



Near the foothills

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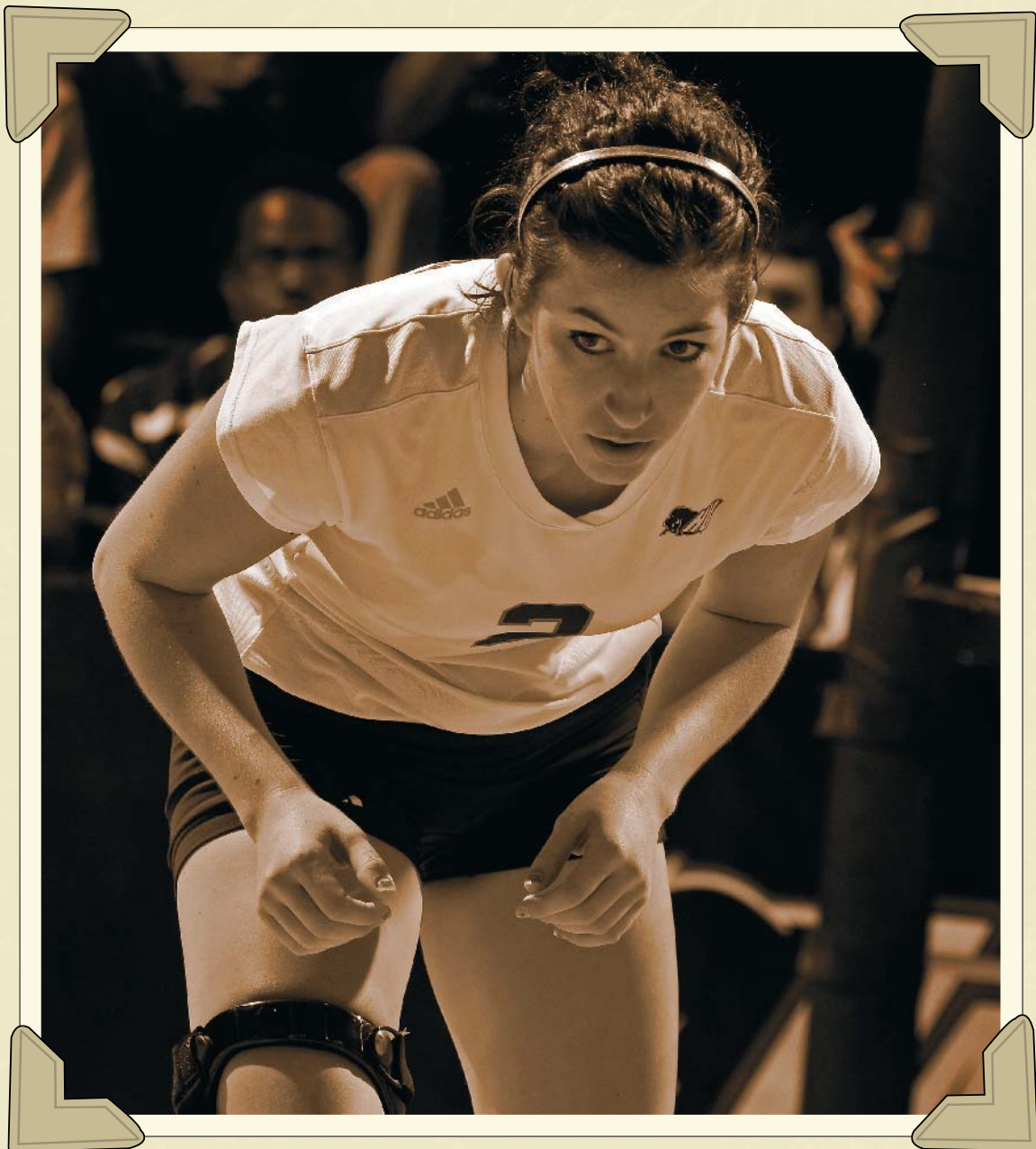
harding college, 1955

