



CARNEGIE Results

WINTER 2006

Carnegie Results is a quarterly newsletter published by Carnegie Corporation of New York. It highlights Corporation-supported organizations and projects that have produced reports, results or information of special note.

Chronicling Higher Education for Nearly Forty Years

Editor's Note: The Chronicle of Higher Education was founded with Corporation support that was targeted at critical start-up and development stages of the project. It's an example of how a focused foundation investment was used to create a publication that has become not only essential to the field it serves but sustainable, as well. The Chronicle remains at the leading edge of higher education reporting while exploring innovations that will continue to ensure its viability over time.

When the first issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* was published in November 1966, some questioned whether there was enough news to warrant a paper that focused solely on the activities of colleges and universities. The *Chronicle* initially was published every other week by a staff of 12, including 7 editors and writers; it had no editorials and no advertising, and its 5,000 subscribers paid \$10 for 22 issues a year. Today, as the *Chronicle* approaches its 40th anniversary, it is published 49 times a year and has a print circulation of more than 83,000, with 5,600 online-only subscribers and more than 250 institutional subscribers that own licenses allowing everyone on their campuses to access the *Chronicle's* entire web site.

The impact of the *Chronicle* on the world of higher education is documented by a range of factors that are not reflected merely by the number of people who read the paper. In the decades since the first issue appeared, the

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Chronicle has covered many topics such as cold fusion, plagiarism and evolution that its readership intrinsically seeks at a depth that most of the daily press does not provide. Even today, many newspapers do not often cover higher education from a national perspective, and, when they do, their articles usually follow a *Chronicle* story on the same subject.

“Over the years *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has provided a kind of common culture for all of us interested in higher education,” says David Breneman, dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. “Articles in the paper have often influenced the national conversation about higher education in numerous indirect ways that would be difficult to trace.”

Derek Bok, who is president emeritus of Harvard University as well as the university’s 300th anniversary university professor, describes the *Chronicle* as “the preeminent vehicle in this country for news and views about higher education.” He says that “Its readers include most of the important decision-makers in American colleges and universities along with almost all those who write about higher education. It is an indispensable source for anyone who needs to be informed about emerging developments and new initiatives in the entire field.”

For years, the *Chronicle* has had competition from publications such as *University*

¹ www.chronicle.com

Business, *Black Issues in Higher Education*, the now-defunct *Lingua Franca* and *HigherEdJobs*. The most recent addition to the field, *Inside Higher Ed*, was founded in 2004 by three former *Chronicle* employees. The entire *Inside Higher Ed* site is free to readers, whereas a portion of the *Chronicle*’s web site¹ is available free of charge, but only subscribers have access to the entire site.

It is not competing publications, however, that have the most serious implications for the *Chronicle*’s financial health—which is rooted in its advertising revenue—but rather the economy and hiring freezes that occur at institutions when state budgets are cut that have the most impact, according to *Chronicle* publisher, Robinette D. Ross. “That’s when institutions are unable to hire and the recruiting basically drops off,” she says. The *Chronicle* has had an increase in both recruitment and display commercial advertising pages recently, reporting almost a 5 percent increase in fiscal year-to-date through September 2, 2005, with 2,596 pages in fiscal year ‘04 and 2,724 pages for fiscal year ‘05 during that period. Job advertisements not only bring in substantial revenue but also attract new subscribers, yet they are only one indication of how much the *Chronicle* has changed since it began publication:

- Today an editorial group of about 85 people, including editors, reporters, designers and

editorial assistants as well as a business staff of 95 people (which serve both the *Chronicle* and its sister publication, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*) are needed to turn out the weekly publication.

