Fall</sup> Speaker Series



The Department of Journalism Alumni Speakers Series brings outstanding alumni to campus each semester to speak and interact with students and faculty in classes and other settings

Scheduled to speak this fall are:

- **Larry O'Dell**, Reporter for The Associated Press, Richmond, VA • September 27-28, 2010
- **Ellen Krenke**, Chief of Command Information for the National Guard, The Pentagon • October 25-26, 2010
- **Sandra Alstadt**, Director of Customer Communications for Entergy Services, Inc., Little Rock • November 8-9, 2010

## Larry O'Dell

Larry O'Dell is a reporter for The Associated Press in Richmond, Virginia, where he covers state and federal courts.

O'Dell graduated from Little Rock Central High School in 1970. While in high school he worked on the school's yearbook staff as a photographer.

In 1974, O'Dell received his bachelor's degree in Journalism from Arkansas State University. While a student at ASU, he was the Editor of the student newspaper, *The Herald* and Assistant Editor of the yearbook, the *Indian*. O'Dell was also the

president of Arkansas State University's chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, and a member of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity.

After graduating from ASU, O'Dell served as a general assignment and Capitol reporter for the *Arkansas Democrat*. In 1975 O'Dell moved to the *Batesville Guard* where he began a two-year stint as sports editor. In 1977 he was promoted to Assistant Editor. He served as Assistant Editor until 1980. He then moved to Stuttgart, where he was the Editor of the *Stuttgart Daily Leader* until 1986.

Upon leaving the *Stuttgart Daily Leader*, O'Dell took a position as a reporter for The Associated Press in Richmond, Virginia in 1986. In that capacity his beats have included education, politics and government, including 22 years covering the Virginia General Assembly. He was selected as Virginia AP Staffer of the Year in 2000.

O'Dell was raised in Little Rock, and is married to the former Linda Dame. They have one child, Shannon O'Dell.



## Ellen Krenke

Lieutenant Colonel Ellen G. Krenke is a Chief of Command Information for the National Guard Bureau's Office of Public Affairs and Strategic Communication.

Krenke was born at Altus Air Force Base, Okla. She earned two degrees from Arkansas State University; a B.S. in Journalism in 1986, and a master's degree in mass communications in 1987.

In 1989, Krenke joined the Arkansas Air National Guard as an enlisted administrative specialist for the 223<sup>rd</sup> Combat Communications Squadron in Hot Springs, Ark.

Krenke was hired as a sportswriter for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* in Little Rock, Ark. in 1990, and subsequently transferred to the 189<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Squadron at Little Rock Air Force Base.

Later that same year, she was selected for a public affairs officer slot with the National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit at Camp Joseph T. Robinson in North Little Rock, Ark. She was commissioned on June 5, 1991, by the Academy of Military Science at McGhee-Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Tenn.

In 1992, Krenke accepted an Active Duty for Special Work position as associate editor of the *On Guard* newspaper published by the Office of Public Affairs for the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. She has been on extended active duty with the National Guard Bureau since that time.

During her military tenure, Krenke has received many awards, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal and the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster.

Krenke resides with her husband, Bob, in Alexandria, Va. They have three children, April, Grace and Brett.



## Sandra Alstadt

Sandra (Sandy) R. Alstadt is the director of customer communications for Entergy Services, Inc. She joined the Entergy system in 1989 as a communications specialist for Arkansas Power & Light. In 1996 she was named director of utility operations communications for Entergy Services, Inc. During major storms, Alstadt serves as Entergy's "Communications Command Leader."

Under her leadership, the Entergy communications team has been recognized with numerous national crisis communications awards for their work following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which struck the Entergy service territory in 2005 and hurricanes Gustav and Ike, which struck the Entergy service area in 2008. Some of the awards include: PR Week's Crisis Communications Award and their highly coveted Campaign of the Year Award, and the Public Relations Society of America's Silver Anvil Award for Crisis Communications. Alstadt was also named the "2006 Crisis Communicator of the Year" by *PR News*.

In 1998, she was named to the "Top 100 Women in Arkansas" list by Arkansas Business. In 2010, she was selected as one of 12 "Powerful Women" by *AY Magazine*.

Alstadt has been active in several professional, civic, and charitable organizations. She is a member of the Public Relations Society of America; she has served on the board of directors for the PRSA Arkansas Chapter.

Alstadt earned a B.S. in Journalism/Public Relations from Arkansas State University in 1982. She currently serves on Arkansas State University Journalism Department's advisory board.