petit jean 2009 | harding university | searcy, ark. | volume 85

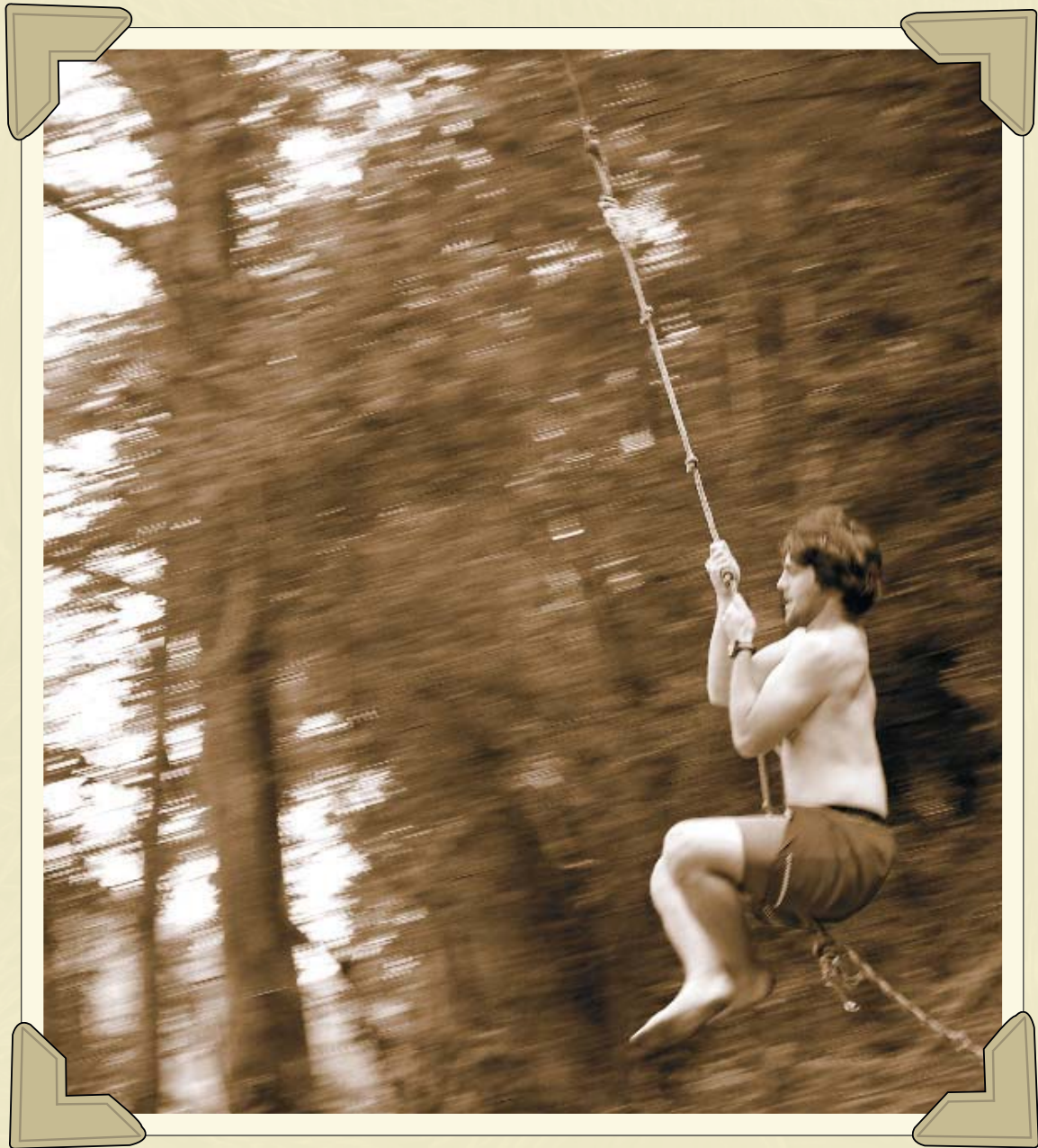
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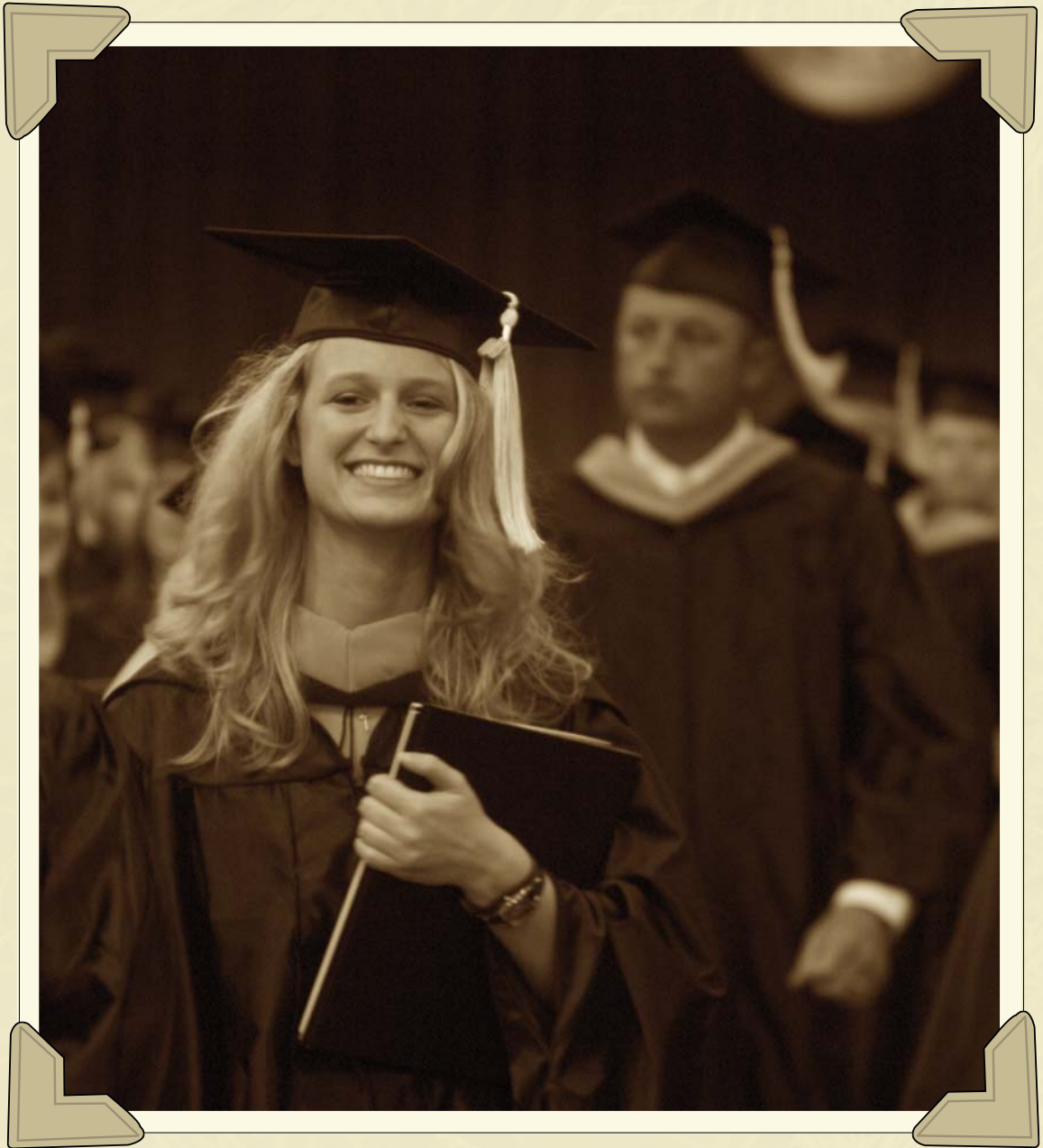
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Near the foothills of the Ozarks,