- The *Chronicle*, which covers international as well as national education news, has won many honors over the years. In 2005, Carlin Romano, a regular contributor to *The Chronicle Review* (a weekly special section of the paper), was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize for criticism.
- The Internet version of the *Chronicle* posts all the articles from the print edition. Job listings are posted on the web site daily and augmented with articles about careers. The *Chronicle* site, which reports 10-to-12 million page views a month, also posts news updates every day and links to *Arts & Letters Daily*, which the *Chronicle* bought in 2002.
- Since May 2005, *Chronicle* site licenses have been available to all institutions of higher learning at a cost ranging from \$500 to \$9,775, depending on FTE (fulltime equivalent) enrollment and other factors.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* went from being nonprofit to for-profit in 1978. It launched *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, a newspaper that focuses on the nonprofit world, in October 1988, and is considering adding one or more new publications to its roster.

THE GERM OF AN IDEA

In 1956, a group of 19 editors of university publications from prestigious colleges and universities across the country met to discuss how they could expand their coverage to go beyond reporting on activities on their individual campuses. The editors decided to produce a supplement for alumni magazines that took a broader, national approach to reporting news on higher education.

Corbin Gwaltney, then editor of *The Johns Hopkins Magazine* for alumni, wrote the first issue along with a colleague. “We were still editing our alumni magazines,” Gwaltney says, adding that they wrote the new collaborative publication “with the little fingers on our left hands.” The original group of alumni editors supported the publication in several ways and pledged a percentage of the budget for one issue. Recalling those mid-20th century days, Gwaltney says, “We were really lucky; we had no idea of the personal legal liability we were assuming if we had been sued for anything. We just published it as a group of people, with not even the official backing, in most cases, of our universities.” It was also a different age with regard to printing processes and the facilities of the Internet and overnight delivery services. “Those were the days of hot metal type,” Gwaltney remembers. “We traveled to Chicago over three consecutive weeks to read proofs.”

The supplement, first published in 1958, was bought in bulk by alumni magazines. Each of the

magazines had different size specifications, so the insert was printed in three different editions, which presented complicated logistical problems for the small staff. Gwaltney says his group was amazed that they sold 1.5 million copies of their fledgling publication. In September 1958, Carnegie Corporation of New York appropriated \$50,000 to the American Alumni Council for the so-called “Moonshooter” report (a reference to Sputnik) to help support the second and third years of its publication, allocating the first portion of \$12,500 in November. However, the publication became financially solvent in its second year, did not spend these funds and returned the grant.

GETTING STARTED

After publishing their report for a few years, Gwaltney and others embarked on a new endeavor, forming a nonprofit educational group, Editorial Projects for Education (now Editorial Projects in Education, Inc. or EPE). They published a newsletter, *The EPE 15 Minute Report*, which was supported by a Carnegie Corporation grant of \$68,500 in April 1964. Designed with an austere, one-color look, except for a red slash in the letterhead, *The EPE 15 Minute Report*, which was intended for trustees, was also read by college and university administrators; it was usually issued

every two weeks, but publication was delayed at times to allow coverage of a newsworthy development or an issue was rushed into print to capture a news-breaking event.

At the time, other newspapers covered some stories about education and there were a few trade bulletins devoted to higher education issues, but no publication focused on higher education exclusively. The editors of *The EPE 15 Minute Report* also noted that the federal government, under the Johnson administration, was getting involved in the higher education arena in a way it never had previously, helping to make higher education financially accessible to low-income youth through aid programs to colleges, government loans and grants to students and federal scholarships.

The grant proposal submitted to Carnegie Corporation included a presentation for the *Chronicle* that was substantially different from the version that ultimately was published. “The prototype was a beautifully written, beautifully laid out magazine called *Renaissance*,” recalls Margaret E. Mahoney, who was then a program officer with Carnegie Corporation. “But it was too sleek, too much like a magazine.” Instead a newspaper-style format was developed, so that the publication would fit more easily into the concept of a publication that could be comfortably read in any venue, including in transit, on a bus or plane. The first eight-page issue of the *Chronicle* featured stories about the 1966 election, including articles

about the new Congress and the changes in higher education likely to occur under the leadership of the newly elected governor of California, Ronald Reagan. The front page of that issue hangs on a wall of the *Chronicle's* Washington, D.C. offices.

