

In 2001 we created the School of Communication Alumni Academy and an External Advisory Board.

The individuals recognized this evening represent the twenty-fourth group of inductees into our Alumni Academy.

It is with great pride that we honor them for their career accomplishments and community engagement.

2026 Alumni Academy Inductees

Brian Abel
Linda Baughman
Krystyn Price



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
School of
Communication

We're More Than Just Talk

Mission Statement

The School of Communication is committed to excellence in teaching, learning, scholarship and the practice of communication. As teacher-scholars, our purpose is two-fold: Develop reflective and skilled communicators who value diversity, community, ethics and critical thinking; and contribute to the research and practice of our discipline with an emphasis on collaboration with local, regional, national and international partners to examine organizational, community, educational and social issues.



Brian Abel, B.A., 2007

Brian Abel is an Anchor and Correspondent for CNN, based in Atlanta, GA reporting across CNN platforms, including CNN, CNNi and CNN Headlines, the network's domestic FAST channel, to deliver up-to-the-minute reporting while continuing to anchor on a fill in basis across CNN.

Brian was previously a correspondent for CNN

NewsSource, based in Washington, D.C., reporting for the network's more than 1,000 affiliate partners. He has extensively covered the White House, the 2024 election, multiple hurricanes, the early 2026 unrest in Minneapolis, and the attack on a Michigan synagogue. He also served as a fill-in anchor and was a key part of the CNN team nominated for an Emmy in Outstanding Breaking News Coverage for Hurricane Milton.

Before CNN, Brian was an Emmy Award-winning evening anchor for WXYZ, where he covered political stories across metro Detroit. He secured multiple one-on-one interviews with presidential candidates during the 2020 election cycle. In 2020, Brian was honored with an Emmy Award by the Michigan chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for "Connected in Crime: Detroit to West Virginia," which highlighted the consequences of and prevention efforts surrounding a drug pipeline.

Previously, Brian reported for KSHB in Kansas City, where he was the lead reporter during the 2016 elections. He also served as a reporter and weekend anchor in Fargo, North Dakota, for WDAY, and as the primary anchor for WDAZ in Grand Forks.

Brian graduated from Western Michigan University with BA in journalism.



Linda Baughman, Ed.D., B.A., 1991

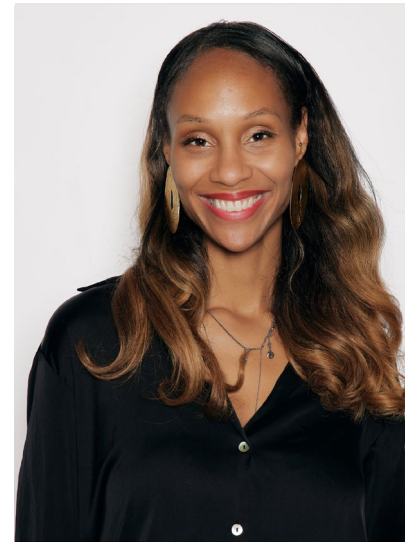
Linda Baughman, Ed.D., pursued a career in higher education and has served in a variety of roles in both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs over the last 34 years. She was most recently appointed as the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota after an eleven-year tenure as dean of students. As dean of students she oversaw an array of on-campus and off-campus student

services and programs, including Residence Life, student conduct, undergraduate orientation, crisis response, and initiatives supporting military-connected students. She credits her experiences in and out of the classroom at WMU with providing her with the foundation for a vibrant career focused on creating supportive environments where students can thrive on their college journeys.

An avid lifelong learner, Linda received a Master of Arts in teacher education from the University of St. Thomas in 1997, and a Master of Science in education in counseling from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls in 2004. She then earned her Doctor of Education in educational leadership and learning from St. Thomas in 2024. Her dissertation was focused on experiences of belonging for first-generation students who began at a community college and persisted to baccalaureate degree completion.

Linda lives in St. Paul, MN with her husband and has two adult children. She has a passion for travel and her annual travel itinerary always includes a trip to a beach on the west side of Michigan.

She graduated from Western Michigan University with a BA in communication and social work.



Krystyn Price B.A., 2010

Krystyn “KP” Price is an Emmy Award-winning media executive and talent strategist who has built her career at the intersection of creators, culture, content, and commerce. As General Manager of Global Talent & Creator Partnerships at Offscript Worldwide, she leads talent and creator strategy across REVOLT, REVOLT Sports, Rap-Up, 3BLACKDOT, 440 Artists, Six

Zeros, and the company’s broader portfolio. In this newly created role, she is helping build a creator-powered ecosystem beyond individual content opportunities.

Previously, KP served as General Manager and Senior Vice President of the SpringHill brand and *The Shop* at The SpringHill Company. There she negotiated over 300 talent deals, launched 15 new series, and contributed to acclaimed projects like the Emmy Award-winning *Turning the Tables with Robin Roberts* and the Emmy-nominated *Recipe for Change*. Before that, KP served as Director of Talent at Complex Networks, developing talent strategies across flagship properties including *Hot Ones*, *Sneaker Shopping*, and ComplexCon. She also held talent booking and producing roles at FOX’s *The Real*, ABC’s *FabLife*, and VH1’s *Big Morning Buzz LIVE*.

KP has also received multiple Webby, Shorty, and Streamy Awards and was named a Top Woman in Media by Cynopsis. She is committed to mentoring and empowering the next generation of women in media and has served as a mentor with Femme It Forward and Girl Connected.

KP graduated from Western Michigan University with a BA in communication and public relations and then earned an MA from Full Sail University in 2011.