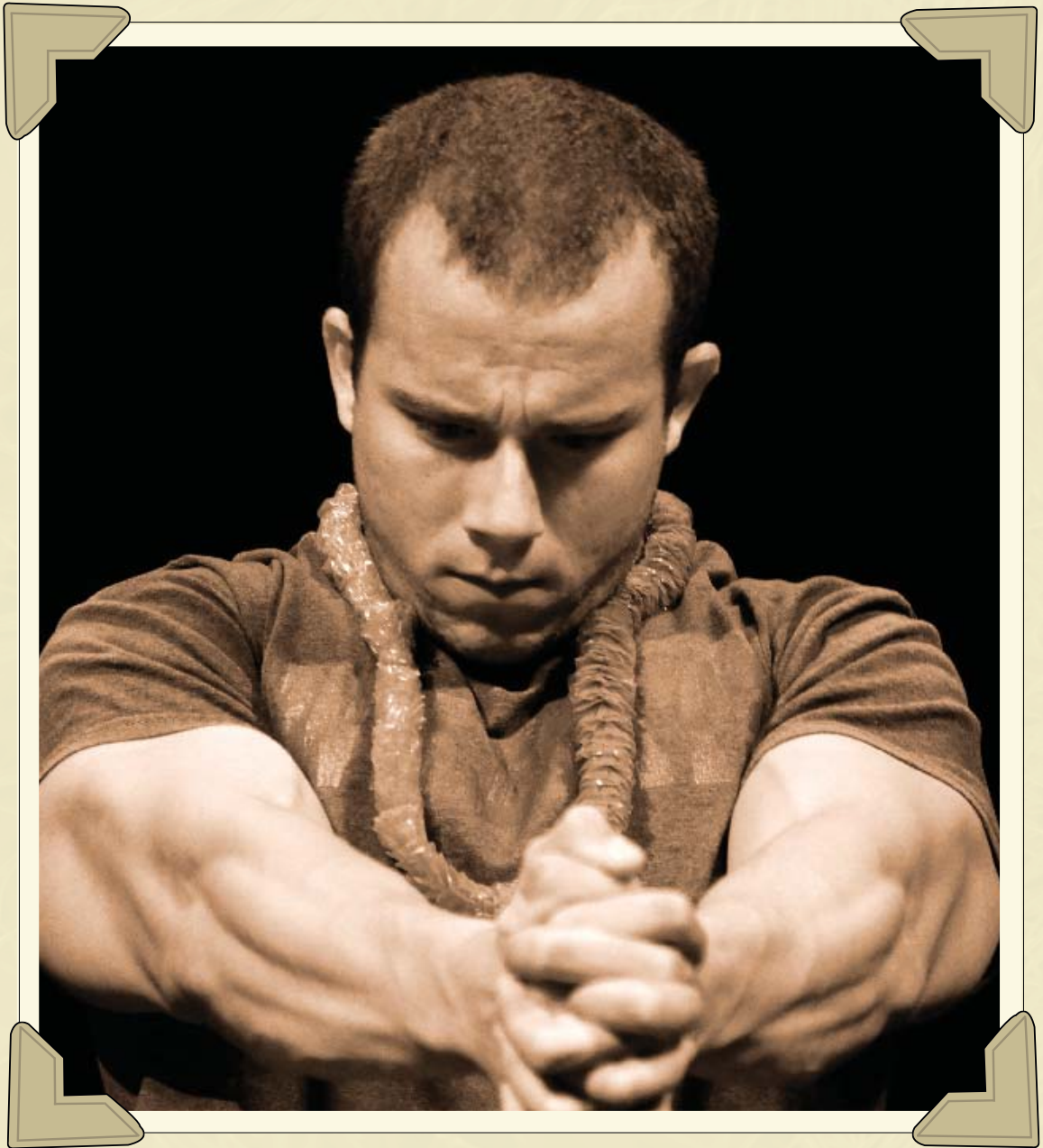
midst of hill and plain;