Carnegie Corporation support for the *Chronicle* began with a 1965 two-year grant of \$120,000 and continued with a second two-year grant of \$100,000 awarded in 1967. Two years later the Ford Foundation awarded the *Chronicle* a \$300,000 grant. In 1968, the Corporation also provided a small grant for "Subscriptions to *The Chronicle of Higher Education* for selected Commonwealth universities"² and a 1973 grant of \$152,000 for expanding the newspaper.

Gwaltney, who was considering how the *Chronicle* could become financially independent, noted that an education supplement of *The Times of London* ran a great deal of recruitment advertising because British law required that education job openings be advertised. "If that could happen in this country, that would solve all our problems financially," he mused. When the affirmative action and equal employment legislation was passed in the United States, Gwaltney says, "We were ready to become the medium for higher education to advertise its job openings, so that solved our financial problems."

The paper published its first classified adver-

tisements in March 1970 and the first display ads a few months later in September. By then, circulation had climbed to more than 20,000 subscribers and the \$15 subscription price bought 38 issues a year. The advertisements proved to be of value in more ways than one. "For people who were interested in pursuing administrative careers, there was no alternative to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*," says Daniel Fallon, chair of Carnegie Corporation's Education Division. "You would have to advertise there if you were conducting a search, and if you were an aspirant, you quickly turned to those pages to determine what the field was looking like and what the market was like. The advertisements also brought loyal readers."

By October 1971, the *Chronicle* had increased its subscribers by about 25 percent, to 24,500. By then there were 20 staff members, a figure that indicated any lingering concerns about there being sufficient news to publish a paper devoted to the academic world were unfounded: there was *plenty* of news, and the paper was a critical success from the start, with some people referring to it as the *Wall Street Journal* of higher education. "The *Chronicle* went beyond our expectations," recalls Mahoney, who later became president of The Commonwealth Fund and who is currently president of MEM Associates, Inc. "Advertising allowed it to become

² Under the terms of the gift made by Andrew Carnegie to create Carnegie Corporation of New York, grants must benefit the people of the United States, although up to 7.4 percent of the funds may be used for the same purpose in countries that are or have been members of the British Commonwealth. The Corporation's current Commonwealth focus is on selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

self-sufficient. They were very clever to get that going early.”

The early days of the *Chronicle* also provided some interesting memories. Gwaltney, for example, recalls a memorable elevator ride on one of his first visits to the offices of Carnegie Corporation. “We were kind of a rollicking group, just a bunch of young kids, and we were on the elevator and were all yakking it up,” he says. As they approached the floor on which the Corporation’s offices were located, one member of Gwaltney’s group said “I guess we have to be serious now.” When he heard that, Gwaltney says, “I cringed, because I recognized the other person on the elevator as John Gardner, who was the head of the foundation.” But everything turned out well and, continues Gwaltney, “Later I wondered if maybe that helped us to get the grant—that we were human beings, not stuffy people.”

Gwaltney says he wanted to be a journalist from the time he was a child living in Baltimore; his first newspaper publishing experience involved writing his own small paper on a Royal Number 10 typewriter given to him by his grandfather when he was five years old. An admirer of *National Geographic*, eight-year old Gwaltney later published his own homemade version of that magazine with stories about places in Washington, D.C., including one article about the 1932 opening of the Folger Shakespeare Library. He took photos with a Brownie camera and hand-pasted them into

the paper. One influence he remembers is *Richie of the News*, a book by Ralph Henry Barbour, a story about a reporter named Richie, who had great principles and, Gwaltney says, was pitted against a sleazy publisher in the same small town. He is still seeking a copy of the book.

His first newspaper job was at the *Baltimore News-Post*. In 1943, his love of publishing took a turn when he invested his limited savings to develop a mockup for *Johns Hopkins Magazine* that upgraded the vision of an alumni magazine to one that featured photographs as well as educational articles, not just dry information about campus life and fundraising. His intuition regarding a new type of alumni magazine proved to be on target, and the Hopkins magazine became a model for alumni magazines at colleges across the country.

