Veteran Journalist and Media Adviser John Harvey becomes a Pirate

John L. Harvey, whose career includes 17 years as a newspaper editor and 15 years in student media, is the new director of student media effective Feb. 4th.

“I am extremely excited about this opportunity,” Harvey said. “I’ve been impressed with the students, staff and administration, their commitment and vision, and I feel confident East Carolina is ready to forge ahead in a renewed effort to build a professional and well-trained student media.”

The Office of Student Media oversees The East Carolinian student newspaper, Rebel literary magazine, Buccaneer yearbook, WZMB radio station and Expressions magazine.

Harvey, who most recently served two years as director of student media at Georgia Southern University, restructured the university’s program, revamped the newspaper and its website and established a successful recruitment and training program. The results include an overall 35 percent increase in ad revenues, 19 percent hike in newspaper readership and 310 percent growth in staff membership.

Prior to Georgia Southern, Harvey served as news adviser from 1998-2010 for The Daily Collegian, the student newspaper covering the Penn State community. During that time his students earned more than 400 regional, state and national journalism awards.

Among the more than 1,000 young journalists Harvey has trained during his career are professionals working in media across the country, including such prestigious organizations as The New York Times, Washington Post, Philadelphia Inquirer, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Baltimore Sun, CNN, Fox Sports, NPR, Glamour, Seventeen and Redbook. In fact, one former student earned a 2011 Pulitzer Prize for her coverage of the Jerry Sandusky scandal, the youngest journalist to ever win that award.

Harvey was also included in a 2007 PBS documentary titled “The Paper” that documented one academic year in the life of the Penn State student newspaper. The TV film aired on Independent Lens and has since been used as a training tool by several university journalism departments and the State Department.

At East Carolina, Harvey is expected to institute the semester-long recruiting and training program for first-time journalists developed at Penn State and used with great success at Georgia Southern. Called the Candidate Program, it provides a multi-layered approach to journalism training that both builds staffs and trains young reporters and editors. On several occasions he has presented on the program at national conferences.

Harvey offered words of praise for Frank Barrows, the longtime Charlotte Observer managing editor who until recently served as interim adviser at ECU.

“Frank did a terrific job in connecting with the students and identifying areas in which the student newspaper could improve. I hope he is willing to continue that ECU connection as we go forward. He is an invaluable resource, and Student Media owes him a great debt of gratitude,” Harvey said.

Prior to becoming a journalism educator, Harvey held a variety of positions with newspapers in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, including city editor, editorial page editor, managing editor and executive editor. He also wrote columns and editorials for 12 years, winning several Keystone Press Awards. He still writes an occasional freelance column, most recently for The Philadelphia Inquirer and the Savannah Morning News.

He earned his bachelor’s in English from Waynesburg (Pa.) College and his master’s in Media Studies from Penn State. His graduate thesis centered on student journalism education.