*Stands our glorious Alma Mater;
Harding is her name.*



*Sing the choruses, shout it loudly,
echoing through the vale,*



Hail to thee, beloved Harding,



Alma Mater, Hail.

Jack Shock

Professor dedicates work to building Christian communicators

The 2008-09 Petit Jean dedication winner, Dr. Jack Shock, professor of communication, led his students by example, both academically and spiritually. When his former students heard he was the recipient for the dedication, many of them wrote to relay memories of their favorite professor.

Shock's classes were always unique, because he had held many interesting jobs before and during his time at Harding. His classes were full of stories from his early years working in the public relations field. In 1995, he took on the role as former President Bill Clinton's director of letters and messages at the White House and he also worked with the American Red Cross, beginning just after 9/11 when 1993 Harding graduate Darren Irby asked him to head to Ground Zero to be a public affairs technician. In 2005 he left for New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the coastline to again work with the Red Cross.

"I remember him talking to our class via speakerphone from the [World Trade Center] site for one entire class period, sharing what he was doing and what he was learning," 2002 graduate Ryan Cook said.

In the November 2, 2001 Bison, Cook wrote about Shock's Red Cross work.

"On the first day I was at Ground Zero, after about five minutes, they had found a fireman's body," Shock said in the article. "That was my introduction to Ground Zero. It was a rude awakening to what I was going to see and experience for the next eight days."

On a public relations trip to New York in the spring of 2008, Shock led a group of students back to Ground Zero to witness the progress of the construction of the 9/11 memorial. Students were also able to see how Shock handled other disaster relief efforts when the American Red Cross again called on him in the fall of 2005.

"I will never forget the time his Red Cross duty called him to New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina," 2008 graduate Molly Morris said. "He described the relief efforts via speakerphone as we listened back in class. Though he wasn't there in person that morning, I don't think a single person skipped class that day."

Shock used other methods to keep his students engaged in class.

"He always tried to keep class interesting, especially the seemingly boring Communication Law," Cook said. "His songs to help us remember the Supreme Court justices and the First Amendment stand out still."

Beside his use of children's songs for memorization, Shock used relevant issues to discuss textbook concepts.

"Dr. Shock stressed getting real-life experience to augment our academic work and worked hard to help open doors for us in that way; it wasn't just talk," 1990 graduate Craig Cheatam said. "He incorporated issues from that day's headlines into the subjects he taught, showing how the knowledge we were gaining was preparing us for the time when we would be called upon to deal with those issues."

He also tried to get students thinking about their future outside of Harding.