OVER THE YEARS

Philip W. Semas, who is now editor-in-chief of the *Chronicle*, joined the *Chronicle* staff in 1969 after working as a California stringer for the paper. He and other longtime colleagues say that they intended to spend a few years at the paper and then move on to other newspapers, but there always seemed something new on the horizon, opportunities and exciting projects, so they never left.

A relatively recent graduate of the journal-

ism school at the University of Oregon when he became a reporter at the paper, Semas says, “One reason people stay here a long time is the emphasis on quality and doing the best possible job we can.” He says his biggest story as a reporter was the aftermath of the shootings at Kent State in 1970, and he remembers when the Scranton Commission was appointed to investigate the Kent shootings and the *Chronicle* published the full text of the report.

“It was our largest issue yet, with 24 pages,” Semas says. “In those days things didn’t get published as fast and there was no Internet, so for several weeks, if not several months, the only place you could get the full text was in the *Chronicle*.” They printed extra issues to meet demand and, Semas notes, it “helped establish us to a broader audience.”

As an editor, he remembers the Bakke decision³ as a big highlight. “It was handed down on our deadline day, but we still managed to do a full report, including publishing more of the text of the decision than *The New York Times* did.” Another highlight for Semas in his editorial career was launching the *Chronicle’s* companion paper, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*.

Gwaltney’s own vision and personality are also credited among the reasons that *Chronicle* reporters often choose to stay at the paper rather than moving on. “Corbin is incredibly creative and imaginative

and a pleasure to work with,” says Malcolm Scully, who came on board in 1967 and now is editor of *The Chronicle Review*. “He has very high standards and a playful and creative mind. You always feel like you are being stimulated when you work with him.” Scully, who has an English degree from the University of Virginia and a masters degree from Cornell University, remembers the early days of publishing the paper when the small staff did everything from copy editing and writing to occasionally driving from Baltimore to York, Pennsylvania, to deliver the *Chronicle’s* pages to the printer on time.

Though 6’ 5”, Scully remembers cracking his head on the low ceilings in the basement quarters that the *Chronicle* rented from Johns Hopkins. He says, “It truly was a very exciting place. We were just getting started and there was a sense of adventure because we didn’t know if we were going to make it. Our timing was very good, though, because there was a lot of foment on campuses in the late 60s and early 70s, and we covered front-page news at a level of depth that got a lot of attention from daily newspapers.”

Scully has held a variety of jobs at the paper, none more fun, he says, than that of founding editor of the international section for which he recruited the first overseas stringers, including Elizabeth MacCallum, who was married to the Toronto *Globe*

³ *In the case of the Regents of the University of California v Bakke, in 1978 the Supreme Court ruled that Allan Bakke, a white man, had been illegally denied admission to the university’s medical school, which had admitted black candidates with weaker academic credentials, but also that medical schools were entitled to consider race as a factor in admissions. The Court thus upheld the general principle of affirmative action.*



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and *Mail* correspondent in Beijing and thus living in China. To get MacCallum's reports in the days before e-mail, Scully drove to Dulles International Airport to walk her packages through customs. In 1978, he traveled to South Africa to report on apartheid and in 1986, he and reporter Paul Desruisseaux visited 15-20 universities in South Africa to report on happenings in higher education. "Those were really heady days for us," he says of his first decades at the paper.

Edward (Ted) R. Weidlein, who began as a *Chronicle* reporter 34 years ago, with a degree from Princeton University and experience as managing editor of the *Daily Princetonian* and, after graduation, as a member of the university's admissions team, also has many memories of headline stories. "I remember getting a call to take the first plane down to Baton Rouge in November 1972, where the Southern University campus had a protest and four students were killed by police," Weidlein says. "I did a major story on that. In fact we ripped up most of the paper that week—at that point it was only eight pages. It was a highlight of my reporting career."

Weidlein has held many other *Chronicle* posts, including that of founder of the opinion section and of *Books & Arts*, which was a critical success but could not sustain itself when spun off from the parent paper. In the 1980s, he

began exploring how the *Chronicle* could use technological advances and helped get its web site started in the 1990s.