"He was a great encourager and wanted his students to aim high," Cook said. "He encouraged me and others to take the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund internship test. There was a run of [a couple of] years when someone from Harding was accepted into the program, no small feat for such a small program. That internship was my first major professional experience, and it has opened career doors ever since."

Others echoed Cheatam and Cook, adding that Shock's use of his own career experiences were what inspired them to work hard.

"The classes with J-Sho, as we called him, were nothing short of amazing," 2007 graduate Kate Dear said. "He knew how to command the class with riveting details and stories. Press and Society, the class we all originally dreaded, became our favorite as we were able to freely interact with Dr. Shock and learn from him in a way that spurred us on to greater, thinking not only as students but as the adults that we soon were to become."

One student, who later went on to work as the director of news services and

public relations for Harding, was April Fatula.

"When I arrived at Harding as a freshman, I already knew I wanted to major in print journalism," Fatula said. "Dr. Shock was working at the White House then, but even in his absence, it didn't take me long to figure out that he was somewhat a rock star in the department and on campus in general. Through Jack and his connections, I have attended movie premieres, chauffeured dignitaries and met fellow journalist Lester Holt."

Along with his arsenal of public relations stories, Shock also brought humor into his classes.

"As a freshman, I jotted down practically every word he said," Morris said. "I dedicated a section of my notebook to what I titled, 'Shocking Facts! Fun facts about Dr. Shock-Collect 'em all!'" Any time Dr. Shock revealed something about himself, we put it on the list. We knew his favorite color, green, which childhood teacher taught him to type 106 words-per-minute, Ms. Annie May Hamilton, and the name of the paint color he used in his home, Murmur."

Others relayed stories of Shock's amiable nature.

"He was a great sport when we took advantage of his hospitality to 'kidnap' a cherished childhood toy of his and held it for ransom," Cheatam said. "To this day, the sock monkey is the chosen icon to represent my fellow classmates' relationship to Dr. Shock, and every time I see one I think of him."

Besides his encouragement in the classroom and his humor, most of his students agreed that it was his personal interest in them that they remembered the most.

"Dr. Jack Shock is not the average professor," 2008 graduate Kristin Kelley said. "He takes time and energy to forge meaningful relationships with students, establishing a confidence seldom seen with other teachers. He is truly interested in watching students succeed in their career, and his enthusiasm for public relations and journalism makes me excited for future job opportunities."

Shock's greatest goal for his students was for them to succeed as Christian communicators in any field they chose to go into after graduation.

"As seniors, he invited us into his home for a Christmas dinner and prayed that we would be influential as Christian communicators," Morris said. "I think we all just hope to be as inspiring to one person as he has been to hundreds."

Dear said that one of her favorite memories of Shock was the day before her graduation in May of 2007.

"With many of us already in tears, he spoke to us, this time not about a funny story or with a deep intellectual thought, but with words that will remain with me throughout my career and my life that he has touched so deeply," Dear said.

Shock brought out a Bible and read from Joshua 3:5: "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you."

"Although many of us were scared to death of what the future held, he was very reassuring that we would surely succeed," Dear said.

One of Shock's most important lessons to his students was his emphasis on what they were doing the day after graduation.

"After classes with Dr. Shock, I feel like there's not a question of if I'll land my dream job someday, but when," Kelley said. "I feel equipped, excited and ready for the professional world."

Fatula also agreed saying that her friendship with Shock was important as a student and also as a colleague.

"He respects his students and their goals and goes out of his way to help make those goals reality," she said. "I have had the distinct privilege of calling Jack Shock my professor, colleague and friend."

With all of his public relations experiences, his humor and dedication to his students, it was no wonder that alumni from all over wanted the chance to share their memories of Dr. Jack Shock. So many wanted to say thank you to the man who influenced their lives the most while they attended Harding.

Katie Ramirez



Dr. Jack Shock, professor of communication, spends the week of May 12 in New York City with public relations and print journalism students. Shock led the group of 15 to Ground Zero, The Clinton Foundation headquarters in Harlem, the Statue of Liberty and inside the NBC studios.

Courtesy of April Fatula

More Shocking Facts!

- Shock was tested as a word savant at age 5
- He loves the ampersand
- His birthday is Valentine's Day
- He would consider selling his forehead for ad space
- He enjoys Moonpies and Diet Coke
- His White House nickname was Pork Chop
- He led a sit-in at Harding's Lily Pond in 1975
- He attended Harding for pre-optometry school, but when he realized he would have to touch eyeballs, he switched to business and later earned a master's in journalism history
- He reads the Wall Street Journal because he thinks the writing is beautiful

Courtesy of Molly Morris