In 1978, the *Chronicle* was purchased from EPE⁴ by Gwaltney and Jack Crawl, a colleague. Later, when Crawl moved to Vermont and formed his own publishing company, Gwaltney purchased Crawl's interest in the paper.

Looking at the range of topics that have been covered by the *Chronicle* in the nearly four decades since it came on the scene, Daniel Fallon says, "*The Chronicle of Higher Education* quickly proved its value in a whole variety of ways: through the dissemination of scholarship, for instance, and through regular reporting on issues of importance for the cultural norms of the enterprise. An example is when ethical questions arose regarding issues relating to sexual harassment or dating and intimate and personal relationships between advisors and students, or between students and students and others on campus. All of those issues tended to be developed almost exclusively in local contexts, but because they were rapidly reported in the *Chronicle*, they took on a normative character, quickly becoming matters that people were familiar with and were able to deal with in terms of a common language that facilitated the development of cultural norms."

⁴ With the funds realized from the sale of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, EPE was able to begin publishing *Education Week* in 1981. Prior to that, Carnegie Corporation had provided money for a feasibility study for the publication. In September 1989, EPE launched *Teacher Magazine*.

NEW HORIZONS

Kathlene Collins, Scott Jaschik and Doug Lederman, three former employees of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, founded *Inside Higher Ed*—which is available online only⁵—in 2004. Saying that they and Gwaltney “wanted to go in different directions,” Jaschik, who is editor of the new online publication says he felt it was “a good time to do something new.”

“The three of us saw a lot of changes going on in higher education and in journalism and in recruiting services and we created *Inside Higher Ed* to be a new model to respond to those changes,” Jaschik says. He explains that some of the changes in higher education include the growth by geography in the south and the west, by institution type in community colleges and for-profit higher education and the internationalization of higher education. He also notes that electronic communication has become the way members of the academic world interact on many issues.

This entire online publication is free to readers. Revenue is generated completely by advertising, and, according to Jaschik, all the indicators—number of readers, job postings and ad revenues—are “going up steadily,” though he readily adds that “we started from a low base.” In September 2005, their site had 1.3 million page views, with no marketing,

though a marketing campaign began later in the fall.

Commenting on the fact that their online publication does not charge a fee, Jaschik says, “We think information is important to everybody. Our model is very much based on the idea that we believe graduate students should have access to the same information in journalism as the provost. Information should be as available to somebody at an institution that doesn’t have a lot of money to pay for things as an institution that does.” He says he had been stunned by the number of international readers their site had reached.

Two other publications that cover education journalism are *University Business* magazine, a free monthly publication that focuses on management in higher education and reaches 42,000 presidents and other senior officers at colleges and universities. Both its print and online versions are free; the privately owned company is advertiser supported. Professional Media Group LLC of Norwalk, Connecticut, bought *University Business* a few years ago and folded it into *Matrix*, a similar magazine that the company owned.

HigherEdJobs.com, which is a privately owned company that has never received grant support, was founded in 1996. It provides a job database for openings in higher education that is free to those seeking employment. Prospective employers pay \$145 to list a job for 60 days; their site has nearly 9,500 positions posted from more than 1,000 insti-

⁵ www.insidehighered.com

tutions of higher learning. According to John Ikenberry, president, an online data base instead of a print format “offers so many benefits for us and for our customers. It is less expensive for our employers, and we think an online format is easier for the candidates to search.”

The *Chronicle's* web site has 800,000 individuals connecting every month. Students doing research can access the paper if a school librarian subscribes to it, and for institutions that have site licenses, everyone on a participating campus has full access to the publication online. Even sub-

scribers to the print version may be turning to the Internet more frequently to read the *Chronicle*.

“Most administrators and faculty on campus use the online version,” says Sarah Sudak, director of housing and residential life at Middle Tennessee State University, which does not have a site license. “I’m one of the rare exceptions who still like the paper copy.” Sudak says she also uses the *Chronicle* for professional development with her staff. “I forward articles that will be of interest to specific people or we use an article as a point of discussion in a staff meeting in an attempt to stay

TIMELINE: HIGHLIGHTS OF *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

- **November 23, 1966:** First issue published.
- **September 1969:** Weekly publication begins, except for the summer months.
- **March 1970:** First classified ads.
- **May 4, 1970:** Lead story—the killing of four students at Kent State.
- **September 1970:** First display ads.
- **October 5, 1970:** Published the full text of the Scranton Commission Report (official title, *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest*).
- **February 22, 1971:** First campus best-seller list. No. 1: *Love Story*, by Erich Segal.
- **October 18, 1971:** First opinion article, “The Debasement of Liberal Education,” by Morris B. Abram.
- **November 27, 1978:** First *Chronicle of Higher Education Inc.* issue
- **February 1979:** The *Chronicle* receives the George Polk Award for education reporting.
- **September 4, 1985:** First “back to school” issue.
- **June 11, 1986:** Special report on South Africa.
- **September 1, 1988:** First Almanac issue.
- **October 25, 1988:** First issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*.

on top of relevant topics in the profession. I also enjoy the *Gazette* section (which tracks appointments, resignations and recent deaths) because it allows me to stay informed about people's comings and goings within the field and regularly review the job listings to be knowledgeable about the types of jobs that are opening up and to see if our salaries are competitive with what's out there."

Commenting on the *Chronicle's* online competition, Semas says, "We think we are already providing the best possible news for higher education and basically try to put out the best publication and best

online service and not worry too much about what [others] are doing."

Still, the *Chronicle* staff continue to evaluate the possibility of new projects that fit their philosophy and seem financially feasible. In June 2005, Weidlein was appointed Editor of Special Projects and he is exploring a range of concepts involving K-12 education, including trends in college admission, how high schools are preparing students and how colleges are preparing teachers along with the possibility of making some information more easily accessible to groups of subscribers such as college

- **April 1993:** First appearance of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on the Internet, as a Gopher service.
- **July 1995:** *Academe Today*, the *Chronicle's* daily service on the Internet, begins.
- **June 1998:** *The Chronicle of Higher Education* offers online-only subscriptions for subscribers outside the U.S.
- **November 1999:** Number of *Chronicle* subscribers registered for online services surpasses 70,000. Print circulation: 95,547.
- **July 7, 2000:** First appears in two sections, news in one section and opinion articles and job ads in the other.
- **September 8, 2000:** *The Chronicle Review* is reborn as a third section of the paper.
- **March 8, 2001:** The *Chronicle* offers online-only subscriptions for U.S. subscribers.
- **August 2001:** Job listings are posted daily instead of weekly and augmented with articles about careers in academe.
- **October 2002:** *The Chronicle* purchases the *Arts & Letters Daily* web site.
- **January 2004:** Site licenses offered to community colleges.
- **May 2005:** Site licenses offered to all four-year institutions.
- **October 2005:** *The Chronicle of Higher Education* holds its inaugural Higher Education Leadership Forum.

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trustees, state legislators and members of Congress. "There are a variety of ideas, but it is too soon to say how we would pursue that area," Weidlein says. He pointed out that they would be careful to avoid competing with *Education Week*, which, as noted earlier, is published by EPE.

Whatever is in store for the *Chronicle's* future, its policy not to take an editorial stance will remain in place. "We decided early on not to have an editorial page," says Gwaltney. "We never have published an editorial, never taken a stand, political or otherwise; we've just reported the news." Gwaltney describes his current role as rather inactive, adding that he has lunch once a week with Semas and others. As chairman and sole member of what is amusingly referred to as the "Board of Director," Gwaltney says his job is still to be the *Chronicle's* "best friend and severest critic."

Written by: Joyce Baldwin. Baldwin has written on a wide range of topics for many national publications and is author of two biographies for young adult readers: *DNA Pioneer: James Watson and the Double Helix* and *To Heal the Heart of a Child: Helen Taussig, MD*. Currently she is working on a book, *Once Upon a Christmastime*, which tells the story of New York City's first Christmas tree lighting ceremony in Madison Square Park in 1912.

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